



April 9, 2023

Abounding Grace: God's Law and the Resurrection Raise for Our Justification

Romans 4:25, John 2:1-7

For Discussion and Reflection

1. The law of God demands perfect obedience. Complete obedience is termed "righteousness." This obedience, or righteousness, is either performed by the individual or by the Surety. Consider Paul's statement in Romans 3:21-23 or his statement in Philippians 3:9. Do you look to your own righteousness or your Surety's for your standing before the law?
2. One author says, "Justification is a gracious work of God whereby He, as righteous Judge, acquits the elect from guilt and punishment and declares them to be heirs of eternal life because of the righteousness of Christ the Surety, imputed to them by God, and received by them through faith." (Brakel, pg. 347-348). Reflect on this definition. How does it account to the Westminster Larger Catechism Q/A 70,72? There are two parts to justification: acquittal and bestowal. What does he bestow?
3. The author of Hebrews (7:22) says that Jesus is the Surety of a better covenant. What is a Surety? Consider the story of the Prodigal Son, when the father robes him in new garments and gives him his ring (which is like giving him his credit card). The prodigal is still a sinner, but he has all the benefits of being a son. How does Jesus function as our Surety?
4. Paul says of Jesus, "he was raised for our justification," Rom. 4:25. Why is our justification dependent on Christ's resurrection?
5. The scripture presents resounding evidence of the resurrection of Christ. First, each of the gospel authors present the event: Matthew 28, Mark 16, Luke 24, and John 20. Second, it's confirmed by testimony: angels, Matt. 28:5-7, Luke 24:7, Romans, Matt. 28:11; and the apostles, Acts 2:32, 4:33. Then it was confirmed by others seeing him: Mary Magdalene, women at the grave, Peter, disciples on road to Emmaus, eleven disciples, Thomas, 500 believers, James, Stephen, Paul, John. (Matt.28:2,10,16; Luke 24:13-14; John 20:14,18,19,26, 21:1; 1 Cor. 15:6,7,8; Acts 1:9, 7:55, 9:17). Reflect on this overwhelming evidence.
6. Wilhelms Brakel puts forth, "The divine nature (of Christ) resurrected the human nature." For evidence he cites the following: John 2:19,21; John 10:17-18; Romans 1:3,4. He says again, "It was necessary that he would resurrect himself, for the Surety who took this suffering upon himself would also have to triumph over it." (Brakel, The Christians Reasonable Service, vol. 3. Pg 629) How does John 5:19 explain the NT teaching that God raised him from the dead? (Acts 2:24, 1 Cor. 6:14, 2 Cor. 4:14, Romans 8:11, Eph. 1:20, et al)
7. Our text says that Jesus was, "raised for our justification." (Rom. 4:25) Brakel says, "As long as the Surety still suffered and death had power over him, the final penny had not as yet been paid....(upon his resurrection) the Surety was justified (1 Tim. 3:16)." (pg. 632) How does the resurrection "vindicate" Christ?
8. The resurrection of Christ is necessary for our justification, but it also facilitates his ministry on our behalf. He needed to raise so that he could ascend to atone at the mercy seat of God, send his Spirit, distribute gifts to his people, represent us to God as one of our own race, intercede as our brother, rule in our favor at the Father's right hand (session), return for his people, and judge mankind. Reflect together on the continued and future ministry of the resurrected Christ.
9. Based on the sermon and what you've interacted with today, what is God saying to you? How is God calling you to respond to his grace?