

GRACE GAZETTE

Volume XX

Issue 36

Published occasionally for mourners in Zion

Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.

Hebrews 12:12-13

JUSTIFIED BY THE JUSTIFIED JUSTIFIER

And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.

1 Timothy 3:16

No other doctrine is of any greater importance in the understanding of the basis of the salvation of the LORD's people than that of "justification." To be "justified" in the sight of a HOLY GOD is the desire of all who find themselves guilty of sin. The Greek word which is most often translated as "justify and justified" in the KJV, literally means to be "found or rendered as righteous". That same word is the root word of the Greek word which is translated as "justification". The meaning of this word is "the act of being justified or simply put; acquitted of all crimes".

The man who thinks he has no need of "justification" before GOD, is a man who is convinced that he is not a sinner and faces no judgment for any crimes against the LORD of Glory. Such a man will certainly perish in the natural darkness of his own mind without regard to his dilemma. "*The simple pass on, and are punished.*" (Prov 27:12)

Yet there are those who are in an even greater place of danger than these who perish in their ignorance. These are those who recognize their sinful condition but think that they have the power to "justify themselves", if not totally, at least in some measure. Some do so by comparing themselves to others who they deem much worse than themselves and imagine that this "comparative righteousness" will cause the LORD to have higher regard for them and reward them accordingly. This can be seen in the attitude of the Pharisee who prayed with himself (while supposing that he was praying to GOD). "*The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.*" (Luke 18:11-12)

Still others think that they can gain the favor of GOD by acts of devotion, good deeds, obedience to the Law, and religious affiliations of one type or another. They cannot imagine that the LORD will not have at least some regard to their piety and dedication. These are those described by the LORD, "*Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.*" (Mat 7:22-23)

The most difficult place for a man to come, who believes he has some measure of "righteousness" in himself, is to see that even his "righteousness" (as he defines it) is but filth in the sight of a HOLY GOD. "*But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.*" (Isa 64:6)

There are multitudes who would confess that the only means whereby a man can be "justified", is by the blood and righteousness of CHRIST, who, sadly, at the same time deny the very thing they confess by believing that they have it within the power of their own free will to either accept or reject that "justification". Many embrace the belief that it is their "act of faith" in CHRIST which determines their justification. Those who do so are no different than those who believe GOD will take notice of their acts of devotion and obedience, since they entertain the notion that they can produce some activity which will cause GOD to be pleased with them and their righteous deed.

The Publican who was in the temple the same day as the aforementioned Pharisee, manifested the grace of GOD at work in him as he fell upon his face saying "GOD be merciful to me, a sinner." He knew that he had not one thing which he could bring unto the LORD, and if it did not please the LORD to show mercy to him, he would surely perish in his sin. The LORD said that he "*went down to his house justified.*" (Luke 18:14) He did not bring one thing to the LORD nor did he commit some righteous deed or make any public profession of his faith. He had nothing in his hand even as Toplady, of old, wrote, "Nothing in my hand I bring, simply to THY cross I cling, naked come to THEE for dress, helpless look to THEE for grace. Foul, I to the FOUNTAIN fly, wash me SAVIOR or I die."

The LORD has revealed in HIS word that HE will not at all acquit the wicked nor by any means clear the guilty (see Nahum 1:3; Exod.34:7). In fact, HE says HE will establish HIS justice in condemning sinners to destruction. "*The soul that sinneth, it shall die ---the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.*" (Eze 18:20) "*For the wages of sin is death*" (Rom 6:23) "*The unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God. Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.*" (1Cor 6:9-10)

This is a most bleak prospect for the sinful offspring of Adam. David confessed the justice of GOD in the destruction of sinners when he prayed, "*Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest.*" (Psa 51:4) Apart from the work of GOD in devising a means to make sinners clean, they could not in anywise enter into HIS HOLY PRESENCE. HE will not set aside HIS justice but demands that HIS Law be perfectly fulfilled in every jot and tittle. So how then can a sinful man be found "justified" in the sight of a HOLY GOD? He certainly cannot "justify" himself, so he must have SOMEONE to perform what he cannot.

Thus, we find in the gospel of the glory of the blessed GOD, the TRUTH that CHRIST JESUS the LORD has come into the world as a SUBSTITUTE for sinners. HE is the JUSTIFIER of the ungodly, the unthankful, and the rebellious. Yet HE does not set the law aside, but rather fulfills it in every iota, leaving nothing that is undone in HIS purpose to redeem that which was lost. HE is both just and the JUSTIFIER of those for whom HE has undertaken this task.

We can be certain that everyone whom HE came to justify, will be justified before Almighty GOD, for HE can in no wise fail to accomplish HIS eternal purpose. "*What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.*" (Rom 8:31-34)

For CHRIST to satisfy the demands of the Law, for men, it was necessary that HE be made in the likeness of sinful flesh, and walk among men as a MAN, completely obedient to every precept of the Law and to die a sinner's death to satisfy the justice of GOD. This HE did as HE "*learned obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him.*" (Heb 5:8-9) CHRIST was perfectly suited to be the JUSTIFIER of HIS people. Yet it was also necessary for HIM to be an acceptable SAVIOR in the sight of HIM who is the JUDGE of all the Earth. Thus, thankfully, we read that HE was "*justified in the SPIRIT*". We see the declaration of HIS acceptability to HIS FATHER and therefore in the courts of Heaven as a voice came from Heaven, saying, "*This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*" (Mat 3:17) The evidence of HIS acceptability as the sinner's SUBSTITUTE came on the third day after HIS death at Calvary. "*Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.*" (Rom 4:25)

Thus, we conclude that HE who was justified by HIS FATHER, is now become the JUSTIFIER of all of those whom HE has redeemed. They are granted this justification solely on the basis of HIS redemptive work and nothing of their own. "*That no flesh should glory in his presence. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.*" (1Cor 1:29-31) Are you justified by the blood of CHRIST?
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