

Justification and Peace

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Romans 5:1-2

During the centuries that have followed the appearance and ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ here on earth, religion has formed itself into at least three camps concerning what salvation and standing before God is made of in terms of the Christian profession. In one camp we find a good crowd of people who insist that salvation and credibility in the presence of God is all about how we behave. These maintain that the Lord Jesus came here, showed us the perfect righteous behavior pattern, and left us with a charge to walk that right path, and by doing that we would be saved and find merit with God. For them, everything depends on whether or not we are able to discover the pathway of perfection in walking, talking, thinking. If we do that, then we will be saved at last because we have attained to a level of sinlessness that we become accepted of God and He is therefore obliged to open the gates of heaven for us and allow us entrance.

There is a second group...this is more of an army than a group. It boasts multitudes of people many whom have made professions of faith in Christ, and many who have not made professions of faith, but believe and promote the second camp view. In that view, Christ indeed set a righteous example for us to follow, and in addition to that, He died for our sins. This army believes and teaches that when we hear the gospel, if we confess that we believe that gospel and that we intend to follow the Lord of that gospel, and the precepts of that gospel. According to them, Christ did his part in setting the example and in being crucified in order for us to be saved, but now, we have to do our part by obeying all the commandments of the Lord in order to stay saved. If, in the course of being a disciple of Christ, we should fall into some kind of sinful state (we don't know how the state is defined, nor how far we must fall, nor what kind of sin fits the category that we must not fall into) we become lost again and must find our way back out of that state and get re-saved.

Some soldiers in this camp interpret falling into some sinful state as being equivalent to losing ones faith, of falling into reprobation (which sinful state again is not defined...we wonder if this falling into a sinful state means one act of such a sin, developing a habit of doing such a sin, or adopting 5 sins, or 10; or of falling into the habit of practicing 5 or 10 sins). By adopting this definition, they can then demonstrate that certain people have fallen from grace and they can then define this as "getting lost again."

There is a third camp. People in this camp really do not believe what they do because of a religious philosophy they have adopted. Rather, they have adopted a religious view because they have experienced something that has formed in them a viewpoint born of that experience. They believe that Jesus Christ did two things for them. He lived a perfect life and He became sin for them and paid for that sin in the event that started at Calvary. They have come to this belief, because that same Christ began to form Himself in them at the time of a new birth they experienced, and because He is still forming Himself in them as they live each day guided by His

Holy Spirit that lives in them.

The first two camps we mentioned have at least two things in common. Both camps believe that there is an element of human works involved in assuring the salvation process succeeds. Connected with this, they believe that you can get saved, then get lost again. They also believe that this staying saved is dependent on you not sinning, and getting lost again is dependent on you sinning. It takes only the very least amount of self-honesty to force us to acknowledge that if this axiom were true, that absolutely no one of us could stay saved for any length of time, and all of us would most certainly get lost again before each and every sundown came. It is in regard to this doctrinal error that the third camp parts ways. And that is because this is also where the bible parts ways with those two camps.

The bible clearly shows that salvation is all about, and only about, a work of God within a human. This is the position held by the third camp that we mentioned. Our text verse is a biblical statement tailor made for this third camp, and for every person who ever gives any thought to what true salvation is. And it also has a message and a warning for those in the other camps of religious belief. As we look at the meat of this verse, may the Holy Spirit enlighten us to the great truths in it!

I. The Believer Is Justified By Faith

We must define “justified”

- Gr. Dikaioo = render just or innocent (render: to cause to become)
 - > So, our text teaches that faith causes one to become innocent or just before God

- **How is the believer justified by faith?**
 - > See Romans.
 - Romans 4:1-5 What shall we say then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found? 2 For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath *whereof* to glory; but not before God. 3 For what saith the Scripture? **Abraham believed God**, and it was **counted** unto him **for righteousness**. 4 Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. 5 But to him that worketh not, but **believeth on him that justifieth** the ungodly, his **faith is counted for righteousness**.
 - Notice: Abraham believed God and it was counted to him for righteousness
 - This Abrahamic “believing” is about accepting the promise of God concerning things to come
 - > Acts 13:38 Be it known unto you therefore, men *and* brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins:
Acts 13:39 And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.
 - > For the difference between presumed justification by works and justification by faith see Luke 18:10-14

- > For a contrast between right doing (behavior for merit or credit) and being counted righteous (or justified) by the Lord see Romans 3:19-22
 - Romans 3:19 Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.
Romans 3:20 Therefore **by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight**: for by the law *is* the knowledge of sin.
Romans 3:21 But now **the righteousness of God without the law is manifested**, being witnessed by the law and the prophets;
Romans 3:22 **Even the righteousness of God *which is* by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe**: for there is no difference:

■ **So, the believer is rendered innocent or just by faith. Question: Is this justification permanent?**

- > See Romans 8:29-30 and 38-39
 - Romans 8:29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate *to be* conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.
Romans 8:30 Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.
- > **For another biblical perspective on the permanency of justification see:**
 - We have to establish that those who are justified by faith are those called sanctified:
 - Acts 26:18 To open their eyes, *and* to turn *them* from darkness to light, and *from* the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.
- > **Now, let's see the permanency of the condition** that God puts us in when He justifies us by faith in Christ (by which we are sanctified).
 - Hebrews 10:14 For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified.

II. Those Justified by Faith Have Peace With God

- We see a bumper sticker around from time to time that says, “No Jesus (or God), No Peace; Know Jesus (or God) Know peace.”
 - > The first thing we think of is the opposite of this biblical truth: that is, those presuming to be justified by any other route do not have peace with God:
 - > This peace, or lack thereof should be used as a barometer
 - > This peace is an essential credential of being truly considered innocent in the presence of God
 - > If you are under the conviction that you have to be doing something to be considered innocent before God, you do not have that peace
 - > If you appreciate that God's acceptance of you as an innocent one is all because Christ has settled your sin debt, then grace is operating in your soul, and you will find this peace there also
 - > If you think tht God is going to be obliged to give you some credit based on your

conduct, you do not have the peace

■ **Where does this peace come from?**

> **Recognizing that the enmity that sin builds between yourself and God has been erased by an act of God**

- Romans 8:7 “...the carnal mind *is* enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.”
- Philippians 4:7 And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

> **Recognizing that the grace of God is large enough to cover the problem of your imperfect character**

- We have a testimony about our imperfect character that parallels that of Paul the apostle:
 - Romans 7:18 For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but *how* to perform that which is good I find not.
 - Romans 7:19 For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.
- But, we also have a testimony about grace that parallels that of the Apostle, also:
 - Romans 7:22 For I delight in the law of God after the inward man:
 - Romans 7:25 “...with the mind I myself serve the law of God...”
- This is far different from the claims of some folks in the other two camps I mentioned: Some of them claim sinless perfection. The bible says (1John 1:8) “If we say that we have (present tense) no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.”

> **Recognizing that the Lord has provided you with a guide, Comforter, and intercessor in the person of the Holy Spirit**

> **Recognizing that Christ himself IS OUR PEACE:** This in apposition to the idea that peace with God is about doing some thing or being some kind of person:

- Ephesians 2:13 But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.
- **The object of our peace:** Ephesians 2:14 For **he is our peace**, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition *between us*;
- **The action bringing our peace:** Ephesians 2:15 Having **abolished in his flesh the enmity**, *even* the law of commandments *contained* in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, *so* making peace;
- **The outcome of the action which brought our peace:** Ephesians 2:16 And that he might **reconcile both unto God** in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity

thereby:

- **The spread of that peace:** Ephesians 2:17 And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh.
- **The non-discriminating character of that peace:** Ephesians 2:18 For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.
- **The consolidating power of that peace:** Ephesians 2:19 Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God;

III. Conclusion

If, as we have shown the bible teaches, salvation from beginning to end is all about a work of God upon a human soul, then where does works fit in. The bible clearly teaches that works are critical to the Christian ethic. We find that scripture is clear that “faith without works is dead, being alone.” (James 2:20, 26)

James 2:20 But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?

James 2:26 For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.

So where do works fit in? Answer: they are a **PRODUCT of faith**, not an essential element that ensures salvation, but an essential element that proves that salvation has been wrought in the heart of the person who has experienced faith in Christ.