

26 QUESTIONS YOU SHOULD BE ASKING!

QUESTION #16: WHAT IS JUSTIFICATION?

Justification is an instantaneous legal act of God in which he (a) thinks of our sins as forgiven and Christ's righteousness as belonging to us and (b) declares us to be righteous in his sight. This declaration saves one from condemnation on the Day of Judgment.

1. JUSTIFICATION INCLUDES A LEGAL DECLARATION BY GOD

A. LEGAL DECLARATION

Bible terms: Righteousness-justice, same word group – relational. One is righteous with respect to another (including conduct).

"For it is not the hearers of the law who are righteous before God, but the doers of the law who will be justified." Rm 2.13 (Dt 6.25, Ps 106.31)

OT has notion of dispensing of justice, an outcome (*Pr 17.15, Dt 25.1, Ex 23.7*). NT commonly influenced by OT and often means "to declare righteous."

"When they heard this all the people and the tax collectors justified God, having been baptized with the baptism of John." Lk 7.39 (the people did not make God just) (Rm 3.20, 26, 28, 5.1, 8.30, 10.4,10)

Regeneration is an act of God in us. *Justification is a judgement of God with respect to us.* Legal language, "to justify" forensic, to do with legal proceedings. (Rm 8.31)

"For we have already charged that all, both Jews and Greeks, are under sin." Rm 3.9b (Rm 3.23)

B. BY GOD TO HIS FALLEN CREATION

"Shall not the Judge of all the earth do what is just?" Gn 18.25c (1Chr 16.33) – "but they will give account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead." 1Pt 4.5 (2Tim4.1) – "Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord of hosts the whole earth is full of his glory!" Is 6.3 (Ps 111.9)

2. GOD DECLARES US TO BE JUST IN HIS SIGHT

A. HE DECLARES THAT WE HAVE NO PENALTY TO PAY FOR SIN, INCLUDING PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE.

"Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man against whom the Lord counts no iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no deceit." Ps 32.1-2 (Rm 4.1-5.21, Ps 130.3-4)

B. HE MUST DECLARE US NOT TO BE MERELY NEUTRAL (LIKE FIRST ADAM) BUT ACTUALLY RIGHTEOUS IN HIS SIGHT.

"And he (Abraham) believed the Lord, and he counted it to him as righteousness." Gn 15.6

"But the words it was counted to him were not written for his sake alone, but for ours also. It will be counted to use who believe in him who raised from the dead Jesus our Lord, who was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification." Rm 4.23-25 (Rm 3.21-22, Is 61.10)

How can we be declared as righteous?

3. GOD DECLARES US TO BE JUST BECAUSE HE IMPUTES CHRIST'S RIGHTEOUSNESS TO US

A. GOD THINKS OF CHRIST'S RIGHTEOUSNESS AS BELONGING TO US. HE RECKONS IT TO OUR ACCOUNT.

To one who does not work but trusts him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is reckoned as righteousness Rm 4.3 (Gal 2.16, Rm 3.22)

B. CONCEPT OF IMPUTING GUILT OR RIGHTEOUSNESS TO SOMEONE ELSE:

- 1) Adam's sin imputed to us *Rm 5.18-19, 1 Cor 15.22*
- 2) Christ's death, our sin's imputed to him *1Pt 2.24, Gal 1.4*
- 3) Christ's righteousness is imputed to us *The great exchange*

"For our sake he (God) made him (Christ) to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God." 2Cor 5.21 – "Not having a righteousness of my own, based on law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith." Phil 3.9 (Rm 3.21, 1Cor 1.30)

4. JUSTIFICATION COMES TO US BY GOD'S GRACE, THROUGH FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST

By Grace alone, not on account of any merit in ourselves.

"For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God." Eph 2.8

God did not have any obligation to justify us, this is a free gift to us.

"For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." Rm 6.23 – We are those who "received the free gift of righteousness." Rm 5.17

Faith is in the objective work Christ accomplished (life, death, resurrection, ascension).

Justification comes after saving faith (we are justified by the means of our faith).

"So we also have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith." Gal 2.16b (Rm 5.1, Phil 3.9)

5. JUSTIFICATION AND GFC CORE VALUES

A. FREEDOM AND TRUTH

The removal of all guilt and sin and restoration of sinners to God - *And Can it Be! Out of the Depths.*
A final and once for all pardon, not repeated - *It is finished! Before the Throne of God*

B. DELIGHT

Sing to Him and Share Him with others – *In the Cross of Christ / Glory.* Live for Him to His glory – *Heavenly Father, Beautiful Son*

C. HUMILITY

You are seen as righteousness by God - *Jesus thy Blood and Righteousness!*
God has done this for us - *Only Jesus, How Deep the Father's Love*

"God will announce publicly to the world the verdict of not guilty on the last day, though this already stands for those who have been justified by the blood of Jesus."