

2024/01/28

SERMON

Justification: Providence**GOOD Morning OIC,**

As I attempt to bring out the meaning that the Apostle Paul, thus the Holy Spirit, intended in this Letter written to Christians living in Rome almost two thousand years ago, I want to recall the main theme, **Justification**. **This foundational theology, knowledge of God**, is carried throughout this Letter. True knowledge of God leads not only to begin a new relationship, but also, for a deeper walk with God. I call this walking closer to Jesus. The recent chapters, Romans 7 & 8, emphasize the **WHAT TO EXPECT**, and **HOW TO** of normative Christian living. Maybe we might see it as something like the Bible's "YouTube How Do I Do Christian Living Video." This Letter, as many by the Apostles of Jesus, was later accepted as part of the Holy Bible, written by men of God and breathed into these men by Holy Spirit.

Dear OIC Saints, let us remember that all this unique and difficult wordage to explain *Theology* must not replace JOY, but enhance and magnify it. The simple old hymn says-

I need no other argument

I need no other PLEA

It is enough that Jesus died

And that He died for me

Remembering *Justification* means God's **not** crediting our sins against us because we believe in His Son's taking all our sins upon Himself. He did this by His bloody and painful death on a Roman Cross. Jesus "paid it all" so we owe no debt to God for our sins against Him. The recent parts or chapters of the Book of Romans details how this right standing with God allows Christians to live Holy lives because of the Spirit of God we received at the moment of believing, being born again.

As I emphasized, what the Book of Romans emphasizes, that a Christian's victory to walk close to Jesus, to walk to Glory in Heaven, is really humanly *impossible*. But God is the God of miracles, nothing is impossible for Him. God has given us through faith in Jesus' sacrifice not only *right standing with Him*; but also, the **guarantee** of finishing what He initiated. God proactively started

rebirth in us when yet sinners: born again, kept through this world with men and devils opposing us, and brought safely to Heaven. **The guarantee is Holy Spirit**, usually referred to as the Third Person in the Holy Trinity because Jesus spoke this sequence in His *Great Commission*. In (Matthew 28.18-20) it says- **18** *And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.* The Book of Romans makes it abundantly clear that the #3rd Person is in no way less than #1st or #2nd in the Godhead. The *impossible* becomes a reality because God gave us His very Holy Spirit to live inside of every Christian.

Last week we saw how *walking* according to the Holy Spirit and not *walking* according to the Flesh results from our choices. Choices of what we set our mind on and invest our lives in produces our *walk*. What we set our mind on allows a close walk with Jesus, a life in co-operation with Holy Spirit. The Bible includes the warning in **(Romans 8.6)** *For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace,...* And, in (Galatians 6.8/AMPC) - *For he who sows to his own flesh (lower nature, sensuality) will from the flesh reap decay and ruin and destruction, but he who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.* God’s Word is often using work of a “farmer” such as who **sows good** seed to illustrate the good result of the Spirit as for a rich harvest by a farmer. You may worry for fear of lacking the ability to set your mind on the Spirit! Remember, you have the Great Helper! For **(Romans 8.9)** erases that fear, *However you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit {if you are a Christian}*. Therefore, the Spirit of Jesus, our Heavenly Helper, who is our connection to the Father and to the Son, is continuously Helping us in ways we may or may not realize.

Justified by Faith in Jesus, results in having a *Heavenly Father*. Jesus’ Father is now Our Father by adoption. Therefore, Holy Spirit in **(Romans 8.15)** is called the *spirit of adoption. 15 For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, “Abba! Father!”* Abba is the Aramaic word for a small child in calling out in need of love and addressing his Daddy (in English) or Otoh-chan (in Japanese). This is how intimate God wants to be with His children. I like the following quotation from the Expositor’s Bible Commentary (EBC): **“We sometimes come to the point of doubting our salvation because our sanctification has proceeded so slowly and so lamely. The Spirit, however, does not base his assuring testimony on progress or the lack of it in the**

Christian life. He does not lead us to cry, "I am God's child." Rather, he leads us to call upon God as Father—to look away from ourselves to him who established the relationship."

This fits with my exegesis of *son and children* in the recent verses. The Spirit gives us assurance and power as **Sons of God**, and gentle but yet still strong leading to call to our Heavenly **Daddy as Children**. But, **I also think it is important to add to the EBC quote:**

1. that Holy Spirit also gets our eyes back on Jesus, through whom God established the relationship. As in (Hebrews 12.2) *fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.*

2. God's best will and His heart's desire for us is not doubting our salvation because our sanctification has proceeded so slowly and so lamely. The power of Holy Spirit is intended to overcome all doubt and slow moving in being set apart to follow Jesus!

YES, The Holy Spirit brings power to Christians, but, He is not a spirit of slavery. Satan often says things *like* Holy Spirit says, but to confuse and make us feel like God is a hard taskmaster. That is why in the battle of the mind, I often wait for that *Still Small Quiet Voice* of Holy Spirit. But that voice, creates boldness, confidence, and an unstoppable compulsion to proclaim that **JESUS IS LORD!** Also, don't put God in a box, limiting how He communicates to His Beloved Children. God may speak in an audible voice, if He chooses. But when the warfare seems too great, after using the Armor of God, including the Spirit's Sword, often I personally as one of Jesus' Soldiers, wait for Holy Spirit's *still, small quiet voice*.

Even Elijah had to wait: In **(1 Kings 19.9-13)**

9 *Then he came there to a cave and lodged there; and behold, the word of the LORD came to him, and He said to him, "What are you doing here, Elijah?"* **10** *He said, "I have been very zealous for the LORD, the God of hosts; for the sons of Israel have forsaken Your covenant, torn down Your altars and killed Your prophets with the sword. And I alone am left; and they seek my life, to take it away."*

11 *So He {the LORD} said, "Go forth and stand on the mountain before the LORD." And behold, the LORD was passing by! And a great and strong wind was rending the mountains and breaking in pieces the rocks before the LORD; but the LORD was not in the wind. And after the wind an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake. **12** After the earthquake a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire; and after the fire a sound of a gentle blowing. **13** When Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his mantle and went out and stood in the entrance of the cave. And behold, a voice came to him and said, "What are you doing here, Elijah?"*

It seems very apparent that Elijah was so used to God's mighty miracles in his walking in the Spirit as God's prophet, that hearing the LORD in his heart (1 Kings 19.9) didn't stick. So, our gracious God, gave him more of a message, even passing by "bodily", as it says in (v.11). This evidently got Elijah's undivided attention. A note for all of us when we are depressed. Jesus knows personal ways to communicate to us in addition to the Word but always by the Spirit. Maybe He will recall a memory or place an unexpected word in our hearts. After the LORD had Elijah's attention, He repeated the same question: "*What are you doing here, Elijah?*" (v. 13) and detailed marching orders from the Lord followed.

God's children are even called *sons of God*, as we saw last week and repeated below in (**Romans 8.14**). God wants all Christians to look ahead to when they will be just like Jesus, The Son of God. For it is written in (1 John 3.2) *Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like **Him**, because we will see **Him** just as He is.* God has inspired Paul to emphasize walking all the way to Glory, seeing Jesus, and considering ourselves already Sons of God. In that sense it does not conflict with already being children of God who call out *Daddy...Otoh-chan* to Almighty God.

A poor self-image is a bad attitude regarding your importance to God. It is fertile soil for seeds of self-pity, rebellion, covetousness, jealousy and hate. A poor self-image is not humility, but a refusal to acknowledge God's making each one of us wonderful. As the Psalmist wrote in (Psalm 139.14) *I will give thanks to You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Wonderful are Your works, And my soul knows it very well.* Knowing God calls us His Sons gives no room for a poor self-image but makes much room for humility.

TAKEAWAY#1

The Letter to Romans has some of the most concise and hard to understand theology in the New Testament. Much of it addresses Jews attending meetings in house churches in Rome. It explains many mysteries of God as revealed in Christ Jesus. Theology is knowledge about God, intended by Him to affect men's relationship with Him, to accept His Son and be Justified by Faith.

Chapters 7 & 8 in the Book of Romans reveal and explain the supernatural actions by God for and with Christians. God's Grace or Undeserved Favor produces Cause and Effect Christian Living, fighting our old nature and sensing Holy Spirit or Experiential Christianity.

14 For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.

In (**Romans 8.14**) last week we saw how Paul distinguished clearly between *walking according to the flesh* versus or compared against *walking according to the Spirit*, with the basic human experience of *walking* as willfully choosing a path of sin or of holy living. Now, the supernatural side of living for Jesus as we *walk* has the illustration of being *led*, not just choosing.

True Son-ship is determined by who or what leads you forward. I remember how I used to *worry* if I was allowing the Holy Spirit to lead me. *Worrying* is sin! May I say that this attitude might be a healthy spiritual *concern*. I noticed just recently that (**Romans 8.14/AMP**) agrees with this **concern** - *For all who are allowing themselves to be led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.* It is healthy spiritually to humbly revere the Lord, but not in fear of condemnation. I always don't want to miss the most of Jesus that I can experience. Whatever I did, God **met me where was at, or reached me and** taught me, and continues to teach me. I learned that if my life is aimed at a future eternity with Him as well as daily fellowship with Him now, the Holy Spirit will find a means to lead me. Experiential Christianity or Simply Life in Christ is truly Life in the Spirit. About 30 years ago I heard a mature Minister share how he just sometimes just finds himself in the **right place** at the **right time** for God to do something special. I wanted that too! I may have prayed; but, by His favor (Psalm 37.4) it began to happen. *Delight yourself in the LORD; And He will give you the desires of your heart.* For my calling, **right place, right time**, this is usually with the **right person like a stranger I meet**. This is God's Providence. **Providence is our Heavenly Father's care or guardianship in daily living for His adopted children. This happens on planet earth by the power of the Holy Spirit within and upon us.**

Dear OIC, I just introduced a new word to describe our relationship with the Holy Spirit: **upon us**. When Jesus came to John the Baptist at the river, as the Bible in (Luke 3.21-22) declares, the Holy Trinity, all Three Persons of the Godhead, were there together. Jesus was dunked like a doughnut in coffee into the water. **21 Now when all the people were baptized, Jesus was also baptized, and while He was praying, heaven was opened, 22 and the Holy Spirit descended upon Him in bodily form like a dove, and a voice came out of heaven, "You are My beloved Son, in You I am well-pleased."** If Jesus, the Son of God, needed the Holy Spirit upon Him to begin His powerful ministry on earth, then shouldn't we? Trinity arrived on earth in a tangible way: Jesus in the river, Holy Spirit came upon Him, and Father spoke. Whether we sense it or not, everywhere we Christians go, Trinity, the Godhead, is with us too. Praying for Holy Spirit anointing on us is our humble response to be Jesus' Ambassadors in today's world. In (2 Corinthians 5.20) *Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making an appeal through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.*

Jesus deserves that His name be shared with people, by the power of God.

TAKEAWAY #2

If Jesus, who had no sinful flesh inside Him as we do, needed the Holy Spirit to be upon Him for His service to God, why shouldn't we? Inside is not enough; Holy Spirit must be *upon* us. This is the power that Jesus deserves for us to display Him to a sinful world.

Reading (Romans 8.16-17/ NASB1995) *The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God,*

AND, I want to refer to the *New Living Translation* here,

(Romans 8.16 / NLT)

16 *For his Spirit joins with our spirit to affirm that we are God's children.*

(v.16) I highlight the NLT phrase, ***His Spirit joins with our spirit.*** Holy Spirit is really inside of you, brothers and sisters in Christ. We, including myself, too easily forget that fact. **Praise be to God!** God doesn't forget and continues to be proactive by Holy Spirit to remind, refresh, and renew us in glorious *affirmation, that we are His children.* Paul uses both *sons of God* and *God's children* as I mentioned above. I think that *Sons* is used to encourage confidence and boldness in or walk to Glory, whereas *children* is used to emphasize dependence on Daddy God in humility as we walk to Glory. Both of these truths of relationship are intended to be inside our hearts and minds.

I always wonder why Christians read books about "Why People, Good or Bad" suffer? We Christians need only read **(Romans 8.17)** for the answer that personally applies to our lives.

(Romans 8.17/NLT) *And since we are his children, we are his heirs. In fact, together with Christ we are heirs of God's glory. But if we are to share his glory, we must also share his suffering.*

First, let's look at our inheritance for ***we are His heirs.*** In most societies in the whole world, the children get the inheritance that their father bequeathed {left or gave property, money, possessions} to them when he died. Thus, the children are called *heirs*, usually identified in the last will and testament document. We have the most trustworthy document in the Universe to guarantee our inheritance: the Bible. We, brothers and sisters in Christ at OIC, will in fact **inherit with Christ the Glory of God.** It seems too good to be true, that God already calls us both His children and His sons. But God is Good and God is True.

The glory that Jesus will receive in Heaven for His obedience to His Father to death on a Cross will be shared with all His Family, Christians. In (Revelation 5.11) the Angels exalt Jesus, the Lamb of God who took away the sins of the world: ***II Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many***

angels around the throne and the living creatures and the elders; and the number of them was myriads of myriads, and thousands of thousands, 12 saying with a loud voice,

“Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing.”

Our unworthiness is not considered at all. Salvation is a gift. It is God’s will to give His children the same Glory that the Angels proclaim Jesus deserves. We will receive it as well! How can we describe, the indescribable: the Glory of God. It is in one sense God’s very essence, but all words fall short. We get some description when the New Jerusalem comes down from Heaven for the New Earth after this earth is destroyed by God. In (Revelation 21.23) *And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon to shine on it, for the **glory** of God has illumined it, and its lamp is the Lamb.*

It is more than light. The Bible shows that Christians can sense by feelings or in some way, God’s special touches, Holy Spirit’s Presence or moving upon us. (2 Corinthians 3.18) says that the Holy Spirit stays with us, unlike Moses, after the sensations have faded.

7 But if the ministry of death, in letters engraved on stones, came with glory, so that the sons of Israel could not look intently at the face of Moses because of the glory of his face, fading as it was, 8 how will the ministry of the Spirit fail to be even more with glory? Moses would veil his face until the effect of God’s glory faded after His meeting with Moses to give the Law, the Ten commandments. As Paul’s teaching that we are Justified by Faith, that the Law could not save anyone, so we have unfading glory. The Holy Spirit lives inside us. Yet, there are obviously times when God decides to reveal His glory with or upon Christians more than other times. Reading (2 Corinthians 3.18) in regards to Moses’ experiential Christianity:

*But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the **glory** of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from **glory to glory**, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.*

Christians have the Holy Spirit within them; but obviously they may have experiences sensing God’s Presence from the Lord Jesus. Maturing is living by faith to faith as we saw in (Romans 1.17) *For in the righteousness of God is revealed from **faith to faith**; as it is written, “But the righteous man shall live by **faith**.”*

We believe God’s Holy Spirit lives inside us not only from believing God’s Holy Bible, God’s Word, but also the Experiential Christianity described in God’s Word: **(Romans 8.16 / NLT)**

16 For his Spirit joins with our spirit to affirm that we are God’s children.

Each believer gets to know Holy Spirit inside him as he gets to know also the Father and the Son. Holy Spirit **always gives experiential Christianity that testifies of Jesus** but in many different ways. But when it's really Holy Spirit, we always can say that we just experienced God through Jesus!" Affirmation, Miracles, Peace, Gifts of the Spirit, fruit of the Spirit It's JESUS.

Now let's look at Christians sharing Jesus Christ's sufferings, the part of this verse that we naturally don't like to think about. First, we need to know that Jesus didn't like suffering either. He would not have been 100% MAN and at the same time 100% GOD if he didn't have that humanness Himself. He could not have felt with us in our sufferings, as He still does in Heaven. He never disobeyed God, His Father. But in the Garden of Gethsemane He showed his humanness to want to avoid the Cross. (Matthew 26:36-39, 44) *36 Then Jesus *came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and *said to His disciples, "Sit here while I go over there and pray." 37 And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be grieved and distressed. 38 Then He said to them, "My soul is deeply grieved, to the point of death; remain here and keep watch with Me." 39 And He went a little beyond them, and fell on His face and prayed, saying, "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; yet not as I will, but as You will." 44 And He left them again, and went away and prayed a third time, saying the same thing once more.*

We might say it was only spiritual, for His grieving was knowing He would be separated from His Father on the Cross, and not the agony of physical pain, that had Him say - "*My soul is deeply grieved, to the point of death;*" But even if so, it was a human response to an impossible situation. He even wanted friends nearby to help! His obedience is even more precious and beautiful to us who have received the gift of Salvation that He bought for us that Good Friday. (Hebrews 12.2) reveals Jesus being humiliated and shamed, another human tendency besides fear of separation from loved ones and physical pain. That was what our Lord suffered. (Hebrews 12.2) says *fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.*

(Romans 8.17/NLT) *And since we are his children, we are his heirs. In fact, together with Christ we are heirs of God's glory. But if we are to share his glory, we must also share his suffering.*

The Apostle Paul makes it clear that sharing Christ's suffering is **not an option** to keep on our walk to Glory. God has given us tastes of His Glory on Earth, the assurance of Salvation and experiences by the indwelling and anointing of Holy Spirit upon us. We have a reward that truly is *out of this world!*

Now Paul confirms these encouragements in **(Romans 8.18)** *For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.*

A brief summary of his sufferings before he was imprisoned in Rome is in (2 Corinthians 11:23-25) **23** *Are they servants of Christ?—I speak as if insane—I more so; in far more labors, in far more imprisonments, beaten times without number, often in danger of death. 24 Five times I received from the Jews thirty-nine lashes. 25 Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, a night and a day I have spent in the deep.* That should give us a sense of the “cost of discipleship.” We must recall that there is **an already and not yet of** Christian living. The best part of the already is Knowing Jesus. In (Philippians 3.7-8) the Apostle Paul declares the cost and present rewards in following Jesus. *7 But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ. 8 More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ,*

These instructions to live in light of a glorious eternity ahead, and fellowship with the Lord Jesus now are given a more Universal aspect or description in **(Romans 8.19-21)** *19 For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God. 20 For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope 21 that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God.*

I remember during the real Revival in America in the 1960-70's, called the Jesus Movement, many of us newly born-again Christians commented on how our pet dogs and cats acted differently after we became Christians. Here in the Bible this is confirmed. Animals sense God's Presence. After all, He still leads them to food and shelter and it cannot all be explained as instinct. As we see in (Psalm 29.9) *The voice of the Lord makes the deer to calve And strips the forests bare; And in His temple everything says, “Glory!* Therefore, God has a relationship with communication to the animals.

Remember death came into the world by Man's, not animals', action. (Romans 5.12) *Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned—* Death also spread to nature; animals, vegetation, everything living. Attributing consciousness about God's Presence seems limited to just the animals, but we see in **(Romans 8.21)** *that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God.* Death for man and animal will no longer exist when

Jesus returns with His Glorified Saints to rule the Earth. Speaking of Experiential Christianity, we Christians will experience, even see with our own eyes, God's glory in our beings and all around us. First in Heaven, but then in all of Creation for - *For the earth will be filled With the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, As the waters cover the sea.* This was written by the prophet in (Habakkuk 2.14).

And in (Revelation 21.3-4 /WE) we read: *3 I heard a loud voice in heaven. It said, 'Look! God's house is now set up among the people. God will live with them. They will be his people and God himself will be with them.*

4 He will wipe every tear from their eyes. No one will die. No one will ever cry or be sad for any reason. No one will ever have trouble. The old things are gone.'

TAKEAWAY#3/CLOSE

Suffering is not an option but part of God's plan for each Christian. Providence is our Heavenly Father's care or guardianship in daily living for His adopted children. This happens on planet earth by the power of the Holy Spirit within and upon us. The better we trust God for His Providence and for His keeping His Promise to bring us safely to Heaven, the better we can keep the Faith in God through suffering.

TAKEAWAY #4/CLOSE

We not only have been promised Heaven, but a New Earth, where there is no sin...no Devil...no pain...and perfect fellowship with God, our Christian Family, the Angels, and our lovable pets, lions, tigers and bears...and more....Even all The Animal's in Creation. We will see with our own eyes all of this, and more!

I now will review the TAKEAWAYS from earlier in this message.

TAKEAWAY#1

The Letter to Romans has some of the most concise and hard to understand theology in the New Testament. Much of it addresses Jews attending meetings in house churches in Rome. It explains many mysteries of God as revealed in Christ Jesus. Theology is knowledge about God, intended by Him to affect men's relationship with Him, to accept His Son and be Justified by Faith.

TAKEAWAY #2

If Jesus, who had no sinful flesh inside Him as we do, needed the Holy Spirit to be upon Him

for His service to God, why shouldn't we? Inside is not enough; Holy Spirit must be *upon* us. This is the power that Jesus deserves for us to display Him to a sinful world.

The Third Person of the Godhead has been given the task to cause this to all come to pass in our lives....if we simply allow Him to lead us forward. **Providence has Power!!!**

Methinks, that's worth keeping the Faith for.

Let Us Pray:

REFERENCES

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NABRE – New American Bible (Revised Edition)

NASB - New American Standard – 1995 Edition *Let Us Pray:*

WE -Worldwide English (New Testament)© 1969, 1971, 1996, 1998 by [SOON Educational Publications](#)