



**Wednesday, May 25, 2022**



## **JUSTIFICATION by FAITH - PART 1**

**God's Only Plan of Salvation**

**Main Text: Rom. 1:17--** For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.

**Introduction:** If you have been around a Christian church for a while, you have heard the following words countless times: adoption, atonement, baptism, believe, faith, forgiveness, God, gospel, grace, Holy Spirit, justification, law, new-birth, propitiation, reconciled, redemption, righteousness, salvation, sanctification, the sinner's prayer, and works. Is your head spinning yet? And that is not an exhaustive list! To add insult to injury, not only is any combination of those words tossed about in relationship to mankind's salvation, but they are sprinkled throughout the biblical teachings of different church denominations, pastors, priests, ministers, and lay-people in diverse ways. Sadly, the result is not always more clarity, but more ambiguity and confusion! Does the multiplicity of words correlate to multiple New Testament plans of salvation? One might think so! But does the Bible teach more than one New Testament plan of salvation? If so, what are they? If not, what is the New Testament plan of salvation, and is there a way to combine all those salvation-related words to unveil God's plan in simple terms? The answer is, there is only one New Testament plan of salvation; and yes, it can be stated in three words; justification by faith.

**Declaration of the New Testament Salvation: Isa. 43:18-19, Ezek. 36:27, Matt. 1:21**

**Isa. 43:18-19--** Remember ye not the former things, neither consider the things of old. (19) Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert.

**Ezek. 36:26-27—**(26) A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. (27) And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.

**Matt. 1:21--**And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.

**Note:** Since Genesis 3:15, God promised to send a Redeemer to rescue man from the curse of sin. We know the Redeemer was Jesus Christ (Isa. 40:3-5, 53:4-5, Isa. 9:6). When Isaiah prophesies about the "new thing" God would do, he was referring to the coming of Christ who would die for the sins of humanity. Prophets like Ezekiel and Joel prophesied about the coming of the Holy Spirit which God would place into the hearts of New Testament believers.

**John the Baptist Prepared the Way for Christ: Isa. 40:3-5, Matt. 3:1-5, Mark 1:14-15**

**Isa. 40:3-5—**(3) The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. (4) Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain: (5) And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it.

**Matt. 3:1-5—**(1) In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, (2) And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. (3) For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. (4) And the same John had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey. (4) Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judaea, and all the region round about Jordan, (5) And were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins.

**Note:** Isaiah prophesied that John the Baptist would go before the Messiah and prepare the hearts of the people to receive Christ. John was a rugged, fiery, wild-man preacher whose preaching convicted the people. To prepare their hearts, John called the people to repent of their sins and be baptized in water. Matthew chapter 3 was the first mention of aspects of the New Testament plan of salvation.

### **Jesus Introduced the Gospel of the Kingdom of God: Mark 1:14-15**

**Mark 1:14-15--** Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, (15) And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.

**Note:** After John (Jesus's forerunner) was imprisoned, Jesus appeared and began His ministry, which included preaching the "gospel of the kingdom of God." The Greek word for gospel "euaggelion" (pronounced you-ang-ghel-ee-on) means a good message; to declare the good news. What was the good news? The good news was that Jesus Christ, the promised Messiah, had arrived. The Jews who were expecting Jesus understood that He was the Messiah. Jesus said, "the time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel." John the Baptist urged the people to repent and be baptized; two things that were central to the New Testament plan of salvation which Christ would establish.

### **Jesus Promised to Build His Church: Matt. 16:13-18, John 10:15-16**

**Matt. 16:13-18—**(13) When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? (14) And they said, Some say *that thou art* John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. (15) He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? (16) And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. (17) And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed *it* unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. (18) And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. (19) And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

**John 10:15-16—**(15) As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep. (16) And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, *and* one shepherd.

**Note:** Jesus told His disciples that He would build His church on the revelation He would give the disciples regarding Him. However, that church would not be for the Jews only but the Gentiles as well. No longer would there be a separation between Jews and Gentiles. Once the church was established, there would be one church or sheepfold.

**Summary:** While many people are still confused about God's plan for humanity's salvation, understanding the Bible will clear up the confusion. The truth is, the Bible teaches only one New Testament plan of salvation—justification by faith, which began in the Old Testament. In Genesis 3:15, God promised a Redeemer who would take away man's sin and reconcile us back to God. But for centuries, temporary atonement was granted through animal sacrifices. Those who believed the law of Moses and offered the proper sacrifice had their sins temporarily set aside. Eventually, prophets like Isaiah, Ezekiel, Micah, and Joel, proclaimed what God called "a new thing" (Isa. 43:19). By "new," God meant that He would replace the system of animal sacrifice. Instead of adherence to a written law, God's law would be written in man's heart. Atonement would come by the blood of Jesus, and belief in His atoning work on the Cross. When John the Baptist began to point people to Christ, two key elements in his message were repentance and baptism. When Jesus began His ministry, He added belief in the gospel—the good news of His death, burial, and resurrection—to the requirements of repentance and baptism. By studying the Old Testament system it becomes evident that repentance, baptism, and belief in God were concealed in the rituals and ordinances of the law and revealed in the message of John the Baptist and Jesus Christ. (See Lev. 1-10, 16-17). As we will see, the church Jesus established for Jews and Gentiles would retain these elements as the core of God's single plan of salvation—justification by faith.