

The Universal Cure

Stained Glass Words With Great Definitions:

Romans 3:9-31

Sin: An **archery** term = to not **have union**.

Atonement: A **religious** term = to **appease a god**.

Justification: A **legal** term = to be **made right**.

Redemption: A **slavery** term = to buy **your freedom**.

The Universal Problem:

Romans 3:9-23

Sin separates us from **ourselves**.

Sin separates us from **others**.

Sin separates us from **God**.

The Universal Cure:

Romans 3:21-26

Having faith that Jesus:

Atoned for my sin.

Justified me in spite of my sin.

Redeemed me from my sin.

Growth Group Homework

For the week of February 5, 2017

QUICK REVIEW

Looking back at your notes from this week's teaching, was there anything you heard for the first time or that caught your attention, challenged or confused you?

MY STORY

1. We heard this weekend that Jesus is the only solution to our universal problem of sin. How do you think your friends and family who aren't yet interested in Jesus would respond to hearing that everyone has a sin problem and Jesus is the only cure for it?

2. Chris shared how sin separates us from the most important relationships in life. In what ways have you seen this separation happening in the world around you? How about in your own life?

DIGGING DEEPER

1. The universal problem we all have is that we are sinners, and as a result, separated from God and dead spiritually. Spiritual death is not necessarily a feeling people have but a condition they are in. How do the following passages describe what it means for someone to be spiritually dead?

Ephesians 2:1-3

As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, 2 in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. 3 All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our flesh[a] and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath. [NIV]

Titus 3:3

At one time we too were foolish, disobedient, deceived and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures. We lived in malice and envy, being hated and hating one another. [NIV]

Colossians 3:5-7

Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. 6 Because of these, the wrath of God is coming. 7 You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived. [NIV]

Have there been any times in your life when the realization of your own sinfulness and God's forgiveness particularly caught your attention?

What does it look like to balance an awareness of and sadness for our sin with the joy of being a "new creation" in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17) who is loved and forgiven?

2 Corinthians 5:17

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come:[a] The old has gone, the new is here! [NIV]

Can you think of any potential pitfalls for someone who doesn't spend any time thinking about their sin and the impact it has had on their relationship with God?

2. Although God has dealt with the separation that our sins have caused in our relationship with him, the impact of those sins, and the sins done to us by others often continues to affect us. How could the following passages help us to continue to heal from the scars left by our sin?

James 5:16

Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective. [NIV]

Hebrews 4:14-16

Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has ascended into heaven,[a] Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. 15 For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin. 16 Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need. [NIV]

Hebrews 10:23-25

Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. 24 And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, 25 not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching. [NIV]

The story of our life before we experienced God's love and forgiveness can either be Satan's greatest weapon to keep us living in guilt and shame, or God's most powerful tool for us to serve him. What do you think a person needs to do or experience before being willing to allow God to use their story as a tool?

3. In Luke 7:36-50, Jesus had a conversation with a woman who interrupted a dinner he was having with a religious leader. How does this conversation help you better understand the connection between experiencing forgiveness and expressing forgiveness?

Luke 7:36-50

When one of the Pharisees invited Jesus to have dinner with him, he went to the Pharisee's house and reclined at the table. 37 A woman in that town who lived a sinful life learned that Jesus was eating at the Pharisee's house, so she came there with an alabaster jar of perfume. 38 As she stood behind him at his feet weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears. Then she wiped them with her hair, kissed them and poured perfume on them.

39 When the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would know who is touching him and what kind of woman she is—that she is a sinner."

40 Jesus answered him, "Simon, I have something to tell you."

"Tell me, teacher," he said.

41 "Two people owed money to a certain moneylender. One owed him five hundred denarii,[a] and the other fifty. 42 Neither of them had the money to pay him back, so he forgave the debts of both. Now which of them will love him more?"

43 Simon replied, "I suppose the one who had the bigger debt forgiven."

"You have judged correctly," Jesus said.

44 Then he turned toward the woman and said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I came into your house. You did not give me any water for my feet, but she wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. 45 You did not give me a kiss, but this woman, from the time I entered, has not stopped kissing my feet. 46 You did not put oil on my head, but she has poured perfume on my feet. 47 Therefore, I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven—as her great love has shown. But whoever has been forgiven little loves little."

48 Then Jesus said to her, "Your sins are forgiven."

49 The other guests began to say among themselves, "Who is this who even forgives sins?"

50 Jesus said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you; go in peace." [NIV]

Can you think of any ways a person can gain a greater appreciation for the grace and mercy God has for us?

TAKING IT HOME

1. God wants to use the story of your past as a tool for sharing his love and forgiveness with other people. Can you think of anything you might need to do in order to allow him to do that?

2. We all have people in our lives who haven't recognized they have the universal problem of sin and therefore haven't accepted the universal cure – Jesus. Which ones would you like to have the group pray for?

Praise/Prayer Requests:

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