

=BIBLE DOCTRINES=

Lesson 3

Justification by Faith

Objects to have:

Pictures of pleasures that will be in Heaven and pleasures that won't be in Heaven

A picture of someone praying

A large poster board circle to which a stick is attached at the bottom—On one side of the circle make a smiling face, and on the other side draw a frowning face.

Chalkboard and chalk or poster board and marking pen

Your Bible.

Introducing the lesson:

(Hold up your pictures one by one, discussing each one as you do.) People want to go to Heaven when they learn what Heaven is like. People there are not sad; they are happy. People there do not get sick ever again; they are well and strong and able to do what they need and want to do. People there do not fuss and argue; they are loving all the time. People there are not afraid of criminals—there is no stealing or murdering or hurting other people. People there get to see Jesus. (Use no picture to illustrate Jesus.)

(Hold up your picture of someone praying.) Before it's time to die and go to Heaven—while people are still on earth—they want God's help. Even people who don't want to trust Jesus as their Saviour sometimes call out to God to help them.

(Hold up your frowning face.) Not everybody will get to go to Heaven, and God does not listen to everybody who calls out for help from God. There can be no sin in Heaven, and God cannot listen to a person pray when that person has sin in his heart. But, everybody is a sinner—everybody is born that way! So, that sounds like nobody can go to Heaven, and it sounds like God will not listen to anybody who prays. Oh, yes, people can go to Heaven, and God does listen to people pray. Listen, and I will tell you how!

They are justified by faith. (Turn your circle to the smiling face.) Now, that sounds hard to understand, but it is not!

(Write on the chalkboard or poster board the word JUSTIFIED.) That word says JUSTIFIED. I'll tell you about that word; but first, I'll tell you a Bible story that you may already know. Jesus told the story.

Telling the story:

It was a pretty day outside and a warm day. The people were enjoying being outside. On this particular day, however, they were not outside just to enjoy the weather; they were outside because they wanted to hear somebody and to see somebody. The people were coming from every direction. (While speaking, draw a hillside and little figures of people all over the hillside.) As the people gathered on this side of the hill, they looked down toward the foot of the hill. Down there at the bottom of the hill was THE most important Person. (Draw a stick man.) This most important Person was Jesus. They looked at Him, and as He started to speak, they stopped talking. They sat down on the grass, I think, and listened to what Jesus had to tell them. Jesus was answering questions, and He was looking at the people and the crowd.

As Jesus looked into the faces of those people who were gathered with Him outside on that beautiful, warm day, He knew what they were thinking. That's something wonderful about Jesus—He knows everybody's thoughts. I can't know what you are thinking unless you tell me what you are thinking, but Jesus knows what you are thinking. Jesus knew what all those people were thinking that day.

Jesus knew that some of those people were thinking, “This is the most wonderful Person I have ever seen or heard. I believe that He has come from God. I believe that He is the Son of God. I believe that what He is telling is the truth, and I trust Him.”

Jesus knew that other people were thinking, “Who does this Man think He is? He stands there and talks to all of us as if He knows it all. He stands there and talks to us as if we don’t know how to behave and as if we are not good. He should know who we are! He should know how good we are!”

Jesus knew what all those people were thinking. Jesus knew that they trusted themselves and that they did not trust God. He saw how they looked at other people in the crowd. He knew that they were thinking, “I am so good, and these other people are not.” Jesus saw their noses go in the air. He saw them turn themselves away from other people. He knew that they were making fun of them in their minds and that they didn’t like them. So, Jesus decided to tell a story to those people who thought they were so good.

Jesus said, “Once upon a time there were two men. One man was called a Pharisee. The other man was called a publican. The Pharisee thought that by doing all the good things He could do, he would get God to think that he was a good man. The publican didn’t care what God thought about him. The publican wanted to live his life the way he wanted to live it. The Pharisee always brought his offerings to the temple, and he thought that by bringing his offerings, God would have to think he was a good man. The publican got as much money as he could for himself—he collected taxes and told the people that they owed far more than they did. That way, he could keep a lot of money for himself. For two whole days out of every week, the Pharisee ate no food. Maybe he didn’t eat any food on Monday and Friday, or maybe he didn’t eat any food on Wednesday and Saturday. He thought that by eating no food for two days a week, God would think he was a good man. The publican just wanted all he could get for himself—all that he could enjoy.”

Jesus was still telling His story about the Pharisee and the publican. (Choose two children from the class—one to be the Pharisee and the other to be the publican. Gesture toward one and then the other while describing them.) The Pharisee was thinking about himself and what kind of man he was; the publican was thinking about himself also, and what kind of man he was. The Pharisee was thinking that he was such a good man! The publican was thinking that he was not such a good man. The publican was remembering how sad some of the people were as they paid more taxes than they really owed. He remembered how sad they looked and how worried they looked. He was taking from them money that they needed for food for their families, for shoes for their children whose feet kept growing, for medicine for the sick baby, for new towels and for paint and for all the things that were needed around the house. He was remembering the lies that he had told. He was remembering the times that he got mad at people. He suddenly thought about how upset God must be with him.

The Pharisee decided that he would go to the temple. The publican decided that he would go to the temple, too. The Pharisee went to pray. The publican went to pray. The Pharisee walked with strong, sure steps—with a straight back and a proud look. The publican walked with his head down. The Pharisee was proud to have people look at him. The publican felt sorry as he realized that people saw him. The two men went into the temple, and they walked to certain places inside the temple. They stopped and stood there.

Jesus said, “*The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself...*” Prayed with himself? I thought that when we prayed, we were talking with God. Jesus said that this man was praying with himself. God must not have listened to his prayer. I wonder why not? Listen to what the Pharisee said, “God, I thank Thee that I am not as other men are. Thank You, God, that I am so good. I am not bad like other men are. I am not even like this publican is. Look at all the good things I do. I fast two times a week. I am always giving of my money. I treat people nicely. I work hard. I do not steal from others. See how good I am, God?”

Jesus said, “Look at the publican. He won’t even lift up his head. His head is bowed. He is crying and praying, ‘God, I am a sinner. I know that in me is no good thing. I need You. Please be merciful to me.’”

As Jesus was telling this parable, the people on the hillside were listening very carefully. Jesus said, “I tell you, one of these men was justified.” (Point to that word.) He was just as if he had never sinned. “One of these men was not justified.” (Point to JUSTIFIED.) Jesus said, “It is just as if the publican had not sinned. He was justified—just as if he had never sinned. He was confessing his sin and trusting Me to save him. The Pharisee would not admit that he was a sinner. The Pharisee could not go to Heaven. God could not listen to his prayer. One of these men went out of the temple a saved man; the other man went out unsaved. (While saying this, turn the sticks so that the happy face now becomes a sad face and the sad face now becomes a happy face.) How quickly the Pharisee’s smile would fade whenever he would die. God could not let him be in Heaven. How quickly the sad face of the publican changed to being happy. God would let him be in Heaven with Him.

You see, children, everybody is a sinner. There is no good in anybody. The ones who please God are those who admit that they are sinners and then trust God to wash away their sins. God then helps them live the right kind of life. The ones who say they are so good and will not admit that they are sinners and will not ask God to forgive them are lost. People who admit they are sinners and ask Jesus to save them are (point to JUSTIFIED and have the children say it with you) justified. Are you justified?

LEARN OUR BIBLE VERSE: John 5:24, “...*He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life....*”