

Convent Avenue Baptist Church
Wednesday Bible Study 3/3/10
Pastor Jesse Williams

The Articles of Faith; What we believe...

Article V. Justification

Genesis 15:1-6, Romans 3:20-28, Romans 4:1-8, 25; Romans 5:1-2, 9

The term “justification” is a legal term that refers to the act of pronouncing someone righteous and/or an acquittal from guilt. As we see in this doctrinal teaching, justification is a blessing that is bestowed on us by God because of our faith in God and God’s act of salvation in Jesus Christ. Our works have nothing to do with whether or not we are justified, rather our works are subsequent evidence that we *have been* justified by God. Not only does God forgive our sins and pay the price for our sins; but He then also declares us to be righteous in His sight because we accept Jesus Christ as our savior by faith. Justification is the means by which God declares that we have met His standards of holiness and righteousness. The miracle of Christianity is that we did not do anything to make this possible. Jesus Christ did it all, and we accept God’s invitation by faith.

What is required of us is that we believe God and have authentic faith in God. When God sees our authentic faith, He counts it as righteousness for us as he did in the case of Abraham. Notice that Abraham has no concrete evidence to prove why he should believe God. Yet there is something within him that enables him to truly believe God. The scripture then says that God counted it as righteousness for Abraham. That is true faith that leads to our justification.

One of the great sins of humanity is the sin of unbelief. Where there is unbelief or lack of faith, the full extent of the blessings of God cannot be realized because there will always be a human temptation to think that our blessings are as a result of something that we have done. This example of Abraham being declared righteous by God in the Old Testament is written to make a persuasive argument in the early church that Justification is a gift from God based on faith not works. When Jews felt that they were spiritually superior to Gentiles, Paul masterfully pointed out that this declaration by God on Abraham happened *before* the nation of Israel existed and *before* Abraham was ever circumcised! Therefore, the blessing and promise of God is not about cultural heritage, religious rituals or any other works. It is solely based on our faith and belief in God. Faith is absolutely necessary in order to be justified by God. Faith gets God’s attention! The reality of being justified by God is important because;

1) We have Peace with God.

When we receive justification, God Himself declares us righteous. Therefore we are in a right relationship with God because Jesus has made it possible for us to meet His standards of holiness and righteousness. If it had not been for Jesus, we could have never attained a state of being at peace with God. We would always be in a broken, dysfunctional relationship because of the fall and sin. But now, God himself makes it possible for us to have peace with Him.

2) We have Access to God.

When God justifies us, the peace with God that we are blessed with opens the door of access to God. He is our source of joy and hope. Things that we used to rely on the world to give us are

no longer our priority. We can now boldly go to God's throne of grace in prayer and make our petitions known to Him because He has declared us righteous before Himself. Sin breaks the relationship and access, but justification restores it to where God initially intended it to be.

3) We are saved from the Wrath of God.

As unpopular as it may be to say in our society now, sin has consequences! The bible teaches that the wages of sin is death. And additionally, there are other consequences to sinful actions that affect us in daily living aside from being separated from God. When we receive justification from God and God declares us righteous, then we are saved from the wrath and judgment of God because the sacrifice of Jesus is covering us. If it were not for Jesus, we would have no cover to shield us from the wrath of a Holy God. But because we accept Jesus Christ by faith, when God looks at us He sees the covering of the blood of Jesus that pays the debt. So instead of receiving wrath, we are declared righteous because of Jesus. That is why we are so thankful for Jesus Christ! Without Him we could never be justified because there is nothing we could have done to earn it.