

Brother King Series
Justified; no condemnation
Sermon Summary Notes

Roms. 8: 28-30, 34; Acts 13: 32-41

Intro

- If Jesus returned right now and we each stood before Him, our redeemer & judge and He asked, "Why should I let you join me for eternity, why welcome you into a place I have prepared for those who know me?" What would our answers be? Of the following three options which would you most likely say and believe?
 1. Because I have tried my best to be a good Christian
 2. Because I believe in God and try to do His will
 3. Because I believe in God with all my heart
 4. None of the above
- In relation to your answers do you find an element or a motive of the following:
 1.salvation by works?
 2.salvation by faith plus works?
 3.salvation by faith as a work?

As God's children we go through so much fear, anxiety, confusion and failure simply because we do not truly grasp the meaning of justification and its direct link to the truth of saving faith. So today we are going to unpack what justification is and our part of faith in God's grace to bring us to a point of real joy in the knowledge of salvation without condemnation. But first a **Recap**

- So we will look at what Justification is, God's options when looking at the matter and then what God actually does in and through Justification. Keep in mind all along that this is the Gospel message we need to have faith in, saving faith

What is Justification? Roms. 8: 30, 33; Acts 13: 39; & 2 Cor. 5: 21

- Justification is not only a great benefit of the Gospel of Christ but it is an essential doctrine of Christianity; it distinguishes our belief as being one of Grace and Faith. Grace and Faith in turn are cornerstones of justification, hence the questions at the start about our faith.
- The Greek word (*dikaioo*) and the Hebrew word (*sadaq*) literally mean to declare righteousness. It is a courtroom concept whereby justification means the pronouncement of a verdict of righteousness. It is more than forgiveness, acquittal or acceptance; it is a declaration, a verdict that we sinners are now righteous in God's sight; made right with Him in Christ. We are justified and as we read in Corinthians we see that Christ became sin with our sin and we became righteous with His righteousness. Amazing. So if God justifies why does He do so, why does He have to, what are

God's Options with Justification Roms. 3: 23; 2 Tim. 4: 8

- **Condemnation;** God could condemn us. Throughout the bible we see God referred to as a righteous Judge (Tim is just one example) and we see constantly the failure of mankind; our sin. Roms. 3 23 simply tells us very clearly that we all have sinned, we all fall short of God's glory; His standards. We therefore, as in a courtroom, stand guilty as charged, facing the punishment, the judgement the consequences for our rebellion against God. We will all stand there one day to give an account for our life. We may not like this truth, but it is reality. So one of God's options is to simply condemn us, cause us to face our warranted consequences. God could also;

- **Compromise;** His own righteousness by overlooking this last truth and simply ignore our sin. Only a corrupt courtroom would do this and therefore the one and only God we know simply cannot do this, if He did He would not be God. The other option is to
- **Change;** us into righteous people. To commute our sentence in His Holy courtroom by some means that is legal, correct, just and Holy. So how would God fulfill this last option, how does God Justify, what is:

God's Justification Acts 13: 32-41; Roms. 3: 21-26

- God makes possible the third option of changing people whilst the first option of condemnation remains real. There are five steps in God's Justification:
 - 1. The Plan;** Roms. 3: 21; Acts 13: 32-33. God's salvation plan is in Jesus Christ. He raised Him up as one of us and revealed in Him a righteousness and way of life that enables us to be changed. This has always been the plan and has been foretold. We see here the link to God's foreknowledge, His pre-planned destination for us (predestination) and His sovereignty in all things. Jesus was a man as we are but who lived without sin so was not under condemnation
 - 2. The Prerequisite;** Roms. 3: 22; Acts 13: 39. We see that this righteousness is made available to us who believe in Jesus; believe that He is the Son of God and can save; a saving faith which is a prerequisite to justification
 - 3. The Price;** Roms. 3: 24-25; Acts 13: 34. In a courtroom justice demands payment, a righting of wrongs, a sentence has to be passed. In relation to righteousness Christ pays that price; He took and takes our punishment. He who did no sin took our sin upon Himself and took our sentence of death and judgement on Himself. Quite simply He died for us in our place
 - 4. The Position;** Roms. 28: 33-34; Acts 13: 37-38; Eph. 2: 4-6. Christ did not just die but was raised to life defeating the power of sin and death which put those God justifies in a position of being IN Christ, having been raised to new life in Him and now standing not in our sin but in Christ's righteousness. Our sentence has been commuted to righteousness!
 - 5. The Pronouncement;** Roms. 3: 26; Acts 13: 38-39. Therefore the Gospel proclaims the forgiveness of sins through God's Grace in Jesus Christ and our belief in Him as the only means of our justification. Christ's sacrifice not only meets the demands of God's justice, it demands that He justifies us. Therefore the one and only Holy God can remain just and justify the one who believes in Jesus. No one can lay a charge against God's elect, there is no condemnation for the one who believes for they stand in Christ's righteousness in God's sight.

- Now here is where I want to return to the questions we started with and our faith. What we have just looked through is the Gospel message; it is why we put our trust in Jesus, it is He who we have faith in. So if we do believe this why so often do we experience anxiety, insecurity, lack of assurance, spiritual pride, touchiness to criticism and devastation when we fail? We can have lots of strong faith that God exists, is loving and Holy. We can revere Him and grasp this concept of justification but misplace our faith; we can fail to have what Tim Keller calls saving faith. For the blessing and truth of justification to hit home we need to grasp and have true saving faith in our lives this will lead to a final P

The Proof of Justification

- As we understand the doctrine of justification we can see the proof of it in our own lives and the lives of others. We will see three truths:
 - 1. The Truth of Saving Faith;** Roms. 3: 24. We are justified freely by God's grace in Jesus. It is the merit of the work of Christ that saves us. He commuted the

punishment for our sin onto Himself and imputed His righteousness into us. He became our sin, we became His righteousness. Saving faith is transferring our trust from ourselves to God. It is trusting that it is Jesus who saves. It is placing our faith in God and His ability in salvation by grace. This faith means coming to God with empty hands, this faith is the instrument by which we receive salvation, not the cause of our salvation. As we understand this we realise that:

2. **We cannot justify ourselves**; we have to trust God as the justifier. There are no works that can make us right with God, no amount of human effort that can change our condition or save us; **legalism** is not the answer. So we stop working to be saved, or trusting obedience as a means of salvation. Obedience is something that flows from our relationship with God; as we love Him we begin to obey Him...it is a matter of motive. Our 'saving faith' will then develop an attitude of humility, submission and trust. We cannot save ourselves but we can receive salvation by believing in Jesus
3. **Faith alone does not save us**; we realise too that there is a subtle danger that faith itself becomes a work, we trust in our faith rather than the object of our faith; Jesus. If we fall foul of this, mixed with a sense of works, then our sense of assurance can go and our pride can increase. We can think that we do not need full righteousness and we can fall foul of **liberalism**. We do not see sin for what it is and the absolute need of God's forgiveness and righteousness in our lives. We can begin to cut corners and water down truth

Conclusion – **The Joy of Justification**

So we have looked at how God in His Sovereignty has given us a living hope that He empowers us to live with His Holy Spirit. He has set His love on us before time, predestined us for eternity and calls us to respond. Justification is the means by which He makes us right with Him through Jesus Christ. Our response is a belief, true faith, in Jesus. It needs to be a faith though set on Jesus and not on ourselves, our efforts or even our own faith. When we grasp this deep truth we can find a freedom and the joy of justification that is explosive, real and permanent. It shatters our doubts, fears and anxieties. We realise that there is truly no condemnation; we really are right with God in Christ Jesus. It is not dependent on our circumstances or performance. We are not drawn into legalism or liberalism. This is incredible Joy and truth and when we look at it in light of our 3x foundations in life, and the chinks in the chain of affirmation we can be truly ecstatic. Remember though God's purpose in all of this; to conform us to the likeness of His Son for His glory. Remember too it is a process; this is the ongoing work of God. We are still sinful people, we will err but God is working in us in His process of sanctification that will lead to glorification, the final aspect of His affirmations for us that we will look at next week.

Reference Books:

Romans for you. The Good Book Co. Tim Kellar
The Message of Romans. BST. John R.W.Stott
Be Transformed. CVP. Warren W Wiersbe
The Gospel of John. The Daily Study Bible. William Barclay
Basic Theology. Moody Press. Charles C Ryrie
Systematic Theology. IVP. Wayne Grudmen
Romans. Banner of Truth. Dr. M Lloyd-Jones