

Take-Home 6: Peace with God

Romans 5 · Keep this sheet; bring it back each week

What We Found

Justification opens onto peace: not a feeling but a fact, "peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (5:1), and a grace we now stand in (5:2). From there Paul forged the chain: suffering, endurance, character, hope, "and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts" (5:5), a love proven in public: "while we were yet sinners Christ died for us" (5:8). If God reconciled us as enemies, "much more" will he save us as friends (5:10).

Then the widest lens: through one man sin entered, death came through sin, and death spread to all (5:12); Genesis had already tied death to the disobedience (Gen 2:17, 3:19), and the Church teaches the transmission of the sin itself (Rom 5:12; CCC 404): for Adam's descendants a condition contracted, not a crime committed. And through one man's obedience "many will be made righteous" (5:19), the very "many" Isaiah's Servant would justify by bearing their iniquities (Isa 53:11). Made righteous, really; and unequally: "the free gift is not like the trespass" (5:15); "where sin increased, grace abounded all the more" (5:20).

Voices of the Church

VOICE OF THE CHURCH: ST. IRENAEUS OF LYONS

Christ "did, through His transcendent love, become what we are, that He might bring us to be even what He is Himself" (Against Heresies, Book V, preface). St. Irenaeus called Paul's Adam-and-Christ logic recapitulation: the Son retraces the human story, in this study's summary of his teaching, saying yes at every station where Adam said no, obedience unwinding disobedience until the race has a new head.

VOICE OF THE CHURCH: ST. TERESA OF ÁVILA

By tradition found in her breviary after her death: "Let nothing disturb you, let nothing frighten you. All things are passing away; God never changes. Patience obtains all things. Whoever has God lacks nothing; God alone suffices." The hope of Romans 5:3-5, compressed into a prayer.

VOICE OF THE CHURCH: THE CHURCH'S EASTER PROCLAMATION

In the dark of the Easter Vigil the Church sings: "O happy fault that earned so great, so glorious a Redeemer!" (the Exsultet, Roman Missal). The liturgy dares it because "where sin increased, grace abounded all the more" (5:20): what God gave in answer to the fall exceeds what the fall destroyed.

Live It This Week

- Memorize 5:8 and pray it once each morning, putting your own name in it: while I was yet a sinner, Christ died for me.

- Write down one suffering, past or present, and ask God to show you what he has built or is building through it. If the answer is not visible yet, tell him that too.
- Once this week, offer a specific small hardship in union with Christ's obedience, out loud or in writing.

Memory Verse

"But God shows his love for us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us."

Romans 5:8 (RSV2CE)

Before Next Session

Read Romans 6 once, slowly. Catechism references for this session: CCC 402-404, 411, 1817. Keep your sealed My Guess sheet safe; it opens in Session 8.