

Schedule of Meeting Times:

WKAC 1080 AM Sunday 7:30 AM

Study Sunday 10:00 AM

Worship Sunday Morn 11:00 AM

Worship Sunday Eve 5:00 PM

Singing every 2nd Sunday evening

Study Wednesday 7:00 PM

Preacher / bulletin editor:

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“Who will bring a charge against God’s elect? God is the one who justifies,”

—Romans 8:33

**Servants during November:**

Songleader: Stanley (5), Larry (12),
Dwight (19), Stanley (26)

Reading: Larry**Announcements:** Marty

Table: Mike M, Larry, Marty,
Stanley

Wednesday Lesson: Stanley (1), Larry (8),
Kris (15), Larry (22), Stanley (29)

Lawn Mowing (week starting): On leave for
the winter!

Area Meetings:**Hays Mill church of Christ**

21705 Hays Mill Road

Elkmont, AL 35620

The Bible . Examiner

“Examine everything carefully...” —1 Thessalonians 5:21 NASB

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Justified

by Connie Adams

“Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God,” Rom 5:1,2.

The Meaning of Justification

Justification means that the sinner is vindicated before God. He is acquitted of his sin. He is declared righteous. This does not mean that he has not sinned, “for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,” Rom 3:23. The guilty sinner stands before God without excuse. He is unable of himself to provide acquittal. He cannot make himself righteous nor justify himself. That is the right of God. It is sin which has separated man from God, Isa 59:1,2. Man is the offender and God the offended party. In order to have “peace with God” the offender must be acquitted, justified, declared righteous.

The Source of Justification

But how can this be? Is the sinner powerful or wise enough to devise a means of justification? “I know, O LORD, that a man’s way is not in himself,” Jer 10:23. Only God can justify. The Jew

could not be justified by the works of the Lord for Paul said “Now that no one is justified by the Law before God is evident; for, ‘THE RIGHTEOUS MAN SHALL LIVE BY FAITH,’” Gal 3:11. Neither Jew nor Gentile could be justified by works of human merit. It is “not as a result of works, so that no one may boast,” Eph 2:9; and “not on the basis of deeds which we have done,” Tit 3:5. So, then justification does not originate in man. It must come from God. According to Paul, it is God who purposed to offer acquittal to those helpless and hopeless without his grace. He called and justified those called that they might be glorified with him. Indeed, “God is the one who justifies,” Rom 8:30-33. It is offered as a favor which the sinner did not deserve and could not provide. It is therefore of grace. “For by grace you have been saved through faith,” Eph 2:8. Man’s dilemma was God’s opportunity.

*“Amazing grace, how sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me;
I once was lost, but now am found
Was blind but now I see.”*

Having described the frightful condition of those who were “dead in trespasses and sins, and having set forth

the ultimate fate of those suited only to receive divine wrath, Paul opens the window of hope to the hopeless when he said “But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus,” Eph 2:4-7. Astounding! There we are guilty, having offended our own Creator. What have we to offer? What can we think of to do? What wise plan of our own will prompt God to forgive us and restore the fellowship now shattered because of our sin? There is nothing we can do to place God in our debt. We owe him everything but he owes us nothing. Ah, but our God is “rich in mercy,” His love is “great” and his “kindness” is extended out of grace. What a God! He is able and willing to justify us, count us righteous and treat us as if we had never sinned. It boggles the mind to try and take it all in.

The Means of Justification

Having seen that justification can only come from God it is necessary to determine whether or not this acquittal is offered unconditionally or conditionally. It springs from the grace of God flowing out of the wellspring of his rich mercy and great love. Will the grace of God save every sinner, or will it save some sinners? If every sinner is to be saved unconditionally, then we are at a loss to explain many plain passages in the word of God. Jesus said that at the judgment (and why would there need to be a judgment if justification is unconditional?) some would “go away into eternal punishment,” Mt 25:46. Paul said the Lord would come “in flaming fire”

deal out “retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus” and said they would be “punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord,” 2 Thess 1:6-9. So then, not everyone will be justified.

Paul explained it for us in Romans 1:16,17. “For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, ‘BUT THE RIGHTEOUS man SHALL LIVE BY FAITH.’” It is by means of the gospel that God offers his favor to the sinner. “...He called you through our gospel,” 2 Thess 2:14. Remember, he justified those whom he called, Rom 8:30, but here it is clear that he calls by the gospel. This good news is the power he exerts to apprise the sinner that his grace is offered. It is by means of the gospel that God reveals his righteousness (justification, ASV) or acquittal (as Moses E. Lard has it). The gospel tells us how God offers his favor to us.

But upon what ground does God offer to forgive the transgressor? In every dispensation blood atonement has been required. The patriarchs and the Jews under the Law of Moses were required to offer blood sacrifice for “without the shedding of blood is no forgiveness,” Heb 9:22. But the law was only a “shadow of the good things to come” and “it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins,” Heb 10:1-4. Those sacrifices only typified the ultimate sacrifice for sin when the Son of God shed his blood. “So Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many,” Heb 9:28. “How much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God,

cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?” Heb 9:14. When Jesus took the cup, the night of his betrayal, he said, “for this is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins,” Mt 26:28. “And might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross,” Eph 2:16. Here both Jews and Gentiles have “access in one Spirit to the Father,” Eph 2:18. Paul sums it up for us when he said, “being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith. This was to demonstrate His righteousness, because in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed; for the demonstration, I say, of His righteousness at the present time, so that He would be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus,” Rom 3:24-26. The cross was the price which had to be paid in order to make the grace of God accessible to us.

Man’s Part

The sinner must act out of faith to obey the will of God if he is to be justified. “Therefore having been justified by faith,” Rom 5:1. God justifies, that is his part. But it is by faith and that is the sinner’s part. He must believe God. The gospel “is the power of God for salvation to everyone

who believes,” Rom 1:16. “By grace you have been saved through faith,” Eph 2:8. God extends the favor and man responds in faith. The question which must be resolved is whether saving faith is a living or dead faith. “Faith without works is dead,” Jas 2:26. It was because Abraham believe God that he obeyed the instruction of the Lord. The worthies of old who were all said to be justified by faith in God, acted in demonstration of that faith, Heb 11. “For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything, but faith working through love,” Gal 5:6. Christ is “to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation,” Heb 5:9.

God requires the sinner in faith to repent of his sins. “God is now declaring to men that all people everywhere should repent,” Acts 17:30. Peter said, “Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins,” Acts 2:38. Neither faith, repentance nor baptism nullify salvation by the grace of God. All of these are demanded of everyone. God offers his grace and man responds in faith because Christ shed his blood as a perfect sacrifice for sin. Justice has been met. The alienated sinner now has peace with God. He is justified. To quote a good friend and eloquent preacher, “I scarce can take it in!”

—via *Searching the Scriptures*, 3/92 

Remember in Prayer

Mike B is to have his tricuspid valve replaced sometime next year due to damage from cancer; more appointments and tests for other issues are ahead. **Pam** will undergo tests for symptoms of gallbladder issues. **Betty** has to be off her

feet for several more weeks, so is wheelchair bound. Please pray for them and families. Let’s not forget others with chronic issues—such as **Carolyn**; **John**, **Sylvia**, and **Paige Pollard**; and **Joyce**. 