

Justification...

Justification (Gk., *dikaiosis*) Gracious and judicial act of God by which he grants the sinner full pardon of all guilt, release from the penalties of sin, and acceptance as a child of God. In biblical understanding, a justified person is one who is approved of and is acceptable to God. Righteousness may be imputed, a process by which Christ's righteousness becomes transferred or imparted to the sinner and the sinner is transformed through the Holy Spirit into a righteous person. ¹

Justification — the process by which sinful human beings are made acceptable to a holy God.

Justification by Grace - Christianity is unique because of its teaching of justification by grace (Rom. 3:24). Justification is God's declaration that the demands of His Law have been fulfilled in the righteousness of His Son. The basis for this justification is the death of Christ. Paul tells us that "God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them" (2 Cor. 5:19). This reconciliation covers all sin: "For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified" (Heb. 10:14). Justification, then, is based on the work of Christ, accomplished through His blood (Rom. 5:9), and brought to His people through His resurrection (Rom. 4:25).

When God justifies, He charges the sin of man to Christ and credits the righteousness of Christ to the believer (2 Cor. 5:21). Thus, "through one Man's righteous act, the free gift came to all men, resulting in justification of life" (Rom. 5:18). Because this righteousness is "the righteousness of God" which is "apart from the law" (Rom. 3:21), it is thorough; a believer is "justified from all things" (Acts 13:39). God is "just" because His holy standard of perfect righteousness has been fulfilled in Christ, and He is the "justifier," because this righteousness is freely given to the believer (Rom. 3:26; 5:16).

Justification by Faith - Although the Lord Jesus has paid the price for our justification, it is through our faith that He is received and His righteousness is experienced and enjoyed (Rom. 3:25-30). Faith is considered righteousness (Rom. 4:3, 9), not as the work of human beings (Rom. 4:5), but as the gift and work of God (John 6:28-29; Eph. 2:8; Phil. 1:29).

The Results of Justification - The negative result of justification is what we are saved from: "Having now been justified . . . we shall be saved from wrath" (Rom. 5:9). The positive result is what we are saved to: "Whom He justified, these He also glorified" (Rom. 8:30).

Paul also notes "peace with God" (Rom. 5:1) and access to God's grace (Rom. 5:2) as positive benefits. The believer in Christ may look forward to the redemption of his body (Rom. 8:23) and an eternal inheritance (Rom. 8:17; 1 Pet. 1:4). ²

¹Kurian, G. T. (2001). *Nelson's new Christian dictionary : The authoritative resource on the Christian world*. Nashville, Tenn.: Thomas Nelson Pubs.

²Youngblood, R. F., Bruce, F. F., Harrison, R. K., & Thomas Nelson Publishers. (1995). *Nelson's new illustrated Bible dictionary*. Rev. ed. of: *Nelson's illustrated Bible dictionary*.; Includes index. Nashville: T. Nelson.

Imputation - charging or reckoning something to a person's account. Three distinct theological truths in the Bible are directly related to the concept of imputation:

1. *The Imputation of Adam's Sin to His Descendants.* Romans 5:12–19 declares that God imputes the guilt of Adam's sin to all other members of the human race: "By one man's disobedience many were made sinners." "Through one man's offense judgment came to all men, resulting in condemnation." "By the one man's offense death reigned through the one." This concept, also called "original sin," is touched on as well in 1 Corinthians 15:21–22.

2. *The Imputation of the Believer's Sin to Christ.* In addition to guilt imputed from Adam's sin, all people are also charged with guilt for their personal sins. This Paul describes as "imputing their trespasses to them" (2 Cor. 5:19). The Lord Jesus, whose supernatural conception and birth freed Him from guilt from Adam's sin and who committed no personal sin, had no sin counted against Him. But when He died as our substitute, God "made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us" (2 Cor. 5:21) so that He "bore our sins in His own body on the tree" (1 Pet. 2:24). This is made explicit in the Book of Isaiah, where the prophet says of the Lord Jesus, "The LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all" (Is. 53:6).

3. *The Imputation of Christ's Righteousness to the Believer.* "The blessedness of the man to whom God imputes righteousness" is the theme of the fourth chapter of Romans (also 1 Cor. 1:30; 2 Cor. 5:21; Phil. 3:9). Jesus became the Holy and Just One (Acts 3:14) through His perfect obedience to God's Law (Rom. 5:19). These qualities are imputed in turn "to us who believe in Him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead" (Rom. 4:24). Because of this the believer will appear before God "faultless" (Jude 24). We can stand in God's presence because Jesus has imputed His righteousness and holiness to us through His sacrificial death on the Cross.³

Verses to study...

Acts 13:38-39 Therefore let it be known to you, brethren, that through this Man is preached to you the forgiveness of sins; and by Him everyone who believes is justified from all things from which you could not be justified by the law of Moses.

1 Cor 6:9-11 Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.

2 Cor 5:21 For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

Ex 23:7 Keep yourself far from a false matter; do not kill the innocent and righteous. For I will not justify the wicked.

Gal 2:16 ...knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified.

Gal 2:21 "I do not set aside the grace of God; for if righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died in vain."

Gal 3:8 And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel to Abraham beforehand, saying, "In you all the nations shall be blessed."

³Youngblood, R. F., Bruce, F. F., Harrison, R. K., & Thomas Nelson Publishers. (1995). *Nelson's new illustrated Bible dictionary*. Rev. ed. of: *Nelson's illustrated Bible dictionary*.; Includes index. Nashville: T. Nelson.

Gal 3:11 But that no one is justified by the law in the sight of God is evident, for “the just shall live by faith.”

Gal 3:24 Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

Gal 5:4 You have become estranged from Christ, you who attempt to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace.

Is 53:11 He shall see the labor of His soul, and be satisfied. By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify many, for He shall bear their iniquities.

Is 61:10 I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, My soul shall be joyful in my God; for He has clothed me with the garments of salvation, He has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.

James 2:10 For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all.

Jer 23:6 In His days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell safely; now this is His name by which He will be called: THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.

Job 9:2 “Truly I know it is so, but how can a man be righteous before God?”

Job 9:20 Though I were righteous, my own mouth would condemn me; though I were blameless, it would prove me perverse.

Job 25:4 How then can man be righteous before God? Or how can he be pure who is born of a woman?

John 5:24 “Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life.

Luke 18:14 I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”

Ps 32:1-2 Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man to whom the LORD does not impute iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no deceit.

Ps 130:3 If You, LORD, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who could stand?

Ps 143:2 Do not enter into judgment with Your servant, for in Your sight no one living is righteous.

Rom 1:17 For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, “The just shall live by faith.”

Rom 2:13 ...for not the hearers of the law are just in the sight of God, but the doers of the law will be justified

Rom 3:19-20 Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law *is* the knowledge of sin.

Romans 3:21-26 But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference; for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God set forth *as* a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed, to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

Rom 3:28 Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law.

Rom 4:2 For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God.

Rom 4:5-8 But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness, just as David also describes the blessedness of the man to whom God imputes righteousness apart from works: “Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, and whose sins are covered; blessed is the man to whom the LORD shall not impute sin.”

Rom 4:22-25 And therefore “*it was accounted to him for righteousness.*” Now it was not written for his sake alone that it was imputed to him [Abraham], but also for us. It shall be imputed to us who believe in Him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was delivered up because of our offenses, and was raised because of our justification.

Rom 5:1 Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ

Rom 5:9 Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him.

Rom 5:17-21 For if by the one man’s offense death reigned through the one, much more those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ. Therefore, as through one man’s offense judgment came to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so through one Man’s righteous act the free gift came to all men, resulting in justification of life. For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man’s obedience many will be made righteous. Moreover the law entered that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more, so that as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Rom 8:3 For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh

Rom 8:30 Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.

Rom 8:33-34 Who shall bring a charge against God’s elect? It is God who justifies. Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us.

Rom 9:31-32 ...but Israel, pursuing the law of righteousness, has not attained to the law of righteousness. Why? Because they did not seek it by faith, but as it were, by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumbling stone.

Titus 3:7 ...that having been justified by His grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

Zech 3:4 Then He answered and spoke to those who stood before Him, saying, “Take away the filthy garments from him.” And to him He said, “See, I have removed your iniquity from you, and I will clothe you with rich robes.”