



# CURRENT

session page

## Non-Reactionary Love

**Romans 5:1-11 | Session 8.48**

### Before the Session

Facilitator: In advance of the session

- Review today's scripture text and the session activities to help better facilitate the discussion.
- Have the Bible Background Video ready to view.
- Encourage your group to listen to the Faithelement podcast ahead of the next session (Share the link via email or social media)
- Find web links for underlined items on this session's webpage at [faithelement.net](http://faithelement.net).

## Context

Begin by talking with the group about how God loves people who may seem to have little value in the world. You might want to start by asking the group to think about someone they pass by regularly but pay little attention to, such as a grocery clerk, a traffic cop, a person on the street, or a hotel staff person. Share the story of the storm chasers who used GPS dots to honor Bill Paxton and ask:

- Jake DeFlitch drove to a point on the map to register his GPS dot. He “waited for the right moment to log his contribution,” he said. “I waited until all the letters lined up. I was part of the ‘P,’ right below one of the connections, where the half-circle came back and connected with the straight line.” What do you think it meant to him to be counted in this moment?
- If we saw one GPS dot on the map, it might be easy to overlook or ignore. Why does this tribute of many dots make an impact?
- In what ways does it matter to someone to know that they “count.”
- When you pass by people, how often do you stop and think about how this is a person God loves?
- Why is this often the last thing that might cross our mind?

## Content

Read [Romans 5:1-11](#), then watch the Bible Background Video.

Ask questions like these:

- Complete this sentence based on what we read in this passage: "We are \_\_\_\_."
- Think about Romans 5:8-9 and what these verses say about being known by God. How does God regard us?
- How might Paul see this as an invitation to change the way we regard others?
- What would Paul regard as a "right" relationship with God?
- In what ways are a person's individual struggles a reflection of their faith, as Paul suggests in this passage?
- What do you think terms like "justification" and "reconciliation" mean in this passage and why?
- In what ways might such terms be similar or different when applied to our relationship with other people versus with God?

## Closure

Show this video about the [Human library](#) (Some groups may want to consider stopping the video at 2:50.). Remind your group that the human library "gives people a chance to tell their own story in a one on one conversation" and ask:

- How do you understand someone who has a different life experience from you?
- What could we learn about God's love for all people by understand more people from different backgrounds?
- Who would be someone you would like to "check out" from this "library" for a thirty minute conversation?
- In what ways is this picture what you think of when you consider the reconciliation described in Romans 5:1-11?
- How do these stories change the way you picture the body of Christ?
- In what ways are we part of a larger "human library" for others, and what does that suggest we do for and with others?

Pray together to end the session, using this version of The Lord's Prayer from Nadia Bolz-Weber:

*Our Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins. As we forgive those who sin against us.*

*Forgive us when we hate what you love.*

*Forgive us when we would rather anesthetize ourselves than feel anything.*

*Forgive us when we squander the grace and freedom you have given us.*

*Forgive us for our self-centered lives.*

*Forgive us for the pride we exhibit in our political life together.*

*Forgive us for how much we resent in others the same things we hate in ourselves.*

*Forgive us for the terrible things we think about our own bodies, bodies you have made in your image.*

*God we praise you that your grace and mercy and forgiveness toward us is our one true source of our forgiveness toward others. Forgiven people forgive people and God we thank you for guiding the way toward this kind of freedom. You who perfected enemy-love have given us your own heart. May we more and more become what we receive.*

*Amen.*

**Writer: Erin Hall**