



“For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not.” (Ecc. 7:20)

Just A Minute with Scripture

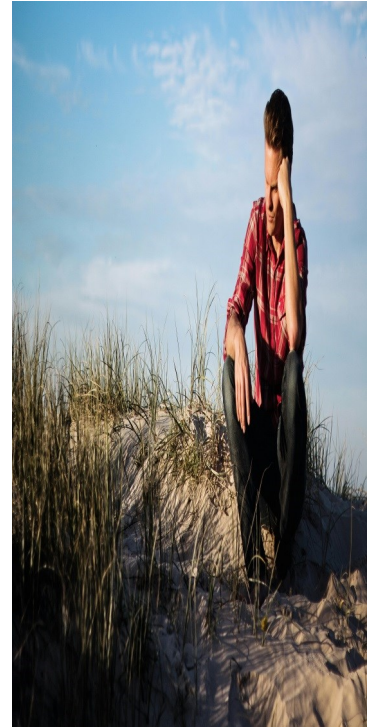
Who is Just in God's Sight?

There is a Truth that should be evident. Evaluate your thinking against what Scripture says. *Galatians 3:11* is an inter-dispensational doctrine (read also *Hab. 2:4, Rom. 1:17, Heb. 10:38*) found throughout the Bible: ***“But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith.”*** Our fallen nature acquired through Adam needs transforming (*Gen. 3*), because sin reigns in man: *“Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.” (Rom. 5:12)* Yet, we have a loving, but righteous Judge.

This sin problem needs to be solved for anyone to be just before God. Scripture documents Israel's history of trying to keep the Mosaic Law. How did they do? *“But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumblingstone...For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.” (Rom. 9:31-32,10:3)* They tried to attain God's perfect righteousness, but fell far short. This is fallen man's condition, in the 'past,' 'now,' and also the time 'to come.' Man's ONLY hope is to be humbled by their desperate condition and believe God. Just place your faith in Christ's blood.

God's character is righteous and He can only accept perfect righteousness: *“He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he.” (Deut. 32:4)* If man tries to attain THIS righteousness, here's his task: *“To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life...glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good... (For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified.” (Rom. 2:7,10,13)* It's perfection, 24/7, every second, every day, always.

Faith Today: The unbeliever is “in Adam” and has a sin nature. His filthy works are unacceptable; but the Law was designed to humble you: *“Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.”* But God's wonderful love determined to offer His Son to die to pay for all sin. Once you believe, you are placed “In Christ” and He imputes His righteousness: *“Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe...” (Rom. 3:20,22)* There are no works, just faith!



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Feel free to call if you have questions with any articles.

Saved By Grace

What does this mean? Grace is God's undeserved favor; a gift with no strings attached. Free!

In His great love for us, God sent His Son to die in our place to pay for sin, so we could be saved by simply taking God at His Word. **It is Faith Alone!**

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Study Tools With Practical Study Ideas: Ephesians 4

Take time to use the book “Exploring the Bible Using Study Tools” to find options to assist your study. This month we will highlight tool #14: **Key words and phrases**: These are words repeatedly used and are a flag to the student, indicating an important topic or concept. Define each key word/phrase, thinking about the context. This can help you gain valuable insights.

1. Look at the number of times the word “one” is used in *Ephesians 4:1-6*. What is the significance? How does this help you understand unity in this opening section?
2. Select two words that are repeatedly

used in *Ephesians 4:12-16*. (Include terms with the same root word, like dwell, dwelling, dwelled, etc.) Now define these words and think about how they are used in this section. What purpose do they serve?

3. Notice similar repeating phrases in *Ephesians 4:22-32*: “put off,” “put on,” “putting away,” and “put away.” Can you define them in the context? How are they the same and different? What are they instructing you to do? How does it help?

4. In *Ephesians 4:26-32* observe the use of the term “let.” How many times is it used and why? Define it. Is it helpful to you?

“Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh? (Gal. 3:3)

Questions & Answers With Deborah

1. How can I prepare for marriage?

A few insights that may be helpful:

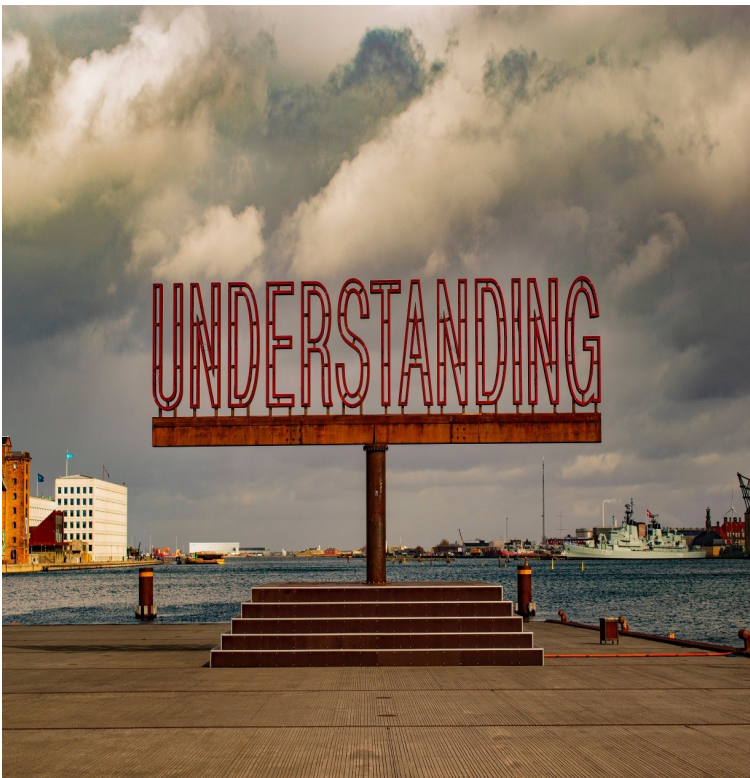
- a) Both of you ought to become established in the foundational doctrine of *Romans*. Read, study, think on, and pray about what it says and how to apply it. Practice doing these things and then reflect.
- b) Premarital counsel or coaching with a sound Bible perspective, such as from a pastor, mentor, or spiritual friend or Bible teacher is helpful.
- c) Read and consider what the Bible says about marriage, starting in *Genesis 2:18-25*. Use a concordance to study the terms marriage, married, wife, and husband throughout the Bible. Read and discuss *Ephesians 5* together with your fiancé. Notice that *verses 1-21* are general teachings to the Body and preliminary to marriage. *Verses 22-33* relate to the marriage roles. (Continued)

The Law is Our Schoolmaster... Will We Learn?

So, if I can't be just before God by trying hard to keep God's Law and worse, I continue to fail over and over doing my very best, what's the purpose of His Law? It just brings wrath, condemnation, and great frustration! This conclusion shows you've learned what God is teaching in *Galatians 3:11*. (See article on p.1) We can't be just with God by our own works; it is only by faith: “Wherefore the law was our **schoolmaster** to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.” (*Gal. 3:24*)

As we read *Romans 1-3* we see this very thing. God gave His Nation Israel the Law. Why? The Law is a very small glimpse of God's own, perfect righteous standard, which teaches that man needs the Savior. God's wisdom and righteousness are perfect and far above man's: “For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.” (*Is. 55:9*) God's Law is designed to humble us to realize we are in desperate need. The Law functions to teach us of our vast limitations and to humbly trust God.

Think on This: The summary of what God can teach us about sin by the Law is found in *Romans 3:19-20*: “Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: **that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.**” This teaches that no flesh can be just before God by trying to keep the Law. We will always fail: “...there is none that doeth good, no, not one.” (*Rom. 3:12b*) Have you personally learned this? No one can keep the Law to be saved, nor to walk a holy life. You need Christ. Search to know ‘how’ God can bring forth resurrection life in you. (Read *Gal. 2:20* & *Rom. 6-8*)



Purpose of the Body of Christ by Erin Young

The term Body of Christ is used a lot among the Christian world. But what is it exactly? And what purpose does it serve? *1 Corinthians 12:12: "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ."* The Body of Christ is the collective of believers that are saved and sealed in Christ. According to the Scriptures, our purpose is to spread the Word of God, and most importantly, the gospel, here on earth. *Ephesians 1:22-23: "And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all."*

We become one with Christ once we are saved and become a member of the Body of Christ. *Ephesians 5:30: "For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones."* We are ambassadors for Christ here on earth. *II Corinthians 5:20: "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God."* The Body of Christ is the most important unit on earth. When we gather together, we are a witness to the world that there is a God and Christ the Word is living within us. We help teach others His Word and help show them the way and importance of eternal salvation. And when an individual has this knowledge and peace, it can help them navigate through the stresses of our sin fallen world.

Questions & Answers *With Deborah*

d) Understand and learn to practically apply *Romans 12* doctrine. This chapter teaches many foundational relationship issues, such as godly love, preferring others, and seeing each other in the Body and as equal, functional, and important interconnected members.

- Understanding your own role in the Body provides the groundwork for interactions and when taking on new roles, such as being a husband or wife, but also responsibilities as an employee, student, etc.
- When challenges arise, it is helpful to first see your spouse as a brother or sister in the Body. He/she is a person with similar feelings and needs. Each of you have a flesh with weaknesses and sin problems, but also strengths/preferences. This gives you the insight and empathy to realize that the problems your partner has are similar to your own. Sound doctrine enables you to live godly even in the midst of challenges, by godly love and relying on Christ and His Word for wisdom/strength.

2. What can I do... my marriage is in trouble, and my spouse refuses marriage counseling?

God and His Word are your help. Here are a few insights:

- a) The major focus needs to be about you and what God can teach you in order to grow through the challenges of life to live Christ.
- b) Pray to your Father for a humble heart as you read *Romans 12/Ephesians 5*. Ask yourself questions about your understanding and application of the verses: Do I understand this? Am I applying this with my spouse? How can I grow to apply this more consistently or effectively? What is my thinking/behavior in loving my spouse; how can I move forward?
- c) Avoid focusing on your spouse's weaknesses, problems, or things done that have hurt you. In other words, don't build a case against him/her in your mind. When negative, destructive thoughts arise, replace them with sound doctrine. Be prepared with verses to allow God to reframe fleshly thinking.

Thankfulness is a Key!

Take a few moments to think on this: What does it look like to have a heart that is deeply and genuinely thankful for all God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, has given and done for us? Thankfulness refers to an appreciation or gratitude, with the acknowledgement that what was received was of tremendous worth. *"Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."* (Eph. 5:20)

We would be humbled by the fact that the great God Almighty and Creator of all things, who spoke the worlds into existence, desired to fashion us in His own image and give us the earth and ultimately have intimate fellowship with Him forever. *"And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion... over all the earth..."* (Gen. 1:26)

In grace and in unfathomable love, our Father determined to also save us, delivering up His only Son to be our Savior, who *"...took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."* (Phil. 2:7-8) He took all sin onto Himself and suffered in our place: *"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."* (II Cor. 5:21) Man did absolutely nothing to earn it. The Bible attests to the fact that it is God's love story to us.

Reflect: Do you truly have a grateful heart unto the one who has given you everything? It was done in grace and free for us, but it was accomplished at a great price and with immeasurable love. God in the flesh endured being rejected and spat upon; persecuted by His own Nation and the whole world. Paul learned this kind of love that our Father has for us: *"And I will very gladly spend and be spent for you; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved."* (II Cor. 12:15) How do you express your love and charity in response to the Lord? What an opportunity to live what Christ teaches! (II Cor. 5:14)

Take Time To Be Thankful God Gives Us All Things Freely!



Morning Prayer by MJ Weidman

When I wake up I find your goodness
Patiently waiting for me.
Every morning your mercy and grace abound,
Reminding me that I am free.
The blood you shed upon the Cross,
Taking away each and every sin.
Even if I stumble and fall today,
You grant me a fresh start to begin again.
I will sing your praises, glorify your name,
For all you've done and continue to do.
Let me be love and light to all today,
As I spend my day chasing after you.

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Writers/Editors/Coaches: Brian/Deborah Johnson

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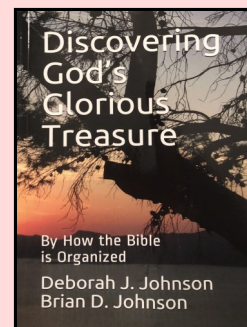
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A Helpful Book:

"Discovering God's Glorious Treasure"

(How the Bible is Organized)

By Deborah and Brian Johnson



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