
Sermon Notes

September 20, 2020

First Congregational Church of Pomfret

God is For Us: Justification

Romans 8:33-34

Long-Range Plans

- ❖ The importance of long-range plans
 - constantly need to be reviewed, revised, and updated
 - forecast trends, needs, and contingencies that will affect an organization or corporation
- ❖ God's long-range plan!
 - there are no needs or contingencies that take God by surprise
 - extends from eternity past to eternity future

Justified By Grace Alone Through Faith Alone

- ❖ "Justification is the article on which the church stands or falls."
 - impossible to overstate the importance of justification
 - understanding justification causes us to grow in awe and appreciation of what God does for us in Christ
- ❖ Understanding justification strengthens our assurance of salvation

- *It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn?* (vv. 33-4)
- *a gift through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.* (Romans 3:24)
- ❖ What does "justification" mean?
 - the opposite of justification is condemnation
 - since *all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God*, all people stand condemned before God
 - how can a person who stands condemned by God ever be made right with God? (Romans 1:18)
 - there is no good work or any amount of good works that will lead to justification
 - justification does not **MAKE** us righteous or good, or holy, or upright
 - justification is a legal word that belongs to the world of the courtroom
 - a judge declares us to be either guilty or innocent, condemned or justified
 - a judge justifies an accused person by declaring them **NOT GUILTY**
- ❖ In justification, God declares us to be in a right relationship to His law
 - the righteousness of **CHRIST** is applied to our account
 - because of Christ: God sees me "**JUST AS IF I**" had no sin
 - *dressed in His righteousness alone, faultless to stand before the throne* (Romans 8:1)

HOW Can This Be?

- ❖ How can God justify those who are totally unrighteous?
 - if a human judge lets a guilty person walk free, we think of that judge as unjust
 - human judges are put in place to condemn the guilty and justify only the righteous
- ❖ in declaring us NOT GUILTY, God does not overlook, forget, or simply dismiss our sin
 - God does not declare bad people to be good or say that they are not sinners after all
 - God declares us to be legally righteous and free from any liability to the law because He Himself, in His Son, takes the penalty of our lawbreaking on Himself
 - Christ's obedience of the law is the ground of our justification
- ❖ Though God's wrath is revealed from heaven against all unrighteousness, God's good pleasure is also revealed on His well-beloved, Son and all those who trust Him to give them His righteousness (Isaiah 61:10, Romans 5:19)
 - God imputes Christ's righteousness to you
 - in God's sight you are 100% righteous if you have the righteousness of Christ

HOW Do I Get This?

- ❖ How can I be made right with God and declared not guilty?

- faith is the channel through which justification becomes ours
 - we must **respond** in faith by committing ourselves to Christ and repenting of our sin
 - faith is somewhat like an electrical circuit in which God's grace flows into us and we, in turn, respond back to God by believing Him, receiving what He offers us in Christ and committing ourselves to living a life of faith
- ❖ Christians don't have faith in faith, Christians have faith in Christ (Hebrews 12:2)
 - faith is not nourished by looking "in" but by looking "out" to Christ
 - without faith it is impossible to please God (Hebrews 11:6)
 - ❖ All we must do is entrust ourselves to Christ whose perfect righteousness becomes ours through faith
 - what peace and assurance! (Romans 5:1)
 - by faith in Christ you are delivered not only from the guilt of sin but from the power of sin as well

Personal Application

1. If you belong to God through faith in Christ, God declares you "not guilty" of all the sin you have ever committed!! When you think of the mass of sin that has stained and scarred your life, how does knowing this bring comfort, peace, hope, and assurance to your soul?
2. How effectively are you cooperating with God's Spirit to take full advantage of the freedom He offers you in the present from sin's power?