

General Topics :: How are we justified?

How are we justified? - posted by dann (), on: 2005/3/7 18:27

I have been troubled over this, this past week, so I will spill my thoughts here, for discussion.

Scripture teaches that Christ's righteousness is reckoned unto us if we believe on Him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead (c.f Romans 4:24).

That is, a believer is not justified by their own righteousness, but the righteousness of Jesus Christ is reckoned to their account.

-HOWEVER-

Scripture also teaches that sin shall not have dominion over the believer; that since the believer is no longer under the law, but is now under grace the believer -can and should- have victory over sin - since they are no longer sin's slave. This passage doesn't stand alone - but the same idea is soberly preached throughout the new testament.

It seems to me that there are two commonly held views - both extreme, and both incorrect. (edit: cleaned up extraneous use of word extreme...)

The first view says that there is no such thing as victory over sin - that such a thing is theological fiction - and that those who adhere to it are sadly mistaken.

The second view says there is no such thing as imputed righteousness - that a believer can never be sin's slave - and therefore, a person only becomes a Christian when they gain victory over sin.

I believe both are incorrect.

I believe that a person is justified by Christ's righteousness imputed to them the moment they place saving faith in Jesus Christ - but that this moment does not necessarily {go} hand in hand with freedom from sin.

Freedom from sin is available to every believer - and God expects us to pursue it. It comes only as a gift of grace - grace meaning divine enablement - or power. This same grace is freely given to those who are humble - {this imparting of grace is} otherwise known as an anointing of the Holy Spirit (the Spirit of Grace). {It is} this same Spirit of Grace that helps our weaknesses, comforts us, enables us and empowers us to live the Christian life.

The apostles were filled with the Spirit on more than one occasion, yet Peter sinned even after he was filled. This 'baptism of the Spirit' - this 'victory over sin' - this 'anointing' - whatever you want to call it - it {cannot be} a one time thing {since} we are commanded to be being kept filled with the Holy Spirit. I think that {is just another way of saying} walk humbly with our God. {When} we do, we will not lack 'victory over sin.'

It is a mind-numbingly simple formula - but never the less, the believer who humbles himself consistently before God, will have consistent victory over sin.

This victory in no way justifies the believer - it is just the avenue of service - of fellowship, of communion and blessing. The believer is justified solely through the imputed righteousness of Christ - but is empowered solely through the anointing that results from a humble walk with their God.

Am I way off, bang on, twisting something?

let me know.

Dan
/V
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(EDITS: anywhere you see the curly braces {} I have edited the text for clarity)

Re: How are we justified?, on: 2005/3/7 19:38

I think you said that quite well. Thank you brother. I believe that clarification was much needed.

Eph 2:8-9 "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast."

Christ has set us free, so let us walk free! Saying that there is no complete victory over sin would be like saying to a criminal in jail "we are setting you free, we have completely erased your criminal record, we are not going to put you to death for your crime, however you must stay bound here in this cell for the rest of your life." Some freedom!! Your free but you have to stay bound? That makes no sense at all.

God is our Captain (Heb 2:10), and we are His soldiers (2Tim 2:3). Does our Captain really send us out to fight a battle that we can not win? Does God not first look and see if we can win this battle? Of course he does and he has declared that we are set free from the stronghold of sin through the blood of Jesus Christ! Heb 9:14 -"how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"

Re: - posted by dann (), on: 2005/3/8 8:06

Thanks Laz. :-)

Dan

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Re: justification and sanctification....., on: 2005/3/8 20:55

I think what you are relating to is two different doctrines. We are saved, ie, justified before our God by the atoning and finished work of Jesus Christ on the Cross; commonly expressed as "the Cross".

Faith without an object is worthless. Couple faith without an object and presumption together and you have a volatile mixture destined to deceive, enslave, and defeat. Our faith is in the Cross. I rest all of my eternal hope in the finished work of the Messiah at the Cross. His Victory is my victory. I have been immersed into Christ. Therefore when God looks at me, all He sees is Christ. What Christ did, I did, by faith. He was bruised, I was bruised. He was beaten, I was beaten in God's eyes. He was nailed to the tree, I was nailed to the tree. He was raised from the dead, glory be to God I was raised from the dead and have made to sit with Him at the right hand of the Father in heavenly places. Alleluia. Alleluia.

1 Cor. 1:18 says that the cross is foolishness to those perishing, but unto us who are being saved, it is the power of God. Somebody ought to shout. It is the power of God. Power to do what? Call down rain out of a clear blue sky? Perhaps, if the Spirit is leading and commands you to do so. But this power is more than that. It will take the spots off a leopard while the leopard sleeps. Let me explain.

Before I was saved, all I wanted to be was a country music star. If you could have cut my spirit open, that is all you would have seen. That and sexual lust. It was all I thought about day and night. If I hadn't been such a drunk, I would have likely made it. But God.....oh God, in His infinite wisdom and mercy would not open that wide door. After I got saved, one morning I woke up and realized that the same God who saved me by my faith in the cross, had also delivered me of my desire to become a country music star. My star was replaced by that great and morning Star. Thank You Jesus.

I did have to go to overcomers class 101. I just believed God for it. Not since the fall of Adam has man had the power to overcome the carnal and evil desires of the fallen nature. They have to be supernaturally removed. We can't fast enough, read the Word enough, pray enough, give enough, enough is enough. There is no rest in that!!!

If you have something in your life that continually trips you up, just ask Jesus to take it away. Admit that you are powerless over it. Place all your hope in that shed blood that ran down Calvary's hill. Our God shall not fail!

Does this mean that we will now live a life of sinless perfection? I don't believe this is so. But sin shall not have dominion over us. Three times Paul asked the Lord to remove that "thorn in the flesh". Some say it was a physical infirmity. I don't think so. Why? Because you don't need grace for physical infirmities. God's answer to Paul's request was that His grace is sufficient for him. Grace=unmerited favor. Paul needed unmerited favor. Furthermore, God said His unmerited favor was sufficient. Aren't you glad His unmerited favor is sufficient? I am too.

If God had removed that thorn in the flesh, the message of grace would have died on the vine. Paul would have swollen in pride and we would all be satanic soup. But God....alleluia. He is ever faithful. He has imputed to us the righteousness of Jesus. I do not believe in eternal security. But I do believe I am eternally secure in Christ.

In Hebrews it speaks of backsliding. Not backsliding as is implied in most pulpits today. The Hebrews writer is talking about leaving Christ and placing our eternal hope in something other than His shed blood; my own works for instance which is nothing more than religion. Oh what an evil peril that is. My God hates religion probably more than homosexuality. You can go to heaven being a homosexual. (by that I mean that homosexual sin can be forgiven and one can be delivered from it by faith in Jesus Christ and Him crucified.) But you shall not enter in depending on your own self made merit which is filthy rags to our God. When He looks at us He must see Jesus. Nothing else will stand in His presence. When He looks for a bride for His Son without spot or wrinkle, all He can see is Jesus. If you do not have His imputed righteousness, you cannot stand boldly before His throne of Grace.

Saints, we really need to get this straightened out and put to rest, once and for all. On Christ the solid rock I stand, all other ground is sinking sand.

Paul said that all things are permitted, but not all things were profitable. Why? Because we are not under the law. But that does not mean we are not under chastisement!!! God is faithful, and chastens His sons and daughters. If not, you nor I are His sons and daughters. If we start playing with sin, like David did, He will bring forth the rod of correction and mercifully try to get us back on track. What was called sin committed by the Christian will make the Christian miserable. We simply cannot continue in it. But it is our worst nightmare to attempt to rid ourselves of the sin nature. Sin nature means that it is natural for the unregenerated man to keep from sinning. It's his nature to sin. When we become born again, we take on a new nature. A nature of righteousness. But Paul tells us that a war begins. If you are a Christian, you know all about this war. In our world, the two are still living, flesh and spirit. But not in God's world. God already reckons our flesh dead with Christ. If we have not died with Him, we have no right to live through His resurrection. You cannot resurrect what has not first died! That flesh will never be regenerated. It will never be perfected. It will never change its desires. I can only be put to death, and that by faith in Jesus Christ and Him crucified. That's why it was Paul's message. It was his message because it is the simple gospel message. It is the gospel of liberty. It is the gospel of eternal life. Somebody ought to be praising God right here!!!

So let us lay aside this weight that so easily besets us and let us press on toward the mark of victory. The victory has already been won. Let us stand complete in Him, giving God all the glory honor and praise. For His Word says that we have already passed from judgement unto light and life. That means that on that day it will be great for us, and terrible for those who knew not Christ; terrible for those who placed their confidence in their own works, their own business, their own strength. There is no joy in that. There is no rest in that. If you find yourself submerged in your self and worn out, simply repent and go back to the cross. Remember that old hymn?

At the Cross, at the Cross

where I first saw the light. (go back, the light is still on.)

Where the burdens of my heart rolled away. (you can get the burdens rolled away right now)

It was there by faith (in the Cross) I received my sight.\o/

And now I am happy all the day.

Go back to the cross and get your happiness back. Rest in Jesus Christ and Him crucified. Let your life become a life of praise and thanksgiving for so great a salvation as this. It's the only salvation that God recognizes. Jesus, our faith in Him, our completeness in Him, is our eternal life. Alleluia. Thanks be to God.

Re:, on: 2005/3/11 23:47

Lahry,

Perhaps you should repent from not using paragraph breaks!!!

My eyes are tired brother....MERCY!!!

In Jest,
Picky400

Re: I'm not your brother, on: 2005/3/12 7:17

I don't know you.

Re: justification, regeneration, imputation, impartation - posted by philologos (), on: 2005/3/12 13:09

We have a whole handful of terms here which need some separating. A couple of years ago I did a little series of studies on Repentance, Justification, Regeneration, Adoption which Greg has available [here](#). You may not agree with everything you hear but it could give you some reference points.

Justification is by faith, total dependence upon God, and nothing else. Add anything to it and you change its nature. You must come just as you are, but you must understand that you cannot remain just as you are. Justification results in the 'reckoning of Christ's righteousness to our account'; this is imputation. It results in a change in our legal status with God. Regeneration, is a term which points rather to a change of nature in which righteousness is imparted, not imputed.

There is a sense in which you can put justification on either side of the word faith. Only faith justifies, but faith itself is justified by its fruit. Justification is only because we believe, but genuine belief will be evidenced (justified) by a changed behaviour. So God justified us as a result of our faith, and our faith is justified by our behaviour.

Here is a little definition of faith from William Tyndale with some dependence upon Luther...right faith is a thing wrought in us by the Holy Ghost, which changes us, turns us into a new nature, and begets us anew in God, and makes us sons of God as thou readest in the 1st of John, and kills the old Adam and makes us altogether new in the heart, mind, will, desire and in all the other affections and powers of the soul - the Holy Ghost ever accompanying it and ruling the heart. It is good to remind ourselves that 'faith' in the bible is not mental assent.