

Introduction:

- Actor Kevin Bacon gave this account of a conversation with his 6-year-old son after he viewed Footloose for the first time:
 - "Hey, Dad, you know that thing in the movie where you swing from the rafters of that building? That's really cool, how did you do that?" I said, "Well, I didn't do that part--it was a stunt man." "What's a stunt man?" he asked. "That's someone who dresses like me and does things I can't do." "Oh," he replied and walked out of the room looking a little confused.
 - A little later he said, "Hey, Dad, you know that thing in the movie where you spin around on that gym bar and land on your feet? How did you do that?" I said, "Well, I didn't do that. It was a gymnastics double." "What's a gymnastics double?" he asked. "That's a guy who dresses in my clothes and does things I can't do."
 - There was silence from my son, then he asked in a concerned voice, "Dad, what did you do?" "I got all the benefits," I sheepishly replied. **APPLICATION** Jesus dressed in my clothes when He took on human flesh, and then He did things I couldn't do by fulfilling all of the righteous requirements of the law. And what did I do? I accepted the benefits.
- *"God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God in Christ."* (2 Corinthians 5:21).
- No set of words is more important to understanding Paul's letter to the Romans than these:
 - *dike* - Root meaning justice.
 - *dikaioo* - justify -
 - *dikaiosyne* - righteousness.
 - *dikaios* - righteous

I. Paul's Understanding of Righteousness.

A. **Dike** - the root meaning of this word is justice.

1. From it stems many other forms of the word which the Apostle Paul uses extensively.
 - a) To give direction, to indicate, to establish.
 - b) Therefore it begin to be understood as law. As established can mean law.
2. God's law is considered righteous because it comes from Him who is righteous. His ways are right therefore they give us life and security.

B. **Dikaioo** - justify

1. Used 44 time in the LXX.
2. The Hebrew forms Qal-to be righteous. Piel, to be demonstrated as righteous.
3. A judge can therefore pronounce a person righteous or acquitted.
 - a) For Paul, it is always God who justifies and it is man who is justified.
 - b) Particularly true to Paul is that this justification takes place by faith and nothing else.
 - (1) *"If his good deeds had made him acceptable to God, he would have had something to boast about. But that was not God's way. For the Scriptures tell us,*

"Abraham believed God, and God counted him as righteous because of his faith." (Romans 4:2-3, NLT)

(2) *"For no one can ever be made right with God by doing what the law commands. The law simply shows us how sinful we are."* (Romans 3:20, NLT) also Gal 2:16.

(3) It is God who justifies/declares us righteous.

C. **Dikaiosyne** - righteousness

1. Used over 300 times in the OT.
2. Usually carries with it an 'ethical flavor' of understanding.
3. In the Greek this word is used most often to designate an attribute of God, righteousness. Though many also carry the connotation of relationship.
 - a) *"Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, the God of my salvation; Then my tongue will joyfully sing of Your righteousness."* (Psalm 51:14, NASB95PARA) Reflects relationship.
 - b) *"I bring near My righteousness, it is not far off; And My salvation will not delay. And I will grant salvation in Zion, And My glory for Israel."* (Isaiah 46:13, NASB95PARA) God is acting on behalf of the people! Again this reflect relationship.
 - c) *"this saving activity can also be considered from the standpoint of the human being who receives "God's righteousness." In these contexts, God's righteousness clearly includes the aspect of gift or status enjoyed by the recipient."* Moo, D. J. (1996). NICNT Romans (pp. 81-82). Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co. *"Let them shout for joy and rejoice, who favor my vindication; And let them say continually, "The Lord be magnified, Who delights in the prosperity of His servant." And my tongue shall declare Your righteousness And Your praise all day long."* (Psalm 35:27-28, NASB95PARA)
4. Another meaning for dikaiosyne, is not the saving activity of God but the motivation for that activity. *"In You, O Lord, I have taken refuge; Let me never be ashamed; In Your righteousness deliver me."* (Psalm 31:1, NASB95PARA) God's righteousness in passages as such speak of God's faithfulness, His commitment to His promises.
 - a) So much of our OT understanding has to do with meeting commitments imposed by covenant relationship, whereas this understanding reveals God's faithfulness in right action.
5. To summarize, then, we find that God's *dikaiosynē* in the OT can denote God's character as that of a God who will always do what is right, God's activity of establishing right, and even, as a product of this activity, the state of those who have been, or hope to be, put right. Moo, D. J. (1996). NICNT Romans (p. 84). Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.

D. **Dikaios** - righteous.

1. Used over about 400 times in the OT.

2. Usually used to speak of a person who is characterized as righteous. It become the standard by which a pious, or holy person is noted.
3. Refers often to the one who keeps the will of God.

II. The Importance of Being Right With God

- A. The Love of God will not save us. We would not need to be here this morning.
 1. If it did we would already be saved.
 2. Some deceptive doctrines actually proclaim that there is no hell, no separation from God and that all will be saved. But you can't arrive at that conclusion unless you exclude or misrepresent portions of the Bible.
- B. Paul in his letter to the Romans says over and over the phrase, "**right with God**". Some of your Bible may say justified. But to be justified means to be right with God.
 1. *"This Good News tells us how **God makes us right in his sight**. This is accomplished from start to finish by faith. As the Scriptures say, "It is through faith that a righteous person has life."*"* (Romans 1:17, NLT)*
 2. *"For no one can ever be **made right with God** by doing what the law commands. The law simply shows us how sinful we are."* (Romans 3:20, NLT)
 3. *"But now God has shown us **a way to be made right with him** without keeping the requirements of the law, as was promised in the writings of Moses and the prophets long ago."* (Romans 3:21, NLT)
- C. We are made right with God by Faith in Jesus Christ. This is what the apostle Paul was after on every missionary journey. He knew that all men were dead in their sin and must be made right with God.
 1. *"**We are made right with God by placing our faith** in Jesus Christ. And this is true for everyone who believes, no matter who we are."* (Romans 3:22, NLT)
 2. *"...**People are made right with God when they believe** that Jesus sacrificed his life, shedding his blood. This sacrifice shows that God was being fair when he held back and did not punish those who sinned in times past,"* (Romans 3:25, NLT)
 3. *"...**He makes sinners right in his sight**."* (Romans 3:26, NLT)
 - a) *"So we are **made right with God through faith** and not by obeying the law."* (Romans 3:28, NLT)
 - b) *"There is only one God, and he makes people right with himself **only by faith**, whether they are Jews or Gentiles."* (Romans 3:30, NLT)
- D. Biblical Illustration: Abraham
 1. *"... What did he discover about being made right with God?"* (Romans 4:1, NLT)
 - a) *"For the Scriptures tell us, "**Abraham believed God**, and God counted him as **righteous because of his faith**."*"* (Romans 4:3, NLT)*
 - b) vs 5 goes on to tell us that we are made right by faith.
 2. *"Therefore, since we have been **made right in God's sight by faith**, **we have peace with God because of what Jesus Christ our Lord has done for us**."* (Romans 5:1, NLT)

III. We are Made Right With God by Believing in Jesus Christ

"For Christ has already accomplished the purpose for which the law was given. As a result, all who believe in him are made right with God." (Romans 10:4, NLT)

- A. Because God loved us He sent His Son. But love did not save us. It simply offers us a way to be saved. We were drowning in our sin and God threw us a Life Saver! Jesus!
- B. We are made right when we believe. Romans 10 is so load with this entire message today.
 1. Right with God is a common phrase in Romans 10.
 2. Faith in Jesus is a common understanding in Romans 10.
 3. Made right with God/justified is the result of the having done the first two.\
 4. *"But faith's way of getting right with God says, ..."The message is very close at hand; it is on your lips and in your heart." And that message is the very message about faith that we preach: If you openly declare that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by openly declaring your faith that you are saved."* (Romans 10:6-10, NLT)
- C. By Faith in Christ we are made right with God. *"Christ made us right with God; he made us pure and holy, and he freed us from sin."* (1 Corinthians 1:30, NLT)

Conclusion:

- Romans 10:13 "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."
- Will that be you today?
- You can't earn this. You don't deserve it. It is the free gift He offers. We just receive by faith!

In DESTINED FOR THE THRONE, Bill Billheimer writes: "Checks used by some business firms require the signatures of two individuals to make them valid. One signature is not enough. Both parties must sign."

APPLICATION

- "This," he observes, "illustrates God's method of operating through the prayers and faith of His people." His promises are His checks signed in His own blood. His part was fully completed at Calvary. But no promise is made good until a redeemed man enters the throne room of the universe and, by prayer and faith, writes his name beside God's. Then, and not until then, are the check's resources released.
- It is like a safety deposit box in the bank vault. The keeper has a key and you have a key. Neither key alone will open the box. But, when you give the keeper your key, she inserts both keys and the door flies open, making available all the treasure stored in the box."

"Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him!" (Romans 5:9).