

August 22

Scriptures: Read Romans 3

Key Verse: “Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law.” (Romans 3:28)

Overview

What does it mean to be “justified”? And who or what is the “justifier”? Well, let us start with the meaning of “justice”. The Bible tells us God is “just” and His nature demands “justice”, especially in the context of man’s injustice. Justice is the “reward of virtue and punishment of vice” (Concise Oxford dictionary). To “justify” is to “show the justice or righteousness of (person, act, etc.), or to vindicate”. To be justified, then, is to be declared free from the penalty that God’s nature demands of sin. To be unjustified is to be subject to “the wages of sin”. According to the Bible, if we aren’t justified we’re going to hell.

God is the ultimate and only justifier. Look at verses 25 and 26: “God presented Him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in His blood. He did this to demonstrate His justice... so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus” (NIV).

God’s justice demands a penalty for sin. For His own reasons, God chose to require the giving of life as that penalty. In the Old Testament He allowed the Israelites to substitute the life of an unblemished animal for one’s own life. The shedding of the sacrificial blood was the only way to effect “remission of sin”. Without that blood there was no justification.

Jesus Christ has become that sacrifice for our sin, but we have to accept Him as our substitute. We cannot come into the presence of a holy and just God without the “covering” of His blood; there is no other way. As we have “faith in His Blood”, we are vindicated in God’s eyes—justice has been served. God’s anger at sin is atoned and we are accepted, unconditionally, into His presence.

Prayer

Thank you, O holy God, that we are justified by faith. Grant us that daily supply of faith so we may live today, and for eternity, in a relationship with You which is based on the Blood of Your sacrificial Lamb, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, in whose Name we pray. Amen!