



The Deep End wk3: Let's Go Over This Again

Introduction: Some lessons have to be repeated often. It's not that they are hard to understand sometimes, but that even when we understand the concept, it's easy to fall into old patterns of thinking. Paul covers some ground again, because we really need to understand at both the head and heart levels, that we can't earn God's love.

Discussion Questions

1. Why do musicians warm up playing scales, even though there is rarely a scale played in an actual piece of music? Can you think of something that might seem simple, but you have to go over it often to remember it?
2. Read **Romans 4:3 & Romans 4:21-22** What case is Paul making in pointing out the timing of Abraham being declared righteous? Why does it matter that it was before the covenant of circumcision or even the law? How do these verses define faith?
3. Why do we often struggle with the concept of being justified by faith and not by works? Are there things that you do that deep down you might be trying to earn God's favor? There was a Dallas Willard quote shared in the sermon, "Grace is not opposed to effort; it is opposed to earning." Respond to that, what's the point he's making?
4. Read **Romans 5:1-11** What gives us access to God? What does it look like to "glory in our sufferings?" Do we tend to see suffering as punishment, refining, or something else? How do you know if the difficult things you are going through are "self-inflicted" or "God ordained?"
5. What is the good news Paul is highlighting near the end of this passage? Why are our emotions sometimes not moved by this good news?
6. What can you do or we do together, that can inspire more joy when we think about what God has already done for us?

Shaping Your Mind – *But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: while we were still sinners, Christ died for us Romans 5:8*

Moving Forward – Grace is not opposed to effort; it is opposed to earning. – Dallas Willard