

Reformation Sunday

Sermon Road Map
Pastor Roger W. Huffman

Romans 3:19-28
October 25, 2020

Here we stand: Justification by faith alone!

- 500 years ago next April 18 Luther declared at Worms: *Here I stand.*
 - ◆ His stand: on the clear teaching of Scripture
 - ◆ The heart: ²⁸ *...a person is justified by faith without the works of the law.*
- The church without this heart is a corpse! Dead, worse than worthless. Deadly.
- God used the book of Romans to open Luther's eyes to this missing teaching
 - ◆ ^{1:17} *For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed by faith, for faith, just as it is written, "The righteous will live by faith."*
 - ◆ ²¹ *But now, completely apart from the law, a righteousness from God has been made known. ...* ²² *This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all and over all who believe.*
- After Worms - Luther's German translation of the NT captured Paul's point here: ²⁸ *...a person is justified by faith alone without the works of the law.*
 - ◆ For Rome taught and still teaches it's *by faith and works (good deeds)*
- *For we conclude that a person is justified by faith without the works of the law.*
 - ◆ Paul included the church in Rome and the faithful of all time in the *we*
 - ◆ Greek: *we conclude* = *after careful consideration we hold to this ongoing truth*
 - ◆ Let us carefully consider and reaffirm our stand.

Here we stand: Justification by faith alone!

❖ Carefully consider what this means

- From Romans 1:18-3:20 Paul exposes the sin problem of every human
- Conclusion: ¹⁹ *Now we know that whatever the law says is addressed to those who are under the law, so that every mouth will be silenced and the whole world will be subject to God's judgment.*
 - ◆ Our guilt under moral law leaves us all speechless - no defense - condemned
 - ◆ Subject to owing God big time for all the damages - by actions & neglect
 - ◆ You know God's law & just demand for ZERO SIN. Guilt - *hole to hide in*
 - Not only our naughtiness. Also neglect. Failure to respect God always!
 - ◆ Luther's guilt, he took God seriously. *Catholic guilt* is still well known today.
 - ◆ TILM - reaching out to Mormons who are told *Be ye perfect. Do it!*
 - ◆ Law = no defense/silent & *through the law we become aware of sin*
 - Even the most self-righteous in face of law: *becomes silent or angry & leaves*
 - ◆ The universal every person problem: *In fact, there is no difference,* ²³ *because all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.* - standard & praise
 - All need to be convicted of this *all* to find any good news in the next *all*.
- *...and [all] are justified [acquitted] freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus...*
 - ◆ Those who think *I've got it. I can stand before God on my deeds.* - mock this.
 - ◆ Those convicted by their guilt and shortcomings - are stunned to be included.
 - God, whom we offended, is the very one who solves **our** problem. Amazing!
 - Here's a righteousness from God that's absolutely unconditionally free to **all**.

- ◆ It's critical for our comfort and confidence to know God acquitted **all**
 - Right out in the open for all to see - Jesus' shed blood fully paid our debt
 - This was a just punishment because Jesus assumed the guilt of all as his own.
 - Once God's justice was fully compensated, **God declared all acquitted.**
 - Only those who think *they are better than others* are offended to be equals.
 - This truth **leaves no room for doubt** that your sins, **every** one, is paid for!
 - Without this **all** we have no grounds for faith, i.e. to trust that it's resolved.
- ◆ ²⁶ ***He did this to demonstrate his justice at the present time, so that he would be both just and the one who justifies the person who has faith in Jesus.***
 - Since **all** are justified/acquitted - God no longer holds their guilt against them
 - God's **purpose** for making this payment was to **set people free from sin.**
 - Christ's atonement freed **all** from their debt of **guilt.**
 - Those who don't care: **remain** in sin, are hostile to their Savior God. **Dead!**
 - **Through faith** (the new self God creates through the gospel) God rescues people from slavery to sin to be his servant, robed in Christ's righteousness.
 - God's gift of faith is the **means** through which people get God's benefits
 - God's gift of faith gives the gift of new living fellowship with God.

How good it is for us, who've grown up knowing this truth, to see the impact of this stunning message of God's grace on the Hmong in Vietnam, Mormons, people of India, Nepal, and other places where it is new news - truly amazing.

- ❖ **Carefully consider the implication that it's all God's work, none of ours.**
 - If anyone adds anything to God's grace - doubt and fear follow
 - ◆ *Have I done enough? Was it good enough? I don't think so. What's next?*
 - ◆ Peace, joy, hope are all destroyed - riddled with doubt.
 - Protestants have perverted the gospel adding conditions to *faith and believing.*
 - ◆ *If you only believe. Truly, sincerely, fully believe with all your heart.*
 - ◆ This takes a person's eyes off the faithful God to focus on frail self.
 - ◆ As soon as the **quality** and **quantity** of **your faith** is the focus, it's **your** doing.
 - We are saved by **faith alone** - the **trust** that Jesus has **done it all.**
 - ◆ Faith that trusts God's word: *you are fully forgiven, you are my child forever*
 - ◆ **All** who take God at his word **are believers**
 - ◆ Faith takes its stand on God's promises not on the confidence that I truly believe
 - An example. *If God asked you why should I let you spend eternity with me?*
 - ◆ **Don't** say, *Because I believed in you.* Did you notice the noun? **I** - basis/focus
 - ◆ *Because **your Son** paid for all my sin and **you** made me yours in Baptism.*
 - ◆ Faith stands on Jesus' completed works and promises. Stand there! Doubts flee
- ❖ **Carefully consider what it means to say, Here I stand.**
 - Consideration of this truth renews faith and grows in grace.
 - Confessing a clear stand on the truth encourages those standing with you.
 - The more we know this clear comforting truth the more we want to make sure the next generation knows it - treasures it - and joins us in sharing it.
 - The Reformation reminds us what this good news can do to individuals, churches, countries, and the world. Let God's reformation begin with us as we maintain...

Here we stand: Justification by faith alone!