

Salvation 101

Lesson 4

Justification

PART I EXPLANATION

Introduction: The work that Christ accomplished has reconciled us to God by His blood. In that great work, there was something accomplished legally between God and the sinner called justification. Justification is the state to which Christ brings His elect through His salvation. It is a one time act that can never be repeated or reversed and is equally applied to every saved person. There are no degrees of justification; you are either righteous in the sight of God or unrighteous, depending on whether you have Christ's righteousness or your own.

No man wants to stand before God with his own righteousness. The Bible tells us that "*all of our righteousnesses are as filthy rags.*" That is not telling us that the things that we are ashamed of are filthy before God; it is telling us that the things we are proud of are filthy before God. They are filthy because they are offered in the stead of Christ's perfect righteousness. His righteousness, in contrast to filthy rags, is likened to a spotless, white garment.

To be justified means to be declared righteous and is the opposite of condemnation.

The Law of God (specifically the 10 Commandments) was given in order to reveal to man why he is condemned. It gives a legal basis for his just condemnation. However, because Christ lived in perfect obedience to the Law of God, completely fulfilling the demands of the Law for righteousness, He is able to be our Substitute. Therefore, when He died upon the cross, He was the Just dying for the unjust. That is how God can be just when He justifies the ungodly; because Christ's death satisfied His justice.

By His death, He did not merely erase our debt of sin; He also imputed or counted to us His righteous obedience to the Law of God. This "imputed righteousness" is given "*that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.*" Christ is our righteousness and this righteousness is received by faith; by believing in Christ for your righteousness. This principle is illustrated all of the way back to the Garden of Eden. After Adam had sinned, he attempted to cover his nakedness by sewing together an apron of fig leaves. God viewed this as an insufficient covering to enter His presence. Instead, He required the sacrifice of an innocent animal. Only after shedding its blood and using its skin as a covering was God appeased. This is a picture of the innocent sacrifice of Christ for our spotless covering.

Only by understanding this principle of justification by faith in Christ can any man have a proper understanding of his standing before God. It also helps the believer understand the purpose of the Law of God. The Law was given to reveal why man is condemned and to bring knowledge of sin. However, Christians are no longer under the wrath and condemnation of the Law. To the saint, the law of God serves as a "rule of life, informing them of the will of God and their duty." It is an aid to their sanctification but in no way does it contribute to their justification.

Failure to understand justification and its connection with the Law of God is the source of most heresies regarding the doctrine of salvation. This is a subject of the utmost importance to be clearly understood and applied in our daily lives. To understand our position in Christ is a great source of comfort and cause of rejoicing to the Christian and at the same time a great motivation to surrender our lives to Christ "*who loved me, and gave Himself for me.*"

Definitions: For English use the Webster's 1828 Dictionary and copy all appropriate definitions for each word. For the Greek and Hebrew use a Strong's Concordance and copy the definition. The Strong's number is in parenthesis.

English: **Justification** -

Imputed -

Greek: (1343) **dikaio**sune *dik-ah-yos-oo'-nay*

(1345) **dikaio**ma *dik-ah'-yo-mah*

(1347) **dikaio**sis *dik-ah'-yo-sis*

Hebrew: (3198) **yakach** *yaw-kakh'*

Quotation: “God is never indifferent toward sin. If, therefore, a man be not in a state in which God can justify him, he is in a state in which God must condemn him. If you are not just before God, you are condemned at this very moment. You are not executed, it is true, but the condemnation has gone forth against you, and the sign that it is so is your unbelief, for “He that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed on the Son of God”. How some of you would spring up from your seats tonight if all on a sudden you got the information that you had been condemned by the courts of your country; but when I say that you have been condemned by the Court of Heaven, this glides across your conscience like drops of water or oil over a marble slab. And yet, my hearers, if thou didst but know the meaning of what I am saying - and I pray God the Holy Ghost to make thee know it - it would make thy very bones to quiver! God has condemned thee. Thou art out of Christ. Thou hast broken his law. God has lifted his hand to smite thee, and, though his mercy tarries for a while, yet days and hours will soon be gone, and then the condemnation shall take the shape of execution, and where will thy soul be then? Now, you must have the sentence of condemnation passed in your own soul, or else you will never be justified, for until we are condemned by ourselves we are not acquitted by God. Again, I pause and say, Dost thou feel this, my dear hearer? If thou dost, instead of despairing, be hopeful. If thou hast the sentence of death within thee, be thankful for it, for now shall life be given thee from the hand of God’s grace.” Charles Spurgeon

“He hideth our unrighteousness with His righteousness, He covereth our disobedience with His obedience, He shadoweth our death with His death, that the wrath of God cannot find us.” Henry Smith

“The establishment of a sinner in a right standing before God...The language of Scripture, therefore, points to justification as God’s action in declaring His people righteous and placing them in a state of legal perfection before His law on the basis of the righteousness He provided freely for them in Christ.” Alan Cairns

“Indeed this is one of the greatest mysteries in the world – namely that a righteousness that resides with a person in heaven should justify me, a sinner on earth.” John Bunyan

“Justification is an act of God’s free grace, wherein He pardoneth all our sins, and accepteth us as righteous in His sight, only for the righteousness of Christ imputed to us, and received by faith alone.” Shorter Catechism

Confessions (Look up and read these articles)

New Hampshire Baptist Confession of Faith of 1833

Article V The Blessings Of The Gospel

London Baptist Confession of Faith of 1689

Chapter 11: Of Justification - paragraphs 1-6

Chapter 12 Of Adoption

Chapter 19 Of the Law of God - paragraphs 1-7

Spurgeon's Catechism

Question: 32

PART II EXPLORATION

Key Questions (*Answer in writing*)

1. Explain what was accomplished legally by Christ between God and the sinner.
2. Why are our righteousnesses viewed as filthy rags before God?
3. How can God justify a sinner and still be just (what happens to the sin)?
4. Can anyone be justified by the law? Why not?
5. What is the opposite of being justified?
6. When a person is justified what is he cleared or acquitted from?
7. Explain imputed righteousness?
8. How is justification received?
9. If you do not have the righteousness of Christ, whose righteousness do you have when you stand before God?

10. How is justification illustrated in the Garden of Eden?

Key Scriptures:

Jeremiah 23:6 The primary concept to understand is that it is the _____ who is our _____ and not our own good works because His works have been imputed (accounted) to us.

Matthew 5:17 Christ declared that He did not come to _____ the Law of God but to _____ its righteous demands.

Acts 13:39 Those that _____ are justified by faith in Christ and not by their works. To be justified by our own works is the same as trying to be justified by the _____ of _____ or by keeping the 10 Commandments.

Romans 3:19-20 The purpose of giving the law was for every mouth to be _____ and for the whole world to become _____ before God. For by the _____ of the law, no man will be justified in the _____ of God, for the purpose of law was not to justify you, rather to give you the _____ of _____.

Romans 3:24-28 We are not made righteous before God based upon our works but by His _____ through the _____ that is in Christ. Because of Christ's blood, God is satisfied and willing to accept His _____ to remove our sins. That makes God _____ and the _____ of him that _____ in Jesus. Since it is His righteousness and not our own that makes us acceptable before God, it excludes _____. The conclusion that we must draw is that a man is justified by _____ without the _____ of the _____.

Romans 5:1 We are justified by _____ which gives us _____ with God because His wrath has been satisfied.

Romans 5:9 We are justified by faith in His _____ which saves us from God's _____.

Romans 8:33 If you are declared righteous by God, nobody can make a _____ against you because it is God that _____.

Romans 10:1-10 The Jews were _____ of God's way of salvation and were still attempting to _____ their own _____ and had not _____ themselves to God's way of salvation. They did not understand that _____ is the _____ of the _____ for righteousness to every one that _____. In order to be saved by the _____ you would have to keep them all perfectly which is not possible. But the righteousness which is of _____ comes from believing the gospel in your _____ and confessing with your _____ the Lord Jesus Christ.

II Corinthians 5:21 By belief in Christ we are made the _____ of _____ in Him.

Galatians 2:16 We know that a man is not justified by the _____ of the _____ but by the _____ of

Jesus Christ. We must be justified by the faith of Christ because by the works of the law shall no _____ be justified.

Galatians 3:11 The _____ shall not only trust Christ one time but will _____ by faith.

Galatians 3:23 Before faith came we were _____ the law.

Philippians 3:9 Paul's testimony is that he did not want his _____ righteousness which was of the _____ but the righteousness which came by the _____ of _____, the righteousness which is of _____ by _____.

I John 1:9 If we _____ our sins He is faithful and _____ to forgive us our sins and _____ us from all unrighteousness. He can only be just in doing this because the blood of Christ paid for our sins.

Key Chapter(s) (*Read daily and summarize in your own words the meaning of the chapter*):

Romans 4

PART III EXPECTATION

Memory verse: II Corinthians 5:21

Personal Definition: (*Write a definition in your own words*)

Justification -

Personal Confession: (*Study the confessions and write your confession in your own words*)

Justification-

The Law of God-

Meditation question: (*be prepared for discussion*)

Why is the law necessary in dealing with justification?

Extra Credit: Compare Romans 4:1-8 and James 2:14-26 and explain the apparent contradiction between Abraham being justified by faith or by works.

