

The Turnaround

A Series on Romans 1-8

Hillside Church of Marin - Small Group Discussion Guide

Part 2: The Turning Point, 02/18/24, [Romans 3 & 4](#) (Romans 3:21-28; 4:20-24)

Main Point: No one is righteous, and no one can justify themselves. Christians are freely justified by grace through faith in Jesus's perfect life, atoning death, and victorious resurrection.

Getting Started

Last week we learned that awareness of our need for God's grace because we are broken and sinful. This week we are becoming aware that God has done all the work through Christ to justify us. So for us, it's how do we respond to this free gift of grace? Logan quoted Tim Keller defining justification/righteousness as "a validating performance record that opens doors" — comparing it to your resume or LinkedIn page.

Discussion

- What are some ways we try to justify ourselves in our lives without God, to justify our existence, or to have a good record of life?
- Which of these ways do you most resonate with? Why?
- How do these self-justifications, or self-made righteousness fall short? How are they fragile?
- Can a good record, good deeds, or successes make up for our failures and sins? Why or why not?

Read Romans 3:21-28 aloud together

- How does this passage point us to the solution?
- What justifies us in God's sight? How does providing Christ Jesus as a sacrifice demonstrate the righteousness of God? How does it accomplish our justification?
- Justification means we get to swap our life's resume with Christ's. What does that mean for us in daily life?
- Forgiveness means "you may go" and justification means "you may come." What does this mean and why is it important?

Read Romans 4:20-24 aloud together

- How did Abraham receive the righteousness of God?
- What did Abraham believe about God that convinced him God could keep His promise?
- How does Abraham's righteousness by faith apply to us?
- Is there anything we can do to add to it, or to be good enough to receive it? Can we add something to sweeten Christ's resume? Why or why not?
- If this really is a free gift from God, why would we ever go on trying to "be good?"
- How does this good news change the nature of our efforts to do good and grow in goodness?
- What makes it difficult for us to believe that we can gain God's justification by faith in Christ alone?

Last week you were asked to make a practical step that you can make that will move you toward fully embracing a turn-around in your life. Were you able to focus on that step? How can the group pray for you this week as you grow toward a life lived out in grace?

Prayer Time: As you come to the close of this time,

- Ask for God's help you truly believe and receive by faith the gift of Jesus righteousness and justification.
- Thank God for the incredible gift of justification by grace through faith.

Final Notes: Encourage everyone to read the text for next week: Romans 5-6

The Big Picture (Video): If you have time, to help you introduce Romans to your group, you might want to show them this video from BibleProject.com: [CLICK HERE](#) if you don't have time feel free to forward them the link!