

Justification

A Brief Description

Justification is a legal term describing the act whereby God declares us righteous based on the merits of Christ. This justification is a complete work of God whereby He declares the sinner righteous. In this work God.....

- satisfies and appeases the divine requirements of justice - **Propitiation**
- completely removes the guilt of our sins, - **Expiation**
- credits the righteousness and merit of Christ to the believer – **Imputation**
- restores relationship and rightstanding with God - **Reconciliation**

It is clear from scripture that in the death of Christ upon the cross, that God's wrath because of sin has been satisfied by Christ's payment of death. This is called **"propitiation."** Because Jesus was without sin, His was qualified to pay the debt for all sin by His death. He died as a substitute or in place of sinners, and bore the wrath of God Himself. We value the cross because the death of Christ affected a real and fundamental change in our relationship to God by taking our place and bearing the guilt of our sins as an offering to appease the holy wrath of God.

1 John 4:10 - 10 In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and **sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.** NASB

We value the cross because there Jesus paid a very real price.....He literally bore the penalty for our sins! Our chastisement became His! He carried our griefs....and our sorrows! Let's look at how this was expressed by the prophet Isaiah.....chapter 53...

Isaiah 53:4-6, 11-12 - 4 Surely **our griefs He Himself bore, And our sorrows He carried;** Yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, Smitten of God, and afflicted. 5 But He **was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; The chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, And by His scourging we are healed.** 6 All of us like sheep have gone astray, Each of us has turned to his own way; But the **LORD has caused the iniquity of us all To fall on Him.** 11 As a result of the anguish of His soul, He will see it and be satisfied; By His knowledge the Righteous One, **My Servant, will justify the many, As He will bear their iniquities.** 12 Therefore, I will allot Him a portion with the great, And He will divide the booty with the strong; Because He poured out Himself to death, And was numbered with the transgressors; Yet **He Himself bore the sin of many, And interceded for the transgressors.** NASB

We value the cross because there the actual guilt of sinners has been removed by Christ's payment, because He paid the full price of that guilt. This is called **"expiation."** Jesus removed our guilt having paid the full price of redemption for sins. Christ made a fundamental change in our relationship with God by expiating our guilt. Having paid the full price of our sin by His death, **our guilt was removed.** We were bought with a price, a ransom.....we were redeemed by the price of the sinless Son of God, Jesus Christ. Our guilt has been canceled because the debt of it has been paid. All of this was done by God.....it is God who justifies.....and so the scripture says...

Colossians 2:13-14 - 13 And when you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions, 14 **having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us** and which was hostile to us; and **He has taken it out of the way,** having nailed it to the cross. NASB

Romans 8:33-34 - 33 Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? **It is God who justifies.** 34 **Who is he that condemns?** Christ Jesus, who died — more than that, who was raised to life — is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.

1 Timothy 2:5-7 - 5 For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, 6 **who gave Himself as a ransom for all**, the testimony borne at the proper time. NASB This is why the scripture can say, there is now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus. The guilt of our sins has been removed.

Romans 8:1-2 - 8:1 There is **therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus**. 2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. NASB Now having our guilt removed and God's wrath because of our sins satisfied, we also have the righteousness of Christ credited to us. This is called **"imputation."** Jesus perfect righteousness has become ours through faith in Him. We can stand in God's presence because Jesus has imputed His righteousness and holiness to us through His sacrificial death on the Cross. It is clear from scripture that Christ's perfect righteousness is now ours by faith, and why the scripture addresses believers as blameless.

1 Corinthians 1:30-31 - 30 But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, **who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption**, 31 that, just as it is written, "Let him who boasts, boast in the Lord." NASB

Hebrews 10:14 - 14 For **by one offering He has perfected for all time** those who are sanctified. NASB

Romans 5:19 - 19 For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so **through the obedience of the One the many will be made righteous**. NASB

2 Corinthians 5:21 - 21 He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, **that we might become the righteousness of God in Him**. NASB

Colossians 1:21-22 - 22 But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to **present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation-**

Therefore when we say that the sinner is **"declared righteous"** by God it is because the sinner is not actually righteous in himself but in Christ has received a **foreign righteousness which is not his own, but is from God in Christ**. Since Jesus life was one of sinless perfection, this righteousness which is received is also therefore perfect.

Philippians 3:9-10 - 9 and may be found in Him, **not having a righteousness of my own** derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, **the righteousness which comes from God** on the basis of faith, NASB

Romans 3:21-24 - 21 But now apart from the Law **the righteousness of God** has been manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, 22 even **the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe**; for there is no distinction; 23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 being justified as a **gift by His grace** through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; NASB

And all of this has brought about Justification before God.

Romans 5:9- 9 Much more then, **having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him**. NASB

In all of this we have therefore been restored in our relationship to God and this is called **"reconciliation."** We have been reconciled to God through Christ! God took the initiative, and sent His Son Jesus to reconcile us to Himself.

2 Corinthians 5:18 - 18 Now all *these* things are from God, **who reconciled us to Himself through Christ**, and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, NASB

Justification is applied or received by Faith

This is to say that the benefits of Christ's sacrifice become benefits realized by us through Faith or trust in Jesus work. We must believe in and rely upon the justifying work of Christ in order for it to be applied to us. This justification by faith is a gift(not earned) by God's free grace.

Romans 3:21-24 - 21 But now apart from the Law the righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, 22 even **the righteousness of God through faith in**

Jesus Christ for all those who believe; for there is no distinction; 23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 being **justified as a gift by His grace** through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; NASB

So then, we receive these benefits by faith in what Christ has done and NOT on the basis of any merit in us or by some thing that we could possibly do. **Justification comes to us by grace**(God's unmerited favor), **through faith**(by trusting and believing), **in Christ alone**(Christ is the only object of faith), and NOT on the basis of any good works that we have done.

Ephesians 2:8-9 - 8 For **by grace you have been saved through faith**; and that not of yourselves, *it is* the gift of God; 9 not as a result of works, that no one should boast. NASB
Romans 5:1-2 - 1 Therefore **having been justified by faith**, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, 2 through whom also we have obtained our **introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand**; and we exult in hope of the glory of God. NASB

In Galatians chapter 5, Paul clearly summarizes that seeking to be justified by the “good works” of the law, forfeits the value of Christ’s sacrificial death on the cross. He clearly states that trying to be justified by the law alienates one from Christ, who alone is the way of salvation.

Galatians 5:1-5 - 1 **It was for freedom that Christ set us free**; therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery. 2 Behold I, Paul, say to you that **if you receive circumcision, Christ will be of no benefit to you**. 3 And I testify again to every man who receives circumcision, that he is under obligation to keep the whole Law. 4 You have been severed from Christ, **you who are seeking to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace**. 5 **For we through the Spirit, by faith**, are waiting for the hope of righteousness. NASB

By the merit of Jesus Christ only, can we be justified (**declared righteous**) before God, not on the basis of our own good works. It is on the basis of His perfect life and sacrificial death that we are justified. He fully met the requirements of the law and made a full payment (**propitiation**) for the penalties of sin, removed our guilt (**expiation**) and by His perfect life merited the righteousness of God for us which is applied to us (**imputation**) by faith. (**Titus 3:5-6, Heb 10:14**)

Philippians 3:9-10 - 9 and may be found in Him, **not having a righteousness of my own** derived from the Law, but that which is **through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith**, NASB