

Romans 5:6-21

"The Justification Of Life"

How does it happen? That's what I want to consider: the benefit, the blessing of the resurrection of J.C. that's applied to each of us who believe. We're all (or at least the vast majority of us are) familiar w/the historical reality of the death & resurrection of Christ.

It's what we celebrate today isn't it? The fact that, "*He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.*"¹ God sent His only begotten Son into this world; He was in all ways tempted as we are tempted yet w/out sin. Never one time did he succumb *to* sin. Therefore He was qualified to make atonement *for* sin... That was His mission, right? To provide the solution to the "sin dilemma"; the fact that God's *Holiness* demands perfection but man's *sinfulness* can't provide it.

You see, when Adam sinned it created a *separation* between God & man, if there's to be a restoration than there must be *reconciliation*. Question; how can that happen? Now I'm about to make a theological statement that I don't understand. God has ordained that the life of the flesh is found in the blood & that it's through blood that atonement is made for the soul. We read in Lev 17:11, "*For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that makes atonement for the soul.*"² You say, "How does that work?" I don't know. What I do know is that it creates a real problem for humanity collectively.

Because in order for there to be atonement for imperfect people it mandates a *perfect* sacrifice; it's impossible that sinful man could atone for sinful man. That's like thinking 2 wrongs make a right. The problem comes in, in that *all* have sinned & fall short of the glory of God. We are born into this world w/a sin nature. The bible makes it clear that sin is present from the moment of conception (Ps 51:5). So we're condemned before we ever begin. We come into this world as sinners in need of a Savior. It was impossible for Adam to pass on what he no longer had. Once he sinned, he couldn't pass on a sinless nature. All he could give us is what he had... a *sin* nature.

That's in large part why hell is forever isn't it? In theory one could get out of hell the moment they could offer a perfect sacrifice for their sin. But since we're an imperfect people it's impossible that we should *ever* offer a *perfect* sacrifice.

Now we have one more problem. Why not just sacrifice a bull, or a goat or something? Because it's impossible that the blood of bulls & goats should take away sin.

¹ The New King James Version. (1982). [2 Co 5:21] Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

² The New King James Version. (1982). [Le 17:11] Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

It's impossible that an *animal* could atone for a *man*. Only man can atone for man. Can you see the dilemma? It has to be a man to atone for man, but no man is perfect. God's justice demands perfection; but only God Himself is perfect...

So what does God do? He sends His only begotten Son into the world. Born of a virgin (born through humanity makes Him fully Man), conceived of the Holy Spirit (begotten of God makes Him fully God). As a Man He can represent man, stand in the gap on behalf of man; as God He is holy & perfect w/out sin. As such He is qualified to provide the perfect sacrifice & make perfect atonement for our souls. He can pay the price. What is the price? The wages of sin is... death.

Enter the cross. Jesus is taken for no wrong doing of His own. He's falsely accused, He's beaten, He's scourged, His body is torn open, His blood is spilled (what is it that makes atonement for the soul? The blood) & He's nailed to a cross. As He hangs there, somehow & in some way God takes all the sin of mankind collectively throughout human history & lays it upon Him; He becomes the vicarious/substitutionary sacrifice for the sin of the world & He pays the price. He dies.

But here's the beautiful part right? He Himself never sinned. Though He was *made* sin, He Himself was not a *sinner* therefore it was impossible that death should hold Him down. One day the scribes & Pharisees were asking Him to show them a sign. But He answered & said to them, *"An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."*³

Translation; "Death will not hold Me down." Even as Jonah could not be contained but 3 days after being swallowed up he "surfaced" alive from the deep. Even so Jesus being taken down into the heart of the earth, death would not be able to contain Him but 3 days later He would surface from the "deep" never to die again. J.C. defeated death. As it is written, *"Death is swallowed up in victory. 'O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?' The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."*⁴

Here are my questions; why? & How? *Why* did God do this for us & *how* does it work? Meaning how can 1 man's righteous act count for all of mankind throughout all of human history? Let me turn your attention to Rom 5

³ The New King James Version. (1982). (Mt 12:39-40). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

⁴ The New King James Version. (1982). (1 Co 15:54-57). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

Paul has been in the throws of developing the principle of justification before God on the basis of faith. He's taken the reader all the way back to the book of Genesis into the life of Abraham. & He's systematically demonstrating how that God never intended a man to be made righteous on the basis of his works, God always has & always will accredit righteousness to man on the basis of faith. Abraham "believed" God & it was accounted to him for righteousness. (Look back at Vs 23 of Ch 4 [thru 25]).

Why was Jesus delivered up to death? Because of our offenses; not because of anything in Him, but for our sake ... & Why was He raised? For the sake of our justification. That we might stand justified in the sight of God, "just as if I'd" never sinned. Justified.

The resurrection was the sign that God accepted the sacrifice of J.C. on behalf of humanity as payment in full. If God didn't receive His sacrifice; He'd still be in the grave; but in raising Him from the dead, God was declaring His sacrifice as sufficient to atone for our sin. Amen? Look at Vs 1 (Ch 5)

Vs 1-2

Did you note the benefit brought out here in Vs 1? Because Jesus paid in full the penalty price for our sin, God's justice toward us is completely satisfied. Therefore we have *peace w/God*. But notice it's only possible through J.C. our Lord. If you're not in Christ you're not at peace w/God, you're at war w/God. But in Christ we receive the reconciliation, the restoration that was previously impossible due to the separation that sin created.

We also have access (in Christ) into God's grace in which we stand. Who here is grateful for the grace of God? It's yours as a benefit to being *in Christ*... Now what's the logical conclusion of peace w/God & a standing in His grace? We rejoice in hope of the glory of God. *If we were to relate to God on the basis of works, our rejoicing would be presumptuous & arrogant at best. But when our relationship w/God is all about the work of Christ & a standing in His grace, then we can rest assured that we will see His glory... that we will be w/Him eternally. Notice Vs 6*

Vs 6-8

Remember my question? Why? Why would God send His only begotten Son to a sin infested, Christ rejecting world to die for us? To avail salvation to us? The answer is found in Vs 8; because He *loves* us.

Jesus declared, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved."⁵

You see, when we were still w/out strength (that is w/no power nor ability to save ourselves or do anything about our lost condition), when the time was right (historically, politically, spiritually, prophetically) Christ died for the (notice) *ungodly*.

Paul goes on to touch upon the highest level of human love. He says, "For scarcely (or rarely) for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die." In other words, it could happen but it's rare that someone would knowingly, volitionally fight the will to survive & willfully lay down their life for someone whom they consider to be honorable. Jesus said that like this; "Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends."⁶ That's the highest level of love that mankind can attain to.

"But God..." what's happening here? We're seeing a contrast in the love of man & the love of God; a *sharp* contrast. "This" is all that mankind is capable of. But God demonstrates "His own" love. It's not man's love; it's *His* love, a higher, *much* higher love, a love that's inconceivably high according to our own understanding. But God demonstrated His love toward us in that while we were still *sinners* (not a good people, not a righteous people, an ungodly people) Christ willfully, knowingly laid down His life in the place of *His enemies*, namely, you & me...

Vs 9-11

We love the "much more" statements of the bible. If Christ was able to justify us through His blood (by His death), how much more will He be able to save us from wrath through His life? It's reiterated in Vs 10; if Jesus was able to make us (enemies of God) friends of God through His *death*, much more, now that we're reconciled we shall be saved by His *life*. In other words, consider how much Jesus was able to accomplish by His death; how much *more* in His resurrection life?

Or look at it like this; if God demonstrated such immeasurable love toward us when we were His *enemies*; how much more will He do for us now that we're His *friends*?

So to answer our question; why would God do this for us (save us, rescue us from the penalty of our own sin/rebellion); it's because of His great love for us. As for how it could be that 1 Man's righteous act could be applied to all of mankind?

⁵ The New King James Version, (1982). (Jn 3:16-17) Nashville: Thomas Nelson.
⁶ The New King James Version, (1982). (Jn 15:13) Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

Vs 12-14

I want you to notice that Paul (& Jesus for that matter) considered the account of Genesis 3 absolutely, historically true. We need to understand that the Adam & Eve account of Genesis 3 is not an optional passage to be accepted/rejected, we can't look at it as a story or some kind of allegory, it is absolute factual history. Listen to me, if you take the truth of Genesis 3 away, than you effectively remove the principles that lay the very foundation that make for our salvation!

When Adam sinned, all of mankind effectively sinned along with him because humanity was bound up in him (in his loins). So sin entered the world through 1 man, Adam, therefore death spread to all men, because all sinned. Every grave on this planet is evidence of the spread & reign of sin since the time of Adam. How do we know that every man/woman & child are sinners? Because all are subject to death.

Now you may not like the fact that you're a sinner due to the act of another man (namely Adam) & you'd like to stand on your own 2 feet. But Paul is developing something here & that is this. If you're not a sinner by the work of one man, then you can't qualify to be made righteous by the work of one Man either. However if we are made sinners in Adam, than we can be made righteous in Christ.

What does Paul mean when he calls Adam a "type" of Him who was to come? What he's saying is that both Adam & Jesus were completely sinless men from the beginning & both of them would do things that had consequences for *all* of mankind.

Vs15-17

Do you see what's happening here. Paul is speaking of what we call a "Federal Headship" 1 man, representing all the people. We live under a "Federal Government". 1 man, (your president), represents (for better or worse) all the people of this entire nation. Even so, Adam & J.C. both stand as Federal representatives over mankind.

Both of them did something & each act had an effect on all of mankind. But the free gift is not like the offense. This is where they part ways, Adams act resulted in offense, & the offense that he gave had consequences upon the entire human race. His offense resulted in death, "many died". However the free gift of the grace of God through Christ yields a *different* result, which abounds to "many" as well.

Paul begins to compare & contrast in Vs 16. What was it that came through the one who sinned? Judgment resulting in *condemnation*.

However the end of many offenses being laid upon Jesus (the sin of the world) was accredited righteousness resulting in *justification*. So in Adam we receive the penalty of death, in Christ we receive the gift of righteousness leading to life (everlasting life). Notice Vs 18.

Vs 18

Listen, we are born into this world w/Adam as our representative. The result is that we are under the heavy hand of condemnation. But there's hope. Jesus said we have to be *born again* as by the Spirit of God. & In being born again we are translated (we now have our citizenship not in this world but in the kingdom of God) & find now our identity in Christ. Now, (having been born again) *Jesus* is our representative.

You might say that we all have a choice to elect our representative. To choose Adam (which is to reject Christ) results in judgment & condemnation. To choose Jesus results in righteousness leading to justification.

How does one choose Jesus? Takes us back to Jn 3:16 doesn't it? "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that *whosoever believes in Him* should not perish but have everlasting life." It's about turning from our sin & trusting in J.C. His finished work upon the cross, His body broken, His blood shed, Him paying the debt He did not owe because we owed a debt we could not pay. Believing that 3 days later He rose again from the dead & behold, He is alive forevermore. It's that simple. Later on in Rom 10 Paul will go on to say, "*...if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the Scripture says, 'Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame.'*"⁷

Judgment leading to condemnation, or righteousness leading to justification, the choice is yours.

Vs 19

This is the "how". Why would God do this for us? Sending Christ to die for us, to save us from the error of our own ways? Because of His great love w/which He has loved us. How? How can one Man's act be applied to all of mankind? In that if 1 man's disobedience can make all of mankind sinners. Even so by 1 Man's obedience many (that is as many as would call upon the Lord) can be made righteous.

⁷ The New King James Version. (1982). [Ro 10:9-11]. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

It's the only way it could work, because if we had to represent ourselves we'd all perish because all have sinned & fall short of the glory of God. So God in His wisdom elected Adam to represent us all leading to condemnation, that Christ could represent us all leading to our justification.

Vs 20-21

Isn't God amazing? We might think that where sin abounded, God's anger or judgment might have abounded much more. But God's love is so incredible, so astounding that *grace* abounded *much more* where we might have otherwise expected wrath.

But notice that grace is no friend to sin. Some fear that if you're to learn the nature of God's grace it might lead to you feeling as though you have license to sin. The truth is that grace doesn't accommodate sin in anyway. Notice that grace reigns (Vs 21) *through righteousness*. Grace confronts sin w/the atonement of the cross & the victory won at the open/empty tomb.

You guys the justification of eternal life is found in the resurrection of J.C. The Son of Man was delivered into the hands of sinful men, He was crucified & the 3rd day He rose again. & We praise God. 2,000 yrs later, oceans apart, other-side of the world & the power of the resurrection is still at work in our lives. One Man's righteous act, resulting in the justification of life. Amen?

Prayer Points:

Lord Jesus we praise You today. That You would leave Heaven & condescend to humanity. Becoming the Son of Man that through You we might become the Sons & daughters of God. You have defeated death & You reign in life & You extend that offer of life to all who will call upon Your name. Lord we love You, we thank You, & we celebrate the victory that You have won...

In Adam is only judgment leading to condemnation, in Christ is righteousness leading to justification. You can stand justified in the sight of God. Listen, all manner of sin has been forgiven man. Jesus dealt w/the sin dilemma upon the cross. The question is what will you do w/Jesus. Accept Him, or reject Him. There's no in between. Let me encourage you to turn from your sin, trust in J.C. that you might be born again by the Spirit of God. Come out of darkness & step into light, be cleansed of your sin today by the blood of J.C.