

#3: "justified by his grace..."

The conversation that made me begin recycling: "How ignorant do you have to be not to recycle these days?!"

- Have you ever experienced *that awkward moment when* someone is speaking poorly of you right in front of you?
- That's how we all could have felt last week as Mike showed us God's righteousness from a biblical perspective.
- "God's perfectly right relationship with right and wrong."
- He loves what is right and hates what is wrong perfectly. (Arrogance, pride, dishonesty, laziness – that's all of us, to an extent)

Romans 3: 10-18

"None is righteous, no, not one;

¹¹ no one understands;
no one seeks for God.

¹² All have turned aside; together they have become worthless;
no one does good,
not even one."

¹³ "Their throat is an open grave;
they use their tongues to deceive."

"The venom of asps is under their lips."

¹⁴ "Their mouth is full of curses and bitterness."

¹⁵ "Their feet are swift to shed blood;

¹⁶ in their paths are ruin and misery,

¹⁷ and the way of peace they have not known."

¹⁸ "There is no fear of God before their eyes."

There is bad news that makes the good news good, and the bad news is, by our unrighteousness, we are FAR from God, and utterly incapable of ridding ourselves of our unrighteousness.

- Recognizing our helplessness before a righteous God leads us to two of the most amazing words in the entire bible...

BUT NOW...

- But, in spite of ourselves, in spite of our unrighteousness, in spite of our condition... NOW...

Romans 3:21-26 – ²¹ But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it— ²² the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ and are **justified by his grace** as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, ²⁵ whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. ²⁶ It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

WHAT TO KNOW ABOUT THE ACTUAL GOSPEL: "through it sinners are justified by the grace of God"

IMPORTANT DEFINITIONS:

Justification: The act of being declared righteous because of the atoning work of Christ on the cross.

- In other words (friendly definition), being counted as righteous even though we aren't.

- Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to **justification** and life for all men. (Romans 5:18)

Propitiation: The appeasing of someone who is offended by removing the cause of his anger.

- In other words (friendly definition): the removal God's anger towards our sin.
- In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the **propitiation** for our sins. (1 John 4:10)

WHAT TO KNOW ABOUT JUSTIFICATION

1. Justification credits Christ's righteousness to us.

- The theological term is IMPUTED righteousness, it means being credited something that you are not due.

Now to the one who works, his wages are not counted as a gift but as his due. ⁵ And to the one who does not work but believes in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness (Romans 4:4-5)

2. Justification removes God's wrath from us.

But God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. ⁹ Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, **much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God.** (Romans 5:8-9)

CS Lewis: "The doctrine of the Second Coming teaches us that we do not and cannot know when the world drama will end. The curtain may be rung down at any moment: say, before you have finished reading this paragraph... then you enter eternity as you left earth. Either Christ's, or else, not..."

WHAT TO ACTUALLY SAY ABOUT justification

a) It is God's solution to our dilemma.

Q. If God is in the business of making unrighteous people righteous, won't he be merciful towards anyone he judges?

He who justifies the wicked and he who condemns the righteous are both alike an abomination to the LORD. (Proverbs 17:15)

- To simply overlook our sin without punishment would be an abomination, justice needed to be served. (so that he could be both just and justifier)

For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. (2 Cor. 5:21)

b) Sin makes you a perfect candidate for justification.

"...but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." (Romans 5:8)