

—{1}. **Romans 5:1** **Justification by Faith**

A. Faith

1. it is good when the Christian community expresses its faith
 - a. the churches in Richmond Hill have united to have the 'Mayor's Prayer Breakfast' once a year
 - b. its purpose is to engage Christians in praying for the leaders of that city: its mayor and its councillors
 - c. this is in keeping with the commands of Scripture, that pray for magistrates and rulers and those in authority
 - d. such a commitment testifies to the world that we, as Christians, care about our community and its welfare
 - e. Greg Reader reminded us that Jeremiah instructed the Jews in Babylon to seek that city's welfare, its peace
 - f. this is a part of being a Christian faith community

2. 'faith community' is a term that is very freely used today
 - a. politicians, of all kinds, use politically correct speeches, yet using words to gain votes from the 'faith community,'
 - b. the 'faith community' includes all flavours of religious – and non-religious – groups, simply being those who share some common belief, heritage or culture
 - c. if you ask your neighbour what faith means you will get all sorts of answers – some very fuzzy and nebulous
 - (A) 'I have faith; I believe there is a god.'
 - (B) 'I am of the Islamic faith.'
 - (C) 'faith is one of the virtues'
 - (D) 'my faith is men and women are fundamentally good.'
 - (E) 'my faith is a very personal and private thing'
 - d. but is just being part of a 'faith community' what the Bible means when it speaks of faith? ... when it says in ...

3. ... Romans 5:1 – ‘Therefore, having been justified by faith, ...’.
 - a. justified –
 - (A) not merely pardoned nor forgiven
 - (1) pardoned frees one from the penalty
 - (2) forgiven – if true – restores relationships
 - (3) but neither of these remove the original guilt
 - (B) but justified means that one is declared ‘not guilty!’
 - (C) in fact, as used here, it means more than that negative
 - (D) positively, we are declared to be righteous
 - (E) so righteous that we can stand before a holy God!
 - (F) we will be looking at all that this means, Lord willing, over the next several weeks
 - b. but, for today, why is this justification ‘by faith’?
 - c. why has God given faith as the means and conduit whereby we are justified; whereby we are saved?
 - d. why are we told, ‘For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, *it is the gift of God;*’? ... the next verse partly gives the answer: ‘not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.’ –Ephesians 2:8-9
 - e. why is only faith mentioned here? Is this only part of the story? What about the things that James has to say about being justified by works – aren’t those needed, too?

B. Justified By Faith Alone

1. Martin Luther when he read these words,
 - a. ‘Therefore, having been justified by faith, ...’
 - b. wrote beside them, ‘alone!’ (In Latin, of course)
 - c. there are some sects that claim he even included this in his translation of the Bible into German, calling him a heretic, but these are sects that add all sorts of requirements on top of faith before one can be justified before God
 - d. well, I’ve looked in Rae’s German Bible which is Luther’s translation, and I cannot find the word ‘alone’ added

2. The statement, '*... having been justified by faith, ...*' is elliptical
 - a. i.e., it conveys more truth than the meaning of the words
 - b. evident truth from where the statement sits in its context
 - c. in Romans, Paul spends the first three chapters describing our hopeless condition as sinners and sums it up thus:
 - (A) *because by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight; for through the Law comes the knowledge of sin.* (Romans 3:20)
 - (B) *For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from works of the Law.* (Romans 3:28)
 - d. in chapter 4 he shows that it was completely by faith, not works, that Abraham was accounted to be righteous
 - e. the context of Romans 5:1 thus excludes all other human actions from being the source of justification – and Luther was correct in commenting on this statement ... '*alone!*'

3. Then how about those verses in James? – let us read them
 - a. James 2:14-19 – ¹⁴¶ *What use is it, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but he has no works? Can that faith save him? ¹⁵ If a brother or sister is without clothing and in need of daily food, ¹⁶ and one of you says to them, 'Go in peace, be warmed and be filled,' and yet you do not give them what is necessary for *their* body, what use is that? ¹⁷ Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead, *being* by itself. ¹⁸ But someone may *well* say, 'You have faith and I have works; show me your faith without the works, and I will show you my faith by my works.' ¹⁹ You believe that God is one. You do well; the demons also believe, and shudder.*
 - b. now, examining these words what do we discover
 - (A) yes, James is talking about being just or righteous, but
 - (1) it is a righteousness with respect to men, not God
 - (2) it concerns whether we treat justly our fellow men
 - (B) James questions the reality of our claim of faith:
 - (1) he asks us if we are really showing our faith
 - (a) can men see that we are righteous?
 - (b) can men see that we have faith?
 - (c) are our actions justified before men?

- (2) let us not ignore the importance of these questions, or we will be snared by the trap of 'easy believism'
- c. but Paul is speaking of our being justified before God
- (A) what God account or reckon us to be?
 - (B) does God need proof of our faith?
 - (C) No. ... [the LORD said to Samuel, '... God sees not as man sees, for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.'](#) (1 Samuel 16: 7)
 - (D) so justification with God is by faith – not works
4. But why is justification by faith? ... why just simply faith?
- a. because faith is not something we do; it is not a work
 - b. faith is the means given to us by God for justification
 - c. the statement, '[having been justified by faith,](#)' is elliptical in another sense
 - (A) i.e., it conveys more truth than just the words
 - (B) it is the context that shows the additional meaning inherent in the statement
 - (C) that context is in Romans 5: 9, [Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, ...](#)
 - d. faith is neither an abstract quantity nor a quality
 - (A) faith is not an ideal or virtue that we seek after
 - (B) faith is not some quality which we need to amass
 - (C) so that by seeking or amassing we have a sufficient amount for us to be justified before God
 - e. faith must always be understood as inclusive of its object
 - f. the power and effect of faith is not found in the faith itself
 - (A) and certainly not in the one showing that faith
 - (B) no; its power is in reality of its object
 - (C) faith is but the conduit which joins us to the object of our faith ... and that object is Christ and the cross
 - g. justification is based on faith because faith, and faith alone, can link us to what Jesus has accomplished on the cross
 - (A) to His bearing my sin, your sin, in His own body
 - (B) in His receiving the punishment, death penalty for sin

h. faith is what so closely ties us to Jesus Christ, so tightly identifies us with Him, that we can say, 'I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.' (Galatians 2:20)

5. justification is by means of faith, faith linking us so intimately with our Saviour, Jesus Christ, that when God looks upon us, He sees not our sin, but the righteousness of the Son of God
 - a. by faith, before God, I am just as if I'd never sinned
 - b. and that is why it is not of works, why it is by faith alone
 - c. good deeds could never make me as if I'd never sinned
 - d. but God, by grace, through faith, can reckon me to be so

C. The Parable of the Pharisee and the Publican

1. this parable is not about prayer, but about faith,
 - a. this fact becomes clear in the first verse:
 - b. 'And He also told this parable to some people who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, ...' (Luke 18:9)
 - c. 'trust' is a word found more often in the OT, while 'faith' is more often a NT word; but their import is nearly identical: that of having come to a settled confidence in something
 - d. Jesus told this parable illustrating clearly to us that, as in James, there are two quite different kinds of faith:
2. the Pharisee believed in God – like James' demons, he had a broad knowledge about God – but God was not the object of his faith; rather his own goodness, his own works, himself
 - a. he addresses God, but Luke tells us he prayed with himself
 - b. his prayers never reached beyond the top of his head
 - c. how thankful, he says he is, that he is so much better than the common lot of mankind; especially than the publican
 - d. how wonderfully fortunate God must be to have such a splendid person as the Pharisee as one of His worshippers

3. the Publican believed in God – not with mere head knowledge – but with true heart-knowledge
 - a. by faith he perceives that the Lord is holy, utterly holy
 - b. so pure that he could not even look in his direction
 - c. and himself? ... not merely a sinner, but the sinner; lost
 - d. what can he claim, to come to the Lord?
 - e. 'nothing in my hand I bring, simply to Thy cross I cling'
 - f. 'have mercy on me' – faith casts itself on the merciful grace of God and finds itself fastened to the Rock, Christ Jesus
 - g. righteous Job (9:15) said, 'For though I were right, I could not answer; I would have to implore the mercy of my judge.'
 - h. or, as we read in Romans 4:5: 'But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is credited as righteousness,'
 - i. and Jesus, with the full authority of God, pronounced this verdict on the Publican's faith: 'I tell you, this man went to his house justified rather than the other ...' (Luke 18:14)

D. Conclusion

1. I stood within the court of heaven^{2}.
 - a. there stood the prosecuting attorney
 - (A) devilishly cunning and clever beyond imagination
 - (B) in his hand a huge dossier labelled with my name
 - (C) and he looked upon me with an undisguised hatred
 - b. at my side was my defence attorney – quiet but assuring
 - c. one by one the prosecutor, my adversary, read out his files
 - (A) one by one he listed the heinous charges
 - (B) as each charge came my head bowed lower in shame
 - (C) there were my relatives, friends, work-mates; listening
 - (D) he listed not only the deeds that I had done, but the unspeakable thoughts and lusts of my heart
 - (E) in the gallery sat my wife, my children, my church hearing each and every charge; every single one true

- d. Satan turned furiously to the Judge, saying, you cannot allow this man to live; he must come with me to hell
 - e. to this point by Advocate, my defence, had said nothing
 - f. now He stood and in quiet tones that stilled the murmur of the crowd the said, 'Yes, my client has sinned and has rebelled against the Eternal God. But look here ...' and He held out His hands and showed the print of the nails, and set forth His feet to show the same; He uncovered His side to show where it had been wounded, and said, 'But I bore each and every one of those sins, from start to finish. I was punished for them. By this I have purchased his salvation'
 - g. and the Judge said to me, 'You are justified, you are clothed in the righteousness of my Son, you are free to enter into heaven to dwell with me forever; case dismissed.'
2. That is justification by faith: 'He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy ...' (Titus 3:5); are you trusting in Him?

1. © 2009 by Garth Hutchinson, Faith Fellowship Baptist Church of Aurora (Ontario): may be distributed or quoted freely, only let this be done to the glory “of the great God and our Saviour, Jesus Christ” (Titus 2:13). Except as noted otherwise, quotations are from the New American Standard (NAS) version of the Bible, © 1960 ... 1995 by The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission.

Various other English versions of the Holy Bible may be used in this sermon. Some (for example, the AV, ASV, and NAS) seek to be strictly translations, while others (and especially PHIL) contain paraphrasing which involves a certain amount of subjective interpretation. Nevertheless, there is little material difference in meaning among these. Some prove slightly clearer on some verses than others. Looking at more than one version sometimes sheds additional light on any particular verse. Explanatory additions to the Bible text are shown in {braces}. The versions are identified as:

ASV	American Standard Version of 1901
AV	Authorized (King James) Version
ERV	The Revised Version of 1885
NAS	New American Standard version © 1960, 1995 The Lockman Foundation
NIV	New International Version © 1984 by the International Bible Society
NKJV	New King James Version © 1979 Thomas Nelson Inc., Publishers
NLT	1996 New Living Translation © 1996 by Tyndale Charitable Trust
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version © 1989 by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U. S. A.
PHIL	New Testament Translation © 1972 by J. B. Phillips
RSV	Revised Standard Version © 1946, 1952 by the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U. S. A.
WEY	The New Testament in Modern Speech © 1902, 1912 R. F. Weymouth

Further sermons and illustrations may be found at the web-site, www.holwick.com. Materials in this sermon from Rev. David Holwick's database are identified by “Kerux” followed by a sermon or illustration number.

2. Adapted from ‘My Day in Court – Paid in Full’, author unknown – Kerux illustration #24302