

May 12, 2013

LIVING BY FAITH
(Who are the JUSTIFIED?)
Romans 1: 16-17; Galatians 3: 9-11;
Hebrews 10: 38-39

Three times in the New Testament and once in the Old, we see a statement that inspired today's title and lesson. **"The just shall live by faith."** We will look in each of these contexts as we proceed through the lesson.

Who is this that "SHALL live by faith"? **It is** the JUST. **And**, who are the JUST? **The JUST** are the JUSTIFIED. **They** are those whom God DECLARES righteous in His sight. **They** are those who STAND (infinitely/unchangeably) Righteous before God. **They** are Just. **They** are Righteous in God's sight. **And**, they can NEVER be otherwise.

Their (legal) standing before God is FIXED. **Their** standing before God is UNCHANGEABLE, not BASED on/or BECAUSE of anything found IN THEM, BUT based (entirely) on the doing and dying of Christ ALONE. **It is** based on Christ's Righteousness imputed/charged to their accounts.

They are JUSTIFIED because they have a Surety who has said to His Father, "If they have wronged you, or owe you anything, put it on my account. **I will** repay it." They are JUSTIFIED because Christ assumed their (legal) debt in eternity and paid that debt in full at the Cross.

Let's look at the JUSTIFIED as the scriptures define them. **The** JUSTIFIED are the (spiritual) children of Abraham. **They** are those who have been delivered from the law (from its "curse").

Look at Galatians 3: 6-11 **"Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.**

7 Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham.

8 And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed.

9 So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.

10 For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.

11 But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith.

What is the ðcurse of the lawö? **The** law demands something no sinner can ever provide. **It has** a standard no sinner can ever measure up to. **It** demands perfect/continual OBEDIENCE. **And**, where it does not find that PERFECTION, it demands PUNISHMENT, (eternal death to the soul that sins; The wages of sin is death.).

The JUSTIFIED have been redeemed from the law's ðcurseö? **How** so? **By** the death of Christ.

Look at Galatians 3: 12-14 “**And the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them.**

13 Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:

14 That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.”

SOMEONE has been delivered from the ðcurse of the lawö. **And**, that **SOMEONE** consists of every sinner Christ represented in His death. **Christ** has ðredeemedö a multitude; He has ðredeemedö the **JUSTIFIED** from ðthe curse of the lawö. **They** are **NOT** condemned. **They** **CANNOT** be punished. **All** their shortcomings have been answered in the death of Christ, their Surety and Substitute.;

But, although the **JUSTIFIED** have been ðredeemed from the curse of the lawö, they are still born ðunder the lawö. **Like** all other sons and daughters of Adam, the **JUSTIFIED** are born looking to the law (their obedience/their reformation/their character and conduct) as a means of righteousness and acceptance with God. **They** stay that way until the law stops their mouths and brings them in ðguilty before Godö.

Look at Romans 3: 19-20 “**Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.**

20 Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.”

The law speaks to those ðunder the lawö. **Who** is that? **ALL** of us by nature. **By** nature **ALL** of us are looking **WITHIN** for righteousness and acceptance with God. **None** are looking to the righteousness God has provided in Christ.

By nature **NONE** are righteous. **NONE** are seeking God. **ALL** are ðunder the lawö. **ALL** are seeking righteousness by their works.

So, how are the JUSTIFIED distinguished from everyone else in this world? **Their** ðmouths are stoppedð from justifying themselves based on their obedience. **They** are brought in ðguilty before Godð (i.e. worthy of Godðs just wrath based on their best obedience).

Under the Gospel, they see and are persuaded that Christðs death has put away sin and provided righteousness for every sinner He was given. **They** ðBECOME dead to the law by the body of Christð.

Look at Romans 7: 4-6 “**Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.**

5 For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death.

6 But now **we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.**”

The JUSTIFIED are those who (like all others) are born ðunder the lawð. **They** are born looking WITHIN for righteousness and acceptance with God. (**Verse 5**) **They** WERE ðin the fleshð. **They** WERE ðunder the lawð (working ðby the lawð for acceptance). **They** WERE ðbringing forth fruit unto deathð.

But, they are not left that way. **The** JUSTIFIED are those who BECOME ðdead to the law by the body of Christð.

The JUSTIFIED are those who are ðdelivered from the lawð. They are those delivered from being ðunder the lawð. **They** are delivered from the law as a means of righteousness/acceptance with God. **They** serve in ðnewness of spiritð (i.e. find their acceptance in Christðs work ALONE); and are delivered from ðthe oldness of the letterð (SUPPOSED acceptance by THEIR doing).

They see Christðs satisfaction to law and justice and the righteousness that resulted as the only way of acceptance with God. **They** see Christ as ðthe end of the law for righteousnessð.

Look at Romans 10: 4 “**For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.**”

The only way for any sinner to be free from ðunder the lawö (as a means of righteousness) is in Christ's FULFILLMENT of the law.

Even those whom God has JUSTIFIED, are born ðunder the lawö. **They** are ðunder the lawö in their mind. **They** are ðunder the lawö seeking righteousness UNTIL Christ ends the law FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS, which He does for all who believe (all who are JUSTIFIED).

The JUSTIFIED are those redeemed from the ðcurse of the lawö, (its demand for their eternal death), by the death of Christ, their Surety and Substitute. **And**, they are those delivered from being ðunder the lawö (as a means of acceptance). **They** are those delivered by the Gospel, which declares Christ as the ðend of the law for righteousnessö to every sinner who looks to Him ALONE for their complete salvation and acceptance with God.

The JUSTIFIED are those who live by faith. **They** are those delivered from the law.

Who are the JUSTIFIED? **They** are those who are delivered unto ðthe righteousness of Godö. **Look** at the second context in which we find our statement, ð**The just shall live by faith.**”

Look at Romans 1: 16-17 “**For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.**

17 For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.”

It takes something POWERFUL to deliver sinners out from under the eternal wrath of God and into the eternal favor of God. **It takes** something POWERFUL to deliver sinners from being ðunder the lawö? **It takes** something POWERFUL to deliver sinners from thinking that WE have to DO (something) to be ðrightö with God. **It takes** something POWERFUL. **It takes** ðthe righteousness of Godö.

What makes it right for God to JUSTIFY one sinner and not another? **What** makes it right for God to declare one sinner righteous in His sight and not another? **What** makes it right for God to forgive and pardon the sins of one sinner and not another? **What** makes it right for God to ðlove Jacob and hate Esauö?

There is ONE answer to all these questions. **It takes** ðthe righteousness of Godö. God has provided a Righteous that makes it right for Him to show mercy to those of His choosing. **Christ** established this Righteousness by His obedience unto death. **He fulfilled** the law (obeyed it perfectly). **He satisfied** Godø's justice (suffering all the punishment those sinners He was given deserved). God charged Him with the sins of His sheep. **And**, He answered those charges in full.

The result of His obedience unto death is ðthe righteousness of Godö. **God** has charged this Righteousness to the accounts of the elect. **And**, they are JUSTIFIED. (**I.e.** **They** stand and are declared righteous in Godø's sight based on Christø's righteousness imputed ALONE).

We could talk on and on about ðthe righteousness of Godö. (**And**, we do in every Gospel message.) **But**, for the sake of brevity here, the JUSTIFIED are those in every generation who are delivered from being ðunder the lawö.

They are delivered from thinking that **THEY** need to DO something to get ðrightö with God. **They** are delivered unto the doing and dying of Christ ALONE for all their ðrightnessö (all their acceptance). **They** are delivered unto the Righteousness Christ worked out imputed/charged to them. **They** are delivered unto ðthe righteousness of Godö. **They** ðlive by faithö. **They** rest in Christø's Righteousness imputed for all of salvation.

Who are the JUSTIFIED? **They** are those who PERSEVERE in the faith. **This** is the third context in which we find our statement, ð**The just shall live by faith.**”

Look at Hebrews 10: 35-38 “**Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward.**

36 For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.

37 For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.

38 Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.

39 But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.”

The JUSTIFIED are those who PERSEVE in the faith; in the Gospel; in the Righteousness of Christ imputed alone. **The** JUSTIFIED ðare not of them who draw backö. **Having** been delivered from the law, and having been delivered unto ðthe

righteousness of God, they will CONTINUE to find their confidence before God in Christ's work ALONE. **They** will have NO confidence in the flesh (their doing).

In three contexts we have answered the question, Who are the JUSTIFIED? **The JUSTIFIED** are those chosen in Christ and made righteous in Him before the world began. **But**, they are made known in this world in each generation by their doctrine, their God, their Savior, by the righteousness they rest in. **They** are delivered from being "under the law". **They** are delivered unto "the righteousness of God". **They** are those who PERSEVERE in the faith.

Now, back to our statement, "The just shall live by faith." We have spoken at length about the JUSTIFIED as they are identified in the scriptures. **Our** statement says, those whom God has justified "SHALL LIVE". **They SHALL** live in time. **And**, they SHALL LIVE throughout eternity. **The JUSTIFIED** (shall) live. **They MUST** live. **What** is this LIFE?

This is not the (physical) life we are born into this world having. **It is** (rather) a life we must be GIVEN. **It is** Spiritual life. **It is** the New Birth. **It is** the life IMPARTED to a sinner in regeneration. "You must be born again." **This** life is the "quickenning of the dead" (Eph 2: 1, "For you hath he quickened who were dead").

Contrary to our thinking by nature, we are not (spiritually) alive in ANY sense. **We** are DEAD. **By nature** we think and are taught that there is a "spark" of "goodness" in us all. **That** "spark" just needs to be fanned into a flame. **But**, the scripture says, "There is none good, no not one."

By nature we all think that we are seeking after God (apart from and before we learn about "the righteousness of God"). **But**, the scripture says, that "NONE" are seeking after God. **We** seek A "god". **We do** not seek THE God.

The scriptural example of Spiritual "deadness" is Lazarus in the tomb. **It** a corpse already put into the grave. **You** can fan that corpse as much as you want, with whatever you will, it is NOT going to respond.

The JUSTIFIED "shall live". **They WILL BE** "made" alive. **They** will be given life. **But** they cannot be given life on the basis of ANYTHING found IN THEM (not even faith), because they are DEAD. **Upon** what basis, then, are such sinners given life?

They are given life on the basis of Christ's Righteousness imputed to them. **God** has charged to them the righteousness of His Son. **He has JUSTIFIED** them (i.e. declared them righteous) on that basis. **And**, they are given life on that same basis.

Justification (necessarily) precedes life as certainly as life precedes faith. **In order** to have faith, you must have life. **In order** to have life, you must be JUSTIFIED. **In order** to be JUSTIFIED, you must have Christ's Righteousness imputed/charged to your account.

We can see this faith, this life, this JUSTIFICATION manifested in the scriptures all the way back to Abel.

Look at Hebrews 11: 4 **“By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh.”**

Abel's sacrifice PROVED (gave EVIDENCE of) his ðfaithö, **which** PROVED his (spiritual) life, **by which** he ðobtained witnessö (or gave EVIDENCE) that he was righteousö. **I.e. His** sacrifice by faith PROVED that he was Justified. **He was** JUSTIFIED and therefore, lived, and therefore, believed.

God declared Noah righteous (Justified) in his generation (Genesis 7: 1). **“And the LORD said unto Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation.”**

In every generation it is the JUSTIFIED who ðliveö. **It is** the JUSTIFIED who are given (spiritual) life because God has declared them righteous on the basis of Christ's righteousness imputed/charged to them. **It is** the JUSTIFIED who ðshall liveö. **It is** the JUSTIFIED who **MUST** live.

Last, it is the JUSTIFIED who shall live ðby faithö. **What** is this FAITH by which those who are JUSTIFIED (shall) live?

Look back at Romans 1: 16a-17 ð**“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: 17 For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.”**

The literal translation is OUT OF ðfaithö INTO ðfaithö. **There** are TWO ðfaithsö. **The** righteousness of God is revealed OUT OF (the) ðfaithö (i.e. the body of truth that declares Christ).

And, it is revealed INTO the subjective (inward), God-given ðfaithö which believes the Gospel, and, therefore, receives and rests in Christ ALONE for salvation.

First, there is the OBJECT of faith. **SECOND**, there is BELIEF in (rest in/dependence upon) that OBJECT. **No sinner** can have the right OBJECT of faith until he/she hears the Gospel. **I have** a lot more to say about ðfaithö (later).

Let me summarize what I have said today. **Who** in this world in any given generation will ðlive by faithö? **It is** the JUSTIFIED who will live by faith.

Who are the JUSTIFIED? **They** are those in every generation who delivered from being ðunder the lawö as a means of acceptance with God. **They** are those delivered unto ðthe righteousness of Godö revealed in the Gospel. **They** are those given life on the basis of Christ's Righteousness imputed to them. **And**, they are those who PERSEVE in the faith, resting in Christ ALONE for all their salvation up to their final glory in heaven.

Are you among those in this world in this generation who is JUSTIFIED? **Are** you standing with those who are walking and living by faith?

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