



Fall Sermon Series | *The Story Houston* | www.thestory.church | thestoryhouston@gmail.com
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Part Four: Just Grace (Rom. 5:1-11)

No matter how hard we try - and no matter how clear the New Testament is on the matter - we can't seem to kick the habit of human religion. Religion is any set of dogmatic beliefs and practices that promise eternal rewards for those who accept them and punishment or damnation for those who don't. While it may bear some resemblance to religion, **Christianity is not a religion**. In chapters four and five of his letter to the Romans, the Apostle Paul explains why.

Read Romans 4. Why does it matter that Abraham was "righteous" in God's sight *prior to* his circumcision? What did Abraham have that made him righteous?

What is *faith* in God? Is it mere belief, or something else?

How is Jesus the fulfillment of what God began in Abraham?

Romans 5:1-11 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.



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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.

What does it mean to be “justified”? How are we justified by our faith?

What is the relationship between suffering, perseverance, character, and hope? What role do grace and faith play in that relationship?

“As far as relations with God are concerned, for those justified through faith, the new age has dawned. In their bodily life, however, they remain anchored in the old age, afflicted by weaknesses, suffering, and death. Righteousness has set them on the way but full salvation is only grasped in hope. The challenge is to hear the gospel in such a way that hope stays alive.” - Brendan Byrne

How does the gospel of Jesus keep hope alive in you?

How can a person know if s/he is saved? After we trust God, if we continue to sin, are we still justified before God? How can you be sure? (Hint: Romans 5:5)

“God demonstrates his love for us in this: while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” Why is this idea so important to remember? How does this notion set Christianity apart from religion?

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