



LUKE







"Hypothesis: a substantial part of what people call 'virtue signaling' is actually self-righteousness – i.e., signaling your virtue to yourself, rather than to other people"

– Noah Smith, tweet, June 7th

Jesus does not offer a way to self-justification.

Jesus **GIVES** his righteousness;
he doesn't **VERIFY** your righteousness.



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1. Everyone wants to feel self-justified.

(basically all the time, in any way possible)

How are these connected?

The Good Samaritan

Mary and Martha



2. Self-justification is deadly to virtuous faith and real righteousness.

2 reasons why self-justification is deadly:

1. **Diagnostic**—produces false positives and negatives, because it is guided by the flesh (says good is evil and evil is good)
2. **Principal**—self-justification looks good, yet does what is indulgent and stingy. Love looks bad, but does what is sacrificial and generous.

Self-justification and love function on the opposite principles,
and function on the opposite dynamics

Self-Justification

Needs to look good

Needs to be free

Self-Sacrificial Love

Often looks bad

Chooses a sacrifice

Jesus' message in chapter 9:

“You will look bad (to the world),
and live sacrificially (not worldly)”

Luke 9:23-26

Then he said to them all: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will save it. What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, and yet lose or forfeit his very self? If anyone is ashamed of me and my words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his glory and in the glory of the Father and of the holy angels."

Luke 9:46-48

An argument started among the disciples as to which of them would be the greatest. Jesus, knowing their thoughts, took a little child and had him stand beside him. Then he said to them, "Whoever welcomes this little child in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. For he who is least among you all—he is the greatest."

3. Self-Justification always has a strong reasons
(that utterly fail)

Law Expert:

"what is the limiting principle to loving others?"

Martha:

"are you supposed to treat guests like guests?"

Jesus to law expert:

"Is the 'limiting principle' really the problem? Or is it that you don't want to be sacrificial and learn to love? Isn't it that you are trapped in your abstractions—and have lost your connection to real human pity?"



Jesus to Martha

"Are you doing all this to be hospitable? Are you really demanding your sister help for my sake or for yours?"



4. Jesus and his justification is the only true cure to our longing to be justified selves.

You have to be a justified self—
that need is from God.

But you can't be self-justified—
that is a corruption of the flesh.

How Jesus gives justification:

There is always a kind but direct rebuke:

1. Do you think your reasons work?
2. Is that the way I look at this?
3. What is this doing to you?

Then he *demands* you put your faith in him for the **GIFT** of righteousness.

The Irony of Righteousness

