

POWER

“the gospel is the power of God unto salvation” (Romans 1:16)

JUSTIFICATION IN VIEW OF THE CROSS

by Daniel F. Cates

While "justification" is only found three times in English in the King James Version, other forms representing the state and process of justification are found hundreds more. The idea of justification with reference to man's spiritual state involves making men who are unrighteous due to their own sin (Rom. 3:23) and incapable in and of themselves to become righteous (1 Tim. 2:5,6; John 14:6; Acts 4:12) as if they were again in their former innocent state of righteousness having been redeemed by the crucifixion of Christ (Rev. 1:5; 1 Cor. 6:20; 1 Pet. 1:18,19). The process of justification, from the Greek word δικαίω (dikiao), requires a number of things necessarily tied to the cross.

First, there must be a sacrifice. Cain and Abel offered sacrifices to God (Gen. 4:3,4). Noah offered a sacrifice when he left the ark (Gen. 8:20). From the days of Job, expiation was provided by sacrifice; Job sacrificed for, he said, "It may be that my sons have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts" (Job 1:5).

Second, the sacrifice must be a blood sacrifice. The Hebrews writer succinctly said, "Without shedding of blood is no remission" (Heb. 9:22). This is because, as God told Moses, "... the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul" (Lev. 17:11).

Third, the sacrifice must be a pure sacrifice. The sacrifices offered by the fathers had to be pure, unblemished (Exo. 12:5; et al). An impure, blemished sacrifice would have been "an abomination unto the Lord" (Deu. 17:1). Malachi described such sacrifices simply as "evil" (Mal. 1:7,8) and the sacrificers as cursed deceivers (Mal. 1:14).

Fourth, the Just for the unjust. Because the sin of man could not ultimately be removed by an animal sacrifice (Heb. 10:4), Jesus Christ, because no other were capable, had to be that pure, blood sacrifice (1 Pet. 1:18,19). He was "the Just for unjust" (1 Pet. 3:18).

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EXEGETICAL POWER

THE PROPITIATION OF THE CROSS

by Aaron J. Cozort

This is a new section of POWER called EXEGETICAL POWER where you will receive an exegesis (i.e. a critical explanation) of a passage of Scripture.

The Book of Romans is a masterpiece awaiting the deep thought and exegesis of a serious student. This month's search through the text will **bring out** a text that is damning and hopeful, judgmental and merciful, deep and yet clearly shines a light to all who will read and understand. Romans 3:19-31.

3:19-20

Ro 3:19 ¶ Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. 20 Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

Paul identifies for the reader what he and the recipient already know about law. Here, the law is specifically the law of Moses. The Law set apart the Jew and Gentile during the Old Testament, but it also equally condemned the sin of both Jew and Gentile, while providing no justification for either through simple "law keeping." (Note: Justified in His sight = standing holy before God **without** God's grace).

Why could the law not provide justification apart from grace? Because it brought the knowledge of sin, but not the solution.

3:21-23

21 But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, 22 even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference; 23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

Be careful to understand, God doesn't become righteous by "keeping the law." He is manifested (revealed) as righteous, and that righteousness is conveyed upon us through our faith in Christ, not the law (cf. Gal. 2:16).

Don't miss though, the emphasis is on the equality ("all... all") with which both Jew and Gentile receive God's righteousness--just as they both fell short of that glory.

3:24

24 being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,

Now, the one (either Jew or Gentile) who could not stand justified by the law (vs. 20), apart from grace, can be justified freely by grace through redemption that is found **in Christ**.

I do not set aside the grace of God; for if righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died in vain. (Gal. 2:21)

3:25

25 whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed,

Now the crux of this study. God set forth... Robertson wrote, "Second aorist middle indicative... God set before himself (purposed) and did it publicly before (pro) the whole world."

God didn't do this because of necessity. He didn't do it privately. It wasn't demanded of Him. We didn't deserve it. He chose. He decided. He purposed.

The blood of the of the only perfect sacrifice, through faith, supplied our atonement which the justice of God required. Reader, take time to study God's justice in view of his mercy, and vice-versa. As demonstration, God applied self-restraint (forbearance) as he waited during the Old Testament for the sacrifice of Christ to pay the price. The alternative was immediate punishment for sin--i.e. death (cf. 6:23).



THE PROPITATION OF THE CROSS (CONT.)

(An Exegesis of Romans 3:19-31)

3:26

26 to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

God cannot be just if He doesn't punish sin. God cannot justify man without a sufficient sacrifice. Christ provided both. The opportunity for mercy, the appeasement of justice.

Faith is a requirement for one to receive this atonement. This is why Jesus said, "Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for if you do not believe that I am He, you will die in your sins" (John 8:24). Jew or Gentile, doesn't matter, both are condemned without Christ's propitiatory sacrifice.

3:27

27 Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? No, but by the law of faith.

If you cannot **stand alone** with your works and be justified, then you cannot boast.

3:28

28 Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law.

The law of Moses didn't justify anyone, it condemned them. Faith in Christ justifies mankind -- apart from the works of the law.

3:29-30

29 Or is He the God of the Jews only? Is He not also the God of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also, 30 since there is one God who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith.

Therefore, the propitiation of the sacrifice of Christ on the cross was the one opportunity for the one God to bring one justification for every individual, whether Jew or Gentile, bond or free, male or female (cf. Gal. 3:27-28).

3:31

31 Do we then make void the law through faith? Certainly not! On the contrary, we establish the law.

Can you sense the protest rising to the reader's lips? "Paul! You've just said the law was worthless!" He preempts their protest by making it clear. Faith doesn't void the law, it establishes it. Remember, Jesus said, "Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill" (Mat. 5:17).

So much more could be written, and Romans 4 is a continuation of the argument of this passage, but space allows us simply to say, **may you read and understand.**



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A POWERFUL THOUGHT

A VIEW OF SANCTIFICATION

By: Aaron J. Cozort

This is a new section of POWER called A POWERFUL THOUGHT where we will present the "bones" of a thought that could easily be turned into a sermon outline or a devotional by simply applying some additional "meat" to the bones.

Set Apart

Jeremiah was told that he was sanctified from before he was born. This certainly didn't make him saved from his sins--for he had none. It made him "set apart" (Jeremiah 1:5).

How Are Christians Set Apart?

'I will deliver you from the Jewish people, as well as from the Gentiles, to whom I now send you, 'to open their eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me.' (Acts 26:17-18)

Sanctification is connected to an inheritance shared with those who have faith in Christ. Those who have the inheritance are those who are forgiven. Those who are forgiven are those who have been set apart. What caused them to be set apart? Faith in Christ (cf. John 3:16-17; John 8:24).

The Holy Spirit's Part In Sanctification

Christ, the Father, and the Holy Spirit all participate in our "set apart" status. Paul tells the Romans that the Gentiles were sanctified by the Holy Ghost. Specifically the Holy Spirit made them a sanctified, acceptable offering to God through the ministering of the gospel (Romans 15:15-16).

Sanctification Requires Purity

For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality; that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, not in passion of lust, like the Gentiles who do not know God (1 Thessalonians 4:3-5)

Sanctification cannot be separated from a purity of life. God doesn't set apart that which is defiled, blemished, and spotted with sin. He sets apart that which has been washed, made holy. Once a person has been sanctified, they must not turn back to the filth of the world to immerse themselves once again in lustful behaviors.

When Christ Is Alive In Us, We Live Sanctified

I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me. (Galatians 2:20)

This verse may not use the word sanctification, but it describes sanctification perfectly. When we are "set apart for the Master's use", we give our lives over to be "lived" (controlled) by the Master and we become dead.

(for more on Sanctification, see B.J. Clarke's article on page6)



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POWER from the PAST (DOUBLE FEATURE)

THE PREACHING OF THE CROSS

by Ronald Gilbert

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What does it mean to preach the cross? Some have the idea that just mentioning the word "cross" in a sermon is preaching the cross. When one studies history he learns that Christ was not the first man to die on a cross. Literally thousands of men and women have died on crosses before and after Christ. We are told in 1 Corinthians 12:18 that the preaching of the cross is the power of God. Paul declared in Ephesians 2:12-16 that reconciliation takes place through the cross. In Romans 1:16 we learn that the Gospel is God's power to save man.

The preaching of the cross of Christ is preaching the message of salvation that is offered as a result of the cross of Christ. In 1 Corinthians 15:1-4 Paul said that the Gospel when preached and received would save men. He also stated that the Gospel contained the facts of Christ dying for our sins, and that He was buried and He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures. Thus the Gospel of Christ contains the facts of the death, burial and resurrection of Christ. Redemption from sin is through the blood of Christ, Ephesians 1:7. The question then is, how do we come in contact with the blood? Talking about the blood or simply believing that Christ's blood was shed will not save us from our sins. We must have the blood of Christ applied to our sins.

In Acts 8:35 Philip preached Jesus unto this man. Preaching Jesus is preaching the Gospel of Christ or the cross of Christ.

This man heard, believed, repented, confessed the name of Jesus as Lord and was baptized into Christ for the remission of sins. Philip preached the blessings of the cross. When one preaches the cross of Christ he preaches the message of forgiveness. When one understands that baptism is for the remission of sins, Acts 2:38; Acts 22:16; Mark 16:16; Romans 6:4, then he understands that one cannot preach the cross without preaching the complete plan of salvation. Baptism is a part of God's plan of forgiveness therefore, one cannot preach the cross of Christ, the gospel, the plan of salvation, the message of redemption without preaching what the Bible says concerning baptism.

Why do we preach the cross of Christ? If our preaching is to follow the Bible we do not have a choice as to what we will preach. Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15,16 and Luke 24:46,47 tell us to preach the Gospel to the world. When one preaches the Gospel of Christ he is preaching the message of the cross.

The preaching of the cross is to some foolishness but to those who are saved it is the power of God, 1 Corinthians 1:18. The greatest need in the world today is the same as it was almost 2,000 years ago. The greatest need today is the preaching of the cross of Christ. Let us study diligently and understand what is involved in preaching the cross of Christ



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POWER from the PAST (Double Feature)

CALLED TO BE SAINTS

by B.J. Clarke

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We have been called to be saints. Paul addressed his Roman epistle "To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, CALLED TO BE SAINTS...(Rom. 1:7). His first writing to the Corinthians employs almost identical terminology, "Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, CALLED TO BE SAINTS...(1 Cor. 1:2).

Saints are not perfect, sinless creatures who have attained a spirituality that is almost divine. If that were the case we would have some trouble harmonizing Paul's reference to the Corinthians as saints in chapter 1 with his inspired indictment of their carnality in chapter 3. But, what does it mean to be a saint? This question can best be answered by understanding what it means to be sanctified. After all, saints are those who have been sanctified.

The word sanctified simply means set apart for a holy service. W.E. Vine says that sanctification is used in the New Testament to refer to the separation of the believer from evil things and evil ways. Those who are sanctified are those who turn away from such things as dishonour God and his gospel (2 Tim. 2:21). Those who are sanctified are those who have come out from wickedness and

uncleanness of the world to be separate and holy (2 Cor. 6:17-7:1). Holiness is a status we have been commanded to attain (1 Ptr. 1:15,16). "For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness (ASV translates holiness as "sanctification") (1 Ths. 4:7). Holiness is attained through obedience to the truth and continued faithfulness to it (1 Ptr. 1:22, 1 Jn. 3:6,9). If any man would see the Lord he must follow after holiness or sanctification (Heb. 12:14). A sanctified life is a consecrated life for God.

God's children are commonly referred to in the New Testament as saints, i.e., "sanctified" or "holy ones." The word is used 62 times in the New Testament. Saints are those who have been set apart by the Lord through the agency of the water and the word (Eph. 5:26, Jn. 3:3-5). Saints are those who have been set apart by the truth of God's word and their obedience to that truth (Jn. 17:17). Saints are Christians and Christians are saints. So be careful when you tell people that you're not a saint. You are denying your Christianity at the same time. We have been called to be saints. Let us ever strive to walk worthy of the calling wherewith we've been called (Eph. 4:1).



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