



# The Kingdom Perspective

## Our Justification Narratives

Hello, this is Pastor Don Willeman of Christ Redeemer Church. Welcome to The Kingdom Perspective.

I don't know about you, but I tend to have interesting conversations on airplanes. A few years ago, I sat next to a researcher who has traveled the world over detailing what people do when something goes wrong in their life. What are the universal patterns of response we all have regardless of culture, age or socio-economic circumstances?

He found that immediately after something goes wrong, we begin to tell ourselves a "justification story". We try to find a cause, so that we can pin blame, often to exonerate ourselves and cast the guilt onto someone or something else.

This researcher's "discovery" shouldn't surprise us. If we just reflect on our everyday relationships with our closest family members and co-workers, we will see this pattern again and again. We always try to justify ourselves relative to others.

Now, why? Why are we so driven toward such justification narratives? Why is it that our knee-jerk response is to justify ourselves and our actions, as if we are on trial, living our lives in a courtroom before a judge?

Well, if you are familiar with the Bible the answer shouldn't surprise you. It is because we are. The New Testament book of Romans tells us that we intuitively know our lives are being lived before the ultimate Judge of the universe before whom we will have to give an account. We will be judged by our Creator for our every thought, word, and deed, and on that final judgment day God will render to everyone exactly what they deserve. He alone will settle the score. Thus, deep in our hearts our consciences are constantly either accusing or defending our every action.

Something to think about from The Kingdom Perspective.

"For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse."

~Romans 1:18-20 (ESV)

"He will render to each one according to his works: to those who by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, he will give eternal life; but for those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, there will be wrath and fury. There will be tribulation and distress for every human being who does evil, the Jew first and also the Greek, but glory and honor and peace for everyone who does good, the Jew first and also the Greek. For God shows no partiality.

For all who have sinned without the law will also perish without the law, and all who have sinned under the law will be judged by the law. For it is not the hearers of the law who are righteous before God, but the doers of the law who will be justified. For when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do what the law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law. They show that the work of the law is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness, and their conflicting thoughts accuse or even excuse them on that day when, according to my gospel, God judges the secrets of men by Christ Jesus."

~Romans 2:6-15 (ESV)

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