

## JUSTIFICATION 1

### DISCUSS WHILE WAITING TO BEGIN...

What do you say to yourself when you don't think that you're really a Christian?

### 1. WHAT IS JUSTIFICATION? JUSTIFICATION IS A LEGAL DECLARATION THAT WE ARE RIGHT WITH GOD

#### (a) Key words and definition

- Justify – Justification – Righteous – Righteousness – Upright
- = “declared by God the judge to be in-the-right with him.”

#### (b) Justification is NOT a work that God does IN us. It is a legal declaration

- forensic / judicial / legal
- Bible examples – Deut. 25:1, Luke 7:29

#### (c) Justification is God's declaration that we are right with Him

- Romans 8:33-34
- J.I. Packer, “God's justifying decision is the judgement of the Last Day, declaring where we shall spend eternity, brought forward into the present and pronounced here and now. It is the last judgment that will ever be passed on our destiny; God will never go back on it, however much Satan may appeal against God's verdict.” (J.I. Packer, *Concise Theology*, p165)

### 2. WHO DOES GOD DECLARE TO BE RIGHTEOUS? GOD JUSTIFIES THE UNGODLY

#### (a) We are totally unrighteous and deserve condemnation

- God's majestic holiness... our deep sinfulness
- Human judges must never justify the ungodly (Proverbs 17:15)

#### (b) God DOES justify the ungodly (e.g. Romans 4:5, 3:19-24)

### 3. HOW CAN WE BE DECLARED RIGHT? CHRIST'S RIGHTEOUSNESS IS IMPUTED TO US

#### (a) God gives righteousness – we do not justify ourselves

- justification is NOT:
  - us saying sorry to God. It's not our confession.
  - us trying to excuse ourselves before God.
  - any religious exercise we perform, however good it may be
- it is a gift:
  - Please read through the following references...*
  - Romans 1:17, 3:21-22, 5:17, 10:3
  - Philippians 3:9

#### (b) Christ's righteousness is imputed to us

- Christ's righteousness = active and passive obedience
- Is reckoned to my account = imputed
  - “God cannot but accept into his favour those who are invested with the righteousness of his own Son.” (John Murray, *Redemption Accomplished and Applied*, p124)
- In the context of union with Christ
- Key Bible verses
  - Romans 5:18-19
    - Adam's disobedience → makes many sinners
    - Christ's obedience → makes many righteous.

2 Corinthians 5:21, “God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.”

### 4. SO WHAT? APPLICATION: WE HAVE PEACE WITH GOD (ROMANS 5:1)

- *Simul justus et peccator, semper justus et peccator*  
“At the same time righteous and a sinner; always righteous and a sinner”
- A debtor to mercy alone...