

- 1 To preface this, I'd like to venture over to the book of Job. Job was a man who no one around him could find a fault with. Job had the approach Paul has been trying to create for us reading Romans chapters 1-3. Job, one of the most righteous men in the Bible, a man commended by God Himself for his faith, in Job chapter 9 verse 2 asked, "how do I get right with God?" and that's the question Paul wants us to be asking by the time we get to Romans 3:21.
 - a. Job lays out the dilemma for us in the following verses after 9:2, verse 3, "If one wished to dispute with Him, he could not answer Him once in a thousand times." Verse 12, "were He to snatch away, who could restrain Him? Who could say, 'what are you doing?'" Verses 14 and 15, "How then can I answer Him, and choose my words before Him? For though I were right, I could not answer; I would have to implore the mercy of my Judge." Verse 20, "Though I am righteous, my mouth will condemn me; though I am guiltless, He will declare me guilty."
 - b. This is like Paul saying in 1 cor 4:4, "For I am conscious of nothing against myself, yet I am not by this acquitted; but the one who examines me is the Lord."
 - c. Job 9:32, "For [God] is not a man as I am that I may answer Him, that we may go to court together." Man and God going to court together, keep that image in your mind.
 - d. Job is filled with a sense of his smallness next to God; "[God] makes the bear, Orion, the Pleiades, and the chambers of the south," *what am I next to God?! What can I do to be right with Him?*
 - e. That is every religion's goal; to answer this question, this universal question, "what can I do to get a nice seat in the afterlife? What can I do to be right with God?"
 - i. Buddhists say you have to "empty yourself"
 - ii. Hindus say you have to work your way up the reincarnation ladder by being nice
 - iii. Muslims say you have to pray this direction this many times a day
 - iv. Baptists say you have to homeschool your kids (I'm kidding)
 - f. All basically the same answer: you get right with God by something that you do.
 - g. If you came thinking Christianity is 6 step easy guide to salvation, I'm glad you're here.
 - h. The Bible clearly shows that no one will be right with God like that. The answer has NOTHING TO DO WITH YOU. Salvation isn't in guidelines, activities, going to church, giving your weekend "amen" because it feels good. If you don't think so, read Romans chapters 1-3.
- 2 But this is the beginning of the tilt from condemnation to salvation
Paul spent Ch 1-3 making sure every man knows they're condemned by the law, guilty before God and he'll spend the rest of the letter elaborating upon the truths found in the latter part of Romans 3.
 - i. What we've got so far is; we're all tired of hearing how hopeless we are. Every person, law keeper or not, is guilty, and we're ready to move on.
- 3 Good news! This is the portion of the book that reveals how we get right w/God
- 4 **PRAY**
- 5 The main idea of this passage is that we're made right with God by justification (being made innocent) through faith.
- 6 So, we're going to talk about some **facets of justification**, which is at the heart of the Gospel.

1 **First facet: Justification Is something we all need.** Rom 1-3 Rom 3:23

- a. What is justification? Just-as-if-I'd-never-sinned, Justified. Kinda cutesy, right?

- b. “all have sinned and fall short”—sin is so corrupting and far reaching that the sin Adam committed in the garden at the beginning of the earth has invaded and pervades every inch of human and creation’s existence, even to our very natures.
 - i. David said, “I was conceived in sin,” *I was at enmity w/God from before I was even born!*
 - 1. Parents, do you have to teach your children to lie or tell the truth? You don’t have to teach a kid to lie, you have to teach him to tell the truth; the fact that we’re fallen by nature is evident from our self-centered view of life. Do you remember finding out that the world doesn’t revolve around you?
- c. David, in psalm 51 was declaring his guiltiness before God, but Job came at it from a different angle than David, Job exclaims that “even though I judge myself innocent, when I stand before God, I am at fault.”
 - i. How can a man like Job be so condemned before God? Because men say your only guilty if you perform sinful actions, but Jesus said, “if you even look at a woman with lust in your heart, you’ve committed adultery.” “You’ve heard that if you murder, you’re liable to the court, well, if you’re even angry at your brother, your guilty enough to go to court for it.” “if you even call your brother a fool, you’re guilty enough to go to hell for it.”
- d. Even desiring sin means you’re guilty, according to Jesus, anyhow. Who can stand up against such tall standards? “there is none righteous, not even one; there is none who understands, there is none who seeks for God,” what does that mean? It means that apart from God, your every desire is motivated by selfish gain. It means that your ability to fulfil your purpose, the reason you were made, which is to exult God and enjoy Him forever, is impossible because your heart is as lifeless as a rock. That’s what scripture says, your hearts are hard apart from God and every person is born apart from God, except Jesus.”
- e. That was our first point, the Gospel is something we all need.

2 **Second facet: Justification Is something we all need, but not something we can earn.** Rom 3:20

- a. The emphatic point is apart from legalism.
- b. This is particularly hard for people whose lives are governed by a lot of rules—Like the Jews. Paul said, “by works of the law, no flesh will be justified in God’s sight.” Rom 3:20. “Okay Paul, if being God’s chosen people and keeping the law doesn’t get us salvation, what does? What purpose does the law serve, then?” the Jews would ask.
- c. But he answered that already, the law isn’t for salvation, it’s for condemnation (it shows you how badly you fail). “by works of the law, none are justified, through the law comes the knowledge of sin.” Or later in Romans 7:13, “through the commandment, sin becomes utterly sinful, sin is made out to be what it really is”—My paraphrase.
 - i. Rom 3:20 “Through the Law comes the knowledge of sin.” You wouldn’t fully know what sin was unless the details were spelled out.
 - ii. But there is still that high standard of the law to abide by, because if we don’t abide by it, we’re guilty enough to be thrown into “fiery hell.” “Be ye holy, for I am holy. Be ye perfect, as your Father in heaven is perfect.” The standard of the Law is never lessened; it is never lowered, It is always the same; it demands perfection.
 - iii. Galatians 3 says, “If you break one part of the Law, you’re guilty of it all.” Not the best law-keeping Jew could keep it well enough to get right with God. And neither can you. Trying to get salvation by works is less than fruitless.
 - iv. Trying to earn salvation by works is like if we all decided to stand on the edge of the Grand Canyon, and the objective was to jump to the other side, What would happen?—we would all be in different spots on the bottom. All equally dead. the law warns, “hey! You’re all gonna die unless there’s a bridge!” The law only measures our inability to jump that canyon.
- d. What was the law for? The law condemns us; however, it also acts as a witness to the solution to our plight of inability—Jesus Christ.

- i. God told Adam that a seed would come from the woman and crush Satan's head, thus saving his people.
- ii. Leviticus is all about what JC is to us; Lamb, Priest, blood, etc. "sacrifice this spotless animal here, at this time, in these clothes, take a bath first, make sure the blood gets put here and not there," on and on. What's all of that about? Jesus, it's about how he is the lamb we sacrifice, it's his blood we spill fresh with every "new" sin, he is the priest standing before God on our behalf.
- iii. Job, back in chapter 9 said, "God's not a man that I can take to court! There's no umpire between us who may lay his hand upon us both. Let Him remove His rod from me, let dread of Him not terrify me. Then I would speak and not fear Him; but I am not like that in myself." *I'm no umpire.* In Job's longing for an umpire between him and God, we can see, nearly explicitly, he's wishing for Jesus. *Where's my representative?!*

3 **3rd facet: Justification Is something we all need, not something we can earn, and it Imparts God's rightness.** It makes us right with Him through JC's blood. Rom 3:24

- a. Each and every person should rightly go to hell because we've broken the law.
- b. Picture this: Man is on trial, we have no defense, we're declared guilty before God the judge. Yet, God is loving and wants to justify us, the sinner, but how? That umpire Job talked about, that's how.
- c. Man is on trial, Christ takes the punishment, He says, "I'm willing to take the punishment for their wrong." God executes His plan to reconcile man with Himself and declares us Justified.
 - i. Rom 3:25,26. That's why God could justly "pass over sins previously committed," because those sins all got paid for at the cross.
- d. Why does Christ's blood work, why does it satisfy God's wrath (propitiation)?
 - i. Jesus, because He's an infinite being, can take an infinite amount of punishment in a few hours on the cross.
 - ii. 2 Cor 5:21, "He became sin for us." He bore our sins

4 **Justification Is something we all need, not something we can earn, it Imparts God's rightness, and it's an underserved gift acquired through faith.** We didn't deserve to be pardoned, Christ made that possible. Rom 3:22

- a. God offered this gift to every person but only those with faith receive it
 - i. What is faith? Believing what God says is true, put simply.
 - ii. Whoever's spirit is moved to believe and confess (faith) the gospel as the truth is saved from an otherwise inevitable eternal death.
 - iii. Main Idea: Being right with God is only and simply possible by believing God has made that available.
- b. It was a high cost. It says Christ's Blood is a propitiation for God's wrath.
 - i. Propitiation means satisfaction, Christ's blood satisfied God's wrath.
 - ii. It was a gift. You don't pay for the gift, someone else does. That's what's so important here, someone else presented you with a gift that you could've never gotten yourself. He makes your hard, rock heart soft, a heart of beating flesh with life and blood running through it.

5 **Justification Is something we all need, not something we can't earn, it Imparts God's rightness, it's an underserved gift acquired through faith, and it produces transformation.** It creates action, we will respond to it.

- a. Train
- b. Coins: coins are made to conform to an image by some outside pressure exerted on it—that's what trying to get salvation by works does, it doesn't change the inside, only the outside, it looks different

- c. Butterflies: what the Gospel does to a person is often compared to what happens to a caterpillar. It changes from the inside out. That's what God does; changes us from the inside, inside pressure.
- d. God changes a person from the inside—transformation. The world changes people from the outside.
- e. Real belief brings about real action because it comes from our heart
 - i. The Hebrew word for Heart is interchangeable for the Greek word mind, it means the very core of who we are; the reason we do everything the way we do it.
 - ii. Rom 10 "Faith comes by hearing," believing God comes by hearing and giving heed to God's words; If you have no idea who Jesus is, and who God is and what they've promised, you have no bases for faith.
 - iii. Saying you believe and trust God without knowing something about his character and believing his promises is like picking a random person off the street and saying, "I trust you, here, watch my child for me while go do this thing." That would be putting the most important thing to you (your heart and soul) into the hands of a stranger. To say you trust them is simply not true, that's not how trust works. Trust comes by observing someone to see if they do what they say—that's why we read the bible and pray, to know God more. The more we know God, the more we have peace and assurance that what He says is true.
 - iv. That means that justification by faith is a strong, unwavering intellectual and emotional belief that You're guilty before God, but that Jesus Christ's blood is good enough to cover all of your sins. And that faith or lack thereof will be evidenced by action.
- f. Do you believe that? Do you really believe that you are perfected (made complete and whole) before God by Christ and no good or bad thing you have done or will do can ever change that? God doesn't change His mind when He adopts someone. His ability to make them like Christ is unaffected by their sin because Jesus paid for that and made it possible.
 - i. Some of you are terrible sinners, but far from unsavable; black, white, abused, abuser, prostitute, pimp; there's not a single factor or variable that the power of the Gospel will come across in your life and say, "nope, can't save that one, way too sinful." Typically, the gospel is most powerful to people who really feel like they need it—the people who've looked their sin in the eye and recognized it for what God says it is. Take a look around, there's a good chance that you come to church with the worst sort of people. Each believer is a miraculous display of how good God's power and love is at washing the filth off of us.
 - ii. Heb 10:14 says, "For by one offering, [which is Jesus], [God] has perfected for all time those who are sanctified." Our faithlessness does not nullify the faithfulness of God.
 - iii. "all have sinned and fall short," "the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life," ""If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved." That's the Gospel and that's how it works.
- g. Main Idea: Being right with God is only and simply possible by believing God has made that available. That's all it takes; you've heard it, now you have to interact with it. Most of you have heard the Gospel a lot—be careful that it doesn't become weak and commonplace in your heart and mind. You NEED it to be as good as God says it is. You NEED to know that the Gospel is a work of God when your child has jumped so far off the deep-end that NOTHING but God could reconcile you. You need to know that the Gospel is as powerful as HE says it is when your life and lives around you fall to pieces and you have NOTHING left. You need to know the Gospel matters when you tell starving and desperate people that this is more important than their next meal. You need to know the Gospel still applies to you when you've messed up with someone you love and they give-up on you... when they walk away from you because you hurt them and there's NOTHING you can do about it now.

6 You NEED the Gospel because without it NOTHING in your life matters in the end.

- a. Don't wait to face this.