

Justification Means Right Relationships

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Romans 3:21-31

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Synopsis:

Up and down our street live numerous people who don't go to any church. If I were to go door to door and ask them, "Would you like to get right with God," or "Would you like to be justified with God?" they would shut the door in my face. They don't speak *Christianese*.

But if I were to ask,

 Would you like to find a life?

 Succeed in life?

 Get life right?

I would bet they would say yes and want to talk.

The fancy Christian word *Justification* is about getting life right. Everyone tries to do it. No one succeeds. The Bible says we get life right through trust in what God has done in Jesus.

I.

GOAL: Right Relationships

Rom 3:22 "the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ"

Rome:

 Paul never been there

 Largest city (Ephesus 4th largest)

 Theme: righteousness

 Theme verse 1:16-17 READ

 Note all occurrences in 3:21-31

 Argument going on from 1:18-3:20, summed up here

 Begins 3:21 "Now apart from the law, the righteousness"

"Get Right with God" = phrase from childhood

 No one asks this anymore

 Everyone tries to get life right

 How?

4 World View Questions: Imagine moving to a new town

1. Where are we?
2. Who are we?
3. What's wrong?
4. What's the solution?

Righteousness = Right relationships in world, society, individual
 Goal = glory (v 23) = What righteousness looks like
 e.g. horse when running, sailboat in wind off Dana Point

How do we get life right?

Paul uses categories of Jew and Gentile (*ethnos*)/Greek to answer

II.

WRONG: Broken Relationships

Rom 3:23 “since all have sinned and fall short of the glory”

Simple answer: We can't do it (last week DEAD, trespass/sin)

Flow of Romans: Argument from 1:18-3:31

YES = Righteousness 1:16-17

NO = Greek/Gentile (nation) and Jew

NO Gentile = 1:18-32

Inner law = plain 1:19

Don't follow it

Leads to confusion

Mess in,

World = worship/value

Society = family, politics

Individual = sexual confusion

Image: Hamlet “To thine ownself be true”

NO Jew = 2:1-3:8

Outer law = rely on law 2:17

Don't follow it

Leads to hypocrisy

Mess in same categories

Image: Tevye in *Fiddler on the Roof*

“Tradition!”

Conclusion: Neither Gentile nor Jew gets life right
Look at 3:23 “all have sinned (miss) and fall short (don’t make it)”

III.

SOLUTION: Relationship with Jesus

Rom 3:24 “they are now justified by his grace as a gift through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus”

4 World View Questions:

1. Where are we?
In an unrighteous world
2. Who are we?
Inner and outer law people
3. What’s wrong?
We can’t get life right, and it’s our problem
“Not my Mother, not my Father, but it’s me, O Lord”
4. What’s the solution?

READ Rom 3:23-25 again

Two words:

- Redemption (3:24)
- Atonement (3:25)

Lev 16 Day of Atonement:

- Actions of High Priest
- Goes into Holy of Holies
 - Sprinkles Mercy Seat = lid on ark/box
 - Hands on goat and sends away (scapegoat)

Two actions:

- Mercy Seat = Atonement, used 21x in LXX
- Like a magnet for sin/trespass/fall short
- Once year demagnetized
- Symbol is not what we do but what God does

Scapegoat = Redemption, paid price
Lamb who takes away sin/trespass/fall short
Once year sent away
Symbol is not what we do but what God does

Conclusion:

God makes right our relationships through demagnetizing *and* taking away sin/trespass/fall short. This is God's doing, symbol in OT, real in NT. Grace = all God

How do we get in on this? What's the solution?

Faith = trust in God through right action in Jesus

Look at vv 22, 25, 26, 27, 28, 30, 31

Faith = *amen* = trust in a person

e.g. getting on the plane in Colo Spgs
going under the knife with Dr. Lo

Whose faith? Both Jesus and ours

If you want to get your life right, trust in Jesus Christ.

Tis so sweet to trust in Jesus
Just to take him at his word
Just to rest upon his promise
Just to know "Thus saith the LORD"
Jesus, Jesus, how I trust him
How I've proved him o'er and o'er
Jesus, Jesus, precious Jesus
O for faith to trust him more

End with Baptismal Font = Mercy Seat