

# LIGHTHOUSE GROUP CURRICULUM

Romans 5:1-5

## LEADER'S STUDY

### Standing in Grace

#### Romans 5:1-5

#### What is happening?

The Apostle Paul is writing to the church in Rome. Because Rome was the hub of civilization at that time, the church was made up of Jewish and Gentile believers from around the world. In chapters 1-4 of this letter, Paul reminds his readers that *all* are sinners in need of redemption; though the Jewish law is good, it's unable to overcome sin; but God has provided the means of salvation and restoration for *everyone* through faith in Jesus Christ. Chapter 5 begins with the word "therefore," meaning that what Paul is about to say is based on what he's just explained. That is, because of Christ's redemptive work, we (everyone who trusts in Him and His work, whoever we are or wherever we're from) now have an entirely different relationship with God than we did before we came to faith. We don't have to try to make our own righteousness, because He's given us Christ's perfect righteousness as our own. Our lives won't suddenly become easy, just as Jesus' life wasn't easy. We can know, however, that whatever difficulties we face are in our lives for God's good purposes. There will be trials, but through them all, He gives us the grace to rely on Him, increase our faith in His word, and rejoice in our relationship with Him.

#### Where is the gospel?

Being saved by grace through faith in Christ is the first step in the gospel, but it's *only* the first step. Once we're saved, we walk in grace moment by moment, relying on Him for the rest of our lives. Day by day, the Spirit enables us to gain a better understanding of the reality of our forgiveness, to delight in our peace with God, and to draw closer to Him.

If Christ hadn't redeemed us from the curse of sin, no amount of inner peace or calm acceptance of our difficulties could change our eternal destiny. We might manage to suffer bravely for decades, but at the end of our lives we'd suffer infinitely more, and with no hope whatsoever, separated from Christ for the rest of eternity. In contrast to the emptiness of positive thinking or the vacuum of doing our best to live a good life, the gospel gives us a confident hope in our eternity AND real joy in the here and now through all of life's struggles.

As you prepare for this week, ask yourself questions like these: What does it mean to be justified by faith? Do I ever feel like I'm losing traction in my Christian walk? Do I struggle to see God in the midst of all the evil and injustice in the world? Even after we're saved, does God ever allow us to bear the natural consequences of our sins? Can God use hard circumstances to bring about good? How is God calling me to think and to live differently? How does this change my perspective today? How is God calling me to respond based on this scripture?

Spend some time reading and meditating on these truths as you prepare for your meeting. Be willing to share this with your group and invite them to join you in sharing how God is asking them to respond to His word. Be willing to share areas that He is calling you to "follow Him" and make clear "I" statements about how you are going to align with Him.

**Some helpful scriptures:** Deuteronomy 8:5; Psalm 94:12-16; 119:65-68, 73-76; Prov. 3:11-12; Rom. 3:28; Hebrews 12:1-11; James 1:2-4; 1 Peter 1:3-7; 5:6-11. What other places in scripture speak this same truth?

# LIGHTHOUSE GROUP CURRICULUM

Romans 5:1-5

## INTENTIONAL BIBLE READING

READ Romans 5:1-5  
and meditate on it.

Read in the ESV or similar word-for-word translation. Read it again in the NLT or other thought-for-thought version to get a different perspective.

Consider the historical context:

1- To whom was this letter written?  
(Christ-followers in Rome in the early 1<sup>st</sup> century)

2- What was the reason for writing it?  
(to clarify some disputed aspects of the gospel)

3- How might Jews who followed Christ have a different understanding of the gospel compared to their Gentile brothers and sisters?

4- Did Christians suffer persecution for their faith in that time and place?

Try to summarize the passage in your own words.

The world is so different now! How can any of this be relevant to me today?

## POTENTIAL STUDY QUESTIONS

These are just questions you might ask to help your group discussion. Don't feel like you need to answer all of these as a group

**What does it mean to have peace with God, v. 1?**

**What does it mean to stand in grace, v. 2? (Also see 2 Timothy 2:1 and 1 Peter 5:10.)**

**How is it possible to rejoice in our sufferings? (Also see Philippians 4:4-8.)**

**What seems to be the main point of these verses?**

**A key term in this passage is "suffering." In the Greek, this word (*thlipsis*) refers to the internal pressure a person feels as a result of persecution and tribulation. It's a feeling of being compressed or hemmed in, as if there is no escape. Have your circumstances ever caused you to feel that way?**

**What can you learn about God and His character from this passage?**

## APPLICATION QUESTIONS

**In what ways do I need God's grace even after being justified by faith?**

**What does it mean to rejoice in hope of the glory of God, v. 2?**

**In what ways does the Holy Spirit show Himself when I go through difficulties?**

**Can God use me to encourage someone who's suffering?**

**What is your "I will" statement?**  
(Encourage everyone to steer clear of "we" or "us" or "Christians" statements)

**With whom are you going to share what you have learned?**  
(This is a critical part of growth that is often overlooked. If we can share it with someone else it means we really understand it, it cements it in our own minds, it makes us accountable to the truth, and it blesses the one who hears it.  
Rom 10:17)

**Based on this passage, how should we pray?**