

Discussion questions, “The Joy of The Justified”, Romans 5:1-11

1. Read Romans 3:19-26; 5:18-19. How can God “justify the ungodly”, that is, declare righteous (or, exonerate) people who are in fact guilty as sin? Isn’t this in itself unjust?
2. Read Romans 4:1-8; 16-25. How would you define faith? How does Abraham serve as an example of saving faith? Why is salvation to be received by faith?
3. Read Romans 5:1-11. List the blessings that comes from having a right relationship with God. Which of these are most real to you at this time? Where can we find the most deep and durable joy in life?
4. What is the difference between the justification of sinners and the justification of sin? How do we keep from turning grace into a license to sin? (Titus 2:11—3:7)
5. Read and reflect on the lessons from Jesus’ story in Luke 8:9-14. In what ways can you identify with each character? In what areas might you be tempted to feel superior to others before God?
6. How does understanding God’s method of justification lead to greater realization of community? How does the gospel destroy self-justification?
7. Share your spiritual story with your small group. How do you know that you are saved? Has the truth of *God’s justifying the ungodly through faith* affected your relationship to God and to others?

“Oh! rejoice in the richness of our salvation! When the Lord pardoned our sins, he did not pardon half of them, and leave some of them on the book—but with one stroke of the pen he gave a full receipt for all our debts. When we went down into the fountain filled with blood, and washed, we did not come up half-clean, but there was no spot nor wrinkle upon us—we were white as snow.” (Charles Spurgeon, “The Joy of Salvation”)

“When I say that *God Is the Gospel* I mean that the highest, best, final, decisive good of the gospel, without which no other gifts would be good, is the glory of God in the face of Christ revealed for our everlasting enjoyment. The saving love of God is God’s commitment to do everything necessary to enthrall us with what is most deeply and durably satisfying, namely himself. Since we are sinners and have no right and no desire to be enthralled with God, therefore God’s love enacted a plan of redemption to provide that right and that desire. The supreme demonstration of God’s love was the sending of his Son to die for our sins and to rise again so that sinners might have the right to approach God and might have the pleasure of his presence forever.” (John Piper, God Is The Gospel [Crossway, 2005], pp13-14)