

Water of Life

“...the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life.” - John 4:14

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“JUST AND THE JUSTIFIER”

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The apostle wrote, “Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith...to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus” (Rom. 3:24-26). In this beautiful statement concerning the grace of God, Paul states that, through Jesus Christ, God accomplished being both “just and the justifier.” Let us consider these two wonderful attributes of God that we might more fully appreciate His greatness.

GOD IS JUST: Many fail to realize (most by willful denial) that God is just. Justice is defined as “The maintenance or administration of what is just especially by the impartial...assignment of merited rewards or punishments” (*Merriam Webster Dictionary*). God’s justice will ultimately be found in the impartial judgment He will

execute according to the standard of His law (Rom. 2:5-11; 1 Pet. 1:17). In realization of the justice of God, Elihu said, “For He repays man according to his work, and makes man to find a reward according to his way. Surely God will never do wickedly, nor will the Almighty pervert justice” (Job 34:11-12). Today, one should understand that in this dispensation we have been given “the law of Christ,” replete with commandments which must be obeyed (Gal. 6:2). Seeing this, one must realize that divine justice demands that we be punished if we are disobedient to the “law of Christ” (Heb. 2:1-4). God could not be just if He let those under His authority (all men) break His law with impunity, going unpunished. Thus, Paul could write to the Thessalonians, “It is a righteous thing with God to repay with tribulation those who trouble you” (2 Thess, 1:6). God is just, and His justice demands eternal punishment for those who break His commandments (cf. Rom. 6:23; 11:22). *(continued)*

“JUST AND THE JUSTIFIER” (continued)

GOD IS THE JUSTIFIER: As we have noted, God’s justice demands punishment for sin. However, His mercy and love motivated Him to seek a way to justify us without contradicting His justice. How could this be accomplished? God’s just wrath comes upon man because of his disobedience (Eph. 5:6). Furthermore, the only thing that could take away the sin which kindled His divine wrath was the shedding of blood (Heb. 9:22). Thus, blood had to be shed that God’s wrath might be appeased and His justice might be complete. In the verses which began this article, we find that God set forth Jesus “*as a propitiation by His blood.*” That Jesus was a propitiation means that He was an appeasement, an appeasement to the wrath of God by having borne “*our sins in His own body on the tree*” (1 Pet. 2:24). Jesus took upon himself the punishment for our sins by the shedding of His blood (cf. Isa. 53:4-6). Therefore, it is in Jesus’ sacrifice that we find God’s just requirement of payment for sin fulfilled, His justification of the sinner made possible, and His love outpoured. Jesus, knowing this great plan of God, declared, “*For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be*

saved” (Jn. 3:16-17). Thanks be to God for sending His Son to die and pay the penalty justice required while, through the same act, offering us justification! In this we find God to truly be “*just and the justifier.*”

How does one find justification before God? Paul stated that “*God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him*” (Rom. 5:8-9). Only those reaching Jesus’ redeeming blood receive the justification God offers. Jesus said He shed His blood “*for the remission of sins*” (Matt. 26:28). Peter later preached that one must “*repent and be baptized...for the remission of sins*” (Ac. 2:38). Have you come in contact with His blood in the waters of baptism? If not, you are disobedient, without justification, and, should you die in this condition, you die only to meet the justice of God. Paul describes the time which is coming “*When the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power*” (2 Thess. 1:7-9). Will you obey before it is too late?

“Therefore consider the goodness and severity of God...” (Rom. 11:22)

SINGING HYMNS TO GOD

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For thousands of years, the Lord’s people have sung songs of praise to Him (cf. Ex. 15:1; Num. 21:17; 2 Chron. 29:30). Even today, the singing of spiritual songs is an integral part of the worship we offer unto God. Why the importance of singing in our worship to God?

SINGING IS COMMANDED BY THE LORD.

The Lord has commanded that Christians should speak “*to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.*” (Eph. 5:19). If you are a child of God and have a voice, no matter the quality, you are commanded to sing songs unto the Lord.

SINGING IS A MEANS OF PRAISING GOD.

Not only should we sing because the Lord demands it, we should also sing as it is one way we praise Him. We are to “*Continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name*” (Heb. 13:15). We must realize that simply singing a song is not, in and of itself, praise. For it to truly

be praise, it must be sung with the proper spirit (Jn. 4:24). God is pleased when His people truly offer to Him the sacrifice of praise in the psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs which they sing.

SINGING TEACHES AND ADMONISHES.

The primary reason for the singing of spiritual songs is to praise our God in Heaven. Yet, this does not exclude the fact that there are ancillary benefits we receive when we worship God in song. Paul notes that we are “*teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs*” (Col. 3:16). Listen carefully to the teaching and warnings of the songs we sing.

SINGING COMES FROM A GRATEFUL AND CHEERFUL HEART.

As the people of God we should “*be thankful*” (Col. 3:5). Out of a truly thankful heart should come our songs of praise. James penned, “*Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing psalms*” (Jas. 5:13). As Christians who have “*every spiritual blessing...in Christ*” we have much to be cheerful about (Eph. 1:3). Let us never forget that in singing we express our heartfelt thanks to God.

