

God's Declaration

TEACHING NOTES

KEY VERSES

Romans 3:24-4:25

KEY THEMES

God's righteousness
Believers declared righteous
The judicial act

Sinners in need of a savior (Romans 3:24)

God is righteous

God demands righteousness

God provides righteousness

It has always been faith (Romans 3:25-26)

The cross: the centerpiece of history

God's declaration

The judicial act (Romans 3:27)

Declared righteous =

Right standing =

 **Our faith fulfills the law (Romans 3:31)**

“Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.”
– Matthew 5:17, NIV

 **Abraham (Romans 4:1-3)** **You cannot earn a gift (Romans 4:4)** **The gift of right standing (Romans 4:9-10)** **The ground rules of grace (Romans 4:13-14)** **God gives life to dead things (Romans 3:17)** **Faith is enough (Romans 3:20-25)****Lesson Objective:**

To see clearly that God declares sinners righteous because of faith

PERSONAL STUDY

Study 1

Prepare your heart and mind

Open your time with God by asking Him to help you focus on what He has for you. God desires that we would pursue Him personally.

In this study we want to see the big picture more clearly. Whenever a person sees only a part of the whole or doesn't get the complete story, they are more prone to make assumptions that could lead to wrong conclusions. This is especially true in our relationship with God. We need to understand, as best we can, our need, God's solution, and God's character that drives His incredible desire to restore our brokenness due to sin.

Who we were



Read Romans 3:21-24

Before a person places their faith in Jesus' sacrifice, what keeps them from being in right standing with God?

Verse 23 tells us clearly that in our human state we all fall short of God's perfection. This creates an unsolvable problem for us. A Holy God can't just turn a blind eye to our sin. Because He is just, our sinfulness has to be dealt with. The consequence for our unforgiven sin is eternal separation from God. But God, in His love creates a solution.

Picture yourself in a courtroom awaiting your sentencing. The judge says you are found guilty and you will be receiving the death penalty. You are feeling alone and without hope. Suddenly, someone walks into the courtroom and approaches you. They share with you that there is a way for your sentence to be paid and for you to be declared not guilty. You are speechless. This man tells you that an innocent man is willing to take your place and die for you. You think this isn't fair, but you also don't want to die. He asks you if you are willing to believe in what he has told you and allow the judge to consider this substitution on your behalf. You agree and believe in what he has shared with you. The judge, now having received this news, tells you that you are free to go because this innocent person is taking your place. He looks you in the eye and tells you to never forget the under served kindness this man has shown you.

As you see yourself in this scene, what thoughts do you have? How does this help you better understand Jesus' sacrifice for your sin?

Who we are now



Read Romans 3:27-28

The Good News is only good when we see the hope it offers in light of solving our problem with sin. What is the only thing we can do to be made right in God's eyes?

God declares every person who has responded to this Good News by believing in it as righteous in His sight. God did all the work through the faithfulness of Jesus' life and death. A strange thing often happens in the life of a believer as they begin to walk out their relationship with God. They forget that God will now forever see them as adopted into His family. When we lose sight of this reality we begin to pursue God with motives that stem from trying to keep or earn His approval. We should strive to offer our complete lives for God's use because of our love for the One who has saved us.

Reflect on these questions to see if you have some mixed motives when it comes to how you pursue your relationship with God.

How do you picture God's attitude when you begin spending time with Him again after a season away?

When you sin, how do you think God sees you?

Do you think God sees you any differently after you have served Him really well for a long period of time? (Consider the older brother's perspective and his father's response in the story of the Prodigal Son found in Luke 15:11-32)

We are going to fail at times in our walk with God. When we do, we need to remember the truth of what God has said and lean on Him to move forward– not depend on our efforts alone.

We need to fully realize that once we have placed our faith in Jesus' work on the cross our position as God's sons and daughters is secure. Does this then mean we should live our lives like our sinful nature would prefer? No, why would we? It is important that we keep the Gospel in constant view so we can be humbled and grateful for what God has done for us. Along with the Holy Spirit living inside us, this perspective should give us compelling reason enough to live our lives fully for God and not ourselves.

Key verse

For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. (Romans 3:23-24)

Last week's verse was Romans 3:23. This week put to memory Romans 3:24 as well. Attempt to memorize them as a pair.

Prayer time

As you spend some time conversing with God, focus your prayers around your gratitude towards God's incredible gift to you. Discuss with Him areas where you struggle to pursue Him in freedom and love as opposed to a sense of duty or obligation.

Study 2

Prepare your heart and mind

Begin this time by reading and reflecting on the following verses.

God is love. (1 John 4:8)

You must be holy because I, the Lord your God, am holy. (Leviticus 19:2)

He is the Rock; his deeds are perfect.

Everything he does is just and fair.

He is a faithful God who does no wrong;

how just and upright he is! (Deuteronomy 32:4)

God's character and the problem of sin

God chooses to act according to His character as revealed to us in His Word. In other words, God never does anything that would violate His character. He wants everyone to see that He is trustworthy and true. With this in mind, we must understand that God did not violate His character in forgiving sins. By sending His Son as a substitution, God dealt fairly with sin. Jesus Christ took the penalty for our sins. To better understand this truth, let's take a look back at a few threads in the story of redemption.

The Lord God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them. And the Lord God said, "The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil. He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever." So the Lord God banished him from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken. After he drove the man out, he placed on the east side of the Garden of Eden cherubim and a flaming sword flashing back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life. (Genesis 3:21-24)

God's holiness and justice required Adam and Eve to suffer consequences for their sin. In His goodness, the Lord did not allow Adam and Eve to eat from the tree of life and live forever in their sinful state. Marred by sin, Adam and Eve knew good and evil in a limited, imperfect way. The Lord sent them into exile to protect them from themselves.

But the Lord said to him, "Not so; anyone who kills Cain will suffer vengeance seven times over." Then the Lord put a mark on Cain so that no one who found him would kill him. So Cain went out from the Lord's presence and lived in the land of Nod, east of Eden. (Genesis 4:16)

The Lord had reached out to Cain to help him learn to trust. Instead, Cain chose an unhealthy relationship with sin over a healthy relationship with God. As a result, Cain could not remain in the presence of a Holy God. Nevertheless, God graciously provided a mark of protection for Cain.

Seth also had a son, and he named him Enosh. At that time people began to call on the name of the Lord. (Genesis 4:26)

God has always looked for faith. In Seth's day, people of faith began to call on the name of the Lord.

The Lord had said to Abram, "Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you.

I will make you into a great nation,

and I will bless you;

I will make your name great,

and you will be a blessing.

I will bless those who bless you,

and whoever curses you I will curse;

and all peoples on earth

will be blessed through you."

So Abram went, as the Lord had told him; and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he set out from Harran. (Genesis 12:1-4)

God spoke and Abraham responded in faith. Where Cain went from the Lord's presence to exile in Nod, Abraham was called into the Lord's presence and favor due to his faith. The father of faith, Abraham, believed God and it was credited to him as righteousness. Though imperfect, Abraham had faith in God. God was pleased by his faith. And God is still pleased by faith today.

Through Christ comes righteousness and forgiveness**Read Romans 3:21-30**

What does this passage have to say about the following?

God's justice

God's holiness

God's love

The faith of imperfect people

Key verse

Continue working to memorize Romans 3:23-24. Attempt to write them out from memory.

Prayer time

Take a moment to thank God for who He is: a God who is personal and loving as well as holy and perfectly just. Thank Him for freely giving you priceless gifts through His Son. Ask Him to help you grow in faith and deepen your understanding of what Christ has done for you.

PARENT GUIDE

This week we are emphasizing our need for Jesus. Sin can be a tough topic to discuss with kids, but it cannot be overlooked. In talking about sin, we understand our need for a Savior.

Review with your child last week’s lesson on sin.

What is sin? (*Sin is doing, saying, or thinking things that don’t please God.*)

Who has sinned? (*We all have sinned.*)

On a piece of paper make 2 columns. Together write words or phrases that describe sin in one column, and words or phrases that describe God and heaven in the next. The goal is to examine the question: *if we are sin-filled and God does not allow sin in His presence, how do we have a right relationship with God?*

Sin

Anything that displeases God
 Everyone sins
 Separates us from God
 Ugly
 Cannot be overlooked
 (Etc.)

God/heaven

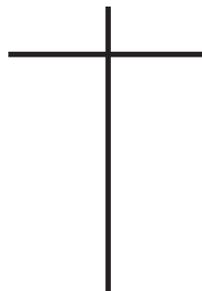
Holy
 There is no sin in heaven
 Perfect
 God cannot be around sin
 Almighty
 (Etc.)

Explain that our sin keeps us apart from God. We can’t do anything about our sin. But because of God’s love for us, He provided a solution for sin.

Draw a cross between the two columns.

Sin

Anything that displeases God
 Everyone sins
 Separates us from God
 Ugly
 Cannot be overlooked
 (Etc.)



God/heaven

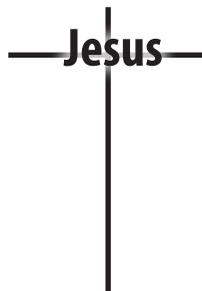
Holy
 There is no sin in heaven
 Perfect
 God cannot be around sin
 Almighty
 (Etc.)

Ask your child what God’s solution was. (*Jesus.*)

Write the name “Jesus” on the cross.

Sin

Anything that displeases God
 Everyone sins
 Separates us from God
 Ugly
 Cannot be overlooked
 (Etc.)



God/heaven

Holy
 There is no sin in heaven
 Perfect
 God cannot be around sin
 Almighty
 (Etc.)

Explain that when we accept Jesus as the solution for our sin, God no longer looks at us and sees sin. Jesus took the penalty for our sin, not because of anything we have done, but because God loves us. God sees us as His masterpiece.

Read Ephesians 2:8-10 together:

God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God. Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it. For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.

Turn your piece of paper over and have your child draw a self-portrait of God's masterpiece.

Pray together thanking God for His son Jesus who took the penalty of our sin.

ADDITIONAL STUDY**Read Romans 5:1-21****Observation**

(Who? When? Where? Why? What does it say? What do I notice?)

Interpretation

(What are the key themes or truths? What is the writer's intended meaning? What is the context? What questions do I have?)

Application

(How do I apply it? What does this mean for me?)

