



## GROWTH GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

### Spring Quarter - Lesson 5 - Week of May 11, 2025

#### Lesson: NOT GUILTY!

**Bible Verses:** Romans 8:1-17; John 1:29; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 9:26-28; 1 Peter 2:24; 1 John 2:2; 1 John 4:10

#### GETTING TO KNOW YOU

1. Does your first or middle name have any significance (or were you named after a family member)?
2. Have you ever come close to being arrested? If yes, why?

#### DISCUSSION

*"There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit." - Romans 8:1 (NKJV)*

**Reflection:** Some days, you will find it easy to live in the truth of your freedom and forgiveness in Christ. Other days it will not be so easy. You might surprise yourself by "caving in" to temptations you think you have left behind. Paul writes that you have been set free from sin and are no longer under condemnation! Do you ever wonder if God will continue to "let you off the hook" after sinning again? How do you deal with guilt and shame in your life?

**Situation:** Read Romans 8:1-17. Paul has clearly stated our spiritual emancipation. We were slaves to sin, but now we are free in Christ. Yet, we will struggle. We are painfully aware of our shortcomings and the tendency to betray what we know is right. Do you consistently do what's right? How does God reconcile our evident instability with His unchanging nature and character?

1. With its list of rules and standards of behavior, why didn't the law offer salvation?
2. What are the characteristics of a person who lives according to the flesh? What are the traits of one who lives according to the Spirit of God?
3. How does being led by the Spirit change your identity?
4. What does it mean to be a co-heir with Christ? What privileges does it bring?

**Inspiration:** Peter learned the lesson. But wouldn't you know it? Peter forgot the lesson. Two short years later, this man who confessed Christ in the boat cursed Christ at a fire. The night before Jesus' crucifixion, Peter told people that he had never heard of Jesus. He could not have made a more tragic mistake, and He knew it. Peter, no doubt, felt guilty regarding his actions. All the feelings of that Galilean morning came back to him. It was too late to take it back. But then Sunday came. Jesus came!

Peter saw Him. Peter was convinced that Christ had risen from the dead. However, he was not convinced that Christ had returned for him. So, he went back to the boat. Peter and his friends fished all night, and they caught nothing. Poor Peter blew it as a disciple. Now, he is blowing it as a fisherman. Jesus gave Peter and his friends another shot at getting things right. "... *So they cast, and then they were not able to haul it in because of the great number of fish* (John 21:6 NASB)."

Peter never caught fish again. He spent the rest of his days telling anyone who would listen about Jesus. It is not too late to try again. Do not allow your mistakes to overtake your sense of being. Have you given Christ your boat? Have you given Him your headaches? Your dead-end dilemma? Have you gone deep?

**Reaction:** Jesus' first call to Peter to follow Him was accompanied by a great catch of fish (Luke 5:1-11). Why do you think Jesus recreated this miracle for Peter at this point?

1. How did Jesus show Peter that there is no condemnation for those who belong to Him, regardless of their past mistakes and failings?
2. How has your life changed since you began your new life in Christ?
3. How should believers deal with feelings of condemnation and guilt?
4. In what areas do you need to depend more on the Holy Spirit and less on your own desires?

**Life Lesson:** It is not uncommon (even for Christians) to sometimes want to give up. Feeling like a failure is a familiar territory for all of us. But Paul's words in Romans 8:1-17 make it clear that quitting is not an option for us. Nothing will separate us from God's love. The Holy Spirit will help us go on and live in freedom of forgiveness. He will show us what it means to "try the other side of the boat" in our lives.

**Devotion:** Father, we want to come to you, but sometimes we are too ashamed of who we are and what we have done. We are afraid that we have done something unforgivable and that you will reject us. But Father, your Word teaches that you sacrificed your Son as the atonement for our sins. There is no sin too deep for your hand of forgiveness to reach. Thank you, Father, for the assurance that we are forgiven and acceptable in your sight.

**Journaling:** How do you feel about being judged "not guilty" by God?

**Prayer Focus:** God, help me trust your word when I am ashamed of my mistakes.