

JUSTIFIED FREELY BY HIS GRACE**Romans 3:23-24**

Last week: the Pharisee looked to himself for a righteousness that was satisfactory to God. So he exalted himself and had contempt for others. He went away burdened. In for a surprise!

The tax collector looked away to Another for his righteousness. He depended only on mercy, so humbled himself. He went away with a clear conscience and joy. And he will be exalted as a son of God!

Besides Pride and Humility, there is another lesson here: “went home **justified** before God.”

Justification and its basis. This was a central issue in the Reformation.

It is almost totally neglected today.

It is seen as an abstruse debate for idle theologians.

Yet nothing could be more practical.

To introduce this, answer this:

On what ground/basis does God justify you?

- a) faith in Christ
- b) a life of perfect obedience

The issue:

Consider the heart of the Gospel in Paul, seen in one simple phrase:

“justified freely by his grace” (Rom 3:24)

I. JUSTIFIED

A. Its meaning:

Deut 25:1 Prov 17:15 Lk 7:29

B. The problem:

Rom 3:23

C. God's radical solution:

Rom 3:24-26 an innocent eligible Substitute takes my record and pays the debt I owe!

II. FREELY

A. Without C

Gen 29:15 Exod 21:2 II Sam 24:24

B. Without C

I Sam 19:5 Psm 69:4 qtd Jn 15:25 Hos 14:4

III. By His GRACE

Not only undeserved, but we provoked Him to the extreme

So again (cf. last week) if I ever look to what I do to give me a sense of peace with or obligation from God, I am looking to the **wrong person**

Look away to Christ: HIS righteousness attributed to you because you place your trust in Him.

What God has done _____ you, not what God has done _____ you.

What He is doing **in** you is so far short of Christ's character.

What God has done **for** you is **perfect**. Delight in that.

Because of Jesus, God holds **none** of your sins against you

Have you yet looked away from yourself as good enough, to see Jesus' record as the only one good enough for God to justify you and receive you?

Do you begin each day consciously **resting** in your justification that is outside of you and therefore unaffected by your performance?