

Preached on 9/3/23 at GBC - Ruston

"The Glory Of God, Pt.1"

II Cor.4:1

It is the **WILL OF GOD** that every elect, redeemed, justified, regenerated and converted child of God have assurance of their acceptance before God through Christ's accomplished work of redemption. Listen to the words of the beloved Apostle John – *"He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son. And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; [and] he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God."*(I Jn.5:10-13) The writer of Hebrews tells us: *"Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever. Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines. For [it is] a good thing that the heart be established with grace; not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein."*(Heb.13:8,9) Every **JUSTIFIED SAINT** can and truly does glorify God by taking Him at His word – *"Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be. And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sara's womb: He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform."*(Rom.4:18-21) We don't honor and glorify God the Father, or His Son, or the Holy Spirit by being filled with doubt and unbelief. If **ANY SINNER** truly understood the infinite grace and mercy God has been pleased to freely bestow on His people, the writer of this epistle did – *"And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry; Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did [it] ignorantly in unbelief. And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. This [is] a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief. Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting."*(I Tim.1:12-16) Understanding and believing this to be true gave Paul patience in dealing with other sinners, like these he is writing to in this chapter.

Look how he opens this chapter – “*Therefore seeing we have this ministry, **as we have received mercy, we faint not**; But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man’s conscience in the sight of God.*”(Vss.1,2) Paul didn’t put himself into the ministry, but was graciously given this responsibility and called to this office by the Lord. He plainly states - “*we have this **ministry***”. The word translated “**ministry**” means ‘one who executes the commands of another.’ “*This ministry*” he received was not a calling to preach the **LAW**, but a command to preach the glory of God revealed in the Gospel of God’s grace, which he states plainly in the next chapter – “*And all things [are] of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and **hath given to us the ministry** of reconciliation; To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.*”(II Cor.5:18,19) Having been given this ministry to declare God’s grace and mercy to all who would hear, Paul showed much graciousness to these Corinthian believers to whom he was writing. What gave him such a gracious spirit in dealing with other justified sinners? It’s simple – “*as we have received mercy, we faint not.*” To the Apostle Paul, it wasn’t a matter of doubt or question as to whether or not he stood before God **JUSTIFIED**. If that were the question that constantly plagued his mind, he **COULD NOT** and **WOULD NOT** have stated: “*we faint not.*” Matter of fact, if Paul constantly questioned whether he was justified or not, he would have fainted at all times, just like other men do who make a sinner’s **JUSTIFICATION** conditional, something they can’t be certain about. The original word translated “*we faint*” means ‘to be utterly spiritless, to be wearied out, or exhausted’. Paul declared boldly “*we faint not*”, **i.e., we’re not utterly spiritless, worn out, or exhausted**, and those who believe God’s shouldn’t be either. I love what Robert Hawker wrote concerning Paul’s words – “For, as long as this is questionable in the mind and conscience; there will be no settled, steady, firm state, of trusting in GOD the FATHER’S covenant-love, and CHRIST’S all-sufficient merit, blood, and righteousness. **But when a soul is conscious he hath received mercy, all cause for fainting ceaseth.**” Paul told Timothy – “*This [is] a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.*”(I Tim.1:15); “*For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.*”(II Tim.1:12) One of the stanzas from a hymn we sing in the declares – “This is not a vain presumption, **I JUST TAKE HIM AT HIS WORD**. God has sworn **THEY SHALL NOT PERISH, WHO BELIEVE ON ME THEIR LORD.**” That’s the faith of God’s elect, the faith which glorifies and honors the God who “*justifieth the ungodly.*” Think back again to what John wrote: “*He that believeth*

on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son. And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; [and] he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.”(I Jn.5:10-12)

Based on Paul’s opening words in this chapter, I want to spend some time confirming to all our minds the importance of being steadfast in the faith and hope that enabled Paul to boldly declare “*we faint not.*” I’m not concerned about the anxiety and uncertainty of their state before God in those who have merely made a **PROFESSION OF FAITH**. But I am concerned deeply that so many of God’s redeemed, who have rested by God-given faith in Christ as “*the Lord our RIGHTEOUSNESS*” live in a state of doubt and suspense concerning this **BLESSED** and **PRECIOUS** point of **FAITH**. The cause of this doubt and suspense comes from the weakness and deficiency of their faith, **not from any defect in the truth of this Scriptural reality**. The life of faith in God’s chosen people, according to the Scriptures, is to be a life of trust, assurance, and confirmation. The Prophet Isaiah, long before Christ came, declared – “*And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever.*”(Isa.32:17) **LISTEN TO ME**: This isn’t a hypothetical! This isn’t a maybe, hope so situation. **Let me read you the verse in YLT** – “**And a work of THE RIGHTEOUSNESS HATH BEEN PEACE, And A SERVICE OF THE RIGHTEOUSNESS** — Keeping quiet and confidence unto the age.” This is the **PROMISE OF GOD!** God by Isaiah also declared: “*Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusteth in thee.*”(Isa.26:3) **Let me state this as clearly and simply as I can** – If there is any uncertainty concerning the justified state of a **CHILD OF GOD**, those sovereignly chosen by God the Father before “*they had done any good or evil*”; those God the Son redeemed by His obedience unto death at Calvary; those God the Holy Spirit sovereignly calls, regenerates, and converts under the preaching of God’s Gospel, those blessed promises declared by Isaiah lose all their power and are useless! **Those for whom Christ is “the work of righteousness” cannot be said to “have quietness, and assurance for ever”** as an effect of their interest in and dependence on the righteousness of the **LORD JESUS CHRIST** while the shadow of doubt remains in their minds as to whether or not they’ve received pardon, mercy, and peace through the blood of the cross and are justified by Christ’s accomplished work as our **Surety and Substitute**. The foundation on which every child of God, those truly “*taught of God*” can have such full assurance of faith, which can keep them like Paul from fainting is the heart-felt conviction, that CHRIST, when he stood forth as the Surety of his Church, fulfilled the words of Prophet Daniel – “*Seventy weeks are determined*

upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most.”(Dan.9:24) In this transaction between the Father and the Son, this work of reconciliation, Christ stood as our Surety or sponsor. Everything we deserved fell on Him, and everything He accomplished is ours by imputation. **NOT ONE ATOM OF GUILT**, either **ORIGINAL GUILT** from Adam, or **ACTUAL GUILT** by our personal transgression was left **UNATONED on His people’s conscience**. In other words, if God was satisfied in Christ, and He is the judge of all, why can’t we take Him at His word – “*Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God’s elect? [It is] God that justifieth.*”(Rom.8:33) Quote **Acts 13:38,39**.

Let me close by reading you Robert Hawker’s conclusion on this truth: “Now if I, or every child of GOD, whom GOD hath effectually called by grace, believes the record, which GOD hath given of his dear SON, i.e. “*that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son*”, and by virtue of the infinite value and preciousness of His righteousness and blood-shedding they are justified from all things; how is it possible that there can be any suspense, doubt, or misgiving, on this grand assurance, of the redeemed child of GOD’s hope? Do look, again and again, at the blessed frame of mind Paul was in, and which wholly arose from this one cause: and recollect, that this high privilege, **was not Paul’s privilege only; but the whole Church of GOD are equally begotten to it, and equally entitled to it, with the Apostle; because it ariseth not from any merit, or services in Paul, BUT THE SOLE GIFT OF GOD IN CHRIST.** Oh! my Brother! if like the Apostle, you would faint not, at any, and all the exercises, to which the LORD shall be pleased to call you; see to it, that Paul’s testimony is yours. **AS WE HAVE RECEIVED MERCY, WE FAINT NOT.**”

Here’s the question we must ask ourselves – “**HAVE WE RECEIVED MERCY?**”