





**Between  
Pride  
and  
Despair**

# We Can Avoid Both Extremes

- The extremes are avoidable, but...
- They are also **observable**
  - **Pride** – self-satisfied, self-righteous or issue-based religion
    - As if we have something to boast about toward God (**Rom. 4:2**)
    - Do we trust in “the Temple” or trust in God? (**Jer. 7:1-7**)
  - **Despair** – “I am not doing enough”, “I have to be perfect”
    - Does the anguish of one under law sound familiar? (**Rom. 7:24**)
    - Jesus died to deliver us from despair (**Rom. 7:25; 8:1**)

# No Place for Pride

- We can't earn salvation
- Justification is not through association (Rev. 2-3)
  - *“each one of you according to your deeds”* (2:23)
  - *“a few who have not soiled their garments”* (3:4)
  - *“to the one who conquers [he who overcomes]”*
- We cannot be “good enough” for God to save us
- Righteousness through works is unattainable
- God knew that (1 John 1:8, 10)

# No Need to Despair

- We don't have to earn salvation
- God's **grace** is accessible through faith (**Rom. 5:2**)
  - *"to bring about the obedience of faith"* (**1:5**)
  - *"leading to the obedience of faith"* (**16:26**)
- Obedient faith is an attainable standard
- We will struggle with our unworthiness sometimes...
- God knew that too (**1 John 2:3; 1:7, 9; 2:1**)

# Faith Only is **NOT** the Answer

- It just seems that way if we don't understand what the Bible teaches about works...
- We are not justified by Works, but without works faith is dead
  - We have to understand what the Bible teaches about “Works” vs. “works”

What Paul has  
been talking  
about

“Works”  $\neq$  “works”

- 1. Works** – A system of deeds or actions by which an individual through perfect law keeping could earn justification and obligate God to reckon him righteous as a wage or debt.
  - (i.e. “*works of the Law*” Rom. 3:20)
- 2. works** – a deed or action
  - (“*their works do follow them*” Rev. 14:13)

# Justification

~~Works~~ (3:20)

Systems

Faith "Only"



Component Level



- Works of law that would “earn” righteousness as a “debt” or “wage”
- Would require perfect law keeping
- “by works of law no flesh will be justified” (3:20)
- “but Israel, pursuing the law of righteousness, has not attained to the law of righteousness. Why? Because they did not seek it by faith, but as it were, by the works of the law. (9:31-32)
- “man is not justified by the works of the law” Gal. 2:16

- “obedience of faith” (1:5)
  - “according to his deeds” (2:6-10)
  - “do... the things of the law” (2:14)
  - “we establish the law” (3:31)
- “...you obeyed...that form of doctrine” (6:17)
- “spiritual service” Rom 12ff
  - Function, teach, give, lead, diligence, distributing to needs, hospitality, etc.
- “...being fruitful in every good work” Col 1:10
- “...may God...establish you in every good work” 2 Thess 2:17
- “...be rich in good works” 1 Tim 6:18
- “...zealous of good works” Titus 2:14
- “...created in Christ Jesus unto good works” Eph 2:10
- “...by your good works, which they shall see” 2 Pet 1:12
- “...provoke one another unto love and good works” Heb 10:24
- “...faith without works is dead” James 2:26

# Justification

~~Works (3:20)~~

Systems

Faith (1:17)



Component

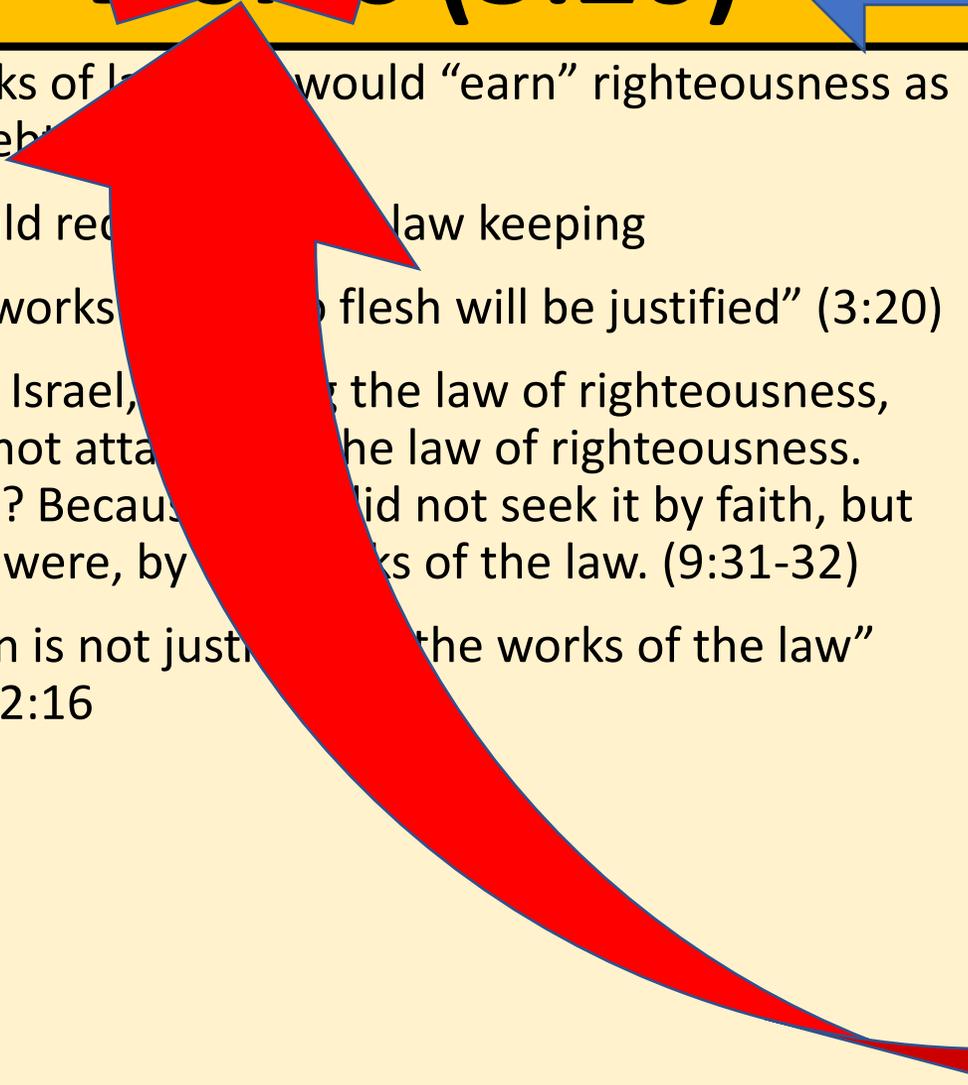
If I think or live like I have to do “enough” of these **“works”**, so that God will find me righteous...

Then we are counting on our efforts to justify us.

Then we turn **“works”** into **“Works”**

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- Would require perfect law keeping
- “by works of law no flesh will be justified” (3:20)
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- “obedience of faith” (1:5)
- “... righteous...”
- “... Then we are counting on our efforts to justify us.”
- “... Then we turn **“works”** into **“Works”**”
- “...may God...establish you in every... 2 Thess 2:17
- “...be rich in good **works**” 1 Tim 6
- “...zealous of good **works**” Titus
- “...created in Christ Jesus with **works**” Eph 2:10
- “...by your good **works**... shall see” 2 Pet 1:12
- “...provoke one another to love and good **works**” Heb 10:24
- “...faith... is dead” James 2:26



# “Works” ≠ “works”

- Paul has dismissed a system of “**Works**” as the means by which we can be found just by God
  - Freeing us from a sentence of perfect law keeping
- Paul has said nothing that minimizes or negates “works” as a necessary demonstration of our faith

*“For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything, but only faith working through love”*

-Gal. 5:6

# We Can Avoid Both Extremes

- There's no place for **pride**
  - We are incapable of being righteous through our own efforts
  - "*So you too, when you do all the things which are commanded you, say, 'We are unworthy slaves; we have done only that which we ought to have done.'*" (Luke 17:10)
- There's no need to **despair**
  - We are **not** required to be righteous through our efforts
  - What we could not do, He did (Rom. 8:3-4)
- There is God's **grace**

# There is God's Grace

- **God is rich in grace**

- *“In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace.” (Eph. 1:7)*

- **Learn more about His grace**

- *“Grace and peace be yours in abundance through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.” (2 Pet. 1:2)*

# There is God's Grace

- **When you can't find **grace**, pray for it**
  - *“Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.” (Heb. 4:16)*
- **Humbly accept God's **grace****
  - *“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— not by works, so that no one can boast.” (Eph. 2:8-9)*

# There is God's Grace

**Grace** is not permission to sin

**Grace** is provision for sin

# Grace is Like a Lift Chair



- **It reminds us we would be helpless without it**
  - we “push the button”
  - but we know we are not lifted by our own power
  - no place for pride
- **It is absolutely sufficient to get us upstairs**
  - no need to despair



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