

BIBLE DISCUSSION GROUP STUDY QUESTIONS

In preparation for Sunday, June 17, 2012

Passage: Romans 3:27-31

Memory Passage: Romans 3:21-26 (Review)

DAY 1 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

(a) **Read Rom. 3:27-31 & Rom. 4.** To what does the word “then” refer that begins v. 27? How do vs. 27-31 fit into Paul’s flow of thought? Upon your first reading, how would you outline vs. 27-31 (Consider observations such as: Are there multiple questions being asked? Is each question asking something different or are some asking the same thing? How many answers are given? Do you see any repeated words? Is there an overarching theme? Etc.).

(b) In our continuous reading of Romans we are reading chapter 4 today. What similarities of thought do you see between 3:27-31 and chapter 4? How do these similarities help us to see the function of 3:27-31?

(c) In 3:27-31 Paul seems to be dealing with implications of his teaching on justification by faith that directly affect his hearers, especially Jewish hearers. If you were writing this letter to believers in the Bible Church of Cabot in 2012, what types of implications would you feel the need to draw out? What tendencies or ideas would you need to address after the word “then” (i.e. “Because of the truth of justification by faith I just presented, then . . .”)? Think specifically of your own life and what the truth of justification by faith addresses or challenges.

(d) *Family:* Use this lesson to review the main theological terms you have studied with your family during the last 3 weeks: righteousness of God, faith, sin, glory, justified/justification, grace, redemption, propitiation, & justice. You can play a game of matching definitions by (1) Making a worksheet with definitions in the right column and terms in the left column, mixed up, and ask your family to connect the proper definition to the proper term, or (2) Placing each definition and term on separate small pieces of paper that you turn upside down, then have each family member turn over 2 pieces of paper. If they match, they are removed from the table, but if they don’t, they are turned back over in their original place and the next person takes a turn (this will cause them to try to remember where the correct matches are placed).

DAY 2 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

(a) **Read Rom. 3:27-31 & Rom. 5.** What type of boasting does Paul say is precluded (i.e., boasting in what?)? Who is doing the boasting? Why is this type of boasting precluded?

(b) How many times does Paul use the word “law” in 3:27-31? Does it have the same meaning in every instance or are there differing meanings? On what evidence do you base your answer?

(c) What does Paul mean by the terms “law of works” and “law of faith?” How do they answer the question, “By what kind of law?” Is the “law of works” different from “the works of the law” (3:20)? If so, what is the difference, if not, why not? How does v. 28 give us clarity concerning what Paul is asking & answering?

(d) *Family:* Before the lesson, write out a monologue for yourself in which you arrogantly & excessively boast about an accomplishment or a personal possession. Make sure you use the word “I” as many times as possible, and count how many times you use the word. Give each person in your family pencil & paper and have them count how many times you say “I” as you read your monologue. Check to see if anyone actually caught every use of the word “I”! Then have them give words that describe your attitude and write these words on your white board. If no one says “boasting” then supply that word and give its definition: “Talk with excessive pride and self-satisfaction about one’s achievements, possessions, or abilities.” Talk about what made your speech boastful. **Then Read Rom. 3:27-28** and ask, “Why would someone be boastful about their salvation?” Lead them to understand the difference between boasting about keeping the law for one’s salvation and trusting in the finished work of Christ (3:21-26) which excludes boasting.

DAY 3 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

(a) **Read Rom. 3:27-31 & Rom. 6.** By way of review, explain in detail how one is, “justified by faith apart from works of the law” (v. 28). Be diligent to define the terms used in vs. 21-26. This exercise will help you know that you truly understand what you say when you describe the gospel, and also help you to preach the gospel to unbelievers in terms they understand.

(b) What is the function of the word “for” with which Paul begins v. 28?

(c) In what ways do you boast that you should not? Think deeply through this question! You may not go around boasting in being saved by your own works, but are there ways you “boast” in your own wisdom as you live out the Christian life? Do you “boast” in your own strength by living according to your own strength rather than Christ’s? What about “boasting” in your status, home, job, reputation, kids, knowledge, spirituality, etc. by the way you live in and speak about God’s blessings? What about when you fail: Is there any sense that you are “boasting” in (as in “depending on”) your own works if you think God looks at you differently when you sin than when you do not?

(d) *Family*: Lead your family through (c) above, helping them to see how trusting in the finished work of Christ, being justified by grace through faith as a gift from God, overcomes every desire to boast in their own works.

DAY 4 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

(a) **Read Rom. 3:27-31 & Rom. 7.** I'm sure it is obvious to you that Paul has returned to the diatribe style of writing in which he posits questions from a hypothetical hearer in order to both answer the objections he anticipates and to further his argument. Why would Paul expect the question, "Is God the God of Jews only?" I.e., why would someone ask this in response to God's work in Christ which provides justification by faith to all who believe?

(b) Is the 2nd question in v. 29 one that Paul thinks his hearers would ask, or is it part of his answer to the first question in v. 29? How do you know? If it is part of Paul's answer ;-), why does this fact flow from his teaching in vs. 21-26?

(c) Why is the phrase "since God is one" important in understanding the Gentiles' inclusion in this justification by faith? From where might Paul have taken this phrase (cf. Deut. 6:4)? What does the word "since" in v. 30 tell us? How does the phrase "God is one" prove Paul's point, and how might this truth be different than many Jews would have applied this truth?

(d) Does Paul choose the prepositions "by" and "through" in verse 30 because he is saying two different things, or is he using these terms purely as a stylistic variation to say the same thing? How do you know?

(e) *Family*: **Read Deut. 6:1-6.** Explain that 6:4 is known as the Shema (Hebrew for "hear") and is a verse that teaches that God is to be Israel's only God. It is an expression of the 1st Commandment, that Israel should have only one God (no other god's) before them, and that they should obey Him. But also explain that many Jews thought of the Shema as also stating that God is only the God of the Jews, and that the law & circumcision & the covenants marked them out as God's people, God's *only* people, but this was a misunderstanding because God has always been the only God for everyone, both Jew & Gentile. **Now Read Rom. 3:29-30** and explain that Paul is reminding the Jews of this fact: that God is now and has always been the one who will justify both Jews & Gentiles (circumcision & uncircumcision) by faith in Jesus through His propitious sacrifice.

DAY 5 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

(a) **Read Rom. 3:27-31, & Rom. 8.** Why would Paul expect someone to ask if the truth of justification by faith requires them to "overthrow the law by this faith?" What misunderstanding does this question reveal in the mind of Paul's hearers?

(b) Paul is revealing a great confidence in his answer when he replies, "By no means!" What inspires such confidence? What does it mean to "uphold the law" and how does one "uphold the law" when they are justified by faith instead of works?

(c) How does v. 31 inform us concerning our relationship with the law as New Covenant believers? From your consistent chapter-by-chapter reading of Romans, what ideas will Paul begin to address in future chapters that this statement foreshadows?

(d) *Family*: Spend today reviewing memory verses: 3:32-36 & 8:1-17.

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Justification Implications

In Romans 3:27-31 Paul presents 3 implications of his teaching on the righteousness of God revealed in the gospel of Christ.