

Justified by the Blood of Jesus Christ

Charles Leiter | illbehonest.com

The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanses us from all sin. The blood cleanses us from sin. 1 John 1:7. Now what does this mean? It means that justification proceeds on the basis of a ransom that has been paid. Justification proceeds on the basis of the satisfaction of justice. In other words, when God justifies a person, He is not looking at anything in the person. He is looking at something that has been done for the person. He is looking at the blood of Jesus Christ. What does that blood represent? It represents the fact that He, by His death on the Cross, paid for my sin. He bore my sin in His body on the cross. So justified by His blood.

In other words, God does not justify a man on the basis of anything in himself. You say, "Well, sure I know that." But that has a lot of implications. In particular, He does not justify a man because the man is in any way, shape, or form godly. What does it say in Romans 4:5? God justifies the ungodly! He only justifies ungodly people. For example, a guy comes, he is sobbing, he is sorry for his sins, but repentance does not pay one iota for sin. Suppose a criminal comes before the judge. He has committed all these murders and he is really, really sorry. The judge says, "Oh, well that pays for everything if you are sorry." No! It doesn't pay for anything. Repentance, your repentance [doesn't pay]. Now there's a lot of people that are looking at how sorry they are, to see if they are sorry enough to pay for their sins. That will never pay for your sins. "Could my tears forever flow, could my zeal no respite know. All for sin could not atone, Thou must save, and Thou alone." So, it's not because of repentance. God does not justify a man on the basis of his repentance. He also does not justify us on the basis of our faith. God does not look and say, "Well, that guy has really got a lot of faith. I will justify him." No, He is not looking at that faith. Faith can't pay for sin! It doesn't do anything to pay for your sins. Only the blood of Jesus can pay for our sins. Justification is based on the blood of Christ.

Now this explains why a person can have very weak faith and still be justified. As long as it is real faith. Let me give you an illustration. Here is a bridge out here going over a chasm. Here is a chasm right here. And I have got a bridge going out across the chasm that is a very, weak bridge. And over here I have got a bridge going across the chasm that's a very strong bridge. Now here's a guy that comes along, who has great confidence in this weak bridge. He's full of faith. That bridge will hold me! You know, the vast majority of mankind has got their confidence in some weak bridge. And so full of faith and confidence, he walks out on the weak bridge. What happens? He perishes. Alright, here is a guy over here and it is a very strong bridge, and he has a very weak faith in that strong bridge. But he has enough to get him out on the bridge. So with fear and trembling, he steps out on the bridge. His faith, or lack of faith, has nothing whatsoever to do with whether the bridge will hold him. It's not how strong your faith is, it's how powerful the blood of Jesus Christ is. If you today are resting your weight on Christ with ever so weak of faith, His blood and His righteousness are infinitely powerful to keep you from falling into the chasm. Do you see that? Because you are not justified on the basis of your faith. You are justified on the basis of Christ's blood and righteousness, that's the point. Somebody said to Hudson Taylor, "You are a man of very great faith." And he said, "No, I am a man of very little faith in a very great God." That's the difference.

Think of the Passover. You remember in the Passover, they put the blood out on the doorpost? And so the blood is out there on the doorpost and the guy inside the house, he might be scared to death. He hears the cry going up from the Egyptians that are dying and he's inside with fear and trembling. God comes along and He says, "When I see your faith and confidence, I will pass over you." Is that what He said? No, He says, "When I see the blood I will pass over you." It didn't matter whether the guy inside was scared to death if the blood was on the doorpost, that was what mattered. That's the only issue. Are you trusting in the righteousness of Christ? Is His blood on your doorpost? It doesn't have to do with you and your performance, it has to do with His righteousness. Now this is an amazing thing.

There was a Scottish evangelist 100 years ago, James McKendrick. And he tells the story of a notorious sinner, one of the worst sinners in the whole neighborhood and area. I think his name was George Mays, and he was converted. McKendrick continued in his preaching, and he came back a year or two later and he saw George. George was very low, he was down in the dumps, his head was down, he was miserable. He said, "George, what's wrong?" He said, "I don't feel the way I used to feel when I first became a Christian. I don't feel that way anymore." And James McKendrick said, "George, I want to ask you a question. How much money do you have in your pocket?" He said, "Well, I have a shilling." He said, "Well, let me ask you a question. When you feel really good, how much is that worth?" He said, "Well, it's worth a shilling." Then, he said, "Well, if you feel really bad, is it worth less than that?" He said, "No, it's still worth a shilling." I am trying to get across to you that you are justified by something outside yourself. You are justified by the blood of Christ, and it doesn't change from one day to the next. It doesn't matter how you feel. His blood and righteousness today are absolutely perfect and powerful to justify me in the sight of God. No matter how I am doing on any particular day, it doesn't relate to that. It relates to who Christ is and what He has done for His people.

If you have ever been to the ocean, you have seen some of these massive ocean-going ships. Some of those anchors, or you look at some of those battleships, the anchors on some of those ships are huge. How much good will it do to put that huge anchor inside the ship? Cast it down into the hold. That won't do anything will it? You've got to get the anchor outside of yourself. You've got to get your confidence from Christ and who He is. You've got to be anchored on Him and not on yourself by looking inside. Cast your anchor outside of the ship.