

Greetings:

The study that Pastor Pat brings on Sunday mornings is a reflection of the study for that week. It represents a lot of research. Not all of what he has prepared is communicated. In an attempt to continue the learning process, he is making available his study notes to the congregation.

They are edited, but not “book” ready. To the critical eye mistakes can be found. So he asks that you take the material with humility, teach-ability, and charity.

Enjoy and if you should have any questions or corrections, please do not hesitate to email him at [pastorpat@waukeshabile.org](mailto:pastorpat@waukeshabile.org).

**Date:**      **October 31, 2010**

**Title:**      **How Can A Person Be Right With God?**

**Text:**      Romans 3:19-31; Misc.

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Waukesha Bible Church is a family of families seeking to live in the Storyline of the Bible. She is determined by design to have a **God-centered, Christ-exalting worship; a Word-centered teaching** focused on personal **discipleship** through intentional and systematic instruction; a **Global-impacting mission** that resolves to be a **church planting church**; and a **Grace-based fellowship** where disciples are invited to live under a **reigning grace** characterized by a **Gospel-driven sanctification** that celebrates a divine **monergism** to the Christian life.

## How Can A Person Be Right With God? Romans 3:19-31; Misc.

How can I be right with God? What does it mean to be right with God? How would you like to never have to worry about God being mad, angry, or upset with you? How would you like to find rest in the midst of life's struggles? How would you like to finally measure up to God's righteous expectations for you? Apart from sounding incredible, it also sounds impossible. But you and I can be right before God.

The book of Romans has already created a dilemma within man by revealing his position of complete spiritual bankruptcy before God (Romans 1:18-3:20). Chapter three verse ten is emphatic, "there is none righteous no not one." In light of his condition man is barred from God's presence, guilty of sin and a recipient of God's full and undiluted wrath. It is here that we should consider the doctrine of justification by faith.

In Romans 3 the word "justified" is used several times (Rom. 3:4, 10, 20, 24, 26, 28, 30 [see also "righteous" Rom. 3:5, 21, 22, 25, 26]). Only God can **declare** a man righteous and yet men continually seek ways to **make** themselves righteous.

"THERE ARE fundamentally only two doctrines of salvation: that salvation is from God, and that salvation is from ourselves. The former is the doctrine of common Christianity; the latter is the doctrine of universal heathenism. "The principle of heathenism is, negatively, the denial of the true God, and of the gift of his grace; and, positively, the notion that salvation can be secured by man's own power and wisdom. Whether the works through which heathenism seeks the way of salvation bear a more ritual or a more ethical characteristic, whether they are of a more positive or of a more negative nature, in any case man remains his own Savior; all religions except the Christian are autosoteric . . . And philosophy has made no advance upon this."

Being justified is an act of God (Ro 8:33) **Who takes the initiative** (cp Eph. 1:4, 1Pet. 1:2, 2 Thess. 2:13) and **provides the means** through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus. The sinner who believes in Christ receives God's gift of righteousness (Rom. 1:17, Rom. 5:17), which then enables God to pronounce him righteous (both Just & Justifier - Rom. 3:26).

Being justified is once and for all time and as such defines the believers permanent state. **Just as you may not be tried for the same crime again after being acquitted, God's justification means you will never be tried or condemned by Him again for your sins--past, present, or future.** This is good news indeed.

To reiterate, justification is not an act of God that makes us righteous but is an act of God that declares us righteous based on what Christ accomplished on Calvary.

Wayne Grudem writes, "A right understanding of justification is absolutely crucial to the whole Christian faith. Even today, a true view of justification is the dividing line between the

biblical gospel of salvation by faith alone and all false gospels of salvation based on good works.

It is this truth of our just standing before the Father in the Son that we wish to note and celebrate in this study. There are five elements about justification within the Scripture that one must come to grips with if they will stand before God right and live free.

I. Justification is looked upon as a provision of grace and thus a gift (Romans 3:24; 5:16,17; Titus 3:5-7) and is appropriated by means of faith and stands in direct contrast of being attained by works (Acts 13:38, 39; Romans 3:21, 22, 26, 28, 30; 4:2-6, 9, 11, 13; 9:30-33; 10:1-13; Gal. 2:16, 17, 21; 3:6, 8, 11, 21-26; Titus 3:5).

Because this is true, you and I have nothing to boast in or of. The Scriptural evidence is so overwhelming that it is impossible to get around it. If it could have been attained by works, then it would not have been by faith. In the Heidelberg Disputation of 1518 Martin Luther made the following comments. Theology of the Cross - [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theology\\_of\\_the\\_Cross](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theology_of_the_Cross)

- He is not righteous who does much, but he who, without work, believes much in Christ.
- The law says "Do this", and it is never done. Grace says, "believe in this" and everything is already done.

II. Justification is based on the sinless life and sacrificial death, burial and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 1:17; 3:25; 5:18, 19) and thus justifying faith finds its object in the Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 3:22; 4:22-24).

We must never forget that although the gift of justification is of no cost *to us* the securing of it *for us* came through His sinless life and sacrificial death (Romans 5:9).

There are several statements about faith. **First**, faith never operates in a vacuum. **Second**, faith must always have an object. **Finally**, the object of faith must be valid. Jesus is the only legitimate object for a faith that can justify.

III. Justification makes me what Christ is, and He, what I am (1 Cor. 1:29-31; 2 Cor. 5:21; 1 Peter 3:18; 1 John 4:17).

In a positional sense I am what Christ is. The practical outworking of this is the putting on of the new and the putting off of the old by the renewing of one's mind (Ephesians 4:22-24). In so doing our Lord will be seen in our earthen vessels. It is, in this sense, that *we* are righteous. In truth it is His righteousness being seen in and through us. This is what Ephesians 5:9 and Philippians 1:11 are referring to. **Our righteousness is actually the outworking of His righteousness in us.** It is as I become aware of what He is that I am desirous of putting on those qualities that will reveal Christ to others through me (1 Tim. 6:11; 2 Tim. 2:22; 3:16).

IV. Justification results in having peace with God, access to God, boldness before God (Romans 5:1, 2, 5, 9; 8:30, 33, 34), and frees me from sin and the wrath of God against it (Romans 5:9; 6:7 ["freed" = "justified"]).

My justification results in me having peace with God. I am no longer in a state of fear. I no longer tremble at my inability to measure up to God's unattainable standard. I have an advocate who pleads my case (1 John 2:1, 2). My advocate asks the question, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of my elect whom I have declared righteous? Who is there among you that can condemn those whom I have freed?" The answer? NO ONE! I am free! Gloriously free! Jesus paid it all and now all to HIM I owe!

We have lived so long in bondage that we have to learn how to live as free men. We sin so naturally that we must learn how to live in righteousness just as we have lived in sin.

V. Justification results in a surrendered life to God (Romans 6:13-19; James 2:14-26; 1 Peter 2:24, 25; 1 John 2:28, 29)

Justification by faith will always bring forth the fruit of righteousness. It is not the works of the Law that justify, but a justifying faith that produces adherence to the Law. Notice how Romans 6:21, 22 and 7:4 read.

- Romans 6:21 Therefore what benefit were you then deriving from the things of which you are now ashamed? For the outcome of those things is death. 22 But now having been freed from sin and enslaved to God, you derive your benefit, **resulting in sanctification, and the outcome, eternal life.**
- Romans 7:4 Therefore, my brethren, you also were made to die to the Law through the body of Christ, so that you might be joined to another, to Him who was raised from the dead, **in order that we might bear fruit for God.**

Only the justified can "keep" Law. It is the enabling power of God quickening me that equips me to fulfill His demands upon me (Romans 8:10). It is only as we understand the nature of God's grace that we can live righteously (Titus 2:11-15).

Over two months passed when on August 5<sup>th</sup> the San Jose mine collapse near Copiapo, Chile, when 33 miners were trapped almost ½ a mile below ground. On October 13<sup>th</sup>, the first of the 33 miners was successfully lifted to the surface in a specially-designed rescue capsule. Friends and relatives, many of whom had camped nearby for months, slowly let their cautious optimism become joy as they were reunited with their loved ones. All of the 33 men made it safely to the surface. Friend, there was no other way except through the channel provided. Those within the room could only be saved by help outside themselves.

One individual wrote, "Watching each of those men "return from the dead" to hold their loved ones again ... seeing the genuine care and concern and determination shown by their rescuers was a life changing experience for me. I hate to think how many lives have been considered 'expendable' in the past."

There is only one way to be right with God and it is through Jesus Christ. Unless and until you come to Him and through Him to the Father you will forever be trapped in an inescapable hell.

According to Luther, the theologian of the cross preaches what seems foolish to the world (1 Cor. 1:18). In particular, the theologian of the cross preaches that (1) humans can in no way earn righteousness, (2) humans cannot add to or increase the righteousness of the cross, and (3) any righteousness given to humanity comes from outside of us (*extra nos*).

Theology of the Cross - [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theology\\_of\\_the\\_Cross](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theology_of_the_Cross)

#### APPLICATION

- Friend, do you realize that you can be free in Christ?
- Are you ready to live like a freeman instead of like a slave?
- To be right before God is simply a matter of faith in His work in your behalf.
- What are you waiting for?