



### **Key Points :**

Psalm 33.5 'The Lord loves righteousness'.

Paul explains that sin entered the world through the disobedience of one man - Adam. This could only be reversed by the obedience of one man – Jesus – through the Cross. We can only be saved from the consequences of our sin by God's gift of righteousness. This "Justification by Faith" is a cornerstone of Protestant doctrine and the Reformation.

But the guarantee of forgiveness could be seen as an invitation to sin even more. Paul explains that the righteousness of Christ frees us from sin, it doesn't free us to sin. James tells us that "human anger does not produce the righteousness God desires". That is self-righteousness, which is not the kind of righteousness which God loves.

Christ's righteousness, transferred to us by His sacrifice on the Cross frees us from sin. But what we do with our freedom matters to those who hurt us, our witness, God and us. It should set us free to forgive totally, to avoid being judgmental of others failings, To make our lives demonstrate our faith in Jesus, and to free others from our control.

God loves righteousness, but He still loves the righteous and the unrighteous equally. He hates sin but loves the sinner. We should do the same, forgiving but not condoning. Christ died to set us free from the yoke of slavery to the Law, but free to lead a Godly life. The key to accepting the gift of righteousness is acknowledging our sin and repenting.

### **Questions:**

1. Has your view of the Protestant doctrine of Justification by Faith changed with time?
2. Do you ever feel that you are undeserving of God's gift of grace and righteousness?
3. Does the promise of forgiveness for your own sins help you to forgive others totally?
4. How much do you feel what you do with your freedom demonstrates your faith?
5. When do you find it difficult to separate reaction to sin from that to the perpetrator?

**Start praying. Be bold, and pray specifically.**

6. Pray for each other to enjoy the freedom that comes from God's gift of righteousness.

**Start doing. Commit to a step, and live it out this week.**

7. Consider how you think your faith in Jesus is evident by what you do with your freedom.