

ROMANS - #5A

ANTIOCH BIBLE CLASS

LESSON TOPIC

JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH

SCRIPTURE TEXT: ROMANS 5:1-11.

MEMORY VERSE: 5:1. Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

INTRODUCTION

Justification by faith is a marvelous extension of love on the part of God who desires that all men everywhere would come to this phenomenal experience. To be sure, "justification by faith" has all kinds of misapplications, interpretations and uses. That does not keep it from being a reality. The main problem seems to always be in our understanding of what "faith" is. However it is not the scope of this lesson to try to teach what faith really is. Instead our intent is that this lesson would lead us into thoughts and joys over the truly great plan of redemption that God has designed for mankind. After all, we cannot certify that every person will be sure as to what "faith" justifies and what justification really means. There is no doubt but what God has designed that "faith" in his plan of redemption through Jesus Christ is the channel through which God offers justification from our sins.

These first eleven verses of Romans chapter five offer a good foundation for this subject. Certainly there are other scriptures that emphasize and explain this plan. We have chosen to limit this lesson only to these eleven verses since the rest of the chapter is better suited for a separate lesson. This will allow us to contemplate more thoroughly the wonderful truth that God can and will, based upon our appropriate faith in him, deliver us from our sins, providing full justification based upon that faith. We will not be required to pay some large sum of money, perform some impossible task or repeat meaningless rituals daily so that we can be saved. Our requirement will be "faith" in the plan of salvation God has provided through our Lord Jesus Christ. We should never forget, however, that this "faith" has implications far beyond some mental exercise of our minds, no matter how sincere they may be.

DAILY SCRIPTURES AND THOUGHTS

MONDAY. ROM. 5:1-2. JESUS, THE OBJECT OF FAITH.

SCRIPTURES.

V1. Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. 2. By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

COMMENTS.

“Therefore”, that is, following after the previous thoughts relating to the faith and justification of Abraham and that it was not by his circumcision, we also have access to the same provisions. We (Christians) have a justification from our sins that has come to us by the process of our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. This faith leads us to the total and complete change in our lives as well as the renunciation of all that our old life consisted of. The lusts of the flesh were the source and basis of our old life and the only way to rid ourselves of this is some process that will counteract these lusts by our learning of and acceptance of the way of life that is offered in Christ. It is a process of faith because it is not an elimination of the availability of the same old life as before, but a choice to follow after Christ in the “faith” that doing so offers to us both a changed life now and eternal life in the future. Practically speaking, we get up every day with two choices: (1) we can choose to follow the lusts of our flesh which will greet us passionately every day, or, (2) we can choose to follow after the life that Christ offers which will mean the crucifixion of all of our fleshly lusts. We choose to follow after the life that Christ offers because we have come to believe by the preaching of his gospel, that in so doing it will consummate into eternal life when he returns again. Because of this “faith”, Christ justifies us from our former life of sin. Everything we have in him is predicated upon “faith” as he describes it. The glorious truth of the Christian experience is that there is a process of faith in Christ that God will look upon with justification from our sins. God does not say, “I like the sacrifice Christ made so I am going to justify mankind on his behalf”. Instead he says, “The sacrifice of Christ is a sufficient substitute for the sins of mankind, that whosoever believes in this sacrifice and its process within our own faith, I will justify him from his sins.

TUESDAY. ROM. 5:3-5. FAITH IS A CONTINUAL PROCESS UNDER ALL CONDITIONS.

SCRIPTURES.

And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also; knowing that tribulation worketh patience; 4. And patience, experience; and experience hope: 5. And hope maketh not ashamed: because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

COMMENTS.

Living by faith in Christ does not eliminate tribulations. Instead, when tribulations come, if we remain faithful and endure the trials for the sake of our relationship with Christ, that endurance will translate into experience with God, which in turn will strengthen us. The results will be that patience in trials

works toward more experience in God and the result of this is that our ultimate hope in the Lord is strengthened.

When our hope is strengthened, we are drawn more closely to God in love and this is a love of which we are thankful and not ashamed or troubled about. All of this is possible because that God, by the power of his Spirit, enables us to grow in him. Thus, it is not only our justification by faith that is so marvelous but also the fact that as we continue growing through the necessary, and sometimes difficult, process of that faith, we are blessed in all areas of life. Hope is a crowning fruit of faith. Faith that does not produce hope is not biblical faith.

WEDNESDAY. RO. 5:6-8. THE UNBELIEVABLE RISK GOD TOOK IN CHRIST ON OUR BEHALF.

SCRIPTURES.

V6. For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. 7. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. 8. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

COMMENTS.

God took a chance, a calculated risk, that if Christ died to redeem the ungodly from a life of sin, that some would accept his offer. The very fact that it would be true that many would not believe in Christ is evidence that “faith” in his substitutionary work at calvary has requirements in it that are contrary to the will of the flesh. In fact, nothing is more contrary to the will of the flesh than “faith” in God.

But God took that chance, even while allowing everyone to respond on a “whosoever will” basis and not by some coercive means. The only quality of God that would make that possible is his deep love for fallen man. Wisdom and power alone would never have done so; only a love to redeem man from the bondage of a sinful life would move God to take such risk and endure such sacrifice and suffering.

THURSDAY. ROM. 5:9-10. IT IS FORGIVENESS AND MORE.

SCRIPTURES.

V9. Much more than, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. 10. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.

COMMENTS.

If there is more, then what is it? First, by the death of Christ, a means of justification from our sins was made possible. His death does not guarantee that we are justified but that we can be justified. What if God forgave us of all of our past sins and there was nothing else? Included in this process or package of justification is something more. Jesus did not only “die” for our sins; he rose again to give us life. In that he died for us we can claim that he has forgiven us when we accept the propitiation of his death for our sins. But in that he arose again from the dead that does more than just prove him

the victor over the grave. It offers us the opportunity of a new life now through faith in him but also it offers us the promise and hope of eternal life at his return. You cannot separate forgiveness from this promise of eternal life. Otherwise you would die forgiven but without an eternal hope. We do not put enough emphasis and importance on the resurrection. It is the means by which we come into our eternal life. Theology has offered eternal life through the medium of our death and therefore Christendom ignores the need and purpose of the resurrection which is to give us eternal life.

FRIDAY. ROM. 5:11. THE CAUSE OF OUR JOY.

SCRIPTURE.

V11. And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.

COMMENTS.

We don't only have justification by faith we have every other blessing from God through this same medium. We live by faith, not by sight, and therefore every aspect of life is not only affected by this faith, it is governed by it. So Paul tells us here that we have not only been reconciled to God through Christ, but it is our great joy and cause of rejoicing. In other words, we have not just found something that eradicates sin we have found something that removes the sorrows that accompany sin and has replaced it with joy in God our savior.

SUMMARY

For the most part, everyone looks on faith from an outward view. Someone makes a public profession of faith and that is all we see. But there is an inside story to faith. If faith was a capsule and you could break it open and look inside of it, what would you see? For starters you would see much more than a mere profession of faith, you would see the entire scope and purpose and content of faith. That is the real inside story of faith. Faith cannot be judged alone by what is on the outside, but also by its very core and composition. After all, faith is so much more than some mere profession we make publicly.

If you could open up the capsule of faith, you would find repentance, baptism, love, commitment, sacrifice, endurance, courage, forgiveness, meekness, longsuffering, kindness, friendliness, service, obedience, the work of the Holy Ghost, doctrines, giving and so much more. In fact true faith in Christ contains everything revealed by God in his word for us to live by. That is why faith is a growing process, so that we may "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ". We may be only children in faith now, but we should be continually growing daily. Otherwise our faith itself is suspect. That is why God has chosen by the foolishness of preaching to provide us with the substance of faith. This inside quality of faith must expand in order for us to daily meet the challenges of life. Do you think that Paul was complete in faith when he was converted on the Damascus Road? Hardly! But God revealed to him the Christian path of faith both immediately and continually. Take the

simple act of going to church. That was not something you were born with. Practice, commitment and especially faith (belief in its purpose) makes it an integral part of faith in Christ.

Justification by faith is so much more than a gift with no obligations on our part. It is a gift that opens up the opportunity and blessing of believing and doing what God teaches us to do.

QUESTIONS

1. What is the basic substance of faith by which justification can be obtained?
2. Name some other things that faith brings with it.
3. Discuss the importance and method of growing in faith.
4. How has the church abused and misused the great object and privilege of faith in Christ?