

# SAKLC CONVERSATIONS

Mid-week adult Bible Study at St. Armands Key Lutheran Church, Sarasota, FL

## “ROMANS, a letter for today”

Session Plan and Facilitator’s notes for

Thursday, February 23, 2017

### AN OPENING PRAYER:

*Several preliminary statements* authored by Dr. Calvin J. Roetzel –

**Romans 4:23-25:** *“Now the words, ‘it was reckoned to him,’ were written not for his sake alone,<sup>24</sup> but for ours also. It will be reckoned to us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead,<sup>25</sup> who was handed over to death for our trespasses and was raised for our justification.”*

The preceding words signal an important shift in Paul’s thinking that is related to a previous discussion about the impartial revealing of God’s righteousness to all, both Jews and Gentiles. It is at this point that Paul starts to use the first-person plural in his writing.

**Romans 5** is a bridge chapter with two parts. The first (5:1-11) shows the results of the gospel of “*righteousness by faith*” for believers; the second (5:12-21) gives an overview of history from Adam to Christ. In Paul’s day there was a general sense of alienation between the gods and humanity. So Paul’s proclamation that “*we have peace with God*” had profound significance for his readers. For Paul, “*peace*” was more than just an inner fuzzy feeling; it was a social concept, dealing with healthy social relationships. Until the coming of Christ, the human family had been trapped in the bondage of imitating Adam’s act of disobedience. But in Christ, God provided the remedy for human brokenness and alienation as well as for the fractured God/human relationship.

### SESSION OBJECTIVES:

1. To give participants the ability to name consequences of our justification by God in Christ.
2. To explain why Paul described Christ as a second Adam.
3. To foster within each participant the ability to express what it personally means to be reconciled with God through Christ.

**TEXT - Romans 5:1-11** (NRSV) - The Results of Justification

*Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,<sup>2</sup> through whom we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand; and we boast in our hope of sharing the glory of God.<sup>3</sup> And not only that, but we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance,<sup>4</sup> and endurance produces character, and character produces hope,<sup>5</sup> and hope does not disappoint us, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.*

*<sup>6</sup>For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. <sup>7</sup>Indeed, rarely will anyone die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person someone might actually dare to die. <sup>8</sup>But God proves his love for us in that while we still were sinners Christ died for us. <sup>9</sup>Much more surely then, now that we have been justified by his blood, will we be saved through him from the wrath of God. <sup>10</sup>For if while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much more surely, having been reconciled, will we be saved by his life. <sup>11</sup>But more than that, we even boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.*

Initial comment on Vs. 1 – ***“Therefore”*** - Paul uses this word to show that the things he is about to describe are the consequences of all that he has said so far in his Letter. He contrasts the new life in Christ with the human situation that existed before Christ’s life, death and resurrection.

**NOW: DIG INTO THIS TEXT!** –

1. What terms does Paul use to describe our condition prior to salvation?

Vs. 6 \_\_\_\_\_

Vs. 8 \_\_\_\_\_

Vs. 10 \_\_\_\_\_

In the box at the top of the next page, summarize in your own words what these terms tell us about *“man’s”* condition apart from Christ

2. Paul uses the phrase **“through Christ”** several times in this passage, highlighting the fact that Christ is the mediator between God and man. Regarding each of the verses below, write down the benefits that this passage tells us we receive through Christ:

Vs. 1 \_\_\_\_\_

Vs. 2 \_\_\_\_\_

Vs. 9 \_\_\_\_\_

Vs. 10 \_\_\_\_\_

Vs. 11 \_\_\_\_\_

3. What does it mean to be **“reconciled” to God?** (vs. 10 & 11) *{You may find further help in answering by also looking @ Ephesians 2:14-16 and Colossians 1:19-20}*

4. What is the **“hope of the glory of God”** that Paul refers to in Vs. 2?

See also:

Matthew 16:27 \_\_\_\_\_

Romans 8:16-19, 23 \_\_\_\_\_

1 Corinthians 15:42-44 \_\_\_\_\_

Colossians 3:4 \_\_\_\_\_

1 John 3:2 \_\_\_\_\_

5. How is God’s love for us so amazingly different than any human love? (Vs. 6-8)
  
6. What does it mean that Christ died “at just the right time”? (Vs. 6; *but, see also Gal. 4:4 & Heb. 9:26*)
  
7. What do God’s past actions on our behalf tell us about our future? (Vs. 9-10)
  
8. Why can believers rejoice in the midst of suffering? (Vv. 3-5; *see also James 1:2-4*)
  
9. What kind of suffering do the Scriptures commend? (1 Peter 3:14-17, 4:12-16)
  
10. What in addition to Jesus’ death is involved in our ultimate salvation? (Vs. 10)

Your facilitator’s summation and outlined thoughts on Romans 5:1-11:

**THE PAST** (*without Christ*)

weak

sinners

wrath/judgment

enemies of God

boast in God

share glory of God

**NOW** (*in Christ*)

peace

access to grace

saved

reconciled to God

**TEXT - ROMANS 5:12-21 (NRSV) DEATH THROUGH ADAM, LIFE THROUGH CHRIST**

***<sup>12</sup> Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death came through sin, and so death spread to all because all have sinned— <sup>13</sup> sin was indeed in the world before the law, but sin is not reckoned when there is no law. <sup>14</sup> Yet death exercised dominion from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sins were not like the transgression of Adam, who is a type of the one who was to come.***

***<sup>15</sup> But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died through the one man's trespass, much more surely have the grace of God and the free gift in the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, abounded for the many. <sup>16</sup> And the free gift is not like the effect of the one man's sin. For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the free gift following many trespasses brings justification. <sup>17</sup> If, because of the one man's trespass, death exercised dominion through that one, much more surely will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness exercise dominion in life through the one man, Jesus Christ.***

***<sup>18</sup> Therefore just as one man's trespass led to condemnation for all, so one man's act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all. <sup>19</sup> For just as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous. <sup>20</sup> But law came in, with the result that the trespass multiplied; but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more, <sup>21</sup> so that, just as sin exercised dominion in death, so grace might also exercise dominion through justification leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.***

**Facilitator's Commentary** – The basic point of this passage is that Adam and Christ are the heads of two (2) races of people. Adam of a race of condemned sinners, and Christ of those who have received “*grace and ... righteousness*” Paul develops his point through a series of comparisons between Adam and Christ. These comparisons demonstrate the consequences their actions have had for the two races – death and condemnation for one, and life and justification for the other.

1. In the verses cited below, identify the comparisons between Adam's sin and Christ's obedience.

**ADAM'S SIN**

**CHRIST'S OBEDIENCE**

Vs. 15

Vs. 16

Vs. 17

Vs. 18

Vs.19

2. What is the **"one trespass"** referred to in Vs. 18? (*also, see Genesis 3:1-19*)

3. What is the **"one act of righteousness"** referred to in Vs. 18? (*also see Romans 4:25 and Phil. 2:8*)

4. Paul uses the term **"one man"** nine {9} times in this passage – six {6} times to describe Adam and three {3} times to describe Christ. Go back to the printed text and circle all the occurrences of this term. What do you think Paul is seeking to emphasize through the repeated use of this term?

5. What are the **"many"** who are made sinners by Adam's disobedience? (Vs. 19; see also Vs. 12)

6. What are the **"many"** who are made righteous by Christ's obedience? ((vs. 19, Vs. 17)

7. If death is the result of sin; and if sin is not taken into account when there is no law, why did people die before the law was given to Moses? (vs. 12-14)

8. What does Paul mean by the phrase **"all sinned"** when he states that **"death came to all men, because all men sinned"**?

9. What phrases does Paul use to indicate that Christ's act of obedience is more than adequate to overcome the effects of Adam's sin?

Vs. 15 –

Vs. 17 -

Vs. 20 -

**FINAL THOUGHTS and QUESTIONS for DISCUSSION:**

**A)** How do you feel about Adam's sin being credited to you? How about Christ's righteousness being credited to you?

**B)** Can you think of any everyday examples in which one person is held legally responsible for the actions of another, or suffers the consequences of actions taken by someone representing them?

**C)** Why do you suppose that Paul spends so much time contrasting Adam and Christ?

**Romans 5 - The Message (MSG)**

**<sup>1-2</sup>By entering through faith into what God has always wanted to do for us—set us right with him, make us fit for him—we have it all together with God because of our Master Jesus. And that's not all: We throw open our doors to God and discover at the same moment that he has already thrown open his door to us. We find ourselves standing where we always hoped we might stand—out in the wide open spaces of God's grace and glory, standing tall and shouting our praise.**

**<sup>3-5</sup>There's more to come: We continue to shout our praise even when we're hemmed in with troubles, because we know how troubles can develop passionate patience in us, and how that patience in turn forges the tempered steel of virtue, keeping us alert for whatever God will do next. In alert expectancy such as this, we're never left feeling shortchanged. Quite the contrary—we can't**

**round up enough containers to hold everything God generously pours into our lives through the Holy Spirit!**

**6-8 Christ arrives right on time to make this happen. He didn't, and doesn't, wait for us to get ready. He presented himself for this sacrificial death when we were far too weak and rebellious to do anything to get ourselves ready. And even if we hadn't been so weak, we wouldn't have known what to do anyway. We can understand someone dying for a person worth dying for, and we can understand how someone good and noble could inspire us to selfless sacrifice. But God put his love on the line for us by offering his Son in sacrificial death while we were of no use whatever to him.**

**9-11 Now that we are set right with God by means of this sacrificial death, the consummate blood sacrifice, there is no longer a question of being at odds with God in any way. If, when we were at our worst, we were put on friendly terms with God by the sacrificial death of his Son, now that we're at our best, just think of how our lives will expand and deepen by means of his resurrection life! Now that we have actually received this amazing friendship with God, we are no longer content to simply say it in plodding prose. We sing and shout our praises to God through Jesus, the Messiah!**

**12-14 You know the story of how Adam landed us in the dilemma we're in—first sin, then death, and no one exempt from either sin or death. That sin disturbed relations with God in everything and everyone, but the extent of the disturbance was not clear until God spelled it out in detail to Moses. So death, this huge abyss separating us from God, dominated the landscape from Adam to Moses. Even those who didn't sin precisely as Adam did by disobeying a specific command of God still had to experience this termination of life, this separation from God. But Adam, who got us into this, also points ahead to the One who will get us out of it.**

**15-17 Yet the rescuing gift is not exactly parallel to the death-dealing sin. If one man's sin put crowds of people at the dead-end abyss of separation from God, just think what God's gift poured through one man, Jesus Christ, will do! There's no comparison between that death-dealing sin and this generous, life-giving gift. The verdict on that one sin was the death sentence; the verdict on the many sins that followed was this wonderful life sentence. If death got the upper hand through one man's wrongdoing, can you imagine the breathtaking recovery life makes, sovereign life, in those who grasp with both hands this wildly extravagant life-gift, this grand setting-everything-right, that the one man Jesus Christ provides?**

**18-19 Here it is in a nutshell: Just as one person did it wrong and got us in all this trouble with sin and death, another person did it right and got us out of it. But more than just getting us out of trouble, he got us into life! One man said no to God and put many people in the wrong; one man said yes to God and put many in the right.**

**20-21 All that passing laws against sin did was produce more lawbreakers. But sin didn't, and doesn't, have a chance in competition with the aggressive forgiveness we call *grace*. When it's sin versus grace, grace wins hands down. All sin can do is threaten us with death, and that's the end of it. Grace, because God is putting everything together again through the Messiah, invites us into life—a life that goes on and on and on, world without end.**