

**ALL of the judgments in the Scriptures  
are according to works**

**1. Judgment Seat of Christ (which is for church-age believers – those who have received the gift of eternal life and will, therefore, be resurrected prior to the Tribulation):**

1

**1 Cor. 3:13** Each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is.

**1 Cor. 3:14** If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward.

**1 Cor. 3:15** If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.

2

**2. Sheep and Goats Judgment (which is for Gentile believers who survive the Tribulation):**

**Matt. 25:34-36** Then the King will say to those on His right hand, "Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me."

3

**3. Jewish Judgment Seat (which is for all the Jews, those living and those resurrected at the end of the Tribulation)**

**Ezek. 20:34** I will bring you out from the peoples and gather you out of the countries where you are scattered, with a mighty hand, with an outstretched arm, and with fury poured out.

**Ezek. 20:35** And I will bring you into the wilderness of the peoples, and there I will plead My case with you face to face.

4

**Ezek. 20:36** Just as I pleaded My case with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so I will plead My case with you, says the Lord GOD.

**Ezek. 20:37-38** I will make you pass under the rod ... I will purge the rebels from among you, and those who transgress against Me; I will bring them out of the country where they dwell, but they shall not enter the land of Israel.

5

**4. Great White Throne Judgment (which is for Gentile unbelievers who will be resurrected after the Millennium)**

**Rev. 20:12** I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books.

**Rev 20:15** And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.

6

- Many assume that the names written in the Book of Life are those who have believed on Jesus for eternal life
- But that is a mere assumption – and an incorrect one – that has been perpetuated through the centuries
- The text says those at the Great White Throne are judged according to their works
- The Book of Life lists the names of those who have lived righteously and consequently will NOT be cast into the lake of fire

7

ALL of the judgments in the Scriptures are according to works

Thus, the way people LIVE is critically important

In God's eyes, every person living on Earth is either justified or not justified, based on how they are currently living (i.e., their lifestyle, their behavior)

Those He deems justified will not be judged  
Those He deems NOT justified will be judged

8

#### Justification

##### Common traditional understanding:

- A. at the point of salvation (regeneration) God declares His new child positionally, legally, and forensically righteous
- B. the believer is instantaneously credited with Christ's righteousness and, consequently, forgiven of all sins – past, present, and future

9

##### Commonly viewed as synonymous:

eternal life = going to Heaven = saved = justified

- This conflating of terms and habit of using them interchangeably was introduced during the Reformation
- Martin Luther: "justification by faith alone" (used in a soteriological sense) – mantra of the Reformation
- The term "faith alone" is NEVER used by Paul, who used "alone" and "only" dozens of times, but never in connection with faith

10

James used the term in the OPPOSITE sense:

James 2:24 You see then that a man is justified by works, and NOT by faith only.

- Some try to explain this seeming contradiction by recognizing two levels of justification – positional and practical:
  1. Believers are positionally, forensically, legally justified at the point of salvation ...
  2. and they must throughout their Christian lives seek to be practically or experientially justified

11

##### Clarification #1:

- How is a person saved (regenerated)?
- By believing on Jesus for eternal life – not of works

Eph. 2:8-9 For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.

12

Titus 3:5 not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit.

2 Tim. 1:9 Who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus.

13

- Salvation in the initial sense of regeneration is by God's grace, through faith alone, not of works – it is the GIFT of eternal life
- But justification is NOT by faith alone
- Because justification is NOT bestowed positionally at initial salvation
- Martin Luther and the Reformers were the ones who taught that justification IS bestowed positionally when one is initially saved, but that is incorrect

14

#### Clarification #2:

- Justification is God's declaration that a person is living righteously at a given point in time and therefore accepted by Him
- The opposite is God's declaration that a person is living wickedly at a given point in time and therefore condemned (under God's judgment – His wrath as in Rom. 1)

15

- The reason why all the future judgments in Scripture are based on WORKS is because the basis for those judgments is whether or not man has been justified (which has nothing to do with initial salvation or eternal life)
- "The just shall live by faith" = a person who is living righteously is living by faith – and thus God declares them momentarily righteous, justified

16

- Faith is the primary component in justification, but it's not the ONLY component
- Because the just LIVE by faith – and living is all about doing
- According to James 2, works are also involved in justification – but they must be FAITH-FILLED WORKS

17

- What Paul is saying in Romans: Works OF THE LAW do NOT justify and, therefore, result in God's condemnation
- First, mere works of the law won't cut it
- Second, now that Christ has come, if you want to be justified and inherit a place in Christ's kingdom, you cannot be attached to the Mosaic law as your means of justification

18

- Jesus, the righteous One, is the means by which we live righteously
- We appropriate His righteousness through the Holy Spirit to live the Christ-life
- That is the focal point of the book of Romans ch. 6-8, which flow out of ch. 2-5, which (in my opinion) are not salvation-oriented, as we have been taught since the Reformation

19

- Romans is sanctification-oriented, intended to show the believing Jews that doing works of the law is NOT the means by which we are justified
- We are justified by living in faith-filled dependence on Christ for living righteously

20

The definition of justification in the minds of the Jews (from the OT):

- The OT never taught positional/legal/forensic justification
- God always justified those who were LIVING righteously

Ezek. 18:5-9 If a man is just and does what is lawful and right; if he has not eaten on the mountains (referring to offering sacrifices in the high places), nor lifted up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel, nor defiled his neighbor's

21

wife, nor approached a woman during her impurity; if he has not oppressed anyone, but has restored to the debtor his pledge; has robbed no one by violence, but has given his bread to the hungry and covered the naked with clothing; if he has not exacted usury nor taken any increase, but has withdrawn his hand from iniquity and executed true judgment between man and man; if he has walked in My statutes and kept My judgments faithfully—he is just; he shall surely live!" says the Lord GOD.

22

- Those who believe God and live righteously are just (i.e., "justified" in God's eyes)
- Consequently, they are NOT judged by God; instead, He allows them to live

23

Ezek. 18:10-13 If he begets a son who is a robber a shedder of blood, who does any of these things and does none of those duties, but has eaten on the mountains or defiled his neighbor's wife; if he has oppressed the poor and needy, robbed by violence, not restored the pledge, lifted his eyes to the idols, or committed abomination; if he has exacted usury or taken increase—shall he then live? He shall not live! If he has done any of these abominations, he shall surely die; his blood shall be upon him.

24

- The man described in vs. 5-9 is righteous, but his son, described in vs. 10-13, is unrighteous
- God condemns the unrighteous one, pronouncing a sentence of death upon him – Why?
- He has not believed God and lived righteously; he is not just (i.e., justified in God's eyes)
- But there is hope! for God makes the wicked man a promise
- He also makes the righteous man a promise

25

Ezek. 18:21 If a wicked man turns from all his sins which he has committed, keeps all My statutes, and does what is lawful and right, he shall surely live; he shall not die.

22 None of the transgressions which he has committed shall be remembered against him; because of the righteousness which he has done, he shall live.

23 Do I have any pleasure at all that the wicked should die?" says the Lord GOD, "and not that he should turn from his ways and live?"

26

Ezek. 18:24 But when a righteous man turns away from his righteousness and commits iniquity, and does according to all the abominations that the wicked man does, shall he live? All the righteousness which he has done shall not be remembered; because of the unfaithfulness of which he is guilty and the sin which he has committed, because of them he shall die.

27

- God mercifully allows sinners to repent and turn to righteousness
- Those who were living righteously, but turn away from righteousness and begin living wickedly, will die

A good summary: Ezek. 18:20 The soul who sins shall die. The son shall not bear the guilt of the father, nor the father bear the guilt of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself.

28

- God's principle of justification does not merely apply to the Jews – It applies in a much broader sense to all mankind
  - Noah was not Jewish – he lived before the Flood
- Gen. 6:9 Noah was a just man, perfect in his generations. Noah walked with God.
- He was a Gentile who lived righteously

29

- Abimelech was a Gentile who lived righteously

Gen. 20:4-6 But Abimelech had not come near her; and he said, "Lord, will You slay a righteous nation also? Did he not say to me, 'She is my sister?' ... In the integrity of my heart and innocence of my hands I have done this." And God said to him ... "Yes, I know that you did this in the integrity of your heart ... you shall live."

30

- Job also was not Jewish

**Job 1:1** There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job; and that man was blameless and upright, and one who feared God and shunned evil.

- God says he lived righteously, and God vindicated him in the end of the book after all of his suffering
- Nineveh – an entire Gentile city – they repented and God let them live

31

- Cornelius in the NT – a Gentile – a Roman centurion

- When Peter arrived at his house, Peter exclaimed:

**Acts 10:34-35** “In truth I perceive that God shows no partiality. But in every nation whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him.”

32

- The principle applies to the Jews as well, even before the time of Christ’s arrival – e.g., Zacharias and Elizabeth

**Luke 1:5-6** There was in the days of Herod ... a certain priest named Zacharias ... His wife ... was Elizabeth. And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.

33

- Zacharias and Elizabeth were both justified in the eyes of God and so was Noah and Abimelech and Job and the citizens of Nineveh after they repented, and even Cornelius – both Jews and Gentiles having one common denominator:

- They believed God and lived righteously
- Interestingly, not one of those mentioned knew about Jesus or eternal life, yet God considered them justified

34

**“the just shall live by faith”**

Used three times in the NT:

- Heb. 10:38
- Gal. 3:11
- Rom. 1:17

In every case, the NT writers are quoting Hab. 2:4

35

#### Hebrews 11

- Great men and women who lived by faith in OT times
- God describes certain things that people throughout history DID for Him – these are all WORKS of FAITH
- Summed up in 11:33-38:

36

**Heb. 11:33-34** who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, became valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.

**Heb. 11:35** Women received their dead raised to life again. Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection.

37

**Heb. 11:36** Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment.

**Heb. 11:37-38** They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented—of whom the world was not worthy.

38

The works cover the entirety of human history — every age:

- Pre-flood (vs. 4-7) Abel, Enoch, Noah
- Pre-law (vs. 8-22) Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph
- Mosaic law era (vs. 23-32) Moses, Moses' parents, Israel, Rahab, Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel, prophets
- Even Gentiles did things by faith (Rahab)

39

- Notice those from the era of the Mosaic law in vs. 23-32
- Does Heb. 11 emphasize obedience TO THE LAW as their means of pleasing God? NO!
- The point of the chapter is that they did these things BY FAITH
- They believed God and that is why they did these things
- The emphasis of this chapter dovetails with James 2 —

40

**James 2:21** Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar?

**James 2:25** Likewise, was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out another way?

- Remember: Abraham was pre-law and Rahab was a Gentile

41

- The context of Hebrews 11:

**Heb. 10:34** For you had compassion on me in my chains, and joyfully accepted the plundering of your goods, knowing that you have a better and an enduring possession for yourselves in heaven.

- The people to whom he is writing showed great love to him and, consequently, endured great suffering, thus they have rewards awaiting in heaven

42

Heb. 10:35 Therefore do not cast away your confidence, which has great reward.

- *confidence* = “boldness, frankness, outspokenness” – the idea of confessing Christ unashamedly
- If they continue in this confidence — confessing Christ boldly — they will be rewarded further

43

Heb. 10:36 For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise:

- This is the promise of reward
- If they endure, they will be rewarded (which is the big point of the book of Hebrews — persevering unto reward)

Heb. 10:37 For yet a little while, and He who is coming will come and will not tarry.

- Judgment is coming!

44

Heb. 10:38 Now the just shall live by faith; but if anyone draws back, my soul has no pleasure in him.

- *The just shall live by faith* — Is it referring here to initial salvation, believing in Jesus for eternal life?
- NO! The writer wants his readers (who are believers) to be inspired by the OT “witnesses” that he names in ch. 11 – men and women who did things for God IN FAITH

45

Heb. 10:36b so that after you have done the will of God you may receive the promise.

- The promise is the assurance of reward for those who persevere

Heb. 10:39 But we are not of those who draw back to perdition, but of those who believe to the saving of the soul.

- The writer is speaking to NT believers about soul salvation – that is, inheritance at the Bema Seat of Christ

46

- But he is using illustrations of people who lived in OT times – long before Christ
- Yet they believed God and did works of righteousness – both Jew and Gentile – despite never receiving the promise of reward
- The promise of reward (becoming sons to glory – Heb. 2:10) is a NT, church-age promise for those who live righteously in this era and are deemed justified by Jesus at His judgment seat and thereby included as His bride and co-rulers

47

- OT-era believers did not have this privilege

Heb. 11:39-40 These, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise, God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us.

- Perfection = maturity resulting in the status of firstborn son (see 12:5-8) and, ultimately, glorification at the Bema

48



**Heb. 10:38** Now the just shall live by faith; but if anyone draws back, my soul has no pleasure in him.

- Those who are justified in God's eyes are living by faith, that is, believing God and living righteously
- God has no pleasure in those who draw back (stop living righteously) – they are not justified in His sight
- Paul said their works will burn up at the Judgment Seat

49

**Heb. 10:39** But we are not of those who draw back to perdition, but of those who believe to the saving of the soul.

- *perdition* = ruin, destruction, waste
- Those who have not drawn back are experiencing the saving of their soul — that is the end result for the just who live by faith
- That is, God considers those to be righteous (justified) who are doing things for Him out of a heart of faith

50

- Their soul is being saved, and they will be rewarded at the Bema
- Those who are not doing things for Him out of a heart of faith, God has no pleasure in them — they are not righteous – and they are destroying themselves
- Thus, Heb. 10-11 clarify the meaning of “the just shall live by faith” (Heb. 10:38)
- This phrase is quoted from Hab. 2:4

51

**Hab. 2:4** Behold the proud, his soul is not upright in him; but the just shall live by his faith.

- The context: God tells Habakkuk that destruction is coming upon Judah at the hand of the Chaldeans (Babylonians) because of Israel's sins (1:5-7)
- 1:12 says that God appointed them (the Chaldeans) for judgment
- The reason: v. 13 God is righteous and hates unrighteousness in His people

52

- So God tells Habakkuk that judgment is coming (2:3) —

**Hab. 2:3** It will surely come, it will not tarry.

- The writer to the Hebrews, by quoting this, warns his readers that judgment is coming upon the house of God (1 Pet. 4:17)
- The proud, “his soul is not upright in him” — that is, He is not living right ... But the just (those who are righteous) are those who are living by faith

53

- Does any of this have to do with salvation or positional righteousness?

- NO! It is about how Israel is living and the judgment coming upon the nation because, overall, the nation is not living righteously
- The OT context of the term “the just shall live by faith” would have been on the minds of the Jews when the NT writers quoted it
- They would have known that “the just shall live by faith” is about believing God and living righteously

54

- **Why should we take up Martin Luther’s soteriological mantra, “justification by faith alone?”**
- **“the just shall live by faith” is not about regeneration; it’s about righteous living, done out of a heart of faith**
- **Two other books in the NT where this phrase is used – Galatians and Romans – and they also use this phrase in a sanctification sense**

55

**Are you living by faith?  
Are your works for Jesus faith-filled?  
Or are you a legalistic fundamentalist, a 21st  
century version of the first century Pharisees?  
If God were to look down upon you right now  
and issue a verdict, what would it be?  
Justified? Or NOT justified?**

56