

The Gospel of John

The Gospel of John

Lesson #59

The Journey

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Sidebar

- John 20:30 Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; 31 but these are written so that you may **believe** that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

New Testament (222)

- Matthew (8)
- Mark (15)
- Luke (9)
- John (84) ←
- Acts (39)
- Romans (18)
- 1 Corinthians (8)
- 2 Corinthians (2)
- Galatians (3)
- Ephesians (2)
- Philippians (1)
- 1 Thessalonians (4)
- 2 Thessalonians (3)
- 1 Timothy (6)
- 2 Timothy (2)
- Titus (2)
- Hebrews (2)
- James (2)
- 1 Peter (4)
- 1 John (7)
- Jude (1)

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- John 6:28 Then they said to him, **“What must we do, to be doing the works of God?”** - They were programmed to do works.
- The Rich Young Ruler said, **“Teacher, what good deed must I do to have eternal life?”**
- It becomes more than evident justification by faith was a foreign concept to them, but it should not have been.

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- The problem we face is that God is the guardian of Heaven, and he has a standard (perfection) – add to that, that he is unbending in his standard.
- He will accept no behaviors, no attitudes, and no intentions that are less than perfect – not one, no exceptions, under any circumstances, not ever.
- The problem is defined above - God’s criterion is a standard that is impossible for us to meet, perfection.

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We would be right to understand God as unwavering in the qualifications for people to be “right” with him. He is the one who was betrayed and sinned against, so he naturally gets to set the terms of reconciliation. We would be wrong to see his standards as prudish, unnecessary, or unreasonable. His standards are ones of love, and he proves as much by meeting them for us.

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- Genesis 3:15 “And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed. He will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.”
- The offspring of the woman will do the work for us, our responsibility to believe never changes.
- Genesis 15:6 Then he (Abraham) believed in the Lord; and he **reckoned** it to him as righteousness. NASB

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- Reckoned – also translated as “counted” means, “to write down in a record or ledger, and signifies crediting to one’s account, or reckoning something to someone.”
- When Moses writes, “reckoned it to him as righteousness” he means that Abraham had something added to his account and that something was “righteousness”.
- This of course ties in with what every person who has ever lived knows intuitively – that God keeps records!

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- Whether we say “reckoned”, or “counted” what we are talking about in a theological sense is imputation.
- Imputed righteousness is a concept in theology that proposes that the righteousness of Christ is imputed to believers through faith; that is, treated as if it were theirs.**
- By attributing the righteousness of Christ to the believer’s account, God declares the believer to now be what he was not, and could not be, righteous!

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- To be justified by the Judge of the universe is better than being found not guilty, and better than being acquitted on some technicality.
- It is better than never being indicted and put on trial for your “crimes” against God – meaning that you would be free, but guilty.
- To be justified is to have the Judge pronounce you not just innocent, but righteous!

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Justification is not to be understood as “just as if I had never sinned” – justification is far better than being sinless. You could be sinless and still not be given entrance into Heaven. To be sinless would categorize you as morally neutral. The Bible reads, “without holiness no one will see the Lord”. When we believe, God credits all the righteousness of Christ to our account and declares us to be righteous (holy) and we are!

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Some have the idea that when they received Jesus, they were forgiven of all their sins of the past, but they worry, “what if I sin after I am saved?”. They have this notion that at salvation they could not have been forgiven of future sins because how could God forgive them of sins they haven’t even committed. It makes them nervous and more importantly it makes them unproductive. So here is the good news for all who are trapped in this web of ignorance – justification by faith alone. When we believed, our sins (past, present, and future) were subtracted from our account and the righteousness of Christ was added!

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Every week I preach justification by faith to my people, because every week they forget it.

~ Martin Luther

AZ QUOTES

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- John 6:29 Jesus answered them, **“This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent.”**
- While God wants us to obey and serve him, he doesn’t want us skip over believing in him.
- The audience wanted to know what they had to “do” to please God, Jesus tells them what they must “believe” to please God.

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Romans 10:1 Brothers, my heart's desire and prayer to God for them is that they may be saved. 2 For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. 3 For, being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and seeking to establish their own, they did not submit to God's righteousness. 4 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

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He had just told them “do not work for things that perish”, but the thinking of the day was “I get to heaven by works”. The crowd wanted to “do some thing”, Jesus wanted them to “believe some one”. The logical question to ask is, “If you could get to heaven by being good, how good must you be?” The answer is you must be something you are not, perfect. The radical message of the gospel is that what God requires you cannot provide, but fear not, the Lamb of God has provided exactly what you need, free of charge to the one who believes.

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- To the Jew, obtaining eternal life was found in the right formula to produce works that please God.
- This is the insidiousness of false doctrine – even when the truth is present, we are drawn back to what has been drilled into us.
- Once false doctrine is entangled into our thinking it is hard to overcome – when the Jew of Jesus’ day thought of right standing with God, he thought of works.

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When we think of gaining a right standing with God may we be so full of truth that our thoughts go immediately to Jesus.

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Questions?

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