

Message #9**Galatians 3:6-9**

This book of Galatians was written by Paul to show that salvation and sanctification are completely by faith alone in Christ apart from any Mosaic Law connection. We do not make ourselves right with God by governing our lives by a bunch of church rules or church traditions. We are given salvation, we are given the Holy Spirit and we develop by adjusting to the Holy Spirit in regard to the Scriptures. The grace package is just that, a complete grace package.

Now there are two very practical matters that Paul develops in this book. First, justification is by grace alone and faith alone in Jesus Christ apart from any Mosaic Law connection or works connection. Second, sanctification is by grace alone and faith alone in Jesus Christ apart from any Mosaic Law or works connection.

Now to prove this point, Paul is using a series of illustrations. In Galatians 3:1-5, Paul used their own personal experience as an illustration. Paul says our own personal experience proves that we are not justified by any works of any kind. **The second illustration he uses here is the illustration of Abraham.** In this passage Paul's point is this:

THE OLD TESTAMENT SCRIPTURAL EVIDENCE CONCERNING ABRAHAM PROVES THAT JUSTIFICATION IS BY FAITH ALONE APART FROM ANY WORKS.

It is so interesting that Paul uses Abraham as an example because the Jewish legalizers believed they were right with God because they were physically related to Abraham. Paul decides to use Abraham as an example that one is right with God by faith and not works. Not only does Paul use Abraham as an example, he proves his point right out of the Old Testament. **Abraham is a prime example and prime evidence of the fact that justification and sanctification are by grace alone, faith alone in Christ alone.**

Now before we tackle the text, it would be wise for us to do a brief overview of this doctrine of justification, because this is the primary point of the passage. Paul is developing the thesis that man may only be justified by faith alone apart from any works. So we will do a brief overview of the doctrine by asking and answering eight questions:

Question #1 - What is justification?

Justification is a judicial act of God in which God legally declares a sinner righteous and imputes or calculates to that sinner the righteousness of Jesus Christ. The result of justification is that you are free from any condemnation, guilt and wrath.

Question #2 - What is our main problem?

Our big problem is our sin problem. We are sinners by imputation; sinners by nature; sinners by practice; sinners by God's Word. Our main problem is how we, as sinners, by actual evidence can get a Holy, Righteous God to declare us judicially righteous, when we know we are not righteous.

Question #3 - What can we do to merit or earn justification?

We can do nothing to merit or earn justification because we are all guilty sinners and no one can meet God's standard of righteousness (Ps. 143:2; 130:3; Job 9:2; Rom. 3:23).

Psalms 143:2 says, "For in thy sight no man living is righteous."

Romans 3:23 says, "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."

Question #4 - How is it possible for a sinful person to be justified?

Since we cannot earn or merit justification, what makes justification possible? There are two factors that make this possible:

(Factor #1) - Justification is possible because of God's grace. Rom. 3:24; Titus 3:7

Romans 3:24 - "being justified as a gift by His grace."

(Factor #2) - Justification is possible because of Christ's blood. Rom. 3:24; 5:9

Romans 5:9 - "much more then having been justified by His blood."

Question #5 - When is a person justified?

A person is justified the moment a person believes on Jesus Christ (Acts 13:39; Rom. 3:20, 28; 5:1; Gal. 2:16). Paul said in this very book of Galatians that we are justified "through faith in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 2:16).

The moment a person stops trusting in any other thing other than Jesus Christ and believes on Jesus Christ, that person completely enters into the eternal values secured by the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

It is like insurance. The moment you sign up for the insurance, you are linked to all the benefits of that insurance. The moment you believe on Jesus Christ, you are linked to all of the benefits of Jesus Christ.

Question #6 - What are the doctrinal realities for one who is justified?

There are five critical theological realities that are in place for one justified:

- (Reality #1)** - One justified by imputation has sin judicially removed. Ps. 32:1-2; Rom. 4:5-8; 5:18-19
- (Reality #2)** - One justified by imputation is declared righteous from all things. Acts 13:39
This includes all condemnatory sins and all Mosaic Law charges against you.
- (Reality #3)** - One justified by imputation is at permanent peace in relationship with God.
Romans 5:1
- (Reality #4)** - One justified by imputation cannot ever experience the wrath of God. Rom. 5:9
- (Reality #5)** - One justified by imputation is guaranteed eternal life. Rom. 5:18; 8:29-30, 35-39; Titus 3:7

Question #7 - What are the main misconceptions concerning justification?

There are two main misconceptions about this doctrine of justification:

- (Misconception #1)** - Justification makes or causes a person to be righteous. This is false.
Justification legally declares a person righteous even though one still sins.

The matter of becoming righteous is the matter of sanctification after justification.

- (Misconception #2)** - Justification is maintained by living a holy life. This is false.
No one is justified or maintains justification by any works no matter how good one thinks they are—Rom. 3:20, 28; Gal. 2:16; 3:11; 5:4.

When Christ cried out “it is finished,” what those words mean is that He completed everything necessary to make it possible for God to justify a sinner. He did not cry “it is finished; now you pick up the slack and finish what I didn’t.” Our justification comes solely through Jesus Christ.

Question #8 - What are the main objections to the doctrine of justification?

There are three main objections:

- (Objection #1)** - Justification opposes grace because it is a judicial and legal transaction of God.

This is ludicrous because there is no greater demonstration of God’s grace than when He declares an unrighteous person to be righteous.

(Objection #2) - Justification is irreverent because it declares sinners righteous contrary to actual fact. It is almost as if God is legalizing something fictitious or false.

The declaration of a sinner as righteous is very reverent and very sacred because it is based on the righteousness of Jesus Christ and has nothing to do with the sinner's ability to be righteous. When God judicially declares that His Son's blood has washed away the condemnatory sin of a sinner and then calculates His Son's righteousness to that sinner, it is one of the most sacred and reverent acts that takes place at His Throne. This is not some fictitious moment, this is very real.

(Objection #3) - Justification is a doctrine that leads to a life of licentiousness.

One who is justified has God's Spirit living in him and that Spirit starts working in that person's life to promote a true spirituality.

So now having discussed the matter of justification, we come to **Galatians 3:6-9** and in this text Paul is proving that justification is by faith alone and he is using Abraham as an illustration to prove that point. **There are four main questions Paul answers in this defense:**

QUESTION #1 – How was Abraham justified? **3:6**

If we were to turn back the clock to the O.T. days of Abraham, would we discover that Abraham was justified by his works or by faith? What would we discover from the book of Genesis? By the way, we know that Abraham could not be justified by keeping the Mosaic Law because he was justified well over 400 years before the Mosaic Law was even given. So just exactly how was Abraham justified?

Well Paul says in **Galatians 3:6** that he was justified by faith. He simply believed the Word of God and God calculated that to his account as righteousness. Now there are two New Testament Pauline books that quote Genesis 15:6 in proving this point. One is here in **Galatians 3:6** and the other is in **Romans 4:3**. In fact, one commentator said the best commentator on Galatians 3 is Romans 4. **In both of these references to Abraham, Paul is proving that man is justified by faith and not works.**

So let's go back to **Genesis 15:6** and see just exactly the point. God had promised Abraham that He would multiply his name. Abraham was getting old and so was his wife Sarah. They had no children. In **Genesis 15:4-5** God tells Abraham that he will have children and God took Abraham outside and showed him the stars and informed him that he would have more descendants than the stars.

When you are in the Middle East, you can really see the stars at night because of the elevation. Now it has been estimated that when we look up into the sky on a starry night, we see thousands of stars. If you look through a telescope, you will see millions of stars. As Abraham would have looked up in the sky he would have seen lots of stars, way more than he could humanly count. There was nothing that Abraham could do, in and of himself, to produce a lineage that would equal the number of stars. He is old and so is his wife.

So what this all comes down to is whether or not Abraham believes what God is telling him. **In other words, the issue is an issue of faith. Does Abraham really believe what God just told him?**

Right here is the critical issue of justification and salvation. **Do you really believe that there is not a thing you can do to save yourself and believe that Jesus Christ's work on that cross can save you?** The question comes down to this very point for salvation. Do you really believe you are dead in your sins and that if you believe in Jesus Christ you will be saved from your sins? It comes down to faith. If your answer to that question is "Yes, God, I do believe that," then you, like Abraham, believe the Word of God and God will count it as righteousness to you.

Jesus said, "Whoever believes in me shall not perish but have everlasting life." Do you really believe that? Paul said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved." Do you really believe that?

QUESTION #2 – Who is it that is really justified and related to Abraham? **3:7**

In this context, those who believe they are right with God by faith and not works are sons of Abraham. The noun "sons" is anarthrous (no article) which means Paul is stressing the character and quality of a son. This does not mean one is physically and literally a Jew.

The Jews felt they were sons of Abraham and automatically were right with God because of their physical link to Abraham as a Jew. In fact, John the Baptist warned the Jews against this kind of thinking, "and do not suppose that you can say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham for our father'; for I say to you that God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham" (Matt. 3:9). The Jews thought and still do think that they are in a right status with God simply because they are physically related to Abraham. Most of these people rely on their Jewish history and law works.

Paul says no that is not how it works. Abraham was made right with God long before the Law was given and he was declared righteous by God by faith. That is how Jews today may be declared righteous by faith in Jesus Christ.

QUESTION #3 – Do the O.T. Scriptures confirm this justification by faith doctrine? **3:8**

Verse 8 informs us that this business pertaining to Abraham was really an O.T. foreseen presentation of the Gospel of justification by faith apart from any works. **God preached the grace Gospel to Abraham and preaches the grace Gospel to us by Abraham.**

The statement here is that God specifically proclaimed the grace Gospel to Abraham and the question is when? When did He do that?

The specific reference here is to an episode that occurred near the end of Abraham's life in Genesis 22:15-18. Abraham had offered Isaac on the altar, believing that God could and would raise Isaac from the dead if he in fact killed him (Heb. 11:19). We learn from Hebrews 11:19 that Abraham understood all of this as a type of Christ. As soon as the episode was over, the angel of the LORD called to Abraham and told him that "all of the nations will be blessed" (Gen. 22:18).

Apparently at this point the Gospel was explained to Abraham. Apparently God told Abraham that His only Son would come and would be sacrificed, but would rise from the dead and that **any who would believe on Him would be saved.** Abraham understood what all people in the world need to understand, "Jesus paid it all, all to Him I owe, sin had left a crimson stain, He washed it white as snow."

Now there is an intellectual faith that says, "I believe in God" but there is also real personal faith that says I only trust in Jesus Christ to save me from my sins. That is the faith that Abraham had. He took God at His Word.

QUESTION #4 – Who is involved in the blessings like Abraham? **3:9**

Very simple to see—those who believe tap into the blessings of Abraham. Those who have faith are saved like Abraham.