

# **Justification by Faith – The Heart of the Gospel**

## **The Definition of Justification**

Westminster Q:33

## **The Basis of Justification**

Propitiation

Expiation-Redemption

Imputation

Reconciliation

## **The Application of Justification**

By Faith in Christ and NOT by works

### **Q33. What is Justification.**

**A.** Justification is an act of God's free grace, wherein he pardons all our sins, (Rom 3:24, Eph 1:7) and accepts us as righteous in His sight (2 Cor 5:21) only for the righteousness of Christ imputed to us, (Rom 5:19) and received by faith alone. (Gal 2:16, Phil 3:9)

## **The Basis of Justification**

This **justification** is a **complete work** of **God** whereby He **fully meets** all the **requirements** of **Divine Justice** and then on that **basis declares** the sinner righteous. In this work God...

- satisfies and appeases the divine requirements of justice - **Propitiation**
- completely pays for removing the guilt of our sins, - **Expiation/Redemption**
- credits the righteousness and merit of Christ to the believer – **Imputation**
- restores relationship and right-standing with God – **Reconciliation**

## **Propitiation**

The **Bible** is **clear** that in the death of Christ upon the cross, God's wrath because of sin has been **satisfied** by **Christ's** **payment** of **death**. This is called **"propitiation."**

**Isaiah 53:4-6, 11** - 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**. NASB

## **Expiation-Redemption**

Not only has God's wrath been appeased but, 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"** or **"redemption."**

**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

## **Imputation**

We have need of a **foreign righteousness** that is not our own, but is rather being afforded to us by **other means** because we do not possess it in and of **ourselves**. In justification, God provides this righteousness to us by **"imputation."** In this imputation **God credits** to us, indeed **Jesus' perfect righteousness** has become **ours** through **faith in Him**.

**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

## **Reconciliation**

Now because the requirements of **divine justice** have been fully met and we are now **declared righteous** in the **sight of God**, this has **restored the relationship** with God that was damaged because of **sin**. In the Bible, this is called **"reconciliation."**

**Romans 5:6, 8-10** - 6 For while we were still **helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly**. .. 8 But **God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us**. 9 Much more then, having now been **justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him**. 10 For if while we were **enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son**, much more, **having been reconciled**, we shall be **saved by His life**. NASU

## **The Application of Justification**

Now to **re-iterate** an important **part** of **Justification**, we must understand that **Justification** is **applied** or **received by Faith**. This is to say that the **benefits** of **Christ's life and death** and **Resurrection** become **benefits realized for us** through **faith** or **trust** in **Jesus** and **His 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** by God's free grace, and **NOT** earned or **merited** in any way by us, but the **gift** is **received** and **applied** by **genuine repentant faith**.

**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

**Romans 3:28** – 28 For we maintain that **a man is justified by faith apart from works of the Law**. NASB

**Justification** comes to us **by grace alone**(God's unmerited favor), **through faith alone**(by trusting and **relying** upon) **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