

Family Worship Guide – Week 49

READ

- The Occasion of Paul's Letter to the Romans...
 - Paul wrote the letter known as Romans in order to address the tension that existed between Jew and Gentile believers in the church at Rome. This tension was fueled by ethnic arrogance between the two groups because each believed they maintained certain perceived advantages over the other (cf. Romans 3:1-27, 9:4-5; 11:17-25). In other words, the Jewish believers felt they were superior in God's eyes to the Gentile believers, and vice versa. This perception led Jew and Gentile believers in the church to be arrogant and not accept each other.
- The Purpose of Paul's Letter to the Romans...
 - In chapters 1-11 Paul addressed the issues of partiality and arrogance that existed in the church at Rome. He wrote to show that God is impartial and shows no distinction between Jew and Gentile. Before God both Jew and Gentile are equal. In other words, God doesn't show favorites. Individuals from both groups stood condemned (1:18-3:20), yet individuals from both groups are justified by faith in Christ alone (3:21-4:25). Read the following supporting verses, taking special note of God's impartiality:
 - Romans 1:16 - The gospel is the power of God for salvation to ALL (both Jew and Gentiles) who believe, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.
 - Romans 2:6-11 - God's impartiality demands that He judge ALL people the same; there is no distinction.
 - Romans 3:9 - Both Jews and Gentiles, ALL are "under sin."
 - Romans 3:21-31 - ALL those who believe (Jew or Gentile) are justified before God.
 - Romans 10:11-13 - ALL (Jew or Gentile) who believe upon Him shall not be disappointed. There is no distinction between Jew and Greek; there is one Lord who is Lord of ALL (both Jew and Gentile). ALL (Jew or Gentile) who call upon the Lord shall be saved.
 - Romans 11:32 - God has shut up ALL (Jew and Gentile) in disobedience that he might demonstrate His covenant faithfulness to ALL (Jew and Gentile who believe).
 - In chapters 12-16 Paul writes that this lack of distinction and impartiality displayed in the gospel should provoke Jew and Gentile Christians to not think too highly of themselves and instead to humbly accept one another. Read the following supporting verses:
 - Romans 12:3 - Neither Jew nor Gentile believer should think more highly of himself than he ought to think.
 - Romans 12:10 - Believers should be devoted to one another in brotherly love and give preference to one another.
 - Romans 12:16 - Believers should be of the same mind toward one another, not be haughty nor wise in their own estimation.
 - Romans 13:9 - Both groups (Jew and Gentile) should love their neighbor as themselves.
 - Romans 14:1 - Gentile believers should be accepting of Jewish believers.
 - Romans 15:2 - Jew and Gentile believers are to please their neighbor for their good.
 - Romans 15:6-7 - Jew and Gentile believers are to accept one another, just as Christ also accepted them.

The Bottom Line: The gospel displays God's impartiality and acceptance of all (chapters 1-11). This should provoke us to humbly accept one another within the body of Christ (chapters 12-16).

Questions:

How does the gospel keep you humble? How does the gospel keep you from being puffed up over others?

Romans 15:7 says that we are to "accept one another, just as Christ also accepted us to the glory of God." How has Christ accepted us? What does it look like for us to accept others in this way? How does accepting others bring glory to God?

PRAY

- Read *Window on the World*, pg. 194-195 Zimbabwe
- Use Prayer Card

SING

- Use lyric sheet and mp3 download of "He Came (This Christmas Day)"
- This week our family worship song is "He Came (This Christmas Day)". In the book of Romans, we see a clear picture of the Gospel. As the Church we have been saved from our sins through Jesus Christ. We, who once stood condemned before a Holy God, can now through faith, be reconciled to God for eternity. This good news is due to God's grace alone, it is not because of anything good in us that we can say or do, but rather it is "all because He came." Let's reflect on the words of this song as a family as we sing together and worship our great Redeemer and Lord.

MEMORIZE

- Romans 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

SUGGESTIONS

These suggestions were created by the age-group ministry leaders as a way to help parents better communicate the biblical truths discussed in the Family Worship Guide. These activities and questions can replace or serve as a supplement to the questions under the “Read” section on Page 1. Remember that these suggestions are intended to help parents facilitate God-centered discussions with their children. Parents should prayerfully use these suggestions, and any other means necessary, to help their children discover the truths of God’s word and worship Him together.

Preschool (Birth-Kindergarten)

- Before you begin, gather pictures of your family and, using magazines or the internet, find pictures of families from other countries and different races.
- Show the pictures of the families to your preschooler. Talk to them about how all families are different and all people are different. It pleased God to make races of people who are different colors on the outside. Some people have the same color of skin but have different color eyes or hair. God made each one of us different, but He made each one of us to please Him and He loves all of us the same. Because He loves all people the same, He desires that we love each other the same as well.
- There is a song you can sing together, or you can talk about the words if you don’t know the tune. It is called *“Jesus Loves the Little Children.”* The words are: Jesus loves the little children, all the children of the world. Red and yellow, black and white, they are precious in His sight. Jesus loves the little children of the world.
- End with a prayer thanking God that He made so many different kinds of people. Thank Him for loving all of us and for helping us to love others who are different from us.

Children (Grades 1-5)

- Paul wrote the letter to the Romans many, many years ago. But the things that the Christians in Rome needed to learn way back then are some of the very same things that we as followers of Jesus need to learn today.
- The Christians in Rome were divided into two groups – the Jews and the Gentiles. Each group thought that they were better in certain ways than the other. Each group thought that God preferred them over the people in the other group.
- This was not God’s plan for the Romans. God desired the Jews and the Gentiles to be united in love. Paul showed the Romans how the gospel could change their hearts and the way they treated one another. Paul showed them that the gospel was not just a message that affected their individual lives and where they would spend eternity, but it changed everything about them. Because of the work of Jesus, they had a new identity. They were not Jews or Gentiles first, but followers of Jesus. The gospel produced change that affected the whole community, and how the people in that community treated one another.
- There are two important truths that the gospel teaches us that change the way we treat other people:
 - First, all people stand equally guilty before God. Read Romans 3:9 as a family. When Paul speaks of the “Greeks” this is another way of referring to Gentiles, or non-Jews. Are both Jews and Gentiles guilty of sin? Does God look at the sin of Jews and Gentiles differently?
 - Second, all people have the same hope to be forgiven of their sin and made right with God. The gospel provides the only way of salvation for the Jews, the Gentiles, and all peoples today.
- Paul reminded the Romans that it made no sense at all for them to be proud and think that they were better than anyone else. All people are guilty before God and all people desperately need to trust in the good news of the gospel. Paul told the two groups that just as God has accepted them through the gospel, so they are to accept one another (Rom 15: 6-7). To be proud towards another person is to say that our opinion of that person matters more than God’s opinion. God has called us to walk humbly with Him and with our brothers and sisters in Christ.
- Pray as a family that God would drive the truths of the gospel down deep into your hearts. Ask God to produce humility in your heart and greater love for Him and for all members of the body of Christ.

Students (Grades 6-12)

- Start out by separating your family (and/or things in your home) into groups based on a certain criteria. (blue eyes vs. brown eyes, hair color, etc.)
- Have you ever seen someone treated badly simply because of his or her differences? Give some examples of ways you have seen people judged based on this? What are other ways people draw distinctions between one another?
- What do you think causes some people to feel superior to others? How might those feelings of superiority be harmful in the Church?
- Read Romans 10:8-13. This passage says some very specific things about those who call themselves Christ-followers. What does this passage say about different kinds of followers (vs. 12)? What can bring these different groups together (vs. 12b-13)?
- How then does Romans 12: 4-21 tell believers to relate to one another? Why?

Prayer

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Petition

Petition is praying for your own personal needs. While this is not the sole focus of our prayer lives, it is appropriate to pray for the needs and desires of your heart. We are to pray for our needs in times of sickness, sorrow, trial and joy, so that ultimately we learn to seek God's will in our lives. Through prayers of petition, we come to a deeper understanding of God's sovereignty over all things, whether they happen the way we would like or not. It is about submitting to His will and trusting that He will guard us in Christ Jesus. If you desire to read some passages from scripture about this, some are listed below.

Biblical Basis for Petition:

Philippians 4:6; James 5:13-16; 1 John 5:13-15

Take an opportunity for those gathered with you in worship to mention specific personal prayer needs they may have. Pray for each one of these requests specifically.

Nations: Zimbabwe

- The AIDS calamity in Zimbabwe is one of the world's worst cases. Pray for effective government, NGO and church action to stop its spread. Pray for Christians to address its moral, spiritual and economic implications.
- Zimbabwe needs a government that will serve the nation, not just those who govern. Pray for God to establish Christian leaders in government and that they will work to solve the country's overwhelming social issues.
- The Church has grown but has its challenges. Pray for godly men and women to be disciplined into leadership roles in the church.
- Pray for the Gospel to be spread to minority groups that are unreached. Pray for workers to go to these people groups and make disciples. Pray for the growth of the church.

Source: *Operation World* by Johnstone and Mandryk

Scripture Memory

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Romans 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

He Came (This Christmas Day)

By Mandi Mapes

Intro F (jingle bells)

Bb F Dm C 2x

F Dm B F C 2x

Dm C Bb F 7x

Light of the world in flesh appearing Sent
down to darkness to bring us peace The hope
of men promised from the beginning
The longed for Messiah Savior King

I was a prisoner but He broke my chains
He gave me freedom
And He washed away my shame
He opened up my eyes
And he gave me His name
I am forgiven

Bb F Dm C 2x

All the ends of the world will praise His name
And all the people will sing about this day

Bb F Dm G

And it's all because He came
And it's all because he came
Yeah it's all because He came
And it's all because He came

For redemption has come
He has made a way

Bb C F

For His saints this Christmas day

F Dm B F C 2x

His name shall be Jesus Emmanuel
The Shepherd of Israel to call His sheep
His voice will be heard proclaiming the kingdom
Forgiveness and freedom for all who believe

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