

Lesson 4:
Justified and Accepted!



*“God does not justify us
because we are worthy,
but by justifying us
makes us worthy.”*

Thomas Watson

*“Some may call it foolish and impossible.
But for every heart it rescues, it’s a miracle.
It’s nothing less than scandalous.
This love that took our place.
Just call it what it is, call it grace.
Call it grace.”*

“Call It Grace” by Unpoken

Our sin keeps us from drawing close to God. It condemns us and leaves us broken, but God made a way for us to be justified and accepted. He sent His son, Jesus, into the world to stand as the condemnation for us. Christ bore our sins and the punishment of them rested on his shoulders. Now, we receive the justice Jesus, in his absence of sin, deserved because he took the punishment we deserved instead. When we place our faith in Jesus and the power of his resurrection, we are absolved from our mistakes, washed completely clean, and accepted as God child for all eternity.

Justified ~ ~ ~ ~

To be justified is to be made valid, to absolve us of all our sins and to set us right. We talked in the video that justified meant: **Just-As-If-We-Never-Sinned**. That is the gift that God gives us. There cannot be any condemnation for what has been completely removed! We are no longer condemned. We are made whole and our lives are set aright.

God does not give us this gift because of our dedication or good works. Our good works show our heart and show God's heart to the world, but they can never earn us salvation. They can never rectify our account with God. We owe Him everything because we are incapable of ever paying Him back for the price that Jesus paid for our lives on Calvary. Thomas Watson explained it like this, "God does not justify us because we are worthy, but by justifying us makes us worthy."

Please read Romans 8:1-4.

These verses are among my favorite. When I first gave my life to God and put my faith in Jesus, I found myself constantly bombarded with feelings of condemnation. I wanted to live for God, but Satan kept throwing my past in my face. I felt so unworthy, but the truth is that all of us are unworthy. That is the point of the law. God gave mankind the law and commandments so we would understand just how impossible it is to be perfect. Only when we understand that we are powerless, can we appreciate God's power, through Christ, to save our souls.

Are there any things in your life or your past that you still feel ashamed and condemned because of? If so, take a few moments to confess those things to God.

Our justification comes with a cost.... The cost of our condemnation. We are no longer condemned for the sins of our past. They have been completely forgiven and washed away! The next time Satan throws your past mistakes in your face, remind him that you are forgiven!

Please continue reading Romans 8:5-10.

What were some of the things “that nature desires” that tempt you? (When we acknowledge and are aware of our temptations, we can more easily recognize them and call out for God to deliver us from them.)

How do those cardinal things/thoughts keep you from submitting to God’s law?

When you are tempted, what can you focus on to resist the temptation?

Please read Psalm 32:1-5.

What remedy does David offer for the weight of sin and guilt?

Confess your sins and worries to God and allow Him to wash them away and create in you a new heart.

Accepted - - - - -

God accepts us as His sons and daughters. He welcomes us in, forgives us, cleanses us, and makes our hearts right. He cuts us off from the tree of death and grafts us into His tree of life. Our neighbor once had a tree that helped me understand this very simple truth. He had once had two trees. One bore beautiful white flowers. It was strong and healthy. The other tree was very withered and sad looking. Most of its leaves were gone and its branches all looked dead. My neighbor was not willing to give up on this sad and dying tree though. He cut off the one branch that still had a few withered leaves clinging to it and he cut the bottom of it, shaping it until it was just the shape and size that he needed. Then, he cut the healthy tree and carved out a place for the new branch. After carefully placing the dying branch into the healthy (but not injured) tree, he tended the two trees diligently until, in time, the two trees became one. This one tree stood in his front yard, beautiful and strong. In the spring I would always smile and think of how God grafts us into Jesus when I would look at the gorgeous white flowers growing alongside deep purple blossoms. If it were not for the two different colors of flowers, I never would have known they had once been two different types of trees. That is what God has done for you and me.

Please read John 15:1-17.

How would you describe a life in Christ that “bears no fruit”?

When we remain in Jesus, His will becomes our desire. How does this truth relate to verse 7?

What is the command that Jesus gives to all of us? (verse 12)

Paul also spoke about this in Romans 15:7. Please read this verse.

How does this speak to your heart concerning how we should treat others?

Please read Romans 14:1-4.

What is it that we are ordered to NOT do?

Rewrite verse 4 in your own words.

We are all God's children. He loves us each with the same complete, restorative, love. Not all of us are in the same place in our growth towards spiritual maturity. By remembering that we are justified only by God's grace we let go of our pride. Understanding that sometimes it takes a while for a new graft to take hold and begin to bloom, we need to life one another up in love and in prayer. We are accepted because of God's goodness, not our own. So, let us share that love with everyone and support one another in our journey.