

Session 17: The Believer's Justification

Key Passage: Philippians 3:8-9

Part 1: The terms:

- **To be justified: δικαιόω**
 - Romans 3:24-26
 - Romans 3:28
 - Romans 5:1, 9
 - Galatians 3:11
 - 1 Corinthians 6:11
- **Justification: δικαίωσις**
 - Romans 4:25
- **To be counted as righteous: λογίζομαι**
 - Romans 4:3-5

Part 2: Definition: To be declared or counted righteous before God.

- **Romans 3:19-22**
- **Philippians 3:8-9**
 - This is a legal term anticipating a claim, a defense/prosecution, a standard, and a verdict.
 - Justification is instantaneous not gradual.
 - We are declared righteous not made righteous when we are justified.
 - Our justification is on the basis of imputed righteousness not infused righteousness.
 - It is by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone.

The significance of our justification:

- **Problem 1: How can a sinner be declared righteous before a holy God?**
 - Ecclesiastes 7:20
 - Isaiah 64:6
 - Proverbs 17:15
- **Problem 2: How can God forgive sin without compromising His justice?**
 - Romans 3:24-26
 - Romans 4:5
 - Christ removed our guilt.
 - He satisfied God's just response to our sin.
 - He paid the price for our redemption.
 - We have been declared righteous in Him.

Part 3: The basis of our justification:

- **The shedding of Christ's blood:**
 - **Cleansing:** "To declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past..."
 - **Satisfaction:** "A propitiation through faith in his blood..."
 - **Payment:** "Through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus..."
- **The imputed righteousness of Christ:** "That he might be just, and the justifier..."
 - **Romans 3:22**
 - **Romans 4:3-7**
 - **Philippians 3:8-9**

Part 4: The means through which we are justified: We are justified by faith alone.

- **Romans 3:28**
- **Romans 5:1**
- **Galatians 2:16**
- **Galatians 3:11, 24**

Part 5: The difference between justification in James and Romans

- **The point of James 2: Maturing faith can be verified: 2:21-23**
 - **Observation 1: We know when Abraham was declared righteous by God: Genesis 15**
 - **Romans 4:3**
 - **Galatians 3:6**
 - **James 2:23**
 - **Genesis 15:6**
 - **Observation 2: We know the means through which God made that declaration: "Abraham believed God..."**
 - **Observation 3: We know the basis by which we the observer can be unquestionably convinced of Abraham's faith.**
 - "Justified by works, when he had offered Isaac..."
 - "The scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God..."
 - "And he was called the Friend of God..."
 - **Explanation:** James was not looking at the moment that God, justified Abraham, but rather when we, the observer, became convinced that Abraham was truly a believer: **2:22** "Seest thou..."
- **The contrast between James and Romans: The way we are declared righteous before God and the way we are declared righteous before other people is different: 2:24:** "Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only..."

- **These verses reveal there are two different potential points of reference:**
 - **God's Courtroom:** God counts us righteous in His courtroom on the basis of the imputed righteousness of Christ
 - **Romans 3:19-24**
 - **Romans 4:4-8**
 - **Man's Courtroom:** People count each other as righteous when they see the verifiable fruits of new life in Christ
 - **The example of Rahab: 2:25**
 - **The spies believed that Rahab had faith in the God of Israel, because she was willing to put her life on the line to assist them.**
 - **Our observable love for other Christians: John 13:35**
 - **Our observable growth into Christlikeness: 1 John 3:1-3**

Part 6: Why are genuine Christians distinguished by a living faith?

- **Reason 1: They have been regenerated:**
 - **John 5:24**
 - **2 Corinthians 5:17**
- **Reason 2: They are indwelt by the Spirit who is actively shaping them into the image of Christ:**
 - **Romans 8:3-9**
 - **Romans 12:2**
 - **2 Corinthians 3:18**
- **Reason 3: They are the objects of God's loving fatherly care:**
 - **Hebrews 12:5-7, 10-11**