

BIBLE DISCUSSION GROUP STUDY QUESTIONS

In preparation for Sunday, Feb. 5, 2012

Passage: Romans 1:17

Memory Passage: Romans 1:16-17 (Review)

DAY 1 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

(a) **Read Rom 1:16-17 & Rom. 12.** Today, begin by writing: (1) Any questions you have about chapter 12, (2) The verse(s) that stands out to you most in the chapter, & (3) Why it stands out. Be ready to share your observations with your class.

(b) We will study 1:17 this week, but today, prior to our study, write down your answer to this question: To what does the “righteousness of God” refer? Try not to look at any commentaries, the notes in your study Bible, or any other tool. Only use Scripture, and make sure your answer takes into consideration the context of 1:17.

(c) *Family:* Today you will read through **Romans 12 twice**. Once, read it with each reader in your family alternating reading one verse each until you read all 21 verses. Next, tell you family that you will read the same chapter aloud by yourself, and every time someone has a question about what you are reading they are to raise their hand. When they raise it, stop reading and answer the question to the best of your ability. If you don’t know the answer, say, “I don’t know, but I will find out and bring you an answer” (write it down so you don’t forget!) If no one asks a question, choose one of the verses and ask, “What do these verses mean?” to start a dialogue about that verse in its context (v. 21 might work well for this discussion).

DAY 2 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

(a) **Read Ps. 98:1-2, Is. 46:13, 51:1-8 & Rom. 1:16-17.** It is imperative that we understand how some OT writers looked at God’s righteousness if we are to understand how Paul used the term in 1:17. According to Ps. 98:1-2, to what does the psalmist say God’s righteousness refers? What other language is common to both Ps. 98:1-2 & Rom. 1:17?

(b) How does Isaiah in 46:13 interpret the righteousness of God? Is the revelation of this righteousness something past, present, or future? What is God’s purpose in bringing near His righteousness?

(c) In Isaiah 51:1-8, to whom is God speaking? What is the context of these verses? What words/phrases describe God’s people in these verses?

(d) To what does the righteousness of God refer (vs. 4-7)? How can God’s righteousness refer to 2 seemingly opposite acts?

(e) *Family:* Ask your family: “What does the word ‘righteousness’ mean?” Be ready to give the answer if they don’t answer correctly or fully (e.g. to be right, just, acceptable to God). Fill in any other blanks that may be present in their understanding as you listen to their input. Then ask, “To what does the phrase ‘God’s righteousness’ refer?” and be ready to explain to them that God’s righteousness is His perfect, just and right character. Then **Read Ps. 98:1-2** and ask, “What does the psalmist say God’s righteousness is in these verses?” Show them that the psalmist sees the righteousness of God as His work of bringing salvation to His people. Then ask, “Why would God need to save His people?” and remind your family of the effects of sin and why we need a Savior, Jesus Christ, and that as we continue to study Romans we will learn more about salvation.

DAY 3 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

(a) **Read Rom. 1:16-17 & Rom. 13.** How does v. 17 connect with v. 16 (notice the “for” that (should) begins v. 17)? How did v. 16 help you to come to the answer you gave on Day 1 (b)? How does v. 17 connect with v. 18 (again, notice the “for”)?

(b) Review yesterday’s OT study. How does this inform your understanding of what Paul meant when he used the phrase “the righteousness of God?” The OT usages should have led you to the conclusion that, in the passages you studied, the righteousness of God referred to His act of salvation for His people. Does this fit with the context of vs. 16-17? Why/why not?

(c) What other ways could one interpret the phrase, “the righteousness of God” in v. 17? (I buried an answer to this question in Day 4 (a) in case you need help, but *think, use your own mind* before just jumping to the answer!) Which possibility do you think is most likely Paul’s meaning here in v. 17, why, and what Scriptures can you cite to support any of these possibilities?

(d) *Family:* **Read Prov. 11:16-17.** Remind your family of what they learned last night, and then help them to connect verses 16 & 17, pointing out the word, “for” that begins each verse and show them how Paul’s thought progresses. Ask questions to assess your family’s understanding and explain in a different way the truths you are trying to convey if they don’t understand.

DAY 4 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

(a) **Read Rom. 1:16-17.** (Answer to Day 3 (c): Three possible answers are, righteousness *from* God, righteousness *done by* God, or righteousness that *belongs to* God.) We have established that the righteousness of God refers to God’s saving activity on behalf of His people, but now we have another question before us: Is this a forensic (legally declared) righteousness or a transformational righteousness? What do you think? Can it be both (as Tom Schreiner says, “both gift & power”)?

- (b) **Read Rom. 4:3, 5, 6, 9, 11, 5:11, & 8:33.** In these verses, which meaning is taught: forensic or transformational?
- (c) **Read Rom. 6.** Which meaning do you find in these verses (Note: In vs. 7, 18 & 20 the phrases, “has/having been set free,” and “you were free” are all translations of the verb form of “righteous” and can be translated “have been justified.”)?
- (d) **Read Rom. 3:21-26.** Find the 4 verses that speak of God’s righteousness. Which meaning is being taught in each verse: forensic or transformational?
- (e) How do these verses inform your understanding of what Paul means in 1:17 by the phrase, “the righteousness of God?”
- (f) *Family:* **Read Prov. 11:19.** Ask, “How does a person remain ‘steadfast in righteousness?’” Help your family understand that believers must have a righteousness from God that comes through faith (Phil. 3:9) in order to live righteously (i.e. in a way that pleases God). When we are saved we gain Christ’s righteousness (1 Cor. 1:30) and are then considered to be righteous in God’s sight (Gal. 3:6-9). And that same righteousness will produce a life that is not enslaved to sin (Rom. 6:22-23) so that we, as children of God who have received Christ’s righteousness, will live a life that remains “steadfast in righteousness” (Prov. 11:19) and “live” forever. But if a person “pursues evil” continually, which is the fruit of unrighteousness, then that person is giving evidence that they are not saved and will, if they do not repent of their sin and believe in Jesus, “die” (not have eternal life with God). You may want to read each passage and then explain it as you take your family through this study. It is a picture of how “the righteous shall live by faith” (Rom. 1:17 & Hab. 2:4).

DAY 5 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Rom. 1:16-17 & Rom. 14.** How is the righteousness of God “revealed” (the answer is right in these verses!)? The verb translated “is revealed” is present and passive, so it might be translated “is being revealed.” What does this tell you about the importance, activity, and power of the action that reveals God’s righteousness?
- (b) What does Paul mean by the phrase “from faith for faith?” What is it about faith that describes how the saving work of God is revealed? How do the righteous “live by faith?”
- (c) **Read Hab. 2:4** and compare Paul’s quotation in Rom. 1:17 with the verse he quotes. Did Paul quote it accurately? What differences do you see between Hab. 2:4 & Rom 1:17? Did Paul “misquote” the verse?
- (d) Review what you learned this week and write down at least 3 applications that you will make. Be ready to share these with your class on Sunday so you can encourage others with further application of these theologically rich verses.
- (e) *Family:* **Read Rom. 1:16-17.** As a way to review what you studied this week, prepare a game in which you write questions on cards (cut 3x5 cards in half, one question per card) and write the answers on another card. Turn the cards upside down in 2 different grids, one with all the questions & one with all the answers. Have someone choose a question card, and if no one remembers the answer, have him/her choose an answer card. If the answer is not correct, then both cards are turned back upside down. Repeat with different people choosing a question card. Eventually they will begin to remember the answers as they are read in tandem with the wrong cards and begin to answer the questions without having to turn over an answer card.

DATE: January 5, 2012

PASSAGE: Romans 1:17

The Righteousness of God Revealed