

Letter: 23f 47 G v Wigram, -, October 7th, 1841

by John Nelson Darby

The sermon explores the concept of justification, highlighting the importance of God's love, the perfection of Christ's work, and the free grace that enables our acceptance before God.

Scripture: Zechariah 3:1-5, Romans 3:24, Philippians 2:8-9, Hebrews 9:14, 1 Peter 1:19

Topics: "Grace", "Justification"

Description

John Nelson Darby emphasizes that justification is a gift from God, highlighting that it is not a matter of God being unwilling but rather a demonstration of His love and provision through Christ's sacrifice. He explains that while the righteousness of God required expiation, it is God's heart that has provided for our justification and acceptance. Darby contrasts the concepts of justification and sanctification, noting that the Epistle to the Hebrews focuses on our presentation to God and the perfection of Christ's work. He stresses the importance of understanding grace as freely given, as articulated in Romans, and the role of Christ's obedience in making Him acceptable to God. Ultimately, Darby encourages believers to appreciate the multifaceted nature of Christ's work and its implications for their standing before God.

Transcript

p47 [From the French.] G V Wigram, I do not quite like that expression, "Christ has obtained justification from God," because it presents God as unwilling and even opposed to the thing, while it is the will and the heart of God which has provided the sacrifice and all. It is true that the righteousness of God required expiation and the sacrifice of Christ. Still it is He whose love has provided for our needs in this respect. And He it is who justifies. (Compare Zech. 3.) The Epistle to the Hebrews speaks rather of our acceptance under the form of our presentation to Him, of sanctification in an external sense. "That he might sanctify the people by his own blood." He has also perfected them; they can stand in His presence, as being His according to the perfection of the sanctuary, without reproach, without spot. Justification is the idea of a tribunal, of a judge, so to speak. The Epistle to the Hebrews speaks of the sanctuary, and of presenting us there

The foundation is always the same; but we can look at it in many ways, and each one gives us more light as to the perfection of the work of Christ, and the results of that work which we enjoy. 1 Peter 1:19 speaks rather in the sense of redemption, of being taken by a ransom out of the hands of the enemy. The obedience of Christ during His life tended to the perfection of the sacrifice; it was not expiatory, but perfectly acceptable. It was a question of the acceptability of His Person as necessary to His work, but that

obedience was not expiatory. He would have remained alone if the corn of wheat had not fallen into the ground; but His entire obedience rendered Him perfectly pleasing to God, as it also was itself. (See Phil. 2.)

Under the form of justification, the Epistle to the Romans is the one which most formally treats of the subject of our acceptance. What I meant by making use of the expression, "Christ has obtained our justification," will be understood by comparing the manner in which this epistle is expressed (chap. 3:24), "Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." You see how it is presented, as flowing from the free grace of God. This is important for the state of the soul, and for the clear understanding of grace.

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