

BIBLE DISCUSSION GROUP STUDY QUESTIONS

In preparation for Sunday, May 20, 2012

Passage: Romans 3:21-23

Memory Passage: Romans 3:21-23 (Review)

DAY 1 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

(a) **Read Rom. 3:21-23 & Rom. 6.** What does Paul mean by his opening words, “But now?” Of which verse in Romans does Paul seem to be continuing the thought here in v. 21? How does v. 21 continue the thought of this previous verse?

(b) What have you already learned in Romans about the righteousness of God? In v. 21 is Paul speaking of God’s judging righteousness or His saving righteousness? How do you know? Is it a different righteousness than was revealed in the law or the same, and how was it revealed in the law?

(c) Commit right now to memorize 3:21-26 over the next three weeks. These verses make up the very center of Romans, and I dare say, the very center of the Scriptures. Begin today by memorizing v. 21.

(d) *Family: Read Rom. 3:20-21.* Ask, “What is ‘the righteousness of God?’” After everyone answers, take them back to Rom. 1:16-18 and remind them what these verses mean. Then **Read Rom. 1:16-18 and 3:21-23** without stopping, as if Rom. 1:18-3:20 did not exist. Help them to see that Paul picks up the thought from 1:16-18 in 3:21, because he used 1:19-3:20 to prove why everyone needs this saving righteousness of God. Then, depending on how they answered your initial question, fill in any gaps in their understanding concerning the saving righteousness of God, and explain that for the next several weeks we will be studying how God makes this righteousness available to men & women.

DAY 2 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

(a) **Read Rom. 3:21-23 & Rom. 7.** To what is Paul referring when he says, “the Law and the Prophets bear witness” to the righteousness of God that is now being manifested? Why does he start this sentence with, “although?”

(b) As you read the following Scripture passages, make notes concerning what these NT men thought about the OT Scriptures: **Luke 25:26-27; John 5:39; Acts 3:18-24, 10:42-43; 24:14-15; 26:22-23.**

(c) These passages prove that Paul was not speaking anything new when he claimed the OT spoke of Christ’s life, death, & resurrection. How does this help us form our approach to interpreting the OT? Choose one passage from the OT that speaks about Christ and meditate upon it, noting how Christ is the subject of prophecy, foreshadowing, or typing. Now pray through the passage as a New Covenant believer who has seen and experienced its fulfillment in Christ. If you need some help in finding a passage, consider Genesis 22, Psalm 2, Psalm 110 or Isaiah 53.

(d) Memorize 3:22 and review 3:21.

(e) *Family: Read Rom. 3:21-23.* Explain that what Paul is teaching about the righteousness of God being revealed in Christ through His sacrificial death & resurrection is something to which the entire OT pointed, and Paul affirms this in v. 21. Ask your family if they can think of any OT passages that talk about Christ and His work on the cross. Then choose one they suggest and read it, explaining how the passages witnesses about Jesus. If you need some suggestions, try Gen. 22 or Is. 53.

DAY 3 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

(a) **Read Rom. 3:21-23 & Rom. 8.** What is the means through which one receives the righteousness of God? What/Who is the object of this faith? Who possesses this faith? From where does this faith come?

(b) What is faith? What does it entail? Is it knowledge about Christ? Agreement with Christ? More? Less? See passages such as Matt. 8:29, Mark 5:7, Acts 16:17, Rom. 1:32, 4:5, 13, 16, 20, 10:14-17, Hebrews 11, & James 2:17-19, for some help.

(c) How would you explain to a non-believer with whom you are sharing Christ how faith “works” in salvation? Assuming they profess faith in Christ, how would you discern whether or not this faith was saving faith as opposed to non-saving faith? How would you disciple others in this kind of discernment? What Scriptures would you use to prove what you teach them?

(d) *Family: Read Rom. 3:21-23.* Ask, “What is required to receive the righteousness of God?” (Faith) Then ask, “In what or Whom are we to have faith?” (Jesus) **Then Read Eph. 2:8-9** and teach your family how we are saved by grace through faith. You might find this object lesson helpful to illustrate how faith “works:” Have enough treats (fruit, candy, small toys, anything everyone would enjoy) for each person. Then tell them that you intend to give each one their own treat but that each treat costs \$1.00. Offer it to each person and say, “The price has already been paid.” Explain that this is the way faith works. The treat was paid for and provided by someone else, but they reached out their hand to receive it. Their hand did not pay for the treat, earn it, nor create it. It was only the means of receiving it, and they would not have received it had they not used the means (their hand) to receive it. Salvation is a free gift, but one must receive it by faith, and even faith is a gift from God.

DAY 4 – ASK FOR INSIGHT**READ THE PASSAGE**

(a) **Read Rom. 3:21-23 & Rom. 9.** To what distinction was Paul referring (i.e. What distinction is Paul saying does not exist?)? Why would someone depend upon this non-existent distinction, and why does Paul need to affirm that there is no distinction (i.e. Why does Paul start both halves of the sentence with “for?”)

(b) Is there any significance to the fact that Paul says, “all have sinned” rather than, “all are sinners?” Is there anyone left out of this sweeping assertion? What place in the argument of 3:21-26 does this fact have?

(c) What is meant by “the glory of God?” Make sure you can explain it in a way that a seasoned believer would still be astounded by it and a new believer or child would understand it! How do sinners “fall short” of this? Why is this important? How does this falling short connect with 1:20-23?

(d) *Family:* Devise a task that no one in your family can quite accomplish (jumping a certain height, running a distance in a certain time, doing a list of math problems in a certain amount of time, etc.). Explain that the goal is perfection. Let them try for a while, and every time they don’t perfectly accomplish the task remind them that they fell short. Then **Read Rom. 3:21-23** and help them understand that in this passage the glory of God refers to his perfect, righteous, sinless character, and every human sins and therefore falls short of this standard of perfection. This is why God sent Jesus to become our righteousness, so that in Christ we gain the righteousness needed to enter God’s presence for eternity.

DAY 5 – ASK FOR INSIGHT**READ THE PASSAGE**

(a) **Read Rom. 3:21-26 & Rom. 10.** In what ways do you sin and fall short of the glory of God? As a professing believer, what is your response when you sin? How do you apply the gospel, the finished work of Christ, to your own life when you sin and fall short of God’s glory?

(b) Spend some time outlining 3:21-26. It can either be a formal outline, or a set of statements summarizing Paul’s thought and showing how the thoughts are connected. This will help prepare you for the following couple of weeks as we look at these important verses.

(c) Finish memorizing 3:21-23. If you have not already done so, make a small card with the reference on one side and the verse on the other to help you continue reviewing what you have memorized.

(d) *Family:* Spend time memorizing 3:21-23. Memorizing 3:21-26 will be very helpful for your family as they remember what Christ has accomplished for them on the cross and how God remains both the just one and the justifier as He forgives sinners. These are great verses to preach to ourselves daily.

DATE: May 20, 2012**PASSAGE: Romans 3:21-23*****Our Righteous God Who Justifies (Part I)***

In Romans 3:21-26 Paul reveals two realities about the righteousness of God as he explains how believers are justified by faith in Jesus.