

Going Deeper

Your weekly guide to understanding God with others

If God Is For Us - Week 1

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Introduction

Pastor Dale opens the Word at Romans 5 with a passage that brings enormous hope to those who have chosen to accept Jesus into their lives. The passage reminds us that we are declared innocent through that decision and through the choice Jesus made on the cross. Our salvation is not earned, it has been given to us by Jesus; to find God's grace in our lives we need only to follow Him. This grace brings us joy even in suffering – because suffering produces perseverance, character and hope – which in turn bring joy.

Bible Passage

Romans 5:1-11, Ephesians 2:8-9

Discussion

1. Consider the difference between being 'washed clean', 'born again' and 'declared innocent'. Which is new to you? Is one harder than another to accept?
2. Do you consider yourself a 'good person'? What do the words 'sin' or 'sinner' mean to you?
3. If missing the bullseye, even by a minute amount, is sin, does this change your understanding?
4. God's grace is something we cannot earn and do not deserve. Is this hard for you to accept? Is it difficult to understand or apply in your life and in your relationships? Why?

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5. Have you ever experienced God's grace? What did it feel like? How did it impact you and the lives of those around you?
6. We each have something deep inside that we don't like about ourselves or are even ashamed of. It might be something we are working on or something God is showing us today. This is where God wants us to let Him in. Where would you like to see God's grace in your life?

Respond

Some of your innermost responses to these questions will be deeply personal and between you and God. Write them down. Others will be something God is prompting you to be vulnerable about. Listen to His voice regarding how and what to share.

Discuss the changes you want to see in yourself as a result of these observations. Consider how to change your thinking and language so that the way you live better reflects that you have been 'declared innocent'.

