

I. Introduction and Review.

- A. God saves in a gracious and just way: justification redemption, propitiation. v. 21-26
- B. Why does Paul go into such detail explaining justification by faith? v. 27-31 Ga. 1:8-9

II. The gospel leaves no grounds for human pride. v. 27-28

- A. God's way of justification excludes boasting. v. 27
 - 1. The word *law* is used here in the sense of a system or method. 7:21,23 9:31
 - 2. There are two only possible approaches to justification. v. 27b
 - a. The principle (law) of human works.
 - b. The principle (law) of faith in the merit of Another.
 - 3. If salvation were based upon works, then you would have grounds for boasting. 2:17,23 Phil. 3:3-6 Lu. 18:9-12 Mt. 19:16-22
- B. Boasting is excluded because justification is by faith *alone*. v. 28 Eph. 2:8-9
 - 1. God's way of salvation (faith) completely excludes human works and merit.
 - 2. Is your faith meritorious?
 - a. Faith is simply the means by which we receive the gift of Christ's merit.
 - b. We are justified *by* faith, not *because of* faith.
 - c. Faith provides no basis for boasting because faith is a gift of God. Eph. 2:8 I Co. 4:7 John 6:37,44
 - 3. Was Luther justified when he included *alone* in his translation of this verse?
 - a. If all else is excluded, then only faith remains.
 - b. *Sola fide* is necessary in order to maintain *sola gratia*.
 - 4. The only grounds you have for boasting is in the merit of Christ. Gal. 6:14
- C. Any system which allows for human works and merit is contrary to the gospel.
 - 1. Roman Catholicism undermines the gospel by teaching justification by faith *plus* works and sacraments.
 - 2. Some evangelicals teach that faith is our work (Arminianism).
 - 3. Only the gospel of sovereign grace completely excludes human merit. Eph. 2:1-9
 - 4. Does this mean that our works of obedience are worthless?
 - a. Human works are completely excluded as grounds for justification.
 - b. The faith of those who are justified is proven by subsequent obedience (sanctification). James. 2:14f I John 2:3f John 14:15 Eph. 2:10
- D. Do you leave any room for boasting? I Co. 1:30-31
 - 1. If you are proud, self righteous and self satisfied, you are still lost. Mt. 7:21-23
 - 2. The faith which saves humbly looks away from self and trusts the merit and virtue of another (Christ). Lu. 18:13-14
 - 3. Give God all the glory for your salvation. I Co. 1:30-31 Ga. 6:14

III. The gospel eliminates distinctions among people. v. 29-30

- A. There is One God over all of mankind. Deut. 6:4 Isa. 45:5,21b-22 I Co. 8:5-6
 - 1. If justification were by the law, then God would only be interested in the Jews.
 - 2. God is the God of the Gentiles also!
 - a. Paul uses Jewish passion for monotheism to prove God's concern for Gentiles
 - b. The Jews were proud of their special relationship with God.
 - c. They should have realized that their privileges were designed to ultimately include, not exclude the Gentiles. 4:9-12 Ge. 12:2-3 22:18 Je. 30:22 Is. 45:22

- B. It follows that there is only one Way of justification. v. 30 1:16 Ga. 2:15-16 Is. 45:22
John 10:14-16 17:20-21**
1. The gospel suits the character of God: One way be justified by the One God. 4:9f
 2. There is only one way of salvation. Acts 4:12 John 14:6 I Ti. 2:5
 3. There is only one people of God. Eph. 2:11f 4:4-6 Ga. 3:26-29
- C. Every other belief system is excluded by the gospel. John 14:6 Acts 4:12 Mt. 7:13-14**
- D. Do you still make unbiblical distinctions among people? Ga. 3:28 2:12f Acts 15 17:30**

IV. The gospel establishes the law. v. 31

- A. Justification by faith alone does not make the law useless. v. 31 Ga. 3:21f**
1. If the law is excluded as a means of justification, then is the law nullified? v. 31a
 2. May it never be! v. 31b
 - a. The law has its place, but not as a means for justification.
 - b. Faith is not the enemy of the law. Rather it establishes the law. Mt. 5:17
 3. In what sense is *law* used here?
 - a. Paul is not speaking of the Old Testament Scripture, nor of a general rule.
 - b. *Law* here refers to the commandments of God revealed through Moses.
- B. How does faith establish the law?**
1. Paul is not talking about how believers now keep the law (sanctification).
 2. The law serves as a mirror to display our need of grace. v. 20 Gal. 3:24
 - a. The law reveals the holy character of God.
 - b. The law exposes the depravity of man. 3:10f Mt. 5:21-22,27-28 22:27f Js. 2:10
 - c. The law prepares us for the gospel of salvation by grace through faith.
 3. The demands of the law have been fully satisfied by Christ Who came not to set aside its requirements, but to fulfill them. Mt. 5:17 3:15 Ga. 4:4 II Co. 5:21
 - a. He kept the law of God perfectly (Active obedience). He. 4:15 Jo 8:46
 - b. He paid the penalty demanded by the law (Passive obedience). v. 24-26 6:23
John 1:29 Heb. 9:22 I Pet. 3:18
 - c. Because the work of Christ is complete, there is nothing we can add.
- C. God's way of salvation perfectly upholds His law.**
1. No moral obligation is weakened. The law has been perfectly kept.
 2. No penal sanction is disregarded. v. 26 6:23 Ge. 2:17 Ezek. 18:4b
 3. What could not be accomplished by man's law keeping has been accomplished by God through Christ. 8:3-4 Acts 13:39
 4. Paul is simply confirming what the law has always taught. 4:1f

V. Concluding applications.

Discussion Questions for Family Worship

1. In what way does the gospel exclude boasting? v. 27
2. How does any religion leave room for human pride?
3. How do some professing Christians add human merit and detract from the grace of God?
4. Is faith meritorious? v. 28
5. Was Luther right in translating verse 28 "by faith *alone*"?
6. What implication of the gospel is Paul bringing out in verses 29-30?
7. Why is religious pluralism wrong?
8. Why would someone suggest that faith nullifies the law? v. 31a
9. In what way does the gospel establish the law? v. 31b