

Justification by Faith II

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What is it that you can do as a law, rule, declaration or a commandment that deserves the worthiness of God to forgive your sins? That's kind of a tough question—isn't it? Let's look at it another way, from a different point of view: What is it that you can do that will indebt God to you to make Him do something for you? God *is* God Who created the heavens, earth—everything—all human beings. You being a human being, what can you do to make God do something for you? **NOTHING!**

Simply because God is greater than you! If you do something that compels God by the force of what you do, that He is absolutely indebted to you to do something for you by obligation to you, then *you* are greater than God! If you understand that concept, then you will understand why you cannot be justified to God the Father in heaven above through:

- a work of law
- a tradition
- a rosary
- helping neighbors
- feeding the poor

—whatever it may be that will compel God to do something for you. If you really understand that, then we can understand the concept of justification by a *work of law*—which *never* justified anyone to God in heaven above.

During the formation of the New Testament Church, there was this crossbreeding of Judaism—the rituals of the sacrifices—and circumcision, which the Jews *mistakenly* thought would compel God to do something for them. That's still the whole attitude that Judaism has today, that they are the 'chosen people' and God *must* do something for them. Well, if you look at the response of God to Judaism, you will see that that whole attitude is completely wrong.

What can you do that is worthy of the forgiveness of your sins? *or* What can you do that is worthy of the death of Jesus Christ to be applied to you? Once we have that concept clearly in mind; once we realize that our debt is to God, **God has no debt to pay back to us!**

Romans 3:20: “Therefore, **by works of law...**” The King James has, unfortunately, ‘by the deeds of the law’; that makes it sound like that it has to do with the commandments of God, so therefore, the Protestants assume that you don't have to do any law-keeping at all. That is an incorrect conclusion based upon the erroneous assumption that is *the* deeds [works] of *the* law.

In the Greek it is “...by works of law... [that is any work of any law] ...there shall no flesh be justified before Him...” (v 20)—in His presence. Justification means *to make right a past wrong*. All of your law-keeping, after you've had law-breaking, does not rectify or justify or bring to a resolution your past law-breaking, because law-breaking is sin.

“...for **through the law is the knowledge of sin**” (v 20). That's what the Law does. The function of law is:

1. to tell us what sin is
2. to define the minimum standard of conduct that God will accept
3. to show us how we ought to live

No human being is perfect, so therefore, the Bible says *all* are sinners, ‘*all* have come short of the glory of God.’ That's what we're talking about.

You cannot take the Law, which was not designed to give life, but was designed to show us how to live and that transgression of the Law is death. You cannot take that and say that this is a function to force God to give us eternal life.

- What does it take to receive eternal life?
- What kind of justification is necessary?
- What is the price that has been paid, by God, to make that justification possible?

That's where we need to approach it.

Verse 21: “But now, *the* righteousness of God...”—the right standing before God through justification—‘*dikaiosis*’—*the right standing through justification before God!* The justification of God or from God or God's justification:

“...*that is separate* from law...” (v 21)—‘without’ (KJV)—unfortunately it gives the connotation of *the absence of* or *having no part of* when the Greek really means *separate* and *apart from*. It doesn't mean *without*, *the absence of*. It's not throwing away the Law. It's just separate from, it's not an operation of law.

“...has been revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets; even *the* righteousness of God *that is through the faith of Jesus Christ...*” (vs 21-22). God's very own Faith; Christ's very own faith; it's not something that you have, that you can do, that you can work up, but it has to be *the very faith of* Jesus Christ and that is imputed to you, given to you though you are not worthy of it.

We'll see how this operation works. So therefore, there is no law that says ‘you do this, you

do that' and you do the other thing' and you will receive eternal life. God did not design that eternal life would come through law. Otherwise, if it were by law-keeping, then it would be theoretically possible for a man to be perfect. Therefore, he would earn his own salvation, God would be forced to give eternal life and then he would not be subject to God, but he would be a competitor of God.

"...toward all and upon all those who believe; for there is no difference" (v 22). You read that and you don't understand that the difference between the Jews and the Gentiles was so sharp and divisive at the time of the beginning of the New Testament Church that the Jews had all kinds of laws, rules, regulations and traditions that they wouldn't even be in the company of Gentiles.

We're going to see in the book of Galatians that the problem that Peter and others were carried away with, that they were going back to Judaism: Separation from Gentiles rather than accepting what God is accepting. So, "...there is no difference."

Verse 23: "For all have sinned... [every human being has sinned and we will see why] ...and come short of the glory of God; *but* are being justified... [all your past sins made right] ...**freely**..." (vs 23-24).

- you can't buy it
- you cannot work for it
- you cannot earn it
- you do not deserve it

But God, in His mercy in calling you, has given it to you *freely*!

"...by His grace..." (v 24). God's gracious goodwill, love, blessing and calling. Grace is something that we stand in; we *stand within* grace. In other words, it is the sum total of the relationship that we have with God. Whereas with the Old Covenant, the sum total and relationship with God was to keep law or not keep law. Under that covenant that God had with Israel, they didn't receive eternal life. They only had *physical* blessings for a *physical* nation, to receive *physical* things that most people look to in life today.

"...through the redemption that *is* in Christ Jesus; Whom God has openly manifested *to be* a propitiation... [a mercy seat, a continual atoning source of mercy coming from God] ...through faith in His blood..." (vs 24-25). We're going to talk about the blood of Jesus Christ. We're going to see the operation of justification through Jesus Christ.

Let's understand right here that Jesus Christ, before He became human, **was God!** He took on the form of a human being, took within Himself the 'law of sin and death' and was sacrificed to cover for the

sins of **all** human beings. Technically, theoretically, practically, actually there is nothing that you, as a human being, can do to earn justification, to buy eternal life, to be in a position to force God to give you the Holy Spirit because you've done something. ***It has to be done freely, and through Jesus Christ!***

"...in order to demonstrate His righteousness... [that is the making right, putting in right standing] ...in respect to the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God... (vs 25-26).

I'm going to show step-by-step how justification takes place:

I. We see that justification comes through the blood of Jesus Christ.

Romans 5:8: "But God commends **His own love**... [very emphatic in the Greek; like saying this is my Bible, but if you wanted to be emphatic you would say: this is MY Bible. When it says in the Greek that "...God commends His *very* own love..." it means coming directly from God the Father toward us.

"...to us because, when we were still sinners, Christ died for us. **Much more**... [greater; eternal life is greater, far beyond this] ...therefore, having been justified now **by His blood**..." (vs 8-9).

Step #1: ***Justification begins with the accepting of the shed blood of Jesus Christ for the remission of your sins.***

What happens if you don't accept the sacrifice of Jesus Christ? *You're really in a tough position!* There's no other way that it's going to come about. Jesus said, 'I am the Way, the Life, and the Truth and none comes to the Father but by Me.'

God is not like the world. The world likes to have everything nice and broad and everything can apply and we all accept each other in love and peace. *No!* Love and peace can only come from God's way. The love and peace of human beings turns into war, killing, fighting, destruction and sin!

It's not whether you're going to do it this way over here and 'get to heaven'—the Buddhists, Zoroastrians, Hindus, Catholics, Protestants, Universalists—'we'll all get to heaven some day.' Not one word about Christ. *It's going to be through Jesus Christ and Him alone*, because God has determined that that's the way it's going to be!

Verse 9: "Much more, therefore, having been justified now by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His own Son, much more *then*, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life" (vs 9-10).

1-Corinthians 15 tells us something very, very important. It tells us how the operation of justification takes place through what God has done. We're going to see how this then will tie in with Rom. 4:25

1-Corinthians 15:12: "But if Christ is being preached that He rose from *the* dead..." I'll just state very categorically:

- you have no forgiveness
- you have no justification
 - ✓ unless Christ rose from the dead
 - ✓ unless you believe that Jesus Christ rose from the dead.

"...how *is it that* some among you are saying that there is no resurrection of *the* dead?" (v 12). Most people today who profess Christianity do not believe in a resurrection. They believe in going to heaven. You've got a wrong belief!

You're not going to force God to do anything for you because you believe you're going to heaven. Sorry about that; that's the way God is. Don't argue with me; you argue with God. I'm just reading what the Scripture says.

Verse 13—the key: "For if there is no resurrection from *the* dead, neither has Christ been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching *is* in vain, and your faith *is* also in vain... [it's worthless, it's vanity, it's nothing] ...And we are also found *to be* false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that He raised Christ, Whom He did not raise, if indeed *the* dead are not raised. For if *the* dead are not raised, neither has Christ been raised. But if Christ has not been raised, **your faith is vain; you are still in your sins**" (vs 13-17).

In other words, you can't just accept the death of Jesus Christ. You cannot just accept the blood of Jesus Christ and say everything is fine. If you do not believe in the resurrection of Jesus Christ, "...your faith *is* vain; you are still in your sins." Keep that in mind!

Verse 18: "And those who have fallen asleep... [died in Christ] ...in Christ have then perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all people most miserable. But now Christ has been raised from *the* dead; He has become the first-fruit of those who have fallen asleep" (vs 18-20).

Notice how important the resurrection of Jesus Christ is: *IF* Jesus Christ was not raised from the dead and that you believe, you cannot have justification by faith—which means you must believe in the operation of God and what He's provided, or you have no justification at all.

Let's see how very important Romans 4:25 is. We have two things that we're tying together:

II. We are able to attain a state of justification because of the resurrection.

Romans 4:25: "**Who was delivered for our offenses and was raised for our justification.**" Very powerful! Very important! We must trust in the power of God not only for the forgiveness of sin, but that He raised Jesus Christ from the dead!

It's very clear that if a person does not believe that, there is no justification before God. A person may have a 'religion.' A person may, in this society, be what we would call 'a good person.' But that's different than what it is to be justified to God the Father in heaven above.

Maybe you will understand this even more. The great God Who loves the whole world—remember John 3:16: "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, so that everyone who believes in Him... [faithizing; believing into Him] ...may not perish, but may have everlasting life." It's got to be through the very Son of God—Jesus Christ. ***It isn't going to be any other way!***

There's another little trick that comes along with the way that some people preach. They say, 'it's going to be all grace and we don't have to keep the commandments of God.' That is not true! We need to keep the commandments of God.

Romans 5:1: "Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Very important! 'Lord' means your boss, master, ruler, guide, one whom you are following. You can't go to some Maharishi guru and he's going to lead you to peace. ***He's going to lead you to the nirvana of Satan the devil!*** That is not of God! It is through Jesus Christ our Lord!

Verse 2: "Through Whom... [no one else] ...we also have access by faith into this grace..." God is giving you the greatest and most wonderful relationship that He can possibly establish with you though you yourself are a sinner, always coming short of God's way. God is there once you are in this grace, or standing within this grace.

"...in which we **stand**..." We hear about political parties. They have a platform that they stand on. They have this plank, that plank and the other plank, and that is the embodiment of their beliefs. Similarly we have this: The only way that you stand within the grace of God—the grace of God covering your life—is through Jesus Christ our Lord!

- You *must believe* that He is the Son of God!

- You *must believe* God!
- You *must believe* what God has said!

We'll see how this whole operation comes together as we go through and understand about *justification by faith*. Once you understand that, though it's complicated to explain, it is the 'simplicity in Christ,' which is that you can have direct access to God the Father in heaven above through Jesus Christ our High Priest Who sits at His right hand.

- You don't have to go to a temple!
- You don't have to go to a cathedral!
- You don't have to do laps around the beads!

You have direct access whereby you can cry 'Abba, Father' at any time! But you cannot abuse that privilege. You cannot live in sin and have that continue to be given to you. It's given to you by the gracious love and operation of God wherein you stand.

"...and we ourselves boast in *the* hope of the glory of God. And not only *this*, but we also boast in tribulations..." (vs 2-3).

- What happens with this conversion of the mind?
- What happens when you understand what God has done in greatness for you?
 - Doesn't matter what the problem is!
 - Doesn't matter what the tribulation is!
 - Doesn't matter what you go through

because

- ✓ God has called you!
- ✓ God has justified you!
- ✓ God has forgiven your sins!
- ✓ God has given you the power of His Holy Spirit to be the impregnation in your mind

—so that you likewise can be resurrected at the return of Jesus Christ!

We view things differently. We don't look at every trial that comes along as some great overwhelming thing, but we know that God is going to work it all out in the long run.

"...realizing that tribulation brings forth endurance" (v 3). You can't be a flash-in-the-pan 'Christian'; you can't be a fair-weather 'Christian.' You've got to go through the thick and the thin. As Paul said, 'Don't think it any strange thing if some of these trials come upon you'; just remember what Jesus Christ went through. Paul said that he wanted to be 'conformed to the suffering of Jesus Christ' if it would bring him the very fellowship and union with God.

Verse 4: "And endurance *brings forth*

character, and character *brings forth* hope. And the hope of God never makes us ashamed because the love of God has been poured out into our hearts..." (vs 4-5). That you love God more than anything else. You have to get down to asking yourself: Do you love God with all your heart, with all your mind, with all your strength and with all your being? That's what the justification, grace and Holy Spirit of God should be doing for us!

Regardless of what goes on around you or in your life, or what experiences that you go through, the paramount, most important thing in your mind, that you love God that way. That God's Holy Spirit has been 'shed abroad' to you. That God's Holy Spirit is *in* you. **That the very love of God is more important than your life itself!** So, the stakes are very high.

We're not talking about a 'religion' to do 'good.' We're not talking about something to make people happy or better and better. We're talking about something that is going to be for eternity! **We're talking about eternal life, eternal love through all circumstances!**

"...through the Holy Spirit, which has been given to us. For even when we were without strength, at the appointed time... [pre-determined by God] ...Christ died for *the* ungodly. For rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, although perhaps someone might have the courage even to die for a good man. But God commends **His own love** to us because, when we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Much more, therefore, having been justified now by His blood... [His sacrifice, then the resurrection for justification] ...we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if, when we were enemies [of God]" (vs 5-10). Everyone who is carnal-minded is an enemy of God. The mind of the flesh, or the carnal mind, is 'enmity'—same Greek word for *enemy*. You're fighting God!

Quick little test: What is it you're willing to argue to God about? *Think on that!* If you're willing to argue to God about anything, you are still partially *an enemy* of God, *because you do not believe God!* That may sound a little strong, but you need to think about it.

A lot of people would say, 'Well, Lord, I agree'—thank you that you agree—'that we ought to have one day in seven. But as for this Sabbath bit, every week on Saturday, I don't know about that. It seems to me that...' If that's the way you think and reason, or if you've heard people reason that way, *they're enemies of God!* Maybe you never thought of it that way before.

You can take the Catholic version of the Ten Commandments and they have removed out of it the second commandment pertaining the making of

idols and bowing down to them. They've made the third commandment the second one. They've taken the fourth commandment and made that the third one, and they also took out two verses of the fourth commandment pertaining to the Sabbath, because God says *the seventh day* is the Sabbath. Oh no, they want to have Sunday.

If you can argue with God about Sabbath; if you can argue with God and cling to your Sunday, *you're an enemy of God!* You may not think so because 'God is on your side.' But the question is: Are you on God's side? If you were on God's side, then you would keep the Sabbath because Christ is the 'Lord of the Sabbath.'

I just want you to stop and think, and test yourself. Ask yourself the question: Am I an enemy of God? *Oh no, I love the Lord! But I go to church on Sunday. You're an enemy of God!*

- You won't except His Sabbath.
- You won't except His way!

You say:

- Oh yes, Lord, I accept Your grace.
- Oh yes, Lord, I want Your love.
- But don't tell me which day to go to church on, Lord
- Do you love God with all your heart, with all your mind, all your soul and all your being; to let God tell you what to do?

or:

- Are you going to be so presumptuous as to continue to tell God what you will and will not do?

You're an enemy of God!

Let's find out *why* this is happening, v 11: "And not only *this*, but we also boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by Whom we have now received the reconciliation." Through the sacrifice and blood of Jesus Christ and His resurrection you have had every sin of yours blotted out, as if it didn't exist!

Remember what we read in the first part of Rom. 4: 'Blessed is the man to whom God will not impute sin.' That's a tremendous thing. Then he explains why sin came about. Why is it that as human beings we're enemies of God? Why is as human beings we sin? We need to look into that and see what Paul says.

Let's begin to understand why human beings sin, and why we have a sinful nature. Having a sinful nature, there is nothing that we can do that is purely righteous, that we can compel God to do something for us.

Verse 12: "Therefore, as by one man sin entered into the world... [we know that was through

Adam] ...and by means of sin *came* death... [the wages of sin is death; that has been applied from the time of Adam all the way down through all human kind until now] ...and in this way... ['houtos'—for this reason] ...death passed into all mankind..." Death was given inherent within us at the time of the cursing of Adam and Eve. Death was made a part of our very being.

Therefore, there is nothing that we can do carrying around sin and death in us that is ever going to be righteous enough to compel God to do something to give us eternal life. God has to give it as a gift. God has to do something with this nature. God has to do something to overcome this, or to compensate for it. Or we could go even one step further if an antagonist would say, 'God, why did you make it possible for all human being to die and You live forever?'

That's why Christ came! That's why Christ died! His death—of His perfect physical life—pays for all the sins of all human beings, because God created all human beings, and Jesus—before He became human—was God! Because of the sin of Adam death passed to all men.

"...and it is for this reason that all have sinned" (v 12). Because of the very fact that you have 'the law of sin and death within your members' (Rom. 7), that's why you sin. So, you are in a helpless position unless God does something for you. That's why God *freely* gives it to you, because ***you can't earn it!*** No human being can earn it! That is why all have sinned!

Verse 13: "(For before *the* Law... [the law given to Israel] ...sin was in *the* world..." That's kind of an awkward way of saying, 'Listen, before God gave the codified Law to Israel, there was still sin in the world.' Which is saying sin is the 'transgression of the Law' so the Laws of God still applied even before the Law was codified and given to Israel. All you have to do is read the first part of the book of Genesis until the calling of Israel out of Egypt to see that that is a true thing.

"...However, sin is not imputed when law does not exist" (v 13). If there's not a law to define what sin is, it can't be imputed to you. It becomes a little complicated. It becomes a little heavy to understand. That's why we can't do this in a 30 second sound bite.

You have got to, with the Spirit of God, let your mind understand the Word of God, so you can realize what God is telling us. Then when you do, you realize the fantastic thing that God has done for us.

Verse 14: "Nevertheless, death reigned from Adam until Moses, even upon those who had not

sinned in the likeness of the transgression of Adam...” Adam saw God face-to-face; Adam was created by God; Eve was created by God—to the affront to God; to choose to sin! To choose that way even before death was passed to them. That is a tremendous sin! That way is upon the shoulders of Adam and Eve.

God is saying, through Paul, even though other people didn’t sin in the same way, with the same magnitude, with the same great results that occurred as Adam did...

“...who was a type of the *One* Who was to come [Christ].... [Then Paul makes a comparison]: ...But *should* not the free gift be even as the offense was?....” (vs 14-15). The sin of Adam; what a great magnitude that was. Think how great that was! It passed sin and death to all human beings. Wasn’t that of a tremendous and great magnitude? *Sure it was!* Even of a greater magnitude should also be the *free gift* of righteousness and eternal life through the justification that is in Christ.

“...For if by the transgression of the one man many died... [that is, all human beings die] ...how much more... [greater than that; how are you going to overcome this?] ...did the grace of God, and the gift of grace, which *is* by the one man, Jesus Christ, abound unto many?” (v 15).

We need to stop and think of the great magnitude of the sacrifice and the life and the death and the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and what God is doing with that!

- Do you think God is doing anything in vain?
- Do you think that this was just an exercise and ‘religious’ practice that God did?

or

- Was this not for the very salvation of the entire world?
- *Yes, it was for the salvation of the entire world!*

Of course, in God’s time, in His plan, and in His way!

Verse 16: “And *should* not the free gift be like that which came by *the* one who had sinned? For on the one hand, judgment ... [or the sentence of death] ...*was* by one unto condemnation, but on the other hand, the free gift *is by one* to *the* justification of many offenses. For if by the offense of the one man death reigned by the one, how much more shall those who receive the abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness reign in life by the one, Jesus Christ.” (vs 16-17).

It’s only going to happen through Jesus Christ. That is greater than all that happened through

Moses and ‘the law of sin and death’ being given to all human beings, and as a result of all their sin, tragedy and wretchedness that we see about us in the world today. That’s what we need to understand. That’s why *justification by faith* can only be by *belief in Jesus Christ!* It can’t be by a *work* that you do. It can’t be by something that you think of. It can’t be by an accomplishment that you set out to do. It must be in total love and submission to God, and acceptance of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ and the grace of God.

Verse 18: “So then, even as by the one transgression condemnation *came* unto all men, in the same way also, by the one act of righteousness *shall* justification of life *come* unto all men.”

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We have justification to eternal life! But eternal life is only going to be given for those who love God; for only those who accept the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

Verse 19: “For even as by the disobedience of the one man many were made sinners, in the same way also, by the obedience of the one *Man* [Jesus Christ] shall many be made righteous.” The sum of it is this: Once you accept the sacrifice of Jesus Christ! But you must come to repentance. It doesn’t mean that you negotiate with God and you accept Christ on *your* terms. It means that you *accept Christ on God’s terms!*

That’s where the Protestants have it all wrong. ‘As many as receive Him, gave He authority and power to become the very sons of God.’ (John 12:1_[transcriber’s correction]). That doesn’t mean you receive Christ on *your* terms. ***NO!*** You receive Christ on *His* terms to eternal life! If you do, God is going to give you that righteousness, so that God—instead of viewing you as the sinner (which you are); instead of God viewing you as the enemy of God (which you were)—views you as He views Jesus Christ Himself. That is a tremendous *justification*.

It would be like walking into a court and you know you’re sentenced to death. The judge looks down and says that you will die. God says, ‘I’m going to change the circumstances for you *if* you accept Jesus Christ, *if* you repent, *if* you are baptized. I will view you as I view Jesus Christ Who was spotless and without sin. I’m going to view you this way, and I’m going to put you in standing with Me. Not under the threat of death, but under the blessing of grace and life. I’m not even going to calculate your sins to you. I am going to remove them from you ‘as far as the east is from the west.’ Furthermore, I’m not even going to remember them. But you have some things, once you do that, that you also have to do. There are some requirements

that are given.'

Verse 20: "Moreover, the law entered, so that transgression might abound... [that you really understand what sin is] ...but where sin abounded, the grace of God did super-abound." In other words, grace can cover all of that upon the conditions that God has laid out.

Verse 21: "So that even as sin has reigned unto death, so also might the grace of God reign through righteousness... [the right standing before God; grace is going to rule in your life; of which then following God's way is an integral part of it] ...unto eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Romans 6:1: "What then shall we say?..." If God is going to do this; if God is going to be so generous, kind, good, merciful and gracious and actually view you as if He is looking at Jesus Christ Who was perfect. What do we do then? Go live our lives any old way we want to?

"...Shall we continue in sin so that grace may abound?" (v 1). That we may have more sin, with more grace, more sin, more grace? This is what the Jews were accusing Paul of.

Verse 2: "MAY IT NEVER BE!..." May this thought never come into existence; so you don't live a life contrary to the laws and commandments of God. You don't continue in sin! You don't continue as an enemy of God! You are *completely in Christ!* You belong to God! You belong to God the Father!

"...We who died to sin... [Have you died to sin? A sinful way of life?] ...how shall we live any longer therein? **Or are you ignorant...**" (v 3). That's quite statement—isn't it? It's talking to Christians that are supposed to know.

"...that we, as many as were baptized into Christ Jesus, were baptized into His death?" (v 3). So, when it comes time for you to be baptized, **you are literally dying the death that Jesus died** to pay for your sins. That's a fantastic thing to contemplate. You're baptized *into the death* of Jesus Christ.

Verse 4: "Therefore, we were buried with Him **through the baptism into the death...**" God made baptism where then it's fully immersed in water; you actually go under the water and it's the closest thing you can come to—literally, symbolically—of death and still live. It is true that if the minister didn't pull you back up out of the water, you would die. That's why God has baptism by immersion.

This sprinkling stuff, daubing stuff, pour stuff doesn't work! That isn't what God commanded. The people who do that are in rebellion against God. People who do that are still enemies of God, because

they're not doing it God's way. Once you become Christ's, you put down all of your hostility to God's way. You become just like Jesus said, 'not My will, but *Your will* be done!'

- Is that how you have surrendered your life to God?
- Is that how you view your whole very existence and being to God the Father through Jesus Christ?

That's what it's talking about here!

The Greek says, "...we were buried with Him..."—'sune' and comes from the word *synagogue*, which is pronounced: sune-na-gog-ae—meaning a gathering or assembling together. So, 'sune' means to be conjointly, to become part of the death of Jesus Christ. Think of that! **You become part of the very death of Jesus Christ through the baptism that you take**, so that

- you *die* to yourself
- you *die* to your sins
- you *die* to the world
- you *die* to the motivation of your own way

—that you can be raised out of this watery grave to walk in newness of life! It a whole total dedication to God.

"...so that, just as Christ was raised from *the* dead by the glory of the Father, in the same way, **we also should walk in newness of life**" (v 4):

- being renewed in the spirit of our mind
- being renewed in our attitude toward God
- being renewed in the way that we live, walk, think, breathe and do everything as a Christian

Verse 5: "For if we have been **conjoined together in the likeness of His death...**" I want you to understand that! I want you to seriously take the death of Jesus Christ. Not this thing that is a sing-songy Protestant thing where God 'so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes...'—what does that mean to anybody? Or to see 'John 3:16' put in the end-zone at a football game. What does that mean to anybody? *It doesn't mean a thing!*

I want you to understand the fantastic thing that God is doing. God is not only taking the life of Jesus Christ and applying to you, He is joining you with *His death!* He is joining you with *His life!* At the resurrection we are going to be *as Christ is!* That ought to be something that should inspire us and move us and give us greater understanding, depth, knowledge and joy. That's why it's such a pity that so many people argue about the Bible. They get their little old pet doctrine and being an enemy of God, come and brandish about 'new doctrine' supposedly.

Listen, one of the greatest tricks of Satan the devil is to quote Scripture. The Bible shows that it has to be put 'rightly together.' Unless you have this concept, this knowledge, this understanding; unless you really live this kind of thing with God, then you're lacking in understanding. You can grow in grace and knowledge, but I want to emphasize how very important it is that you are buried with Him, in the very "...likeness of His death..."

"...so also shall we be *in the likeness* of His resurrection. Knowing this, that our old man... [the old self] ...**was co-crucified with Him...**" (vs 5-6). When we come to the Passover time and we talk about how Christ was beaten, spit upon, and the spear was thrust into His side, you, upon accepting the very sacrifice of Christ, are saying, 'yes, that was also done to me.' I want you to think on that, and let that become a deep, vital, important part of your very heart, mind and being in your relationship with God.

Someone is surely going to say that that's morbid, wretched, why are you dwelling on that? *Unless you can see the morbidity and the wretchedness of human nature in your own self, then you cannot understand the greatness and the glory and the grace that God has given to make this possible for you!*

Verse 6: "Knowing this, that our old man was co-crucified with *Him* in order that the body of sin might be destroyed... [annulled, it's existence is legally put aside] ...so that we might no longer be **enslaved** to sin." That's what people serve. You want a good example of it, look at someone who smokes. Are they not subservient to that cigarette. Every fiber of their being is focused in on that cigarette, or drug, or alcohol, or whatever their pet thing may be. They are servants of sin!

Verse 7: "Because the one who has died... [through baptism in the death of Jesus Christ] ...**to sin has been justified from sin.**" You've been justified, not freed (*KJV*); it has been made right! You have been freed from sin only in the sense that in the presence of God it has been removed. You are *not freed* from sin in the sense that 'the law of sin and death' has been removed and taken from you and now you can no longer sin. ***He who has died through the baptism of Jesus Christ has been justified from sin!***

Verse 8: "Now if we died together with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more; **death no longer has any dominion over Him.** For when He died, He died unto sin once for all..." (vs 8-10). God, Who created everything that there is through Jesus Christ, sent Him as the sum-total of all human beings combined.

His one death applies to all human beings ***IF*** individually they repent of their sins, they are baptized and receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

"...but in that He [Christ] lives, He lives unto God [the Father].... [totally dedicated to God] ...In the same way also, you should indeed reckon yourselves to be **dead to sin...**" (vs 10-11). If you are dead to sin, you're going to love God with all your heart, mind, soul, and being; and you're going to know what God has done with a great and fantastic sacrifice of Jesus Christ. You're not going to be arguing with God anymore.

Maybe you might have to argue, discuss and talk about doctrine that some is trying to foist off that is not true, not from the Bible or some person's half-cocked idea of what they believe in God. You must defend the faith, that is absolutely true! But you yourself live to God as Christ lives to God. Go back and read some of the statements that Jesus said, 'I always do those things that please God'—do you? Jesus said, 'I have not come to do My will, but the will of Him Who sent Me'—do you?

That's what we have to look to. It's completely different. It's not a matter of 'playing religion'; it's not a matter of choosing Catholicism, Presbyterianism, Methodism, Lutheranism, Baptistism or anything like that.

- It's a matter of where is Christ!
 - It is a matter of what God is doing!
 - It is a matter of your standing with God!
- It's not a matter of denomination or religion*
- It's a matter of life and death!

"...but **alive to God through Christ Jesus** our Lord. Therefore... [as a result of being *alive to God*] ...do not let sin rule in your mortal body..." (vs 11-12). He's not saying that you're not going to have some sin come along. We have to confess our sins when we sin. But he's saying not to let it **rule** in your body. Don't let it reign and control your life.

I'll just use the example of the Sabbath: God says that it is a day that we gather together to worship Him and study His Word. It is a day in which we rest from all of activity that we do in the world. If you're wanting to let *Life* reign in your life—let Christ rule in your life—you will want to do that. But if you're arguing with God and you're saying, 'Well now, that sounds like a good idea, but I really don't know whether I want to do it or not.' Then you're letting sin **rule** in your life. You're letting sin, and your lust *dictate to you* how you will live, rather than letting *God tell you* how you should live—through Jesus Christ!

Verse 12: "Therefore, do not let sin rule in your mortal body by obeying it in the lusts thereof. Likewise, do not yield your members as instruments

of unrighteousness to sin; rather, yield yourselves to God as those who are alive from *the* dead..." (vs 12-13).

Many times we hear the story of someone who had a second chance to live. After they realize that they were as good as dead, or were dead, and still were afforded the privilege of living longer. A lot of people have changed their mind and changed the direction of what they had been doing. Should we not also do that in relationship to how we live our lives in relationship to God the Father. As someone who has been resurrected from the dead as it were, "...alive from the dead..."? *Yes! That's how it needs to be!*

"...and your members *as* instruments of righteousness to God. For **sin shall not rule over you...**" (vs 13-14). Let's understand this. Here's a very key, important difficult Scripture to understand, but becomes very simple in light of what I've said:

"...**because you are not under law...** [for justification] ...**but under grace** [for justification]" (v 14). That's what it means in the Greek. It doesn't mean 'the' law, as it says in the *King James*. **You are under righteousness for justification!** Paul has to go on and explain, because a lot of people stop right there and say, 'We don't have to keep the Laws of God anymore. It just *grace*; brother/grace; love, brother, grace—that's it. *NO!* You live your life for God. Didn't we just read this? You live your life as though you are raised from the dead. That's what it means to be *under grace*.

Verse 15: "What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law [for justification], but under grace [for justification]? **MAY IT NEVER BE!**" Why, I ask, for those who are Protestants, do so many say that you don't have to keep the Laws of God; you can live in sin and God's grace covers all. Paul said that you're deluded! **MAY IT NEVER BE!**

Verse 16: "Don't you realize that to whom you yield yourselves *as* servants to obey, you are **servants** of the one you obey, whether *it is* of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?" Not a hired workman, but a slave, something that you are chained to.

Verse 17: "But thanks *be* to God, that you were *the* servants of sin... [past tense; that was your former life, but not now] ...but you have obeyed from *the* heart that form of doctrine [teaching] which was delivered to you; and having been delivered from sin, you became *the* servants of righteousness. I speak from a human point of view because of the weakness of your flesh; for just as you *once* yielded your members in bondage to uncleanness, and to lawlessness unto lawlessness, so now yield your members in bondage to righteousness **unto**

sanctification" (vs 17-19). That is, you are in the right and proper standing with God.

Verse 20: "For when you were *the* servants of sin, you were free from righteousness. Therefore, what fruit did you have then in the *things* of which you are now ashamed? For the end result of those things *is* death" (vs 20-21). Look at your life!

- What did it amount to?
- Where was it going?
- What did you have in perspective of life?

As you came from birth on down through your life to where you finally came to the point somewhere along the line, you realize that you're going to die. You realize that death is at the door.

- What did your life amount to?

Verse 22: "But now *that* you have been delivered from sin and have become servants of God, you have your fruit unto sanctification, and the end result *is* eternal life. For the wages of sin *is* death, but the gift of God *is* eternal life **through Christ Jesus** our Lord" (vs 22-23).

Now, I realize that you've had to concentrate and follow through to get all of the thoughts concerning this. But there are a couple of other things we need to cover so we can conclude the thought.

I hope that you will understand what, in some ways, is a very difficult portion of Scripture to understand, especially for those who know that we ought to keep the commandments of God. There are certain things in the *King James* that are very difficult that had to do with several definite articles, which are not there in the original Greek.

Let's understand how fantastic this justification is through Jesus Christ. Let's understand that you can't earn it, you can't work for it. Let's understand, review and remind ourselves that the Jews had their own laws and separation from the Gentiles. That had nothing to do with the Laws of God. That had nothing to do with the determination of God.

You read the Old Testament and God says that the 'stranger is to keep the Sabbath'; the stranger is to have the same law as you. He is to be accorded the same rights as you, especially if he is circumcised.

Here we have a little throwback to Judaism on account of the behavior of the Apostle Peter and also of Barnabas. Galatians 2:11 "But when Peter came to Antioch, I withstood him to *his* face because he was to be condemned." Some people look at that and say, 'Paul was a troublemaker. Why didn't he take Peter off to the side and say, *Peter, we ought to*

handle this in private.'

God was not going to all the crossbreeding of Judaism in Judaism religion, Judaism rules, Judaism regulation, Judaism separation—which God never had a part of. Furthermore, you need to know and understand that Judaism was *never* the Law of Moses—though the Jews, even today, claim that it is. It isn't so! That's one of the big lies!

Peter was to be condemned publicly! What Peter was doing was a public act, which needed public condemnation.

Verse 12: "For before certain *ones* came from James, he was eating with the Gentiles. However, when they came, he drew back and separated himself *from the Gentiles*, being afraid of those of *the* circumcision party. And the rest of the Jews joined him in *this* hypocritical act, insomuch that even Barnabas was carried away with their hypocrisy. But when I saw that they did not walk uprightly according to the Truth of the Gospel, I said to Peter in the presence of them all, 'If you, being a Jew, are living like the Gentiles, and not according to Judaism, why do you compel the Gentiles to Judaize?'" (vs 12-14).

So, it had nothing to do with the Laws of God! Please understand, separation of people has nothing to do with the Laws of God! That was a law of Judaism. Those from Jerusalem were coming down still clinging to some things of Judaism. Peter was dissimulating with them, causing dissention within the Church, causing trouble and strife with the Church. They were saying, 'by this we are better than the Gentiles, because we separate ourselves and don't keep company with them.'

God accepts us because separate ourselves from them! That's what was going on here. This rule of the Jews of not keeping company with the Gentile was a *work of law* that the Jews imposed as a tradition of the elders. I want you to have the picture really clear.

Here's Peter, the other Jews in Antioch and even Barnabas were saying, 'All you Jews come over here and eat, and all you Gentiles go over here and eat. Yes, this is in the presence of God, but we are better than you. This is our work of law.'

'Now, if before this time, Peter, you were eating with all the Gentiles and you were eating as a Gentile would eat, why then do you make them do things that are Jewish by separating yourself? And why do you compel the nations to Judaize?' That was the problem. It was never a problem with keeping the commandments of God.

Verse 15: "We who are Jews by nature—and not sinners of *the* Gentiles—knowing that a man is

not justified **by works of law...**" It is a *work* of a *law* because a *work* was separating yourself from the Gentiles, which was a *law* of Judaism. They felt that that would make them in better standing with God if they had nothing to do with these beasts of Gentiles. That's the attitude that the Jews had.

So, Paul is saying, 'we know that you're not going to be justified by a *work* of a *law*. That's not going to make you in right standing with Jesus Christ. *No!*

"...but... [you are justified] ...through *the* faith of Jesus Christ, we also have believed in Christ Jesus in order that we might be **justified by the faith...**" (vs 15-16). Not by a *work of law* over here that you're doing, but by faith in the great, marvelous sacrifice and wonderful working of God and the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

- Do you not see what a paltry thing that Peter was putting Christianity in, in that particular thing?
- Do you not see what an absolute down playing of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ that Peter was putting upon the Gentiles by saying, 'We'll be justified by following a *work of law*'?

You Gentiles, you do this little *work of law* over here and you'll be fine, and we Jews have this little work of law over here and we'll be fine.

Where is Christ in all this nonsense?

That's what Paul was asking. He's saying, 'Peter, you know better! You know that a work of law won't justify you. You know that it's only through faith in Jesus Christ that you have justification before God—not what you're doing.' I hope that makes it clear.

Verse 16: "Knowing that a man is not justified by works of law, but through *the* faith of Jesus Christ... [the very faith of Christ *vs* a law of Judaism] ...we also have believed in Christ Jesus in order that we might be justified by *the* faith of Christ, and not by works of law; **because by works of law shall no flesh be justified.**"

Works of law will not justify you because a work of law was never designed to bring justification; only the sacrifice of Jesus Christ and belief and acceptance in that sacrifice and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Verse 17: "Now then, if we are seeking to be justified in Christ, *and* we ourselves are found to be sinners... [because we're not perfect] ...*is* Christ then *the* minister of sin?..." He's saying very clearly, 'Peter, what you're doing is sin. Yet, you're still seeking the justification, which comes from God through Christ, trying to do it through this *work of*

law. Don't you dare come along and say that this is an instruction from Christ, because it isn't! Christ is not the minister of *your* sin!' That's what he's saying!

"...MAY IT NEVER BE!" (v 17). Christ is not going to be the minister of sin. We can even read in the Old Testament where God says, 'Israel, you made Me serve with your sins!' And He sent them off into captivity because of it.

- Do you think that Christ is going to serve in our sins?
- Do you think we can lay down a rule and law that's going to make Christ obligated to follow it?
- *Of course not!*

As the Apostle Paul said, 'I speak as a fool!'

Verse 18: "For if I build again those things that I destroyed..." Paul is saying of his own life as a Pharisee, as a Jew who followed all of those traditions, even to the point of getting letters of condemnation to haul people back to be put in prison or to be stoned to death from as far away as Damascus.

Following all the laws of Judaism, Paul says, 'if I start building again those things I threw down, threw away when I was converted: "...**I am making myself a transgressor**" (v 18). Don't bring God's name into it and say, 'God is ministering this.' *No!* 'It's my own individual action that I'm doing. God has nothing to do with that. I'm the sinner!'

Verse 19: "For **I, through law...** [for justification] ...**died to law...**" Or because the 'wages of sin is death'; "...to law..." without Christ is dead! That's what he's saying. He's not saying that he's doing away with the Law. He's not saying that he's destroying the Law. He's not saying that he's throwing away the operation of the Law. He's saying that but for justification, you're dead! "...in order that I may live to God" (v 19).

- not to a *rule*
- not to a *regulation*
- not to a *doctrine*
- not to a *structure*
- not to a *corporate thing*

But **to GOD** he may live. Now you know why Peter was to be condemned. Now you know why Paul publicly took him on.

Verse 20: "I have been crucified with Christ... [right back to Rom. 6; how do you consider your life? Are you crucified *with* Christ?] ...yet, I live.... [still in the flesh] ...*Indeed*, it is no longer I..." Not for me; it is not my life; it is not 'God, You're up there and this is my life and I will do with my life what I want to do.' Isn't that the attitude that most people take? *Yes!*

Paul says, no! He says "...I live..." but it's not I, it's not for me. He's saying, 'Peter, I'm not saying this for me. I'm not here condemning you because of me. I am here saying this because of the rottenness of what this represents before God.' Maybe you've never had that explained to you that way, but that's what it means.

"...but **Christ lives in me...**" (v 20). Does Christ live in you? Is that the very reason why you consider yourself still alive? That Christ, through the power of God's Holy Spirit *lives in* you! That's what justification is all about. How stupid, how paltry, how degrading to get some *work of law* in there to substitute for Christ. That's what he's saying.

"...For *the life* that I am now living in *the* flesh, I live by faith—that *very faith* of the Son of God, **Who loved me and gave Himself for me.** [You have an obligation to God because of what Christ has done.] ...I do not nullify the grace of God; for if righteousness *is* through *works of law*, then Christ died in vain." (vs 20-21). Do you see how serious the problem became? This is a tremendous lesson for all churches to realize.

- They cannot setup *their own* doctrines.
- They cannot setup *their own* teachings apart from what Jesus Christ has taught

—because you are using a form similar to Judaism to condemn people, to exclude people.

You cannot take the Bible and use it as a weapon against people. It is the Word of God to bring life! I hope you more thoroughly understand the difference between justification by *a work of law* to men or a group or organization vs justification by faith in the sacrifice and resurrection of Jesus Christ, so that you through the grace of God can be in right standing with God the Father in heaven above.

- Cherish that!
- Love that!
- Hold it close to you!
- Thank God for it!
- Praise God for His goodness and mercy to you!
- Let the grace of God be upon you and on you and in you through Christ Jesus our Lord!

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

Scriptural Referenced:

- 1) Romans 3:20-26
- 2) Romans 5:8-10
- 3) 1 Corinthians 15:12-20
- 4) Romans 4:25
- 5) John 3:16
- 6) Romans 5:1-21
- 7) Romans 6:1-23
- 8) Galatians 2:11-21

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- John 12:1
- Romans 7

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