

Study Series: All of Grace

Author: Charles Spurgeon

Lesson Title: “God Justifies the Ungodly” (pp. 6-17)

Session 1

March 2, 2022

The main point of this lesson is: All are ungodly, but God justifies the ungodly.

Focus on this goal: To help adults recognize their need for God’s justification

Key Bible Passages: Romans 4:5

To the Leader: If you or your church media center/library do not have a Bible dictionary (Step 2), do an Internet search for “Vine’s dictionary of New Testament words justify” and check the top few results.

Before the Session

1. At the top of a large piece of paper on a focal wall, or on the board, write, We are all …. (Steps 1 and 6)

2. Invite a learner to research and be prepared to share a few fun facts about Charles Spurgeon. (Step 2)

3. Bring a handful of mints or a few packs of gum. (Step 5)

During the Session

Step 1. Create Interest / Jumpstart Discussion

After learners arrive and are seated, direct their attention to the statement, “We are all…”

Say: Today, let’s put our brains together to consider ways we’re all lumped into the same category.

Group learners according to ease of discussion based on where they’re sitting, challenging them to compile five statements that encompass everyone in the group. (If they struggle to get started, point out age ranges, current residences, status in the community, etc.)

Call everyone back into one large group and ask: What statement would be true for everyone in this room today?

Explain that today’s passage will show us in detail that we are all ungodly, and what God does about it.

Step 2. Justifying the Ungodly

Introduce this new book by informing learners that it was originally published in 1886, written by theologian and preacher Charles Spurgeon.

Call on the learner to share some interesting facts about Spurgeon’s life and ministry.

Read Romans 4:5 from Day One (p. 6) in unison. Explain that every biblical quote from Spurgeon will use the King James Version. Invite volunteers to read Romans 4:5 from different translations.

Use the last Day One paragraph (pp. 7-8) to explain what it means to be justified in a courtroom. Using a Bible dictionary explanation of “justify,” compare biblical and courtroom meanings.

Step 3. Justifying You

Say: The author was utterly flabbergasted by the truth of Romans 4:5*.*

Enlist a volunteer to read the first two paragraphs of Day Two (p. 8).

Direct attention to the remainder of Day Two, instructing learners to read it silently and underline every description of what an “ungodly” person may look like.

As a group, consider how the term ungodly ranges from those who completely discount God, to those who live without thought of Him, and even to those who practice the outward activities of religion without inward conviction.

Step 4. Justifying the Undeserving

Enlist a volunteer to read Romans 3:10.

Read the Day Three pull quote (p. 10). Share a time in your own life, if applicable, when you honestly thought you were living quite perfectly. (If that doesn’t apply to you, engage a volunteer to share.)

Use the author’s illustration of a physician going to perfectly healthy people at the beginning of the second paragraph of Day Three (p. 11) to drive home that we must recognize and admit our own ungodliness—acknowledge we are undeserving— before we can be recipients of God’s justification.

Step 5. Justifying the Condemned

Hold up mints or gum. Say: I brought enough of these for each of us to have one, but they’re only for those who have a bad taste in their mouth. Does anyone have bad breath or a bad taste? Hand out mints or gum generously to all who will admit it.

Then point learners to the opening paragraph of Day Four (p. 12), stressing the sentence, “He died and made a real atonement for real sinners.”

Say: Just as you needed to admit a bad taste in order to get a mint (or gum), we must honestly admit our very real sinfulness in order to receive the gospel.

Read the last sentence of the second Day Four paragraph (p. 13) and engage learners in discussing its poignant truth.

Allow volunteers to share any responses or insights to activity 2 (p. 13).

Step 6. Justifying as You Are

To the statement used in Step 1, draw a horizontal line. Label the left end ungodly and the right end God-honoring in all I do.

Ask: What are some things we start to do as we move from living an ungodly life to living a godly one? As volunteers make suggestions (such as prayer, Bible reading, serving, loving, etc.) add them along the line.

Read from Day Five (p. 14): “Salvation comes before [we have] any of the results of salvation.” Write Salvation above the word “ungodly,” pointing out that we receive salvation while we are still 100% ungodly.

Read the last sentence of the first Day Five paragraph (p. 14).

Step 7. Practical Application – Live Out the Lesson

Read Romans 4:5 together one more time. As a group, consider how you can each make this the theme of your group over the coming six weeks: memorize it (perhaps in a few translations), look up the meaning of the Greek words and learn their definitions, turn it into word art, consider how it might be portrayed artistically, and more.

Challenge learners to “preach the gospel to themselves” this week using Romans 4:5.

