



3. Agree/Disagree: The fact that we are justified affects the way we look at ourselves, the way we deal with one another, and the way we live together in families.

### INTO THE WORD

*Romans 3:28 For we conclude that a person is justified by faith without the works of the law.*

1. We usually interpret Scripture texts that address justification as though they speak exclusively of eternal life. Christ has justified us now. What does this passage say to you about the possibility of always pleasing others and never losing their approval?
2. The opinion of others is a poor foundation on which to base our self-worth. According to this verse, what should be the foundation of our self-esteem?
3. We know that peer pressure can be a danger for teens. Because of peer pressure, some teens become involved with drugs, sex, and even crime. In what ways are adults susceptible to peer pressure? (Another way to ask this question is: where do people often turn to try and find their value, goodness, their somebody-ness?)

*Galatians 2:20 I have been crucified with Christ, and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I am now living in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.*

4. What do these words say to you about who you are and what you are worth?
5. Unfortunately, our best efforts don't always produce the results we seek. Why is it possible that you might do your best as a spouse and still have your marriage fall apart? or do your best as a parent and still have your children not be what you had hoped?

*Romans 5:17-18 Indeed, if by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through the one man, it is even more certain that those who receive the overflowing grace of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ! So then, just as one trespass led to a verdict of condemnation for all people, so also one righteous verdict led to life-giving justification for all people.*

6. Sometimes Paul made mistakes in his work as an apostle. In spite of those failures, what is the source of his satisfaction?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
7. What would happen if you lived in this confession?

*Romans 8:33 Who will bring an accusation against God's elect? God is the one who justifies!*

8. How could you use the passage above to help a Christian struggling to find self-worth and dealing with peer pressure?

*Galatians 5:1 It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not allow anyone to put the yoke of slavery on you again.*

9. Paul tells us that we have been set free. His primary reference is to our freedom from the Law; we no longer have to try and prove to God how good we are. How has Christ also set us free from having to prove that to ourselves and to others?

*Galatians 5:13,14 After all, brothers, you were called to freedom. Only do not use your freedom as a starting point for your sinful flesh. Rather, serve one another through love. In fact, the whole law is summed up in this one statement: "Love your neighbor as yourself."*

10. How should we use this God-given freedom?

*Galatians 5:4 You who are trying to be declared righteous by the law are completely separated from Christ. You have fallen from grace.*

11. Apply this verse to our efforts to prove ourselves worthwhile.
12. "The more we accept ourselves, the more we will accept the people around us. Until we are happy with who we are, we won't be happy with the people we deal with."
- a. How can these words be misunderstood?
  - b. How can we rightfully understand them in the context of our lesson?

*1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

13. Describe the role of confession and forgiveness in your life. What does it have to do with your sense of self-worth?
14. How can you make that kind of an exchange a part of your daily devotional activity?

### AT HOME THIS WEEK

Spend time this week thinking about how you often put yourself down. Write down your thoughts and meditate on how they reflect God's promises. Apply to yourself the Good News that God has declared you righteous for Jesus' sake, and practice looking at yourself as God's own child.

Sit with another member of your family and speak words of confession and forgiveness to one another.

### IN CLOSING

Prayer: Heavenly Father, we confess that we spend too much of our lives trying to show off how important we are, trying to prove to ourselves and others that we are good people. We confess that all we receive for our efforts is exhaustion; no matter how hard we try, it never seems to be enough. We confess that we have not always lived in the Gospel that assures us of our justification. We have not lived in the freedom from the Law that Jesus won for us. We praise you for the gift of Jesus and all he did for us and keeps on doing. Through your Holy Spirit grant us to live no longer driven by others, but led by you. In Jesus' name. Amen.