

Life Group Notes

Sunday 15 March 2020

**Speaker:** Scott Taylor

**Series:** At The Cross

**Title:** Acquitted

**Passage:** Romans 3:23-24

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**Read Romans 3:23-24**

We continued our series on Sunday, At the Cross, by looking at the fact that we have been acquitted. The central word in our passage is 'justified', it's a legal word that means acquitted. We have all been caught up in a great courtroom drama. In order to understand why Paul is talking about being justified or acquitted we must first understand what he means from.

**For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God**

Paul is clear that everyone is implicated here. It doesn't matter if you think you are or not, all have sinned: an archery term meaning to miss the target, to miss the mark. We all fall short of what – the glory of God. We cannot reach his standard, no matter how hard we try.

What was the mark? – it was being born in the image of God and bringing glory to him. That's what Adam and Eve enjoyed – they were born in God's image and they got to have close relationship with Him. They made a decision though that went on to have cosmic consequences. By doing the one thing God had told them not to do, they inadvertently let all sickness, disaster both natural and manmade, marital difficulty and even Covid-19 into the world. It was as if humankind stood in the dock in the first ever court trial with God as judge and he pronounced them guilty and they were ultimately banished from his presence. Justice was served. This meant that everyone who has ever been born since also gets born out of relationship with God – hence we all fall short. No matter how much good we do, we can never reach the standard because that only comes by being in relationship with him.

So this courtroom drama is the one being played out over all mankind. We should all get judged guilty but Paul says something has happened by which we can **be justified**, acquitted of our guilty. We can be found not guilty. It means that there is now a way that we can come back into relationship with God and live a life that brings glory to his name. Does this solution mean that we just get away with it – no. So how is justice served.

**By grace as a gift**

God's grace. Grace in this instance is Cross shaped. At the cross Jesus stepped in the dock for all those who would believe in him. When we see the cross, we see God himself say – I will take your just punishment so that you can know what it is to walk in the love grace and mercy of a fair loving righteous God. When we say yes to Jesus, he steps into the dock on our behalf and takes all our punishment for all our missing of the mark and as he does so, he hands over his righteousness to us, more than we could ever need. All his good for all our rebellion. This allows us to have once again have relationship with God and look to bring glory to him in how we live our lives. It is beautiful.

**Questions**

1. What hit you afresh from Sunday's message?
2. Why is it important to be reminded of truths like this in the midst of the Covid-19 times in which we live?
3. As a result of this truth – how are you living this week differently?