

Introduction

Gal 1:3-5 "Grace to you and peace from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen."

- Notice that the FIRST thing we need is GRACE ... note the only source of grace : "from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ"
- We cannot have peace with God by our own doing ... we can only experience true peace with God by receiving it as an undeserved, unearned gift of grace from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ!
- See the wonderful provision of God's grace in sending Jesus Christ to this world and to the cross to die for us: "Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil age"
- Note that it is God's will that there is only one way of salvation ... only one Saviour, Jesus Christ: "according to the will of our God and Father"
- And see that when we get saved & rescued from our sin by believing the grace of God through Jesus Christ, it is NOT to our credit ... we cannot boast, because it is "not of ourselves, but by grace" (Eph 2:8-9) ... but because it is by grace, all the glory & praise goes to God: "to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen."

I would like to consider 4 main points:

1. We cannot be justified before God by our own deeds, works or efforts.
2. If it was possible that we could "save ourselves" by justifying ourselves, then Jesus Christ died for nothing!!
3. HOW did Jesus make provision so we could be "justified"?
4. The Gospel is "the Gospel of the grace of God."

1. We cannot be justified before God by our own deeds, works or efforts (Gal 2:16) \_  
(Galatians 2:16) "a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified."

Explain "justified"  
- to be cleared of guilt .... to be forgiven  
- declared "right" & acceptable to God;  
- brought back into a relationship & friendship with God ... part of His family.

**WHY** can we **NOT** 'justify' ourselves by being religious, keeping the commandments, being baptised, doing good works, etc?

- o Rom 3:23 we "**all** have sinned & fallen short of God's glory"
- o Isa 53:6 "All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way."
- o Rom 3:10-12 As it is written: "THERE IS NONE RIGHTEOUS, NO, NOT ONE; THERE IS NONE WHO UNDERSTANDS; THERE IS NONE WHO SEEKS AFTER GOD. THEY HAVE ALL TURNED ASIDE; THEY HAVE TOGETHER BECOME UNPROFITABLE; THERE IS NONE WHO DOES GOOD, NO, NOT ONE."
- o Rom 3:20 "Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin." When we try to keep the law/ commands, all it does is show we cannot do it! We fail & fall all the time.
- o But some people object: "No one is perfect! Just because I'm not perfect I still do many good things – isn't that enough?"
- o BUT: Isa 64:6 tells us that "all our righteousnesses are like filthy rags" – our attempts to justify ourselves by "adding good or religious things into our lives does NOT undo our sin!! You cannot get rid of "badness" by adding "goodness." **Illustration:** putting just one bad egg into a cake mixture, ruins the whole mixture & makes it unacceptable!!

Here is another big problem for us : "For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all." (Jas 2:10).

If a person attempts to please God by keeping the law, he/she is under obligation to keep the whole law. Thus a man is entirely under law, or not under law at all. People under law cannot accept the easy commandments and reject the others. (Gal 5:3) If you break ONE law ... you are held as guilty as if you broke them ALL!

Is that unfair? Illustration: if you are hanging over a cliff by a chain, how many links have to break before you fall?

**Illustration: if some people are trying to jump from one side of a canyon to the other ... it does not matter whether one jumps 10% on the way, another 50% of the way, and another 90% of the way across ... all failed to reach the other side & will fall to their death!**

- o Gal 2:16 “by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified” – no one can clear themselves of their sin & guilt ... no one can make themselves acceptable to God ... no one can earn their own forgiveness ... no one can put themselves into God’s family!

2. If it was possible that we could “save ourselves” by justifying ourselves, then Jesus Christ died for nothing!! (Gal 2:21)

If we can make ourselves acceptable to God by following a religion, trying to keep the law, being nice people, helping others, volunteering, giving money to help the poor, going to church, being baptised, taking communion, etc, then there was NO necessity for Christ to go to all that trouble, pain, suffering, & death, for us! Then we don’t really need Him! We can do it on our own!

This cannot be, as Jesus so very clearly told us: “Jesus said to him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.” (John 14:6) This is “Exclusive” ... no other way to be saved & justified. And Acts 4 instructs us there is salvation in no other than Jesus Christ ... “there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.” (Acts 4:12)

Thus it is clear that it was completely necessary that Jesus died for us ... there is no other method or means of salvation! In Christ alone my hope is found.

3. HOW did Jesus make provision so we could be “justified”?

A. **Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us**

Gal 3:10-13 “For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, “CURSED IS EVERYONE WHO DOES NOT CONTINUE IN ALL THINGS WHICH ARE WRITTEN IN THE BOOK OF THE LAW, TO DO THEM.” But that no one is justified by the law in the sight of God is evident, for “THE JUST SHALL LIVE BY FAITH.” Yet the law is not of faith, but “THE MAN WHO DOES THEM SHALL LIVE BY THEM.” Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, “CURSED IS EVERYONE WHO HANGS ON A TREE” i.e. is crucified.”

B. Jesus Christ is “**the Lamb of God** who took the sin of the world (John 1:29) ... your sin & my sin ... upon Himself, as our substitute!

The prophet Isaiah says in chap 53:3-6 “He is despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.”

C. Rom 3 teaches us that we can be “justified freely by His grace through the **redemption** that is in Christ Jesus” – **He is the Redeemer** ... to redeem means to “regain possession of (something) in exchange for payment.” Jesus paid the ransom price to buy us back ... to rescue us out of slavery to sin & Satan!

D. We also read that Jesus made “**propitiation** by His blood” (Rom 3:25 1 John 2:2).

This word is a wonderful explanation of HOW Jesus saves us: it means “deliver from justly deserved wrath.” The Bible warns us that “the wages of sin is death” ... it tells that the wrath of God is against all unrighteousness .... All sin must be punished ... we have earned eternal condemnation! A good judge does not let guilty criminals get away with their crimes! God is a perfect & fair judge, therefore HE cannot just “let us sinners off” ... the only way He could act lovingly toward us & forgive us, was to deal with our sin & the consequences of sin.

He did this when Jesus went to the cross & took the punishment we deserve ... as our substitute, the perfect, sinless, righteous ONE suffered in our place ... and He did that which we could NOT do for ourselves ... He **satisfied the justice of God** ... Jesus through His death removed the **cause** of our guilt ... He dealt with our sin which caused God to be offended & caused us to be separated from God ... so that He can show mercy to the believing sinner by forgiving & cleansing all who trust in Jesus Christ as their Saviour.

4. The Gospel is "the Gospel of the grace of God" (Acts 20:24)

Eph 2:8-9 For by grace you are saved through faith – it is not your doing - it is the gift of God – it is NOT because of works – so no one can boast / take credit!

The BAD News is that we cannot save ourselves ... we cannot earn forgiveness ... there is nothing we can do make ourselves acceptable & righteous before God ... even one little “bad egg” of sin, disobedience, a bad word, wrong thought, lust, a lie, dishonesty - makes us unacceptable to God who is 100% perfect ... so none will ever become a child of God or get into heaven by being religious or trying to be good ... if we try to keep the law & commandments, we have to perfectly, always, fully obey every command 24/7 our whole lives without even the slightest slip up, or else we ‘break the chain’ and fall to our destruction!

The Good News is that we can be “justified freely by His grace through the **redemption** that is in Christ Jesus!”

Conclusion

“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.” (Joh 3:16)

Have you given up trusting in yourself, your family heritage, your church background, a religion? ... Have you realised that you can NOT win favour with God by trying to keep the Law & 10 Commandments? ... Will you stop striving to “justify” yourself, and accept the truth that your ONLY hope, is to admit that you are a sinner under the guilt of sin, deserving God’s punishment ... Are you willing to receive the gift of God’s grace in Jesus Christ, asking Him to apply the work He accomplished on the cross at Calvary to you personally?

Then you will experience “grace & peace from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil age.”

Then you will be able to truly give glory to God & glorify Him in your life!