

CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE BASICS

GBC EQUIPPING HOUR | AUGUST 25, 2019



Class 16: Introduction to Salvation – Justification

PURPOSE: To refine the categorical (topical) way we understand the Scriptures helping us conform to Christ.

I. Justification without Boasting in Self

Then what becomes of our boasting? It is excluded. By what kind of law? By a law of works? No, but by the law of faith. ²⁸ For we hold that one is **justified by faith apart from works of the law.**

-Romans 3:27-28

But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; ²⁸ God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, ²⁹ **so that no human being might boast** in the presence of God.

-1 Corinthians 1:27-29

“Let the one who boasts, **boast in the Lord.**” -2 Corinthians 10:17

- *Nuance 1:* The authenticity of a believer’s faith may be secondarily justified by a pattern of faith-leading-to-works (James 2:21-26); but this is not the driving force of “justification” as the Apostle Paul unpacks it in his writing. Paul in Romans chapter 4 is focusing on the *foundation* of one’s initial belief whereas James is looking at the *consistency* of that faith expressed outwardly.
- *Nuance 2:* A believer can anticipate receiving a reward for his or her faithfulness (Luke 19:17; 2 Timothy 4:6-8) *which sounds meritorious*, but this happens in the sphere of the believer’s already established identity in Christ (Galatians 2:20).

II. Justification by Faith

A. This Faith Begins with Helplessness

In hope he [Abraham] believed against hope, that he should become the father of many nations, as he had been told, "So shall your offspring be."¹⁹ He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, **which was as good as dead** (since he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered **the barrenness of Sarah's womb**.

-Romans 4:18-19

B. This Faith Looks Upward

No unbelief made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he **grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God**,

-Romans 4:20

Your father Abraham rejoiced that he would see my day. He saw it and was glad."⁵⁷ So the Jews said to him, "You are not yet fifty years old, and have you seen Abraham?"⁵⁸ Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am."

-John 8:56-58

C. This Faith Honors God as the Capable Leader/Savior

..fully convinced that **God was able to do what he had promised**.

²² That is why his faith was "counted to him as righteousness."

-Romans 4:21-22

- *Prickly Question:* Is it right to say, "I have faith *in my faith*." Period." [?]

Is "faith" the end-all of the argument or is it a means for something much greater?

III. Justification by Grace

That is why **it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace** and be guaranteed to all his [Abraham's] offspring—not only to the adherent of the law but also to the one who shares the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all...

-Romans 4:16

A. Propitiation/Atonement – Covering Payment for Sin

²⁴ and are **justified by his grace as a gift**, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, ²⁵ whom God put forward as a **propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith**. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. ²⁶ It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

-Romans 3:24-26

..just as David also speaks of the blessing of the one to whom God counts righteousness apart from works: ⁷ **“Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, and whose sins are covered...**

-Romans 4:6-7

B. Imputation – Christ Crediting His Righteousness to Us

For as by the one man's [Adam's] disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's [Christ's] obedience **the many will be made righteous**.

-Romans 5:19

For our sake he made him [Christ] to be sin who knew no sin, **so that in him we might become the righteousness of God**.

-2 Corinthians 5:21

IV. Where Do We Go From Here?

A. Keep the Reformation Going.

B. Boast Only in Jesus' Saving Work.

Christian Doctrine Basics Course Outline:

- Sin – Opposite Holiness
- Sin – “Original Sin”
- Sin – the Effects (Two Deaths)
- Salvation – Election
- Salvation – “Repent and Believe!”
- Salvation - Justification
- Salvation – Sanctification (Two Aspects)
- Salvation – Sanctifications to Glorification