

Welcome to Calvary Church, Brighton

"The importance of the Reformation for us
today"

Speaker - Philip Wells full-time Elder



www.calvary-brighton.org.uk

Sermons and talks - calvary-brighton.sermon.net



*The background is the
painting Luther's 95
Theses. By Ferdinand
Pauwels, via Wikimedia
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Reformation - today!



- On October 31st 1517 Martin Luther (age - monk and theology teacher posted 95 discussion points on Facebook the door of the chapel in Wittenberg
- This can be identified as the trigger point for a cultural, political, economic and spiritual revolution for Europe
 - and then America, Africa etc.
 - we still reap the benefits today.
- Challenge the Catholic Church 1.5K old and called it corrupt?
- Disagree with the Pope and the Establishment?
- Say he found / rediscovered a better way?
- **What way could that possibly be??**

How can I be right with God?



- The way of salvation ...
- Sued for negligence ... if the church cannot tell people the way to be right with God!
- *Personal cry: "How can I be saved?"*
- *"How can I be right with Almighty God?"*
- *"How can I find peace with God?"*
- *"How can God have anything to do with a sinner like me?"*

How can I be right with God?



- Luther's conscience was guilty and he could not find peace
- *I was a devout monk and wanted to force God to justify me because of my works and the severity of my life. I was a good monk, and kept the rule of my order so strictly that I may say that if ever a monk got to heaven by his monkery, I would have gotten there as well. All my brothers in the monastery who knew me will bear me out. If I had kept on any longer, I would have killed myself with vigils, prayers, reading, and other works.* [1] Walther von Loewenich: *Martin Luther: The Man and His Work*. Trans. Lawrence E. Deneff. (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1982), 72

- i.e. Pilgrimages - severe treatment of the body - payment of money
- e.g. Turn over a new leaf - rid myself of sin - punish myself enough
- *Was this sufficient - to be accepted?*

How can I be right with God?

His inner thinking is as follows:

- 1. There is one Almighty God, and I need to be in a right relationship with him
- 2. My conscience tells me that something is deeply wrong – my moral failure e.g.
 - Envy
 - Lust
 - Anger
 - Cruelty
 - Criticism
 - Pride
- 3. it's up to me, and in my power to mend this in the sight of God



The way of salvation

What does the Bible say?

- 1. Yes: There is a God
 - Creator and Judge
 - "and God saw and it was good"
Genesis 1:25
 - Has authority to put order into his universe
 - Moral and relational qualities:
 - Justice, righteousness
 - Holiness
 - Judge



Genesis 18:25 "far be it from you to do such a thing - to kill the righteous with the wicked, treating the righteous and the wicked alike. Far be it from you! Will not the Judge of all the earth do right"

The way of salvation

2. There is something deeply wrong with human beings

- Finite?
 - NOT THE PROBLEM
- Weak?
 - NOT THE PROBLEM
- Resistant, independent, rebellious
 - won't obey God unless it suits me
 - won't put God first at all
 - I am a law breaker, AND law maker
- ==> so the biggest problem is God's [future] justice, how he will assess me, and how he will then treat me



The way of salvation

3. solution is to be "righteous" in the sight of the Judge

- = what the Judge decides is the key

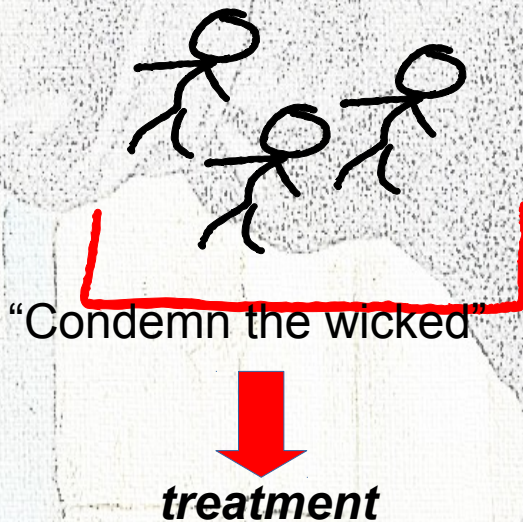


Righteous
(adjective – description)

righteousness
(noun – the thing)

righteousnessify = justify
(verb – activity of a Judge...)

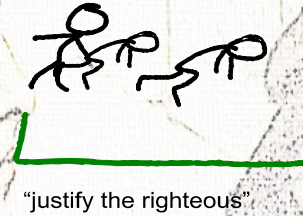
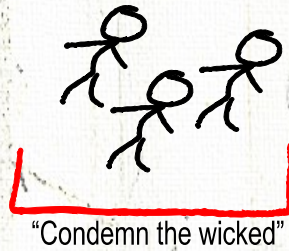
De 25:1 If there be a controversy between men, and they come unto judgment, that the judges may judge them; then they shall **justify the righteous**, and condemn the wicked.



N.B. the justifying activity of the Judge - does not change anything inside you, he changes your status ... and thus how you are treated

The way of salvation

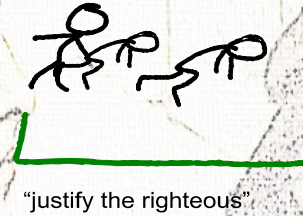
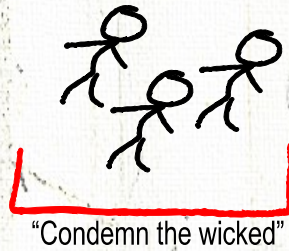
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- On what basis does Judge do this?
- A:1 because the evidence says you are not guilty
- A2: because of some other reason
 - a. Inadequate evidence to convict ... "no closure "
 - b. Corruption by the Judge ... something to be angry about
 - c. Mind-boggling generosity by a third person
 - A.N.Other pays my debt
 - A.N.Other goes to prison for me
 - A.N.Other pays the death penalty for me
 - WHO is this A.N.Other? What good reason? By what right?
 - ==> this would be very generous, why would Judge agree? and also very difficult to accept

The way of salvation

Romans 4:5 However to the man who does not work but trusts God who justifies the wicked, his faith is credited as righteousness ... God credits righteousness apart from works



- This A.N.Other is actually the key - he is Jesus Christ, God's Son.
- What reason could possibly make God the Judge pronounce wicked people "justified"??
 - Closure/fairness, right & not corrupt, clout and authority to interfere
- "through the redemption that came by Jesus Christ. God presented him as a sacrifice-of-atonement through faith in his blood" Romans 3:25
- ==> so great that the Judge is ready and willing to be moved by this
- ==> this strange work offered to us as a promise, to be received by faith
- ==> would you believe this? Receive God's offer, Christ's intervention?

The way of salvation

3. "The answer lies within me and my efforts"

- Bible says NO!
- Luther - shall I keep on trying to be right with God with my efforts
 - and pain
 - And prayers
 - etc.??? Answer = NO.
- Luther - this righteousness through Jesus Christ, from God is a gift
- Luther "alien righteousness" i.e. from outside, by reason of another person.



The way of salvation

3. "The answer lies within me and my efforts"

- NOT by works ... but Jesus is a complete Saviour
- A: consider, in Christ, justification and sanctification

<i>justification</i>	<i>sanctification</i>
<i>What God declares about me</i>	<i>What God does within me</i>
<i>Complete from the first moment</i>	<i>Lifelong process of change</i>
<i>To do with belonging to Christ and his people</i>	<i>To do with likeness to Christ</i>
<i>The first root</i>	<i>The developing fruit</i>
<i>My good works are excluded</i>	<i>My good works are indispensable</i>

UNION WITH JESUS CHRIST

The way of salvation

Justification by faith alone in Christ alone

- *Sola fide, sola gratia, solo Christo*
- This is crucial doctrine - stand or fall
 - A dazzling doctrine!
 - A liberating doctrine!
 - "my chains fell off"
 - A daily doctrine
 - Unlike will-writing, but like weetabix
 - A hope-full doctrine
 - A personal doctrine ... you [O God] and me!

