

## ***Message***

**Title:** Justified Not Improved

**Speaker:** Pastor Samantha O'Connell

**Date:** 8 February 2026

*“Jesus plus nothing equals everything—we’re justified by faith alone.”*

## ***Introduction***

Choose one area in your life this week where you can stop striving and lean fully into your faith in Jesus.

**Are you still trying to earn God's approval—or are you living from the freedom of faith?**

This week in our Galatians series, we explored Paul's bold declaration that we are justified by faith alone—not by following the law. Our speaker unpacked the meaning of 'justified', challenging us to move away from self-effort and toward a transforming relationship with Jesus. It's not about ticking religious boxes; it's about trusting the One who has already done it all.

We journeyed through the importance of repentance, not as an added requirement, but as the natural outworking of real faith. The law shows us our need—but only Jesus can save. Whether you're just starting your faith journey, reconnecting after some drift, or needing to re-centre on grace, this message calls us all to true freedom and a life lived for Christ.

## ***Scripture***

Galatians 2:15–21 — We who are Jews by birth and not sinful Gentiles know that a person is not justified by the works of the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ...



James 2:8-11 — For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it...

Romans 3:23 — For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

Matthew 9:12–13 — 'It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick... For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.'

2 Corinthians 5:21 (NLT) — For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin, so that we could be made right with God through Christ.

Acts 20:21 — I have declared to both Jews and Greeks that they must turn to God in repentance and have faith in our Lord Jesus.

## ***Don't Miss This***

- **\*\*Faith, Not Law\*\***: We can't earn right standing with God by doing all the right things—the law shows us our need, but only Jesus saves.
- **\*\*Repentance Is Part of the Journey\*\***: Repentance isn't a requirement added to the gospel—it's the natural response to real faith in Jesus.
- **\*\*Live From Gratitude, Not Guilt\*\***: We don't obey to earn God's love; we obey because we already have it.

## ***Let's Chat***

1. What does it mean to be 'justified by faith' in your own words?
2. Have you ever felt the pressure to earn God's approval? What did that look like?
3. What's one habit or mindset you feel drawn to turn away from this week?
4. How do you stay rooted in grace and avoid drifting back into striving?
5. What does a life 'lived for Christ' look like in your current season?

