Family Discipleship Discussion Guide

Romans 2:1–11 | “We All Need Grace”

Big Idea:
The fruit of sin might look different, but the root is the same. We all need Jesus.

Key Verse:
Romans 2:4: God’s kindness is intended to lead us to repentance.

Goal:
Help your family understand the danger of comparing ourselves to others and recognize our own need for repentance, grace, and Jesus.

1. Start Talking

Ask:
Would you rather:

- Have someone catch you doing something wrong?
- Or have someone accuse you of doing something wrong when you think you did everything right?

Let everyone answer.

Then ask:

- Why is it so easy to notice when someone else does something wrong?
- Is it harder to recognize our own sin?
- Why?

Family Challenge

- Have everyone point at someone else.
- Now look at your hand.
- When you're pointing one finger at someone else, several fingers are pointing back toward you.

Say:
“Romans 2 isn't telling us that sin doesn't matter. It's reminding us that before we start looking at everyone else's sin, we need to recognize our own need for God's grace.”

2. Read God's Word

Read *Romans 2:1–4* together.

For younger kids, pause after each verse and put Paul's message into simple words:
“Don't think you're better than someone else because they sin differently than you.”

Ask:

- What does Paul say happens when we judge other people?
- According to verse 2, what is God's judgment based on?
- What three things about God do you see in verse 4?

Look for:

Kindness. Patience. Forbearance.

Then ask the big question:
Why is God kind and patient with us?

Romans 2:4 gives the answer:
His kindness is intended to lead us to repentance.

Explain:
Repentance means recognizing we're going the wrong direction, turning away from our sin, and turning toward God.

3. Two Lost Sons
Briefly tell the story of *Luke 15:11–32.*

There are two sons.
The Younger Brother
He essentially tells his father:
"I want what you can give me more than I want you."
He leaves, wastes what he has, and eventually realizes how lost he is.
Then he comes home.
And his father welcomes him.

But there's another lost son in the story

The Older Brother
The older brother stayed home.
He obeyed.
He worked.
He followed the rules.
But when his younger brother returned and their father celebrated...
the older brother became angry.

Here's the connection to Romans 2:
- The younger brother was lost in rebellion. The older brother was lost in self-righteousness.
- One looked obviously lost.
- The other looked like a good person.
- But both needed their father.

Discuss

Ask:
- Which brother looked more sinful at first?
- What was wrong with the older brother's heart?
- Why was he angry when his father showed grace?
- Have you ever thought, "That's not fair! They don't deserve that!"?

Then say:
"He was offended by the badness of his brother, but he was also offended by the goodness of his father."

And that's the danger of self-righteousness.

4. The Root and the Fruit

Grab a piece of paper.

Draw a simple tree with roots underneath and fruit on the branches.

On the fruit, write examples of sins:

- Lying
- Anger
- Jealousy
- Pride
- Disobedience
- Gossip
- Selfishness

Now underneath the tree write:

A HEART THAT WANTS ITS WAY INSTEAD OF GOD'S WAY

Explain:

- Different people struggle with different sins.
- Someone else's sin might look very different from yours.

But:

"The fruit of sin might not always look the same, but the root of sin always does."

We're all sinners who need God's grace.

Ask:

What happens when I spend all my time looking at someone else's fruit but never look at my own heart?

That's exactly the problem Paul is confronting in Romans 2.

5. Look in the Mirror

Read *Romans 2:4* again.

Then give everyone a quiet moment.

Tell them:

"Instead of thinking about somebody else's sin, let's ask God to show us our own hearts."

Ask these questions slowly:

- Where have I been selfish?
- Where have I been prideful?
- Is there someone I've been looking down on?
- Have I been thinking I'm better than someone else?
- Is there something I need to confess to God?
- Is there someone I need to forgive?

Let there be some silence.
Don't rush it.

Then remind everyone:

God doesn't show us our sin so we'll run away from Him. His kindness leads us back to Him.

6. Bring It Back to Jesus

Finish with the gospel.

Say:

"Romans 2 isn't telling us to try harder so we can finally become good enough for God."

- None of us are good enough.
- The younger brother needed grace.
- The older brother needed grace.
- Mom needs grace.
- Dad needs grace.
- Kids need grace.
- Every single one of us needs Jesus.
- We could never perfectly live the life God requires.

But Jesus did.
Jesus lived the perfect life we couldn't live and gave His life for sinners.

Our hope isn't:

"I'm better than them."

Our hope is:

"Jesus saved me."

7. Pray Together

You can pray something like:

Jesus, thank You for loving us and showing us grace. Forgive us for the times we see everyone else's sin but ignore our own. Help us not to compare ourselves to other people or think we're better than them. Show us where we need to repent. Thank You that Your kindness leads us back to You. Thank You for living the perfect life we could never live and for dying for our sin. Help us show other people the same grace You have shown us. Amen.

Family Takeaway

Have everyone repeat this together before you finish:

"I'm not better than them.
I'm a sinner who needs grace too.
Jesus is my only hope."

One question to carry into the week

When you're tempted to criticize, judge, or look down on someone, stop and ask:

"Am I looking at their sin while ignoring my own need for grace?"

The biggest shift I made from the sermon material was turning Paul's argument into concrete family experiences: the two brothers, the tree illustration, personal reflection, and a simple gospel-centered takeaway. That keeps the theological heart of Romans 2 intact while making it accessible across ages.