

Salvation—Justification: Faith (10th)

(In this podcast we are enlarging the study of faith as a principle regarding the doctrine of justification.)

Thus far in looking at faith in relation to justification we first showed that the terms “justified by faith” or “justification by faith” are often misunderstood and that in defining the general understanding of the phrases leads to confusion. Then we quoted Romans 3:28; 5:9; Galatians 2:17; and Titus 3:7 to show that the Scriptures declare that we are said to be justified by *faith, blood, Christ, and grace* and that all of these terms in reality are testifying to the same thing—the Person and work of Christ. Next we noted that the death of Christ is limited to the elect, sheep, or believer and these are the only people that are justified. Too often people who profess to believe in “justification by faith” and profess to believe that the death of Christ was only for the elect present a gospel that implies if one will simply exercise their faith they will be justified. In fact, we previously supplied quotes from various well known commentators to show this. Furthermore, we referenced the meaning of “substance” as found in Hebrews 11:1 that says, “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” We saw that the translation of this word as found in the King James Version to be better and more definitive than many of the modern translations. The Greek word is ὑπόστασις (hypostasis) and is translated “person” in Hebrews 1:3 when speaking of Christ being “the express image of” of the “person” of God. In other words, Christ is the very foundation and substance of God as faith is the substance of things hoped for in Hebrews 11:1. Substance is more foundational and substantial than such words as “confidence,” “certainty,” “being sure,” or “assurance,” as found in some of the modern translations. As stated before in a previous podcast, “*faith* is the real *existence*, the *essence*, the *essential part*, the *vital part*, the *stuff* of things for which we hope. Faith is not a dream. It is not self-persuasion. It is not the product of one’s imagination or something which has been conceived in the mind by emotional desires.” That faith is something produced within man and is a “leap in the dark” is usually the contemporary concept of faith, but in reality this is mysticism and/or existentialism. In reality, faith cannot actually be unless that in which it rests is an actual fact. Faith cannot create. Faith cannot produce something that does not already exist. Faith is the substance of that which is expected to exist. Faith does not justify. A person must first be justified by the Person and work of Christ. “Faith is *reality, real existence, essence, or stuff* of that which is ‘hoped for’ or of that which one expects to receive, it is not derived by the *confidence* or *assurance* that is conjured by a person’s inner thoughts, mental process, or human will.” Modern translations have done more to cloud and obscure the truth and meaning of faith than to simplify the truth.

We ended our previous podcast by supplying a quote from William Jeyes Styles (1842-1914), a Strict and Particular Baptist in England:

We believe that Faith should be regarded — Firstly as a **principle** or faculty imparted by the Holy Spirit to every Regenerated person (Ephesians 2:8; Philippians 1:29; II Timothy 1:5; II Peter 1:1); and Secondly as an **act** which arises from the existence of this principle and which specially characterises [*sic*] the true children of God (Mark 4:40; 11:22; Romans 4:19; 10:17; II Corinthians 1:24; Ephesians 3:17; Colossians 1:4; 2:5-7; I John 5:4; Hebrews 6:12). (*A Manual of Faith and Practice: Designed for Young and Enquiring Christians* by William Jeyes Styles, 1897, pp. 186-187. See also *Justification: The Heart of the Gospel* by Jimmy K. Barber, pp. 105-106.)

I desire to pick up our discussion today regarding the first consideration of faith: faith as a principle. We have previously addressed this in our studies, but I believe it to be profitable to give attention to this

important truth again since there are some (Albert Barnes for one) that deny this. Though quoted in a previous podcast, note again the words of Barnes as follows:

“Faith is always an act of the mind. It is not a created essence which is placed within the mind. It is not a substance created independently of the soul, and placed within it by almighty power. It is not a *principle*, for the expression *a principle of faith* is as unmeaning as a principle of joy, or a principle of sorrow, or a principle of remorse. God promises; the man believes; and this is the whole of it. While the word faith is sometimes used to denote *religious doctrine*, or the system that is to be believed, (**Ac** 6:7; 15:9; **Ro** 1:5; 10:8; 16:26; **Eph** 3:17; 4:5; **1Ti** 2:7, etc.) yet, when it is used to denote that which is required of men, it always denotes an *acting of the mind* exercised in relation to some object, or some promise, or threatening, or declaration of some other being. Cmt. on Mr 16:16.” (Comments from *Sword Searcher* Bible program on Romans 4:3.)

The Scriptures declare that faith is “the gift of God,” Ephesians 2:8. Barnes said that faith “is always an act of the mind.” He further said that “man believes; and this is the whole of it.” Though Barnes denies that faith is a principle, there are others who differ: see the following:

Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? – ‘On what principle?’ Of works? Nay; but by the law (or, on the principle) of faith. (*Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Commentary Unabridged*, from *Sword Searcher* Bible program on Romans 3:27.)

Commenting on Romans 3:27, William R. Newell wrote:

Where then is the [Jewish] boasting? It is excluded. By what manner of law? of works? Nay: but by a law of faith. ...

By what manner of law? of works? Not at all! but by a law of faith. “Law” in this instance is rule, or plan. This “law,” or principle, of faith, applies not only to our justification, but to every aspect of the believer’s life thereafter,--”building up yourselves on your most holy faith.” “That life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God.” (*Romans: Verse by Verse* by William R. Newell, from *Sword Searcher* Bible program on Romans 3:27.)

A. T. Robertson commenting on Romans 3:27:

It is excluded (*exekleisthê*). First aorist (effective) passive indicative. “It is completely shut out.” Glorifying is on man’s part. **Nay; but by a law of faith** (*ouchi, alla dia nomou pisteôs*). Strong negative, and note “law of faith,” by the principle of faith in harmony with God’s love and grace. (*Word Pictures of the New Testament* by A. T. Robertson, from *Sword Searcher* Bible program on Romans 3:27.)

Also commenting on Romans 3:27, Robert Hawker stated:

Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law of works? Nay, but by the law of faith. Everything is excluded in the creature, while Christ alone is exalted in the infinite greatness, and glories of his Person, and in the infinite merit of his work, in his blood shedding, and righteousness. The, *Jew* and *Gentile* are distinctions but in name, while Christ is all, and in all. For God, as a Covenant God in Christ, is the God of both, in every individual instance of his Church, given by God to Christ, and chosen by God in Christ, before the foundation of the world, **Eph** 1:4. This ancient settlement of eternity took place, not only before the name of Jew or

Gentile were known, but before sin had entered into the world to make those distinctions; yea, before the world itself was called into being. And therefore, as the Church of Christ had being in Christ, from everlasting; the recovery of the Church from the *Adam-fall* by sin, in this time-state of her being, had been all along provided for: and Christ's people, whether Jew or Gentile, were his, and the objects of his love, and grace, and favor, from all eternity. So that He that is the God in Covenant for the Jew, is also for the Gentile; seeing it is His justification of them, whether circumcised or uncircumcised, and not their different claims to favor, which becomes the cause of their acceptance. And so far is all this blessed and approved way, of being wholly justified by Christ, from setting aside the law, that in fact it becomes the only establishment of it. Since it proves, that rather than one jot or tittle of God's holy law should fail; the Son of God shall fulfil [*sic*] all its righteous demands, and give his soul an offering for sin, for the breaches of it by his people. And, it is the joy of all the redeemed, as well in heaven, as earth, that by the obedience and death of Christ, the Son of God in our nature, hath done more to magnify, and make honorable, God's holy law, than could have been done by the unsinning [*sic*] obedience of the whole creation of God, to all eternity, **Da** 9:24. (*Poor Man's Commentary* by Robert Hawker, from *Sword Searcher* Bible program on Romans 3:27.)

Though Hawker did not use the word principle, he clearly stated that our justification is solely by the Person and work of Christ for His elect children given to Him before the world began. This declaration is that justification is not due to our faith, nor is our faith imputed to us for justification, but our justification is based on the principle or law of faith which is simply the Person and work of Jesus Christ.

I desire to supply another quote from the English Baptist Israel Atkinson (1817-1881) showing that the law or principle of faith is simply the Lord Jesus Christ, or in other words the Person and work of Christ, but our time is up for today. The Lord willing we will supply the quote from Atkinson and enlarge somewhat regarding the principle of faith in our next podcast. Farewell.