

SAVED, JUSTIFIED AND THEREFORE NO WORRIES

1 Peter 4:17

(Not entirely original with me)

Introduction: Most Christians live their lives pretty much alike, exceptions exist, of course, when some great evangelist arises into popularity, or some missionary is noted for his/her contributions to some village in some far away place, or some pastor is recognized for being pastor of a very large church, etc. Most Churches are alike also, with a choir, deacons/elders, committees, Sunday Schools, youth programs, regular scheduled services so in general most Christians go about their lives content that they are saved, indwelt with the Holy Spirit and on their way to heaven. Saved with no real worries for "God is in charge of their lives, all has been dealt with." There is one thing, however, that most, if not all Christians have forgotten about or perhaps never knew - their daily lives are being watched and they will have to stand before God one day and give an account for every minute lived on this earth as a Child of God. God requires an accounting by each of His Children. Justified, yes, Saved, yes, but - ACCOUNTABLE! Preachers don't preach very much about it, writers don't write much about it, hymns are not sung about it, but it's there - it's biblical - it's a FACT every Christian is accountable to God for every minute of his/her life before God.

I. NOT A NEW DOCTRINE FROM GOD BUT A FORGOTTEN ONE WAS THE REFORMATION

1. The Reformation started by Martin Luther was not some new doctrine. It had always been there but people through the centuries passed it by. All this man did was to bring out a forgotten doctrine and he aroused the Church.
2. Great men through the ages who rose up in God's name and brought their country back to God did not invent or preach new truths. They simply discovered and preached what was had been in God's Word from the beginning.
3. Justification by faith is a famous doctrine of our age and time and it is a true doctrine.
 - However, it has been emphasized so much that other truths have been covered up and lost.
4. Justification by faith frees Christians from the empty struggle to be good to be accepted.
 - It frees Christians from the enslavement and pride of rituals and efforts to make one's self presentable to God.
 - It frees Christians from trying to impress God by wearing "religious" garments, hoping to be accepted by God as a faithful person.
5. When the doctrine of Justification by Faith had been covered up and dropped out of the preaching/teaching of the Church, it was replaced with holy water, holy beads, holy this and that.
 - Eating of certain things on certain days, not eating on certain days, etc.
 - The Church tried to make itself acceptable to God by doing and not doing certain things and giving money to pay for their sins.
6. Then came Martin Luther and his rediscovery of Justification by Faith and not by works.
 - The Church became alive again and since that day, the emphasis has been on justification by FAITH.
 - The believer/Christian has not responsibility/obligation now, it is all on God.
 - The believer/Christian has but to attend services now and then, give now and then and even hand out a tract on how to be saved, now and then.
 - The Christian today worries only that he/she might fall out of "fellowship" with fellow church members.

II. BEING ACCOUNTABLE TO GOD IS NOT SOME NEW DOCTRINE

1. Justification by faith seems to have pushed away the truth, the fact, the doctrine that the believer is accountable to God for the deeds done while living here on earth.
 - Faith is some magical wand that removes such responsibilities/accountabilities, no matter how the believer happens to live - Faith takes care of everything.
 - One's faith automatically guarantees him/her every promise of God.
2. Accountability to God is seldom preached or taught and as a result, few Christians think about it and many don't even know about it.
3. In a sense life here is a preparation for life "there" and accountability doesn't end here until the believer stands in the presence of the Lord Jesus.
 - Only the thief on the cross was guaranteed to be with the Lord on that day in paradise without any accountability - think about it.
4. Jesus has indeed settled many things forever for the believer and one's faith in Jesus Christ has settled forever his/her past sins, all is forgiven and his/her name is written in the Lamb's Book of Life, all is well there but there is something in between believing in Jesus and standing before Him and that is the believer's life and his/her accountability for what he/she has done with that life.
5. Christians are to prove their faith by the testing God sends. Their obedience to His Word, their faithfulness to Jesus, who died for them, what they will be doing with their time, gifts, and opportunities and their possessions.
 - *Romans 14:12*
 - *1 Corinthians 3:13*
6. What kind of life do Christians live if they don't know or think about having to be accountable to God of how they have lived/used their lives with what God has entrusted to/with them?
 - If Christians know that God is watching, testing, grading and that they will have to stand before Him and give an account of what they've been doing, then they will certainly live differently.

III. SAVED YES, BUT STILL ACCOUNTABLE

1. Christians are saved but most have forgotten or perhaps don't even know that they are still accountable and that they will stand before God and everything about them will be revealed, made open to God.
 - God tests the Christian's courage, wisdom, faithfulness, vision and stewardship.
 - God gives each Christian gifts throughout his/her life, how does that Christian use those gifts?
2. Justified and saved, but still accountable, that is how the Christian should see him/herself.
 - Sadly, few Christians want to be held accountable for his/her life, after all, he/she is saved and have been justified, all is well between them and God.
3. Today is not a period of world judgment and therefore anything goes.
 - Sin happens and no immediate punishment, therefore all is well and no accountability.
4. Remember the parable Jesus told about the man who went into a far country and before leaving called his servants and gave each of them so much to take care of while he was gone. He told them that he would be coming back and to remember that he had given them things to take care of for him. The servants did different things what they had been given - one used what he had been given, one buried his, etc. The man returned and called the servants in to give an accounting, he wanted their reports. The servants did what they wanted to with what he had left them and they did. Two of them used what he had given them wisely, one was afraid and buried his, the third didn't know that he would have to give an account and wasted what was given him.

The man rewarded some of the servants, but some he couldn't for they didn't use what he had left them wisely, therefore they were not rewarded.

CONCLUSION:

1. Christian, you have been saved, justified and saved from appearing before God among those who will be condemned to Hell, but the hour will come when you will stand before the Lord and Savior who saved and justified you and you will give an account of what you have done with your life for Him and the gifts He has given you to use for Him.
2. What is it that God expects from His Children? Self-Judgment - "***...if we judge ourselves we would not come under judgment...***"
- God expects His Children to be obedient, knowing that it takes determination to obey Him in day by day faithfulness.
3. Christian, don't let this doctrinal fact/truth be "swept under the rug" for you and every Christian will stand before God and give an account of your life and what you have done with what He has given you to use for Him.