

Understanding Justification

2006039

Topic # 375 – (justification)

Introduction:

- A. New series: *Our assurance in Christ*.
 - 1. How many doubt their salvation?
 - 2. Walk in worry about salvation – whether or not God can truly save a person like them.
 - 3. With some, they feel as if they are always in and out of salvation.
 - a) What if they die *at the wrong moment*?
 - 4. Hope this series will help us to become more confident in trusting in God for salvation.
- B. How can a just God who is repulsed by evil associate with any human?
 - 1. How can the Just One enter a relationship with unjust people?
 - 2. It is truly amazing as to what God has done for us.
 - 3. We can be justified in the name of Jesus Christ.
- C. Justification is a large study.
 - 1. It is inseparably connected with Jesus' death.
 - 2. It involves righteousness and justice – it is impossible to be righteous without being just.
 - 3. Without justification, forgiveness would be impossible.
- D. American perception of justice often centers in retribution. *You get what you deserve*.
 - 1. But...in God's perspective, justice and the concept of being just centers on fairness.
 - 2. God is just (fair) in every act, thought, and motive.
 - a) He gives no advantage to those we consider successful, powerful, or important. Those who are disadvantaged have equal access to God.
 - b) Those we consider "failures" have equal access to God's kindness compassion and blessings.
 - c) God keeps His promises to both the weak and the strong.
 - 3. The humble Christian whose heart is constantly ready to repent can be certain God keeps His promise to forgive.

I. Understanding justification.

- A. *Justification* is found only **3** times in the English bible. All 3 are in Romans.
 - 1. *Justified* is found 34 times.
 - 2. It is a legal word and means to be acquitted of guilt; to be declared righteous; to be found **not guilty**.
 - 3. Justification means to be freed from sin and reconciled to God.
- B. In Christianity, justification is accomplished through **Jesus Christ**.
 - 1. Romans 4:23-25.
 - 2. Justification is connected through Jesus' resurrection. Those who believe in the resurrection may have new life. See Romans 6:4.
 - 3. All men sin – Romans 5:12 and justification and acquittal come through Jesus to all men by virtue of faith.

- C. Gal. 2:16 – Paul makes it clear that it is not the doers of the law who are justified before God.
1. Those who live by faith are justified – Gal. 2:16.
 2. When we believe in God through Jesus and demonstrate that belief through a living and active faith, God pronounces man to be just based on the sinless life and sacrifice of Jesus.
 - a) 1 Pet. 2:24; 2 Cor. 5:20-21
 3. Justification is an event that happens when the sinner is cleansed of sin and pronounced righteous by God.
 - a) Gal. 3:26-27 – it is in the waters of **baptism** that God's clothes us with Jesus Christ. We allow God to do that.
- D. We are justified in our initial obedience to Christ and remain justified so long as we continue to **walk** in the **light** in fellowship with Jesus.
1. 1 John 1:5-7.

II. What does it mean to walk in the light?

- A. It is more than **sincerity** or good intentions.
1. It is the very definition of Christian living.
 2. Walking in the light involves becoming like God – striving to put on His character.
- B. It involves leading a life of holiness and **purity**.
1. It should be our goal to be holy, chaste, and an example to others.
 2. 1 John 3:24
- C. It involves walking in **truth**.
1. We must embrace God's truth & oppose spiritual error.
 2. 1 John 2:21-23; 4:1, 6
- D. It involves a commitment to avoid **a lifestyle** of sin.
1. Talking about a **defiant**, persistent sinner who rejects repentance and confession.
 2. 1 John 3:3-10
 3. 3:6 – does this verse contradict 1:8, 10? No.
 - a) Christian who humbly serves God & does his best will steer clear of habitual and deliberate sin.
 - b) World of difference between 1 sin committed by a sincere believer in his struggle against sin and...
 - c) The habit of sin.
 4. 3:9 – we must work to steer clear of **the practice** of sin. This is walking in the light.

III. How do we remain justified while struggling with sin?

- A. 1 John 1:7, 9
1. 1:7 emphasizes **God's** promise. It is declared in the word **cleanse**.
 2. 1:9 – emphasizes the **Christian's** responsibility & behavior. It is declared in the word **confess**.
- B. When we as individuals are committed to walking in the light...
1. We will accept responsibility by **admitting** our mistakes.

2. God promises to cleanse us of **all** sin.
 3. Our salvation is not dependent upon our perfection – but on God’s cleansing!
 4. No person can be sinlessly perfect – but every person can be responsible.
- C. 1:7 should offer each person extreme encouragement.
1. How many grow discouraged because of constant failures?
 2. Ever feel embarrassed to approach God again to confess and ask for forgiveness because of vulnerability to sin?
 3. Blood of Jesus will cleanse us from *all* sin – not some, not most...but *all* sin!
 4. *We can never come too often to God when we come in humble penitence and faith.*
- D. God wants to **forgive** people who want **forgiveness**.
1. He forgives people who realize they need forgiveness.
 2. He forgives people who feel truly unworthy of forgiveness.
- E. God says:
1. *I do not care about where you have been...I care about where you are right now.*
 2. It is not about the messes you have made in your life in the past, it is about living responsibly now.
 3. We remain justified in God’s sight as long as we direct our lives away from our past and move toward God.
- F. When we repent and confess our sins...
1. We make the commitment to refuse to allow our past determine who we are.
 2. We commit to trust in the power of God to cleanse us and forgive us of all sin.

Conclusion:

- A. Remember the definition of justification?
1. Christians have been acquitted of all guilt and declared righteous.
 2. God has pronounced us **not guilty**.
 3. We have been reconciled to Him.
- B. As long as we are committed to serving Him – walking in the light, and confess our sins and shortcomings – we can be *assured* of our salvation!
1. We can live with hope and optimism.
 2. We can look forward to heaven and know it is ours!
 3. We can live without fear of death and what awaits us afterward.
- C. Not a Christian? All the hope/optimism/assurances we’ve talked about today can be yours.
- D. INVITATION