

# Justification by Faith

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[ 0 : 00 ] It's what Christ did on the cross that gives me a reason to gather with other saints and gives us a fellowship that is otherwise unimaginable, isn't it?

Now, as you've noticed, I'm not Nathan. And this is done so that you pray for the quick return of our pastor.

Nathan and Jamie just married off their first child. Ethan and Claire are now beginning a new home, a new Christian family.

And we pray for them, and we're thankful for that. It is a joy to see that. So Nathan and Jamie, God willing, we'll be back next week.

Let's look at just a couple of announcements here that I want to remind us of. We are participating in the Star Shop again. You have an insert in there.

[ 1 : 16 ] The Star Shop is an involvement with a children's ministry in Springfield. These kids do not have usually access to funds.

So the Star Shop, you'll notice on there what we're doing. We're collecting these things so that these kids can, in this ministry, they can earn some points and get gifts that they can give to their parents that they otherwise couldn't give.

So we're participating in that. There is a rubber bin back against the southern wall toward the back there.

And if you have anything of that that you can participate in, you can drop it in that bin. And the other thing I want to make special note of, you'll see things printed in there that are of particular importance that are happening in the church.

But on Thursday, October 26th, remember, that's coming up. This Thursday, there's the monthly Bible study that meets here.

[ 2 : 36 ] And there's breakfast at 9 and Bible study at 9.30. So remember that especially. There is the Tuesday night marriage class that is ongoing.

And the Tuesday night family night social time that normally would occur on Tuesday nights is suspended for the duration of that marriage class.

If your birthday is in October, please avail yourself of any book that you find on the literature rack in the hallway there.

And you're welcome to that as a gift from Grace Bible Church. Now, are there any announcements that I missed that you would like to make sure of?

Okay. Let's look to the Lord in prayer, please, for his blessing on us this morning. Father, thank you so much.

[ 3 : 42 ] Mainly for what you have done on the cross that gives us hope for eternity. And because of your great grace which has stooped to mankind.

And Lord, we thank you for this day and this time together. And your word which you have given to us. And as we look into it this morning, Lord, please to bless it to us individually and corporately.

I pray in Jesus' name. Amen. At this time, I assume we're still having a children's church. So at this time, any children who want to avail themselves of that class, now's the time to go.

We will begin, if you please, by looking at, first of all, at Galatians. And if you pass Romans, stick your finger in there or a piece of paper because we're going back to Romans as well.

But Galatians chapter 3, and on the way there, I'm going to read a verse out of context from the Psalms. For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me.

[ 5 : 10 ] We're going to look a little bit. I took this out of context specifically for the reason that no one here, of course.

But you know someone who has trusted Christ who is struggling right now with their assurance. And they're wondering, have I done enough?

Am I really in? We're going to look a little bit this morning, just briefly, of course, at the doctrine of justification. And what it really means to me in this respect.

So, Galatians chapter 6, we'll begin with verse 22. Now, as you're getting that, the promises, and I said 6, I meant 3.

Galatians 3, 22. Yeah, when you went there, you said, well, where'd it go? I'm sorry. Galatians 3, we'll begin with verse 22.

[ 6 : 21 ] But we're going to read some stuff here about promises and assurances. And those promises and assurances and the joy that comes from them, about which we'll read, are only going to belong to those who have trusted Christ as their Savior.

And in those, those of us who have trusted Christ, we greatly rejoice. We will greatly rejoice. If you have not believed God, you don't have any of these promises.

You don't have the assurance. And you will not have the joy that comes therefrom. But you can. You can.

And that also is what we're going to read about. Jesus Christ has done all of the work on the cross. And all we need to do is believe God.

And that can be ours. And we can have these assurances and these joys. So let's look at Galatians chapter 3. Now, God said these words through his apostle Paul to a Gentile church that was in danger of abandoning, or I'll say abandoning because he uses that word, abandoning the gospel of the grace of God in favor of rules and rituals.

[ 7 : 54 ] The Mosaic law. Now, the... And he... So God says to them that no one...

You'll... We'll read these through, but no one's justified by keeping that law. You don't have any real hope in keeping the law. And we can...

We can properly read that in... In doing good stuff. We don't have any hope in that. He's going to say that Jesus Christ has done all of the work.

That those good works, that law, especially the Mosaic code, shows me sin. It declares sin.

And it's going to... And it shuts us all up so that we are led to Christ through whom we can be justified by faith.

[ 8 : 56 ] Let's look at that. Romans chapter... Galatians chapter 3, verse 22 through 25. But the scripture has shut up everyone under sin so that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe.

But before faith came, we were kept in custody under the law, being shut up... Pardon me. Shut up to the faith, which was later to be revealed.

Therefore, the law has become our tutor to lead us to Christ so that we may be justified by faith. And here it is for us Christians.

But now that faith has come, we're no longer under a tutor. Without Christ, one is correct to say, my sin is ever before me.

I know my transgression. My sin is ever before me. But in Christ... But in Christ...

[ 10 : 08 ] And now that faith in Jesus Christ has come, then we're no longer under the tutor. We just read that in verse 25.

We've graduated, if you will, from the school. We are justified. We no longer keep rehearsing our sin.

We're not stuck there anymore. We have been freed from that. He said, the law is given to show you that you need a Savior.

Here's the Savior. Believe in Him. And now that you've trusted Christ, leave the rules. Leave the regulations.

He doesn't mean live a profligate life. That's another study, but that's not what he's saying. He's saying that's not your justification. You don't put any trust in that.

[ 11 : 08 ] You can do some collateral reading in Philippians for that. Philippians chapter 3 really pulls that out. We're not going to go there this morning.

But turn now, if you would please, to continue this theme to Romans chapter 3. It's going to be back.

Romans chapter 3, verses 19 through 27. We will read and interrupt our reading, but stay with it there, if you will, please.

Beginning with verse 19. Now, we know that whatever the law says, it speaks to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be closed, and all the world may become accountable to God.

Now, because by works of the law, no flesh will be justified in his sight. For through the law comes the knowledge of sin.

[12:20] Now, all of the world is accountable to God because of, you can respond, because of sin. All of the world is accountable to God, but no one can be good enough.

No one will be righteous because by keeping the law, it will not give you righteousness. But it shows sin. That harks back to Galatians chapter 3 that we just read, the tutor.

And it shows me that I need that Savior. I need someone who can help me. So, continue then in the reading with verse 21.

But now, and you see the change. The law shows me sin and shuts me up under sin.

But now, a righteousness apart from the law has been manifested being witnessed by the law and the prophets, even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe.

[13:35] There is no distinction. There's, and that is between Jew and Gentile. If you read back, you'll see that picture. For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

Verse 24, being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith.

So, we notice that our justification is God's gracious gift. You see that? justification is God's gift and it is based upon the redemption that Jesus Christ provided by shedding His blood upon the cross.

The last two words of verse 25 tell me how that's applied or how that justification, if you will, is granted. And it's granted through faith.

it was to demonstrate verse 25 God's righteousness because in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed for the demonstration of His righteousness at the present time so that He would be just and the justifier who has faith in Jesus.

[15:20] Now, let's look at this propitiation business for a moment because here comes the hard part, doesn't it?

The propitiation is a substitutionary atonement. The righteous, Jesus Christ, for the unrighteous, me.

He shed His blood for me. Now, it becomes a problem because it's not fair, is it?

You can say that's not really fair. Now, if I was sitting in a court of law and I'm just sitting in the gallery and the person that the jury has just declared guilty is sentenced by the judge and the judge says, but you're not going to pay the sentence.

That guy right there, he's going to pay it. Then I'd know about how not fair it was, wouldn't I? See, that's why in 1 Corinthians, God through Paul says to the church there, it's a stumbling block to the Jews and it's foolishness to the Gentiles.

[16:47] This whole business of substitutionary atonement. The preaching of the cross, he says, we preach Christ crucified. It's a stumbling block and it's foolishness.

But, to those who are being saved, it's the wisdom of God and the power of God. And he goes on in verse 25 to say of 1 Corinthians chapter 1, he says, the foolishness of God, and this is a hyperbolic expression.

God's not foolish in any way. But he said, the foolishness of God is wiser than men. The weakness of God is stronger than men. It would be unfair for men to adjudicate by substituting the innocent for the guilty.

That would be unfair for me to do it. But it is not unfair for God to do it. Now, as we've read in Romans chapter 3, verse 26, we've just read that, that this act of propitiation demonstrates God's righteousness.

He does judge sin. but he's both just in the judgment of sin and he is the justifier in that he provided my sacrifice, Christ Jesus.

[18:20] That makes God both just and justifier for the one and that is accredited to me who has faith in him, who has faith in Jesus.

So, continue with verse 27, Romans chapter 3, verse 27, where then is boasting? God's excluded. By what kind of law? Because of your good behavior? By works, it says? No, but by the law of faith. So, where we've come thus far, the law is given to show me what?

My sin. The law is given to show me sin and it's given to drive me as a tutor, to drive me to Christ who is alone sufficient to save.

It's only Christ that can save. He, because of who he is, he is God, incarnate, in the flesh.

[ 19 : 33 ] As we approach, or will be approaching, sooner than I care to think of, probably, we'll be approaching when most of the Christian church is going to celebrate what we call Christmas.

Why is the incarnation, that baby in a manger, why is that so important? Because of this, that's why it's important.

Without Calvary, and without the resurrection, the manger doesn't mean that much, does it? It's wonderful that the baby is born, and that he's born sinless, but it's because of what he did on the cross, that it becomes so huge, and indeed the whole pivotal point of all creation.

So, the law is given to show me my sin and drive me to Christ. By God's grace, we've read, if I believe that what God says about Jesus, he justifies me.

If you believe what Christ, or what God said about Jesus Christ, what he did, why he did it, and what it means, and you trust that, he justifies you.

[ 21 : 04 ] Now, that means he reckons us righteous, and verses 24 and 25 remind me that my justification does not rest on my faith, it is actuated by my faith, my justification rests upon what Christ did.

So, it rests upon the veracity, and the character, and the faithfulness of Almighty God. I'm thankful for that.

That is assurance. just a moment about that justification. By the way, while we're reading this, righteous and just are two English words that translate the exact same original word, Greek word. So, they are equivalent words. They're not just, synonyms, they're actually the same word. So, therefore, the extractions from that, the justice, the just, righteousness, justify, is to be made righteous, to be shown to be righteous.

So, it's a declarative sentence of God that when we trust Jesus Christ, he declares us, righteous.

So, that when, if it were that we stood before God and thankfully we escaped the great white throne judgment, that's another study, but Christians won't be there.

[ 22 : 56 ] Christians won't be there. When all the rest of the world is judged for their works, Christians have already escaped that judgment because of Christ.

All the works of the law are fulfilled in Jesus and they're applied to our account if we trust Christ. You can't beat that gift.

It can't get any better because I no longer have to stand in judgment. it doesn't depend on my work. It depends on Jesus Christ and him crucified and not just crucified as we're going to go on.

So skip down if you will to it won't be very far to Romans chapter 4 and we'll start with verse 21 in chapter 4 in the beginning Paul is explaining here Paul is explaining here that it rests or it's actuated by faith not by works and he gives Abram as an example and he said Abraham believed God and it was reckoned to him or put to his account as righteousness and Paul goes on to explain very thoroughly that it is not because of works so it doesn't depend upon the one who works it depends on the righteousness applied to your life or to your account by

Jesus Christ because you believed God not because you earned it because we can't and not because God was so lonely that he needed a whole bunch of us he's not that lonely he's he's complete in himself it's because he's gracious and he loves us and that's wonderful that's marvelous and in fact when when I walk out this door and I look as I'm driving home to Sherry's dismay I'm going to be looking over the fields she always says do you want me to drive that way you can look and not I'm going to look at creation and the

[ 25 : 53 ] God who made that loves me is that wonderful that's amazing and the more we think about ourselves the more amazing it gets it's just a marvelous thing okay so that kind of sets the stage and he says in verse 21 here Romans chapter 4 verse 21 Abraham was fully assured Abraham was fully assured I better get my page open hadn't I that what he who's he God that what God had promised he was able also to perform God didn't just promise it but Abraham believed not only did he tell me this but he's able to do it for us as we're talking about our justification not only does

God say if you trust Christ you're justified here comes that psalm that we read he said believe also that not only did he say he would justify you Roger he is able to do that he is able to declare you righteous and that is a wonderful thing so going back to it being fully assured that what God had

promised he was able to perform therefore it was reckoned to him or credited to him as righteousness now verse 23 not for his sake only was this written that it was credited to him verse 24 to the church but for our sake also to whom it will be credited as those who believe in him who raised

Jesus our Lord from the dead verse 25 he that is Jesus who was delivered because of our transgressions remember the mercy seat back there the propitiation he was delivered for our transgressions and he was raised for our justification see this whole stumbling block thing about about substitutionary atonement isn't yeah that doesn't make any sense it's it's a stumbling block to the Jew it's a foolishness to the Gentile it's not really fair Jesus God said here God says through the apostle Paul that's why the resurrection or that's one of parts of why the resurrection the resurrection is proof that what

God said he's going to do that's why the apostle says he was given over for my transgression for my sin and he was raised for my justification it proves that God can do it it proves that God can do it as a matter of fact the Lord Jesus the Lord Jesus said you can't really take my life from me I lay it down willingly I have the authority to lay it down and I have the authority to pick it up again that's because the life that God gives is in the son incarnate as well he has life in himself so the resurrection proves that what God promised he can do and in fact Paul's going to use this resurrection business later on in another argument when he says look why is it such a big deal to you to think that there's a resurrection from the dead he said

God created he can resurrect right and when I walk out that door I'm going to be reminded of that I'm going to be reminded of that that the God who put all this together and controls it and keeps it together is the same one who said this I'm thankful for that I'm thankful for that I'm thankful for the hope that it gives us now under the Mosaic law under the Mosaic law David was very correct to say I know my transgression and my sin is ever before me but now the only person who's right to say that is that person who has not trusted

[ 31 : 26 ] Christ it doesn't mean that I'm not sensitive to my actions that's another that's another scripture I'm not supposed to be calloused it doesn't give me leeway for licentiousness that's not what he's saying he's saying your hope of salvation your hope of justification rests entirely on Christ and he says so that I don't have to rehearse my sin school's out I'm not under the tutor anymore am I neither are you if you trusted Christ so I shouldn't keep I don't need to keep rehearsing the old stuff you know someone who has come toward the end of a life they belong to

Christ they make a great confession but toward the end of life especially if it's been tough toward the end physically I wonder if I'm in I wonder if I've done enough and the answer is who justifies and we'll get to that so Romans 8 we're going to finish here and we're going to finish early so you're welcome Romans 8 and this is what the justification brings me to look at that first verse there is therefore now no condemnation for them that are in

Christ Jesus right that's why that last phrase or that last verse of the hymn no condemnation now I dread Jesus and all and him is mine died he for me or alive in Christ my living head and clothed in righteousness divine bold I approach the eternal throne and claim the crown the crown of righteousness for Christ through Christ my own that is that's a good hymnology there it's because we have come to Christ that we can approach God and we can do it because we are clothed in his righteousness righteousness so there's therefore now we'll keep going for the law of the spirit of life in

Jesus Christ has set you free from the law of sin and death remember what we read in Galatians and Romans 3 the law sums everyone up in sin but now life in Christ has set you free from that law of sin and death for what the law could not do weak as it was through the flesh God did what the law what good behavior could not do God did what I could not do by being good God did I need to be reminded of that God did it has set me free from the law of sin and death for what it could not do weak as it was in the flesh God did sending his own son in the likeness of sinful flesh as an offering for sin he condemned sin in the flesh he put the sin to death and all

I have to do is believe yes that's all I have to do I have to believe obviously I have to believe that I'm summed up under sin right I have to believe that if I don't think I'm a sinner I don't think I need a savior right but that would be true if I think I'm already good enough I'm not going to look to God so I have to believe that I'm a sinner I have to believe that what Jesus did on the cross was not exemplary it was substitutionary he didn't do it to show me how I ought to act he died on the cross to be my substitute the cross belonged to me but Christ took it that's grace that's grace what what

you couldn't do through the law or in keeping the law or doing good works

[ 37 : 14 ] God did in order that the requirements of the law this would be verse four might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the spirit we have trusted Christ the spirit of Christ there is no and I'm going to emphasize it again because I need to remind myself there is no condemnation for them who are in Christ there is no condemnation for them who are in Christ when we stand before God it looks like Jesus I don't get it but I don't have to get it do I I have to believe him I don't have to try to explain why what seems unfair is really fair that's in

God's realm what I do need to do is trust him that what he says is true and dropping down to verse 30 of chapter 8 I won't go through the whole thing but he goes through the whole thing about setting our minds on things of the flesh that is setting our minds on you may have heard it preached carnal things but that's not really what he's saying he's saying if you set your mind on things of the flesh you're trying to earn it if you set your mind on the things of the spirit you're trusting Christ that's what he's saying there in verse 5 and he goes or yeah verse 5 but he goes on to say then that we need to well he delves into this whole thing about adoption and everything so we're going to skip most of that and run down to verse 30 he goes through a litany about

God knew God called God saved and that brings us to verse 30 and those whom he predestined or he foreknew these he also called those whom he called he justified he declared righteous and those whom he declared righteous he justified he glorified so we have something to look forward to we have to look forward to a glorification so then he goes on what shall we say to these things if God is for us this is this is really like a now don't don't jump off the cliff this is a catechism kind of a deal he's going to ask a question and then he's going to give the correct response so the question is you can do it in your mind as a responsive thing if

God is for us who is against us he did not spare his own son but delivered him over for all of us how then will he not freely give us all things okay if God is for us who is against us now verse 33 who will be this is the next question who brings a charge or who will bring a charge against God's people God's elect and the response is God is the one who justifies God's the one who declares them righteous who's going to bring the charge God justifies God justifies and who verse 34 who's the one who condemns Christ Jesus died and was raised and he is at the right hand of God and he intercedes for us so it's kind of a catechism kind of a deal here he asks the question he gives the response that I should understand he's not really asking me the question is he he's saying I want to raise this question get you thinking about it and here's what you need to know about it so who condemns God justifies who brings the charge Jesus Christ has paid it for me and he intercedes on my behalf it's a wonderful thing it's a wonderful thing and so he goes on and with verse 35 we know this verse very well who then will separate us from the love of

[ 43 : 26 ] Christ who will separate us from the love of Christ shall tribulation or distress or persecution or famine or nakedness or peril or sword verse 36 is a quote from the Old Testament for thy sake we are being put to death all day long and we were considered as sheep to be slaughtered but that's really a picture of what he's saying there in verse 35 shall tribulation or distress or persecution or famine or nakedness or peril or sword who shall separate us from the love of God shall anything like that but verse 37 in all these things now Lord wait a minute I'd like it to be outside all these things he doesn't promise me that part because this life isn't all there is this isn't all there is but he says even in that even in that in verse 37 we overwhelmingly conquer and there it is again because I'm so good through him who loved us through through

Jesus Christ for I am convinced verse 38 that neither death nor life nor angels nor principalities nor powers things present nor things to come nor height nor depth nor any other created thing is able or shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord this is the crux or actually it's not the crux it is the beginning if you will of understanding justification and what I have in Christ and the hope I have in Christ now as we said in the beginning this hope and the joy that it brings only belongs to those who have trusted Christ it doesn't belong to the world in general but it can it can belong to any of us individually but as we've read numerous times here it is granted to us it is applied to our account justification we are declared righteous based upon believing what God says I have to trust Christ I have to have my faith in him now it's quite early and if you're disappointed in that I'm sorry but whether you're disappointed or not would those of you who are able would you stand with me I thought of this as I was thinking about this justification and what Abraham believed God and it was reckoned to him as righteousness that he believed that what God promised he was able to do right so Paul gives this in Romans chapter 16 this is the abridged

version now to him who is able to establish you according to my gospel the preaching of Jesus Christ to the only wise God through Jesus Christ be the glory forever amen have a great week God God with God for all to us nu to