

## Romans 3:20–31 | Justification

### Study Questions\* from 15.10.2023 sermon

\*Questions taken from Serge Sonship manual, 3rd edition, chapter 3

#### Read

Read Romans 3:23—28 together.

#### Discuss

- i. Off the top of your head, come up with a definition of Justification.
- ii. Of the statements below, which option, **A** or **B**, is true? Circle the appropriate letter to indicate your choice. (Work through these on your own, then do the next question together as a group)
  - 1 **A** Justification is a single act of God for us.  
**B** Justification is an ongoing work of God in us.
  - 2 **A** Justification means “to make righteous.”  
**B** Justification means “to declare righteous.”
  - 3 **A** Faith plus works = salvation (justification).  
**B** Faith in Christ alone = salvation (justification) plus works.
  - 4 **A** Imputation (crediting) means not counting us guilty for our sins and counting us as righteous as Christ.  
**B** Imputation means only not counting us guilty.
  - 5 **A** The nature of faith is to receive Christ.  
**B** The nature of love is to receive Christ.
  - 6 **A** Faith alone justifies by uniting us to Christ.  
**B** Faith alone with baptism justifies by uniting us to Christ.
  - 7 **A** Justification frees us from all responsibility to obey the law of God.  
**B** Justification is a declaration that we are righteous and a pardon of our sins, which sets us free to obey God’s law by faith.
- iii. Look at the answer key found at the end of these questions. Compare your choices with the answers there and make any corrections necessary. Discuss your corrections with your group to ensure you have fully understood Justification.

iv. Ask someone from your group to read out The Heidelberg Catechism question 60:

Q. *How are you right with God?*

A. *Only by true faith in Jesus Christ.*

“Even though my conscience accuses me of having grievously sinned against all God’s commandments and of never having kept any of them, and even though I am still inclined toward all evil, nevertheless, without my deserving it at all, out of sheer grace, God grants and credits to me the perfect satisfaction, righteousness, and holiness of Christ, as if I had never sinned nor been a sinner, as if I had been as perfectly obedient as Christ was obedient for me. All I need to do is accept this gift of God with a believing heart [1975 translation].”

Share with your group: Why is it so good for *you* to have the perfect righteousness of Christ credited to your account?

v. How do you think God views you right now? What is his attitude toward you?

vi. What can you do to change God’s opinion of you? Explain your answer.

We often come up with certain rules or laws, believing that if we keep them we are more “right” before God. From there, it’s only a small step before we start using these rules or laws to judge other people based on their performance. The rules we make for ourselves are often good things. However, we often abuse them. For example, as we struggle with the desire to be in control of our lives, we erect laws that try to maintain that control. These laws could be as simple as, “Don’t cut me off on the road,” or “The house has to be kept tidy.” When people break these laws, we feel we’re losing control and that people don’t respect us. Moreover, we feel that we’re right and they’re wrong. The usual result is anger, whereby we try to retake control of the situation and show just how right we are. Thus, instead of the law being used to help us love other people, we use it against other people.

vii. What’s one rule you’ve made for yourself and others that makes you feel good when kept, but leaves you irritated or depressed when it’s broken?

viii. How has your rule-keeping given you a sense of righteousness? How does being mastered by this rule keep you from genuinely loving other people?

### **Answer key to Question ii:**

1: A, 2: B, 3: B, 4: A, 5: A, 6: A, 7: B.

### **Pray**

Spend some time praying through what you’ve learned & praying for each other.