



THOUGHTS FROM THE MESSAGE

- ICEBREAKER - share with your group a time in your life when you felt truly powerless.

Romans 5: Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we boast in the hope of the glory of God. Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.

You see, at just the right time, when we were **still** powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person someone might possibly dare to die. But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were **still** sinners, Christ died for us.

Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him! For if, while we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life! Not only is this so, but we also boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

- Do you "glory in your suffering?" What do you think this means?
- Does knowing the end goal of suffering change your attitude and perspective about suffering? How has suffering produced any of these in you: perseverance, character, and hope?
- Looking back over your life where do you see where God offered you moments of grace through people, experiences, or even protection in your past?
- What areas of your life do you feel like you need continual grace even after the point of salvation? Get real about these areas with your group.



QUESTIONS FROM WEEKDAY READING (pgs 73 - 106)

WEEKLY QUESTIONS:

1. *What's something you noticed for the first time?*
2. *What questions did you have?*
3. *Was there anything that bothered you?*
4. *What did you learn about loving God?*
5. *What did you learn about loving others?*

DON'T LOSE HEART | pg. 148

- On page 148, right in between Paul's two uses of "do not lose heart," he talks about being hard-pressed, perplexed, persecuted, and struck down. In what ways have you been perplexed, persecuted or struck down lately?
- Are you taking action to avoid losing heart? Ask your group what steps to staying hearty they would recommend for you.

FRUIT OF FLESH vs. FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT | pg. 168

- In one word, describe the fruits of the flesh found at the bottom of page 168. Then use one word to describe the fruits of the Spirit.
- How do you see the fruits of the flesh in our culture today? Which do you find yourself fighting against most often?
- Our Impact staff annually evaluates which fruits of the Spirit are most prevalent and lacking in our lives. How would answer for yourself - which fruits of the Spirit are most noticeable in your life, and which are most lacking?

GROANING WITH CREATION and GROANING OF THE SPIRIT | pg185

- Who is it that "searches our hearts" and "knows the mind of the Spirit?" (Third paragraph down pg185)
- Rewrite the famous passage, "that in all things God works for the good of those who love him," but include the context of the previous two paragraphs in your thoughts.