

# Heart to Heart

Collection 4: Who Am I?  
Week 4: Discussing Chapter 3  
**I Am Justified**

**Materials needed:**  
Index cards  
Art Journal Pages  
Pens, Bible  
Jerry Bridges' book Who Am I?  
Praying The Gospel

## 1. CONNECTING

- Give the woman you are meeting with an index card.
- Look through the following list of emotional words, what three best capture your week?

LOVE	JOY	SURPRISE	ANGER	FEAR	SADNESS
AFFECTION	CHEERFUL	AMAZED	DISGUST	ANXIETY	DISMAY
ATTRACTION	DELIGHT	ASTONISHED	JEALOUSY	PANIC	DISAPPOINTMENT
CARED FOR	SATISFIED		IRRITATION	APPREHENSION	EMBARRASSMENT
ADORATION	CONTENT		RAGE	TENSE	HOMESICK
LONGING	PLEASURE		BITTER	UNEASY	INSECURE
LUST	OPTIMISM		DISLIKE	DREAD	GRIEF
DESIRE	PRIDE		HOSTILITY	NERVOUS	SHAME
INFATUATION	RELIEF		SCORN	DISTRESS	REGRET
PASSION	ENTHUSIASM		CONTEMPT	SHOCK	LONELY

- On your index card draw three faces to reflect these three emotions
- Share your “faces” with each other
- Why did you select those three?

## 2. SHOW & TELL

- Share your art journal pages
- What thoughts came to mind as you created them?
- How would you explain to a friend what it means to be justified?
- Why do you think it's important to remember this?
- When do you most struggle to remember this?

### **3. GOING DEEPER IN GOD'S WORD**

- Share a quiet time in Galatians 2:15-21
- Read the passage together
- LOOK, LISTEN, LIVE IT OUT on your own
- Then, share your highlights
- On page 37 Jerry highlights that Galatians 2:15-16 represents Justification as a past reality but Galatians 2:20 -21 represents justification in the present tense as a present reality. What can happen if we only think of justification as a past reality?

### **4. LET IT LAST**

- Take time to read through the excerpt from a message Jerry Bridges gave in 2007 on Four Essentials for Finishing Well that is included at the end of this outline.
- Take a minute to sketch a quick picture of the main thing that stood out to each of you as you read this.
- Share your sketches with each other and the thoughts behind it.
- How does this relate to what stood out to you in your quiet time?
- Now share your application pages.
- How does what you sensed the Lord highlighting for you today connect with this?
- Is there anything else you sense the Lord wants you to adjust or add regarding your application(s)?

### **5. SHARING THE JOURNEY: REVERSE CLASSROOM**

- This coming week work through the content related to the 4th chapter: I Am An Adopted Son of God, watching the videos, reading Jerry Bridges' book Who Am I? and art journaling (this can be as simple as a 30-second stick figure sketch and creating an application page.
- When you meet next week you will share your art journal and application pages, dive deeper into the Word, and spend time in prayer.

### **7. CLOSE YOUR TIME IN PRAYER**

- Jerry Bridges mentioned in his message how we need to appropriate the Gospel. One key way to do this is to preach the Gospel to your self daily.
- Share the bookmark "Preaching the Gospel to Myself" (note: there is a copy of this after Jerry's article)
- Pray through this together, alternating thanking Jesus for each item on the list (or as many as you have time for).
- This is one example of a way you can preach the Gospel to yourself daily. What could it look like for you to preach the Gospel to yourself daily this coming week?

# Four Essentials for Finishing Well

Excerpt from a message Jerry Bridges gave in 2007

“...we know that justification is a point-in-time past event. At the time you trusted Christ, you were at that precise moment declared righteous by God. You were justified. That’s why Paul in Romans 5:1 can speak of justification in the past tense when he says,

“Therefore, since we have been justified by faith,  
we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

And yet (in Galatians 2:20) he speaks of it in the present tense. “The life that I now live in the flesh,” today. The life that I live today, “I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.”

So if justification is a point-in-time event that happened in our past, why does Paul speak of it in the present tense? The life that I now live today I live by faith in the Son of God. The answer to that question is one of the most important truths we can learn about the Gospel.

For the apostle Paul, justification was not only a past event;  
it was also a present reality.

This is where so many Christians miss it. They can look back to the day that they trusted Christ. And if you press them on that they will say, “Yes, I was justified at that time.” But today they seek to live their lives as if it depends upon them.

In their mind, they have reverted to a performance relationship with God. And so the thinking is, if I had my quiet time and if I haven’t had any lustful thoughts and these kinds of things, then I expect God to bless me today. We want to pay our own way. We want to earn God’s blessings.

The apostle Paul didn’t do that. Paul looked outside himself and saw himself clothed in the righteousness of Christ (1 Corinthians 1:30). He saw himself declared righteous. We say to a person who trusts Christ, “You have been justified. You’ve been declared righteous. Your sins have been forgiven. You stand before God today clothed in the righteousness of Jesus Christ.”

And then we can point to eternity and say, “When you go to be with the Lord forever, you will still stand clothed in the righteousness of Jesus Christ.” Even though we will have left our sinful nature behind, even though we will be righteous people made perfect, as the writer of Hebrews says (Hebrews 12:23), we will for all eternity stand in the righteousness of Christ. That never changes.

But what about from the time of our conversion until the time we go to be with the Lord? For most Christians, it's a performance relationship. That is why we need a daily appropriation of the Gospel, because it is our nature to drift toward a performance relationship.

Going back to those days of crossing the Pacific Ocean (*note: Jerry Bridges' served in the Navy during the Korean conflict*) and getting those navigational positions twice a day, if we did not get those we would drift slowly off course. And if you do not daily appropriate the gospel, you will drift toward a performance relationship with God.

And when you do that, you lead yourself in one of two directions. If you have a very superficial view of sin in your life—that is, if you think of sin in terms of the big gross sins that society outside of us commits—then you will tend toward religious pride because you're not doing those things.

But if you are conscientious and if you're seeing some of these “respectable” sins, such as gossip and pride, jealousy and envy and a critical spirit and these kinds of things, if you're seeing those in your life and you do not live by the gospel, that can lead you to despair. And so oftentimes people in this second category just kind of slack off because they can't handle the tension. They can't handle the difference between what they know they should be and what they honestly see themselves to be.

And what resolves that tension is the Gospel, which reminds us that our sins are forgiven and that we are clothed in the righteousness of Jesus Christ.

At the same time, that which keeps us from spiritual pride is the Gospel, because again the Gospel is only for sinners. But we are all sinners, still practicing sinners, even though we've been delivered from the guilt and the dominion of sin. Yes, that's true. And we are now called saints, separated ones. But we still sin in thought, word, deed, and most of all in motive because we often do the right thing for a wrong reason or for a mixed reason. We want to please God, but we want to look good in the process.

And so we come to the Lord and we say, “Lord, I come still a practicing sinner, but I look to Jesus Christ and His shed blood and His perfect obedience, His righteous life that has been credited to me. And I see myself standing before you clothed in His righteousness.”...

We need to appropriate the gospel every day of our lives because God only accepts us for Christ's sake. God sees us clothed in the righteousness of Christ, and he wants us to see ourselves clothed in the righteousness of Christ so that we will come to him on that basis and seek to relate to him through the merit of the Lord Jesus Christ and not through our own works.

All of us in our sinful nature are prone to slide toward a works-based relationship with God. And even though I have been preaching this kind of message for many years, I

can tell you honestly it is so easy to revert in that direction because of our sinful human nature.

It is our sinful nature that thinks we must somehow earn God's favor by our own hard work or our own faithfulness. Now we want to be faithful, we want to work hard, but not in order to earn God's approval, but because we have God's approval. And so a daily appropriation of the gospel is essential to enduring to the end.

# PRAYING THE GOSPEL

## *A Sweet Way to Preach the Gospel to Yourself Daily*

Thank you, God that you created me in your image to enjoy relationship with You! (Genesis 1, 2 and 3) Would you please give me the grace I need to live today with you, aware of you, fully enjoying you?

Thank you that just as you are a God who experiences pleasure (Genesis 1:9), when you created me in your image, you made me able to experience pleasure too (Genesis 3:6) and then created things that bring pleasure and placed them in my life! (Genesis 2:9) Please help me remember pleasure needs boundaries or it can be destructive and to learn to live within those you've laid (Psalm 16:6).

Thank you you have placed tests in my life to give me an opportunity to actively choose to love you. (John 14:21, James 1:13-17) Would you please help me remember this when temptation comes my way so I choose you?

Thank you that when I fail those tests, giving in to temptation, your love remains steadfast. (Lamentations 3:22-23, James 1:17)

Thank you that you don't change like shifting shadows – you aren't down on me when I blow it and you don't love me more when I get it right. Your love for me is constant even in my worst moments!

Thank you that you are not soft on sin, letting it slide as no big deal, but instead have revealed how serious the consequences are for even the tiniest sin I do. (Romans 3:23, Romans 6:23, Hebrews 9:27, 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9) Please help me not try to justify myself (eg., that wasn't as bad as...) or treat my sin lightly but instead to see all of it as you do.

Thank you that you don't just love with words but actively and demonstrated this by sending your son to pay the penalty for my sin which I could never repay. (Romans 5:8) Thank you Jesus that you were shut out from the presence of the Lord so I never would have to be! (2 Thessalonians 1:7-9, Matthew 27:46) Please help me enjoy this gift of your presence all throughout the day today.

Thank you you've revealed that eternal life is knowing you and this is something that starts now! That I can enjoy now! (John 17:3) Please help me keep growing in knowing you! (Ephesians 1:17)

Thank you that you've blessed my ears so they can truly hear what you've done for me. (John 5:24, Matthew 13:16) Please give me the grace to keep listening to you today!

Thank you for the grace you've given me so I can believe you – not just as a mental assertion – but as an act of faith, entrusting myself to you. (John 5:24) Lord, I believe! Please help my unbelief! (Mark 9:24)

Thank you Jesus that you made it possible for me to have eternal life, that I will never be condemned by You, and that You've provided the way for me to cross over from death to life (John 5:24)

Thank you the moment I did this for the first time I became a new creation in Christ! (2 Corinthians 5:17) Please help me to see myself the way you see me!

Thank you Jesus you died for my sin once for all to bring me to God.

Thank you the good news of the gospel isn't only what I've been saved from but especially what I've been saved to – a wonderful, intimate relationship with You that begins now and will last forever! (1 Peter 3:18)

Thank you that when I do sin you have given me another opportunity to actively love you and bring you pleasure – for it truly is an act of faith when I run to you and confess my sin rather than just continuing to focus on me and beat myself up. (1 John 1:9, Hebrews 11:6)

Thank you this not only helps me experience being cleansed from all unrighteousness but also helps me appreciate more what you've done for me Jesus so I'll keep growing in loving you! (Luke 7:47)

Thank you that you continue to stand at the door and knock, desiring fellowship with me every single day! (Revelation 3:20)

Thank you that you are with me always and able to save me from whatever challenges I face - both inside and out! Thank you for taking great delight in me and even rejoicing over me with singing (Zephaniah 3:17)