



## bigIdea small group discussion

Fill in the blank: **God is \_\_\_\_\_ us**. What would you fill that blank with? Most of us would probably fill it with some pretty negative words. God is *angry*. God is *frustrated*. God is *disappointed*.

There are a lot of things we could put in the place of that blank—but the word *for* is probably the farthest thing from our minds. This week, we learn that Jesus is God doing **FOR** us what we could not do for ourselves. He sent and gave us salvation as a gift that no one could earn, but all could have.



**BIG IDEA:** When we could do nothing for God, God did for us what we could not do for ourselves.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What word would you have filled in the blank “**God is \_\_\_\_\_ us**” when you were a child? A teenager? A young adult? Now?
2. If you had to describe God during some of the highs and lows of your life, what word picture would you choose? (*example*: An elderly man? An angry umpire? A best friend? An absent parent? The church lady?)
3. Talk about a time when God was silent in your life. How did you respond?
4. *With your Bible or YouVersion, read Romans 5:6-10.*

*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!* Romans 5:6-10 (NIV)

5. What words describe us without Jesus? What phrases indicate how Jesus has changed all that?
6. What three words best describes your life before meeting Jesus. Share them with the group. Why did you pick those words?
7. What changes have you seen in your life since meeting Jesus?
8. In Romans 5:6, when did Jesus die for us? What word does Paul use to describe us in verse 6? Look up how Paul describes us in other versions (*New Living Translation* and the *Message*.) What other perspectives do these translations give you about our description before Jesus?
9. In Romans 5:7, Paul makes the distinction between ‘the righteous’ or ‘religious’ and the ‘the good’. Chris said that these are often the two ways people attempt to get to God: the *religious* way, and trying to be a *good person*.

*Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person someone might possibly dare to die.* Romans 5:7 (NIV)

10. Have you ever tried the religious way of making yourself right with God? Of doing stuff *for* God?
11. Chris said that God's intention, both in the Old Testament and the New Testament—has always been getting into a relationship *with* us. The Ten Commandments were given as a way for us to live in relationship *with* God in the reality of our sin. **But what God indented for relationship, we turned into religion.**

Lord of Lords  
Wonderful Counselor

12. Over time, we begin to worship the thing that was to help us worship God. We made it all about the rules. Keeping the rules. Who keeps the rules best. We made it all about who's in and who's out. Why do you think we reverted to religion instead of relationship?
13. Why are we attracted to checklists and do's and don't's?
14. Have you ever tried the religious way of making yourself right with God? Chris described being religious as "Doing stuff *for* God." What type of stuff do religious people do?
15. *With your Bible or YouVersion, read Paul's resume in Philippians 3:1-9.* How religious was Paul?

Chris said "Those who have tried the religious way—no matter how much you do, it is never enough! There is always more that you have to do *for* God. There is always more that you to do to do it right. There is one more place that you have to get in line. There is always one more time when you mess up, and you have to make up for every time you mess up—it is like a treadmill or religious activity to try to get yourself to God—it is exhausting!! And ultimately it leaves you bitter and angry towards God.

16. Why does the religious way of getting to God leave us bitter towards God? Bitter towards other people?
17. Have you ever tried being good enough? How good is good enough? When we compare ourselves to others, what type of people do we compare ourselves? Do we compare up or down? To Hitler or Mother Teresa?

***The religious person always knows that it's never enough. The good person never knows if it's enough.***

18. According to Romans 5:8, how did God demonstrate His love for us?
19. According to Romans 5:8, who did Christ die for? How is this bad news for religious people? For good people?
20. In light of ***God did *for* us what we could not do *for* ourselves***, how should that truth motivate us to talk to others about what Jesus has done in our lives?

#### MOVING FORWARD

What do you do for a God who has done it all for you? Who has made a way *for* you through His Son Jesus?

#### CHANGING YOUR MIND

*Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good man 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.* Romans 5:7-8

Wonderful Counselor  
Almighty God  
Everlasting Father