

## Justification by Faith.

JUNE 8.

ROMANS III: 19-31.

*Golden Text, Rom. 5: 1*

**T**HIS epistle coincides in point of time with Acts 20: 3, was written by Paul at Corinth during his three months' stay in that city. When or by whom the Church in Rome was formed is not mentioned in Scripture. If Peter had been the founder, it surely would have been recorded. Most probably it was formed by private Christians who had come from Palestine to reside there. Rome with its suburbs had then a population of two millions, among whom were many wealthy and influential Jews. Some of the members of the Imperial household were Christians, Phil. 4: 22. Paul had not yet been in Rome, Acts 19: 21; when he did reach it, it was as a prisoner, Acts 23: 17, 20. The Gospel had its opponents in Rome who argued against the doctrine of Justification by Faith, and the Jewish converts were slow to admit the right of Gentiles to the privileges of the Kingdom. "It was the object of this epistle to win the former to Christian truth, and the latter to Christian love." V. 19. The Jews considered themselves amenable to the Mosaic law but, as they did not live up to its requirements of morality they had no right to claim that they were better than others who had no such law. V. 20. His inability to keep perfectly the law of God shows the sinner how far short he falls of the standard which law sets before him. V. 21. Christianity introduces entirely a new element, namely, that justification must be obtained otherwise than by a personal obedience to law. Vs. 22, 23. The offer of pardon is to all, but those only who believe and accept the gift can be justified. *No difference*—betwixt Jew and Gentile. No accident of birth or creed will ever save a soul. Men differ in the nature and extent of their sinfulness, but all have sinned and therefore all need Salvation. V. 24. Justification is not a matter of rewards: it is a free gift, ch. 5: 18. V. 25. *Propitiation*—see 1 Jn. 2: 2; 4: 10—equivalent to "atonement" in the O. T. and "reconciliation" in Heb. 2: 17. *His blood*—Heb. 9: 22. Exo. 12: 7, 13. *Sins that are past*—committed before the death of Christ. "We who live after that death are forgiven through its atoning virtue; they who lived before it were also forgiven by virtue of the divine purpose to send a Redeemer," Heb. 9: 15. V. 26. *This time*—contrasted with the past time of God's forbearance. *Just*—The sacrifice of Christ being accepted by God as sufficient, it would be inconsistent with his *righteousness*—or right doing, to exact the penalty from the penitent sinner, 1 Jn. 1: 9. Vs. 27-30. The Jews boasted that they only would be saved. Paul here argues the absurdity of such a supposition. V. 31. Justification by faith does not annul the obligations of law, Matt. 5: 17; Gal 3: 24. The free offer of Salvation to all is the crowning excellence of the Gospel, but it must be remembered that only those who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ can be saved. Jn. 3: 15-18.

## The Blessedness of Believers.

JUNE 15.

ROMANS VIII: 28-39

*Golden Text, Rom. 8: 28*

**H**AVING explained the doctrine of Justification by Faith and the necessity of Sanctification, the Apostle in this chapter speaks of the consolation of the Lord's people. It is one of the grandest chapters in the Bible and has proved a source of comfort to many in their last hours. This portion of it might with equal propriety be called the *security* of believers finding, as it does, in the electing love of God a guarantee that the believer shall ultimately triumph over every obstacle and enter into glory. V. 28. *We know*—Faith begets assurance, Job 19: 25; 2 Tim. 1: 12. *All things work together*—individual trials may not be good in themselves but the whole chain of God's providences is so designed that good results from seeming evil. V. 29. *Foreknow*—God's foreknowledge of the saints is the same with His everlasting love for them, Jer. 31: 3. *Predestinate*—lit. "to mark off first—to determine before," Ephes. 1: 5, 1 Cor. 2: 7. *Conformed*—Saints shall not only be like Christ in heaven, 1 Jn. 3: 2, they shall be like him in this world, Phil. 2: 5. *Many brethren*—Christ is surrounded in glory by multitudes who share his likeness, Heb. 12: 22, 23. Rev. 7: 9. V. 30. *Called*—All are called, but while some refuse the precious invitation, those who are predestinated accept and obey. V. 31. *What shall we say? What can we say* but express a grateful acceptance of his mercy, Ps. 116: 13-19. To have God for us is to have God with us—upholding, protecting, guiding us, Ps. 23: 4. Having Him on our side we have no thing to fear, 2 Kings 6: 16. V. 32. *That spurns not*: He who gave Christ may safely be trusted to provide for believers all that they need, Matt. 7: 11. V. 33, 34. *Who shall lay anything?*—no one can lay anything. *God's elect*—His chosen ones whom he has called and justified. V. 35. *The love of Christ*—(1) Christ's love to us: (2) our love to Christ. In giving Himself for us Christ gave the strongest possible proof of his love, Jno. 15: 13. None of the trials here named will cause the Christian to doubt the love of God: He knows they are among the "all things." v. 28. V. 36. *It is written*—Ps. 44: 22. V. 37. *More than conquerors*—They rejoice in their trials, 1 Peter 1: 8. *Him that loved us*—and washed us from our sins in His own blood. Rev. 1: 5. V. 38. *Persuaded*—Here again a full assurance of faith that nothing can rob the Christian of his inheritance—neither the terrors of death nor the allurements of life; *nor angels*—even if they were to try; *nor principalities*—all the forces in the world combined, Ephes. 1: 21; 6: 12. *Things present*—The sense of present troubles nor the fear of troubles to come. V. 39. *Heighth nor depth*—of prosperity or adversity. *Any other creature*—any conceivable thing. *Separate us*—It is in and through Christ that God love us.