

Justification by Faith I

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Why is there so much confusion in religion? I think part of it lies in the fact that today that we are so 'TVized' with sound bites, clips and 20-30 second spots. If you watch a program every 8-12 minutes there's a commercial, and you can go do this or that or the other thing. We're in the age of instant this, instant that and instant everything else.

People like to have 'religion' that is instant—instant understanding, instant explanation—so that they can go on about their jobs, business or whatever they want to do. Instead of really delving into the Word of God so they can understand it, they go on their merry way with an explanation that they think is acceptable. If you have not studied the Bible in the past we may leave you in the dust. I'm sorry if that may happen, because I'm going to assume that those who are watching, listening or reading this are going to know their Bibles to a relatively good degree so that we can understand what *justification by faith* really is.

Justification by faith is one of the most basic, but one of the most complicated and difficult things to understand. People have not taken the time to really study their Bibles, nor have they taken the time to understand the forces and pressures that were in the Church at the time the New Testament was written. Everyone will agree that in order to be saved you have to be *justified by faith*.

In order to be justified by faith an awful lot has to be understood before you can understand the simple operation. The reason that this becomes so confusing, is because you have:

- Judaism practices on one side
- Protestants and their view of grace with no works at all
- Catholics who say that grace can only come by works

All of this has created a great confusion! People become *mentally* burdened down to try and figure it out. Let's see if we can sort this out and get some sort of semblance as to what it means to be *justified by faith*.

I think you're going to find that once you understand some certain basic concepts that you're going to find it's much easier to understand *justification by faith* through grace, rather than *justification by works of law* through law-keeping. Because of that, there is a conflict in the New Testament.

1-John 2:4: "The one who says, 'I know Him,' and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the Truth is not in him." It's very clear that we

are to keep the commandments in that particular passage. There's another passage that says 'sin is the transgression of the Law.' There's another passage that says very clearly that sinners will not be in the Kingdom of God. Jesus said that 'not one jot or one tittle will in any wise pass from the Law until everything is fulfilled,' and that 'as long as heaven and earth still stood, His Word would still remain.'

We read in the Old Testament where the commandments of God are 'righteousness.' We also read that the commandments of God 'make us wise; give us understanding.' We also know certain things concerning the commandments of God, which are very important to do and to teach. However, here comes a very difficult Scripture to understand, because we know that we need to keep the Laws of God, we know we need to keep the commandments of God, but how do you understand Rom. 6? This is one of the most favorite Scriptures for the Protestants to show that it doesn't matter that we keep the commandments of God.

However, there's a movement now within the Protestants to where they are trying to get the United States to run the country based upon the Ten Commandments. That creates a little confusion. When you really think about it an analyze it, the reasons the Protestants say that you don't have to keep the commandments—that they're done away—outside misunderstanding some Scriptures, is because they want some sort of *justification* so they don't have to keep the Sabbath so they can keep Sunday.

They turn to a Scripture like this: Romans 6:14: "For sin shall not rule over you because you are not under law, but under grace." If you believe in keeping the commandments of God:

- Could you explain this Scripture?
- Do you know what this Scripture is talking about?
- Do you understand what it is saying?
- Does it say that we should not keep the commandments?
- Does it say that we're not subject to the laws of God?
- What is it really saying?
- What is it really teaching us?

This will add a little bit to the confusion, Romans 10:4 (KJV): "For **Christ is the end of the law** for righteousness to everyone who believes." It says that Christ *ended the Law!*

Then they go to another Scripture, Col. 2, which says that Jesus put the commandments and 'nailed it to the cross.'

But then you come to the very last chapter of the book of Revelation, let's see what Jesus said about commandment-keeping in relationship to eternal life:

Revelation 22:14: "Blessed *are* those who keep His commandments..." The Greek there is 'poieo'—which means *blessed are the ones who are doing the commandments of God!* We're going to see a little later where it looks like if you're trying to say and justify yourself by *works of law* you are 'under a curse.' That is where the problems and difficulties come, because people equate *works of law* or *justification* with commandment-keeping and confuse that with *justification by faith*.

I hope that I can present it in such a way that you can understand it. It's not going to be instantaneous! It's not going to be a 9-second or 30-second sound bite. I appreciate your patience. Get out your Bibles and study and go along with it so you will be able to understand what I'm saying.

Here's how it's important it is, v 14: "Blessed *are* those who keep His commandments, that they may have the right to *eat of* the tree of life, and may enter by the gates into the city." Do you want to be in the Kingdom of God? Do you want God to open the gates for you and say, 'come in'? *I'm sure you do!*

Let's read one more verse, which is a very basic verse, which tells about commandment-keeping; so that you understand that commandment-keeping is required. Then we are going to learn something about the *function of law*. It's a matter of what the *function* is. It's a matter of understanding what it can do, and what it cannot do.

1-John 5:2: "By this *standard* we know that we love the children of God: when we love God and keep His commandments." For all of those that believe that just love is all that is necessary, here we have *love* and *commandment-keeping* together. We see that they are required.

Verse 3: "For this is the love of God: that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome." There's nothing difficult about the commandments of God. That is the point that John is making here.

What we need to understand is that there was a cross-current of things that were taking place, which made it appear as though you could receive salvation by *keeping law* and *rejecting Christ*. That is a Judaism problem. I'm going to refer you to Mark 7, a section where Jesus said to the scribes and Pharisees and religious leaders concerning their traditions. There's something you need to know about the Pharisees' interpretation of the Law of

Moses.

They claim that not only did Moses receive the written law from God, but that Moses received the *oral law* from God. That oral law was passed down from mouth to ear down through all the generations until they finally had it codified in the Talmud and the Mishnah. This was also called the Law of Moses. Included in that were many of the traditions that Jesus condemned the Pharisees for, which was a *work of law to justify them to Judaism*. That was separate then from the rituals that God required for sacrifices, to justify them to the temple. In either case, a *work of law*, through a *tradition*, a *rule or regulation*, *commandment or decree of men*, did not justify them to the temple.

When God gave the laws concerning the sacrifices and the things they needed to do, that only justified them to the temple that was on earth, not to God Who is in heaven above. They did not receive eternal life under what is commonly known as the Old Covenant. They only received the blessings in the flesh *physically* for obeying in the *letter of the Law*. Jesus came and brought access to the Father in heaven above. Now we are talking about something that is far more important, far more reaching than what was under the Law of Moses. {see sermon series: *Judaism vs Scripturalism*}

It was Paul's custom whenever he preached he would go into the synagogues and preach to the Jews, because it was to the Jews first and then to the Gentiles. Forty years later—after the Jews rejected Jesus Christ, after they rejected God's way—then everything that the Jews have been doing has been a repudiation of Christ; it has been an anti-Christ movement. They've been trying to work out *their own* 'religion' and salvation—their own way—but only bringing upon themselves multiple curses.

You can read through the whole chapter of Acts 13 and just see the historical flow of the problems that Paul had with the Jews and Judaism. Judaism, by the way, was NOT the Law of Moses. Judaism is based strictly on the *traditions* of the elders and it was accumulated and put into print about 200_{A.D.} It is a complete and absolute repudiation of Jesus Christ.

It is a true thing where Jesus said, ***'I am the Way, the Truth and the Life, and none can come to the Father but by Me!'*** That's what Jesus said. Theoretically, it is possible to reject Christ on the one hand and then say, 'I'm going to keep the commandments on the other hand.' That commandment-keeping will do you no good, because it's not coupled with faith and love. ***Unless you believe in Christ and accept Jesus Christ, even the Law of Moses does you no good for salvation!*** Please understand that. Do not confuse that with the

fact that under the New Covenant with Christ commandment-keeping is still required. But commandment-keeping does *not* bring right standing with God alone. It must be through Jesus Christ.

So Paul—when he was preaching to them—said, Acts 13:38: “Therefore, be it known to you, men *and* brethren, that through this man [Jesus Christ] *the* remission of sins is preached to you.” This is very important for you to know and understand that under the Old Covenant—even though they offered the sacrifices—*their sins were only forgiven to the temple*. They were not forgiven to God in heaven above. They only had access to God indirectly through the mediation of angels at the temple.

Now God is giving us access to the Father in heaven above to where anyone who believes and accepts Jesus Christ, repents and is baptized, is given the gift of the Holy Spirit and has access to the Father in heaven above. That’s why commandment-keeping is required; so you don’t sin. But commandment-keeping without Christ will not justify you one single iota.

In a sense, theoretically, those who say that you cannot earn salvation by commandment-keeping are right only to the extent that if you just try and keep the commandment and reject Christ, it is true all your commandment-keeping will *not* bring you eternal life. The answer is very simple: the Law was not made to bring life. The Law was made to define sin. The Law was made with the commandments and the Law together, to give us the minimal acceptable conduct that God has laid out for us.

That’s why Paul was saying that it was forgiveness of sin, v 39: “And in Him **everyone who believes...**” We need to stop and take some of these verses and look at them word-for-word.

- Do you believe *in* God?
- Do you believe that there is a God?

James 2 tells us that ‘if you believe there is a God, you haven’t done very much better than the demons.’ The demons were the angels who rebelled with Lucifer, and they don’t believe God, but they believe there *is* a God. There’s a vast difference, because if you really believed God

- you believe what He says
- you would believe on His Son Jesus Christ
- you would accept the sacrifice of Jesus Christ

So, there’s a vast difference! Do you *believe* God? I want you to think on that for a minute! I want you to just reach back in the back of your mind and ask yourself: If I believe God, is there anything I won’t accept that God requires of me? In other words, if you say, ‘I believe there is a God’ you’re no better

than the demons. If you say, ‘I believe God,’ then you cannot be a *yeah but* person—which is: ‘God, I see this is good, but I don’t want to do it that way. God, I don’t want to do it Your way, I want to do it *my way*.’ That’s precisely what the Jews did.

Isn’t it ironic, the ones that had the very Word of God, the ones that preserved the Old Testament for us, the very ones to whom Jesus Christ came, were so deceived and deluded in their own self-righteousness, that even Jesus had to say that they were ‘of their father the devil.’ That is a pretty tough sentence, don’t you think?

Verse 39: “And in Him everyone who believes... [that entails an awful lot] ...is justified from all things, from which you could not be justified by the Law of Moses.” I want you to follow along and I want you to be *spiritually* and *mentally* involved in what we are covering here so that you can understand what is being said. This is the most vital and important thing that there is.

- What is *justification*?
- What does it mean to be *justified*?
- *To make right a wrong!*

You understand that very clearly in relationship to getting a traffic ticket. If you’re speeding and you get a traffic ticket, the officer writes up the ticket for you, you sign saying that you’ll appear in court. You go to court, the judge says, ‘Okay, I don’t accept your explanation, you’re guilty, you were speeding—or whatever you were doing—and the fine will be \$50.’ You pay the fine and you’re free to drive. That is *justification*. Your transgression was breaking the traffic law and resulted in a sin against the society. The only way you can be brought in *right standing* with the society was to pay the fine.

If it were a more severe thing, you might even spend some time in jail. Once your jail-time is done, you have been *justified* to the society. I hope you understand this in relationship to God. The question is: How are you *justified* to God?

Before we get into that, let’s just backtrack a little bit. Let’s take the case of your speeding ticket again. Suppose you say in your own mind, ‘I don’t like that policeman; I don’t like the way he talked to me. Besides, I really wasn’t doing what he said I was doing. I know I got this ticket here, but I’m not going to go to court. I’m just not going to show up at all, but I’m going to be a good boy and I’m going to drive real carefully so I don’t get anymore tickets.’

Fine! You ignore the notices that come, that you would appear. You ignore the notices that you have a warrant for your arrest issued—because after the third notification you didn’t show up—but you were a ‘good boy’ and you were driving your car

within the speed limit and getting no more tickets—right? Then one day you slipped, and you went by the police officer and he saw your license number on the back of your car and he looked down on his list of warrants, and lo and behold, your license number was there. He turned on his red lights and siren and pulled you over.

You looked at him and said, ‘What am I doing? I wasn’t speeding.’ He said, ‘I know you weren’t speeding, but you are under arrest.’ *For what? I’ve been obeying all the laws.* ‘You’re under arrest because you didn’t take care of the matter of your other ticket.’ *I’ve been a good boy; I’ve been driving nice.* ‘That doesn’t matter, you are under arrest because you didn’t take care of this matter.’

We can take it one step further. Maybe you can understand it with a little more severe type of crime. There was in Canada a very nice man. He was a favorite among his co-workers. He was always diligent, always on time, congenial, easy to get along with, until one night one of his co-workers saw the TV show broadcasting from the United States that is called *Unsolved Mysteries*. He saw the story about this man who murdered his wife, kidnapped his children and later abandoned them. Guess who the man was? *The model worker!*

He figured that if he ran away and didn’t break any more laws that everything was all right. Well, it wasn’t! That man got on the phone and dialed the number and the next morning the police came and arrested him and took him off under an extradition order—which is automatic in this particular case—and he was brought back as a fugitive from the law, because *he was not justified to society!*

To be *justified* means to *make it right!* Now we come to the crux of what we need to do as far as human life. How are we *justified* to God? That is the question!

Verse 39: “And in Him everyone who believes is justified from all things, from which you could not be justified by the Law of Moses.” None of the Laws of God were ever designed to bring *justification* or *the correction* of a wrong.

Let’s look at a couple of Scriptures telling us what law is to do for us. There are certain functions of law, which are very, very important, tell us what sin is.

Romans 3:20: “Therefore, by **works of law...**”—any work of any law—please keep that in mind—is required to do, to keep, to obey, but it doesn’t *justify*. *Law-keeping does not make right the path of law-breaking!* Something else has to *make right* that path of law-breaking. In relationship to God it is called *justification* and it has to be *by faith*.

Here is what law does, v 20: “Therefore, by **works of law...** [‘the’ law is not in original Greek. It is in the *KJV* and creates some confusion, unfortunately] ...there shall no flesh be justified before Him; for through *the law is the knowledge of sin.*” That’s what the Law is to do; to give us the knowledge of what the sin is. Paul said later on, ‘What! Shall we sin that grace may abound? **GOD FORBID!**’

Trying to be justified by *works of law* is a misapplication of the use of law. Law was never intended to justify us to God in heaven above. Rituals—through the Old Covenant, through the Law of Moses—were designed to justify them to the temple, not to God in heaven above.

Let’s read what the problem is and how to resolve it. Let’s begin to understand from this point of view and concerning the question: Is Christ the ‘end of the Law’?

Romans 9:30: “What then shall we say? That *the Gentiles*, who did not follow after righteousness, have attained righteousness, even *the righteousness that is by faith.*” This ‘righteousness means *right standing* before God the Father in heaven above. The Gentiles who believe in Christ were in *right standing before God the Father* in heaven above, though they were never given the Law of Moses. God never dealt with them before the New Testament and preaching of the Gospel to the Gentiles.

Verse 31: “But Israel, although they followed after a law of righteousness... [because God’s Law is righteous] ...did not attain to a law of righteousness.” If you follow the laws of righteousness and you don’t accept Jesus Christ, even the laws will do you no good to put you in right standing with God the Father in heaven above. We’re talking about the function of what God is doing.

Why did this happen? Why was it that this happened? That Israel—or the Jews—did not obtain to the righteousness of God? But the Gentiles, who were considered by the Jews worse than animals, never to be touched, never to be around, never to be in the company of. We know that that caused problems later on. In fact, we find this in Gal. 2.

- Why did this happen?
- God called them out of Egypt!
- God brought them into the ‘promised land’!
- God gave them His blessings, His laws, His commandments and said, ‘Follow Me!’

They had everything given to them, but what did they do? *Because they didn’t want to submit to the righteousness of God, they had their*

own righteousness! Even though they had a law of righteousness, it didn't do them any good.

Verse 32: "Why? Because *they did* not seek it by faith... [They didn't *believe* God! They didn't *believe* Jesus Christ!] ...but by works of law, for they stumbled at the Stone of Stumbling." Who was that Stumbling Stone? *Christ is called the Stumbling Stone!* (1-Cor. 2). They stumbled at Christ.

- they didn't want to believe that He was the Son of God
- they didn't want to *believe* that His life and sacrifice was given for the forgiveness of sin
- they didn't want to *believe* that God would do such a fantastic, wonderful, loving, great and phenomenal thing

Just for each individual! 'No! We're righteous! We have law!' But law without Christ is like water without hydrogen *or* oxygen—it won't work!—you must have both.

Verse 33: "Exactly as it is written: 'Behold, I place in Sion a Stone of stumbling and a Rock of offense, but everyone who believes in Him shall not be ashamed.'"

Paul goes on to say, Romans 10:1: "Brethren, the earnest desire of my heart and my supplication to God for Israel is for salvation. For I testify of them that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge" (vs 1-2). They weren't willing to accept the knowledge of God. Before they had their traditions, they had their washings, bathings, their do this, that and the other thing. But they didn't have the knowledge of God, and they refused to accept the knowledge of Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Verse 3: "For they, being ignorant of the righteousness *that* comes from God, and seeking to establish **their own** righteousness..." What made a person acceptable in the synagogue? Let's use the example of John 9: Remember the man who was born blind so that God could be glorified through the miracle that Jesus did in restoring the sight to this blind man. Let's look at the righteousness of God in healing the man so he could see, as compared to the righteousness of law or works as demanded by the Pharisees.

So, he and his mother and dad came into the synagogue and he said, 'Is this your son?' *Yeah, we know it's our son.* 'How did he receive his sight?' *Well, if you want to know how he received his sight ask him, he's of age.* So, they asked him and they said, 'Well, I don't know if this man was a sinner or not, but has it ever been heard that a man born blind was made to see? I don't understand how this man could be a sinner.' *He's a sinner and you're*

deceived, and if you don't reject Him we're going to kick you out of the synagogue.

Kicking him out of the synagogue was a *work of law*. You had to go by *their* rules, *their* regulations, reject Christ and believe in them. They had their own righteousness, ignorant of the righteousness of God. Perfect example right here: *a work of a law—their own!* So, they kicked him out of the synagogue for being ignorant of Jesus Christ and going about to establish *their own* righteousness! (Mark 7).

"...have not submitted to the righteousness of God. For Christ *is the end of works* of law for righteousness..." (vs 3-4). For justification, not the elimination and the absence of law altogether—please understand that! Christ ended all justification by law; *He did not end law-keeping or commandment-keeping.* I hope that is clear. It's a little difficult to understand, but Christ is the *end of law* for righteousness by *works*. "...to everyone who believes" (v 4).

Now let's go back to Rom. 3 and we'll follow through the rest of the chapter, and I will try and explain it to you so you can understand it. But let's keep in mind that by *a work of a law*:

- if you do not *believe* in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ
- if you do not *accept* Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior
- if you do not *keep* His commandments

—as He said, 'If you love Me, keep My commandments'—you do not have any justification to God the Father in heaven above. You can go about and establish your own righteousness; you can have laws and rules and regulations, another rule of *a law, a work of a law.*

I know a church where they used to have it that if the women wore any makeup they were harlots. If they had skirts that came above the top of the kneecap they were indecent. The law that that church established was: if there were any women walking through the door and they had any makeup on or if their knees were showing they should be expelled.

To some people this may sound very righteous, until you realize the fact that there are prostitutes that wear long dresses and no makeup. Think on that! Because it's of the heart; it's what you believe; it's what is your *heart standing* before God that is important, not necessarily the outer expression of who you are. It can get into certain things where you have lewd conduct, and obviously that is law-breaking.

That's just another example of *a rule* or a

work of law to make people righteous. That doesn't make them righteous. Jesus said that if a 'man looks upon a woman to lust after her, he has committed adultery already in his heart.' It doesn't matter what kind of façade you put on, it matters what is going on in the mind and heart.

Romans 3:9: "What then? Are we of ourselves better? Not at all!..." Jew *vs* Gentile! They still say, 'we are the chosen people.' If you have never read anything concerning the Talmud; if you've never read anything concerning the attitude of the Jews toward other people, then it's very difficult for you to understand what Paul is writing here. Most people today try to understand the vacuum of the present day, rather than the historical background. If you haven't done any historical background study, you may find yourself kind of missing the boat in trying to understand this.

"...Not at all! For we have already charged both Jews and Gentiles—ALL—with being under sin" (v 9). Everyone has sinned! It's not the circumcision of the flesh outwardly that makes a person righteous before God, it is the circumcision of the heart *inwardly* and not of the flesh (Rom. 2). If you don't understand how that would really make Jews just gnash their teeth. Paul—being a former Pharisee—really laid it on the Jews.

Verse 10: "Exactly as it is written: 'For there is not a righteous one—not even one!'" Every single human being by nature is a sinner. In order to have that sin and that sinning within justified before God, law-keeping will not do it. Law-keeping is required that you don't continue to live in sin, but you must have a transformation and conversion of the mind. That can only come about with the justification from God the Father through Jesus Christ.

Verse 11: "There is not one who understands; there is not one who seeks after God. They have all gone out of the way... [gone out of the way of God] ...together they have *all* become depraved. **There is not even one who is practicing kindness. No, there is not so much as one!**" (vs 11-12).

The only reason that anyone can do any good is if they have the Spirit of God *in* them, and that they are living by the *ways* of God. That's the only way! It has to be Christ *in them* that is doing it. You cannot of your own!

That's why Protestantism is absolutely so deluding to people. They say, 'If you believe.' *Okay, I want to believe!* 'You open your heart and let God come in.'

(go to the next track)

You don't open your heart and let God come

in; **God has to call you to Him!** In other words, it's the other way around, God has to open His heart and bring you into Him. *He* has to justify you; *He* has to forgive you. You are not good enough to invite God into your life. Do you think you're good enough and righteous before God on your own, that you can say, 'Oh, God, I invite you into my life.' That may be well-intentioned on your part, but unless you go through what God says you need to do: with repentance, baptism, receiving of the Holy Spirit and the true justification that comes from God—you can't have in your mind that 'this is good work and I'm going to do this; wonderful, God is on my side—it's the other way around. **You better be on God's side!** Maybe that will help get some of the priorities straight here.

Verse 13: "Their throats *are* like an open grave; with their tongues they have used deceit; *the* venom of asps *is* under their lips." I point to the Middle East. Do you think the PLOs and the Jews are ever going to get along? That's not going to be solved until Jesus Christ returns!

Verse 14: "Whose mouths are full of cursing and bitterness; their feet *are* swift to shed blood; destruction and misery *are* in their ways; and *the* way of peace they have not known. There is no fear of God before their eyes.' Now then, we know that whatever the law says, it speaks to those who are under [within] the law..." (vs 15-19).

If you're understanding and living within the Law and the Law says that you shall not commit adultery, then it means you shall not commit adultery, shall not steal, shall not bow down to idols, shall have no other gods before God—it's telling you what you shouldn't do! It's telling you how you can live without having transgressions multiplied in your life. The Law is speaking to you, that's correct, that's right, nothing wrong with it, that's fine.

- Are you listening to the Law?
- Are you listening to God?

Don't try and have the Law do something it was never intended to do.

"...so that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty [judged] before God.... [God is in charge!] ...Therefore, **by works of law there shall no flesh be justified before Him...** [not just what a church may agree to, but in His sight] ...for **through the law is the knowledge of sin**" (vs 19-20). That's what the Law was designed to do. when you transgress the Law, what does the Bible say? *That is sin!* 'The wages of sin is death.'

- the Law was designed to show what sin is

- the Law was designed to point out that whomever transgresses it is worthy of death

Therefore, that which was designed to point that out cannot bring eternal life. Only God the Father can give you eternal life through Jesus Christ. That's what *justification* is all about.

Key important understanding, paramount, profound, v 21_[transcriber's correction]: "But now, the righteousness of God... [the right standing through justification of God] ...**that is separate from law** has been revealed..." It's not the absence of law, but is separate from. It is not reiterated in the Law that you have the righteousness of God the Father in His sight through law-keeping. Law-keeping is a separate function. Justification and the righteousness of God is a separate function. Law-keeping is something you can do. Forgiveness of sin and right standing with God the Father in heaven above—through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ to justify you to God the Father—is a function of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ through the power of God's Holy Spirit **IF you believe!** Completely different! Two different functions!

Let's use another example: If you have a high-powered car with fuel injection and needed a high-octane fuel, do you suppose he could run that car if he filled the tank with peanut oil? It wouldn't work! It would gum it all up! It wouldn't function! *Exactly the same way if you try and justify yourself to God the Father in heaven above by:*

- not repenting
- not being baptized
- not receiving the Holy Spirit

It's just like pouring peanut oil into a high-powered car; it won't work! It wasn't designed for it. But if you go to God in repentance, go to God and confess your sins and accept the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, and are baptized and receive the Holy Spirit of God. You *believe in* Jesus Christ, you *believe* God; then you are *justified* and you are *committed* to keeping the commandments of God, as Jesus said, 'IF you love Me, keep My commandments.' I hope you understand that.

Verse 21: "But now, the righteousness of God *that is separate from*... [Moffett translates it *aside from*] ...law..." That doesn't exclude it. That doesn't kick it out. That doesn't do away with it. But *justification* and the *righteousness* here is 'separate from law' ...has been revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets—'ek'—*the righteousness coming out from God to you*. It's a gift! Think of it! A tremendous gift that comes from God that puts you in *right standing with Him*, because He has called you.

That's something! Think on that! This *justification by faith* is greater than you have ever understood before. It is magnificent! It is not whether to keep law or just have grace, it's a matter of what God is doing and to understand the terminology involved in it.

Verse 22: "Even *the* righteousness of God *that is* through *the* faith of Jesus Christ..." That's something that is also very profound. This is in the genitive case or the possessive case. It means *by Jesus' very own faith!* Don't you think that Jesus had to have faith to come to this earth? It talks about God's faith.

A lot of people wonder if God has faith. *Yes!* God has faith. It's a gift of the Holy Spirit that comes from God. If God doesn't have it to give, then how can He give it? *God has faith! Christ has faith!* Don't you think it took a lot of faith on Christ's part, a lot of faith in God the Father, for Christ to say: I will become that sacrifice. I will let You reduce Me to a pinprick of life in the flesh, Father, so that I can:

- be born as a human being
- live as a human being
- walk in all Your ways
- be filled with Your Holy Spirit
- be the sacrifice for all the sins of mankind
- let You justify them through My blood and My resurrection'

That's what it is! Through Jesus' very own faith! It's not some kind of faith that you can work up. You have to have your faith added to it. But how can you have that kind of belief that we are talking about unless it comes from God?

"...toward all and upon **all**..." (v 22). Not just select people because they happen to be in one place at one time, but *all* as Acts 2 shows that God has called.

"...**those who believe**; for there is no difference" (v 22). There is no difference whether you're male or female, whether you're tall or short, skinny or fat, black or white, Scythian, Barbarian, Oriental or whatever—it doesn't make a bit of difference, because God is the One Who is doing it, and it's not a club election by men for a society, brotherhood, sorority, or fraternity. Now you see very clearly what we're getting at here.

The reason is, v 23: "For **all have sinned**... [everyone] ...and come short of the glory of God; *but* are being justified freely..."—without cost; without obligation. God did it *freely!* You might look at the case of Simon Magus (Acts 8), he tried to buy the Holy Spirit. You can't buy it! It is given *freely*, but

- You must *believe!*
- *That's your cost!*
- You must *repent!*
- *That is your cost!*
- You must be *baptized!*
- *That is your cost!*

But it doesn't cost you any money. That's why it says, 'All that believe, come and drink. You that have no money, come and buy' (Isa. 61)—it's *free!*

"...justified freely **by His grace...**" (v 24)—*forgiveness, mercy, love, kindness, goodness, lovingness* of God. Grace is the whole umbrella of the relationship that we have with God. It's called *grace* because you can't earn it, you can't work for it, you can't do anything to deserve it yourself. It comes through Jesus Christ and through grace.

Now, that is differentiated from under the Old Covenant of law-keeping, under the Pharisaical rules and regulations of do this/do that; don't do this/don't do that and that sort of thing. It is *grace freely!* Catholics, on the other hand, say that only grace can come by *your works*. You're not going to get the *grace of God* by your works. Works won't do it. You must be justified to God *first*, and then do the works of God in the proper and right way.

"...being justified freely by His grace **through the redemption...**" (v 24)—buy back, purchase back. God is the One Who is doing the buying. You don't go to God and buy from Him; He comes to you and buys you back out of the slavery of sin, out of the bondage of sin. You are redeemed!

"...that *is* in Christ Jesus; Whom God has openly manifested *to be* a propitiation... [advocating, mercy seat] ...through faith in His blood, in order to demonstrate His righteousness, in respect to the remission of sins that are past... [God's *right standing, justification*—making right your past sins, for the remission of sin, which are past] ...**through the forbearance of God...**" (vs 24-26).

Let's understand something here very clearly: *God does not give us a blanket forgiveness for all future sins!* Technically, there is no such thing as a *future sin*; though in the future you *will* sin. Is that double-talk? *No!* I'll explain it this way: If you rent an apartment for 30 days and you pay for your 30 days, and right at the end of the 30 days you decide you're going to rent again. At the end of that 30 days you pay your rent. How would you like it if the landlord came and said, 'I want you to sign a lifetime lease and pay me in advance everything.' You'd say, 'I can't do that.' That has not yet occurred. How do I know how long I'm going to live? It's the same way with sin.

There's no such thing as a *future sin* because the future is not here and you can only sin in the minute. All sins are *present* while they're taking place; *past* when it has occurred. God is not going to come down and say, 'Here's my grace go do anything you want.' *No!* He does give a mechanism on what we do if we sin, and when we sin in the future. We have to confess our sins:

1-John 1:6: "If we proclaim that we have fellowship with Him, but we are walking in the darkness, we are lying to ourselves, and we are not practicing the Truth." What is Truth? *Jesus said about the Father, 'Your Word is Truth!'* What do we receive from God when we repent and are baptized? *We receive the Holy Spirit, which is the Spirit of Truth!* When we're walking in the ways of God we are walking in the Truth.

John says here that "...we are walking in the darkness... [and we say that we have fellowship with God] ...we are lying to ourselves, and we are not practicing the Truth. However, if we walk in the light, **as He is in the light, then** we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, His own Son, cleanses us from **all sin**. If we say that we do not have sin..." (vs 6-8). I have yet to meet someone who says, 'I'm perfect.' But there are some who would say, 'You know, I don't have any sin.'

"...we are deceiving ourselves, and the Truth is not in us. If we **confess our own sins...** [obviously, to God, not to a priest] ...He is faithful and righteous, to **forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness**" (vs 8-9). God is there to help. God is there to forgive. But you can't go out and just live a life of sin after you've had God's grace given to you and poured out upon your life.

Let's see about this faith and grace and walking in 'good works' motivated by the Spirit and power of God. Ephesians 2:8: "For by grace **you have been saved through faith**, and this *especially* is not of your own selves..." It is not something you work up. Obviously, you can't work up grace, because that has to come from God. Obviously, we saw that it was the *faith of Jesus*—Jesus' faith in you—which then gives you the motivation. God's Spirit comes and *leads* you to repentance—not of yourself!

"...*it is* the gift of God, not of works..." (vs 8-9). Doesn't matter how great you are, or how good you think you are, unless you're right with God that doesn't count. It doesn't matter how many Sabbath's you've kept all your life, what if you end up breaking the Sabbath right at the end, you're still a sinner. You can't say, 'O God, look at all I've done over here all these years.' Maybe God will be merciful and keep it in mind, but *'sin is the*

transgression of the Law; the wages of sin is death!'

It's not of works. It's not something that you can do: "...so that no one may boast" (v 9). That ought to be self-evident. What would happen if it were possible to do it by works, and someone did it? They would go up to God and say, 'You owe me eternal life after what I did. My whole life was nearly perfect. Why, God, I was better than Job.' Look what God did to Job!

Verse 10: "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto *the* good works that God ordained beforehand in order that we might walk in them."

Romans 3:25: "Whom God has openly manifested *to be* a propitiation... [a continual atoning mercy seat that we can come to in time of need] ...through faith in His blood, in order to demonstrate His righteousness, in respect to the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; *yes*, to publicly declare His righteousness... [to bring right standing to you] ...in the present time, that He might be just, and the one Who justifies the one who *is* of *the* faith of Jesus" (vs 25-26).

- God is the One Who does the *justification!*
- God is the One Who makes it *right!*
 - you have to come to see how wrong you are
 - you have to be convicted by God's Spirit in your heart
 - ✓ to see your sins
 - ✓ to repent of your sins
 - ✓ to confess your sins

Then God justifies you through His mercy and goodness, but you have to *believe, be believing—constant, ongoing*—in Jesus.

Verse 27: "Therefore, where *is* boasting?...." You can't brag or boast as to how good you are, what your genealogy is, who your father was, who your mother was or who your grandfather or grandmother was. It doesn't even matter if you were the son of Moses, *if you're not justified by God it doesn't matter who you are*. You can't boast on anything. I can't boast on anything.

"...It is excluded. Through what law? *The law* of works? By no means! Rather, *it is* through a law of faith. Consequently, we reckon that a man is justified... [in right standing before God the Father] ...by faith separate from... [not without; not the absence of] ...**works** of law.... [doesn't mean *to the exclusion of*] ...*Is He* the God of the Jews only? *Is He* not also *the God* of the Gentiles? YES! *He is* also God of *the* Gentiles, since *it is* indeed one God Who will justify *the* circumcision by faith, and *the* uncircumcision through faith" (vs 27-30). God is the

One Who is going to do it.

Verse 31: "Are we, then, abolishing law through faith? MAY IT NEVER BE! Rather, we are establishing law." How is law established? It is established this way: Once you have been justified to God the Father in heaven above through the very sacrifice and resurrection of Jesus Christ, He gives you the heart and the willingness:

- to want to serve Him
- to want to love Him
- to want to keep His commandments
- to want to walk in those good works which He has foreordained that you should walk in

He wants to put His laws and commandments in your mind, in your heart, in your inward parts; to be a very part and fiber of your being. *That's what establishes law!*

Let's use another example: Does the enactment of legislation to create law make people obedient? *No, it doesn't!* Here in California there was this deranged man who took an AK47 rifle and gunned down 30-plus people on a school ground killing five innocent children. Then he took the gun and shot himself. Do you know what happened immediately after that? You would think that people in droves would immediately say, 'Bring all the AK47s and heap them up here, let's get rid of them. *NO!* They had a run of people coming into the gun-shops to buy those guns as quickly as possible, lest the law be changed and they couldn't get them.

Making a law does not make people righteous, it only tells you what you should and should not do. But if you have people who have God's laws in their heart and mind—through the Holy Spirit of God, by the power of God, through the grace of God—that are in right standing with God the Father through Jesus Christ, you establish law, because the people are not out there looking for ways to break the law. They are looking for ways to keep the Laws of God, to keep the commandments of God. You establish it!

Let's cover a couple more things so we can understand about being justified. In Romans 4 it talks about the belief of Abraham, and the blessedness of this righteousness or right standing with God that says:

Romans 4:7: "Blessed are *those* whose transgressions are forgiven, and whose sins are covered.... [justification] ...Blessed *is the* man to whom *the* Lord will not impute *any* sin. Now then, *does* this blessedness *come* upon the circumcision *only*, or also upon the uncircumcision?...." (vs 7-9). Then it goes through how Abraham *believed* God. What this belief did was make him the 'father of the faithful.'

Verse 20: “And he did not doubt the promise of God through unbelief; rather, he was strengthened in the faith, giving glory to God; for he was **fully persuaded...**” (vs 20-21). This tells us what kind of *belief* we have to have:

- No doubt!
- No hesitation!
- No reservation!
- No looking for a gimmick!
- Are you *fully persuaded* that God is right?
- Are you *fully persuaded* that through Jesus Christ alone you can have
 - ✓ the *forgiveness* of sin?
 - ✓ the *justification* of God?

—as Abraham was. “...he was fully persuaded that what He has promised, He is also able to do. As a result, it was also imputed to him for righteousness” (v 21-22). Counted to him as *right standing* with God, because he *believed God!* Not just *in* God, he *believed God in what He said.*

Verse 23: “But it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; rather, *it was also written* for our sakes, to whom it shall be imputed—to those who believe in Him Who raised Jesus our Lord from *the dead*” (vs 23-24). We’re going to see a two-step sequence to *justification*:

Verse 25: “Who was ^[#1]**delivered for our offenses...** [took upon Him the sins of the whole world] ...and was ^[#2]**raised for our justification.**” To be put in right standing with God the Father in heaven above.

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in its Original Order, A Faithful Version* by Fred R. Coulter (except where noted)

Scriptural Referenced:

- 1) 1-John 2:4
- 2) Romans 6:14
- 3) Romans 10:4
- 4) Revelation 22:14
- 5) 1 John 5:2-3
- 6) Acts 13:38-39
- 7) Romans 3:20
- 8) Romans 9:30-33
- 9) Romans 10:1-4
- 10) Romans 3:9-26
- 11) 1 John 1:6-9
- 12) Ephesians 2:8-10
- 13) Romans 3:25-31
- 14) Romans 4:7-9, 20-25

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Colossians 2

- Mark 7
- James 2
- 1 Corinthians 2
- John 9
- Romans 2
- Acts 2; 8
- Isaiah 61

Also referenced: Sermon Series:
Judaism vs Scripturalism

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