

Doctrinal Studies

Justification

1. Definition: An act of God whereby Man is made free from the guilt and penalty of sin. A person who believes in Jesus Christ as Savior is declared righteous. –*Titus 3:7*: "Being justified (aorist active participle of δικάζω—*dikaioo*) by His grace (instrumental case of χάρις—*charis*) we might become (aorist passive subjunctive of γίνομαι—*ginomai*) heirs according to the hope of eternal life." The Arndt and Gingrich Greek-English lexicon, p. 196, describes *dikaioo*: Paul used the word almost exclusively of God's favorable judgment; "acquitted, pronounced and treated as righteous."
2. Justification is based upon the grace of God and not upon anything that man can do. God gives something we cannot earn for ourselves. –*Romans 3:24*: "Being justified freely by His grace through redemption in Christ Jesus." There are different categories of works, none of which can be the basis for justification:
 - Verbal works: begging God, promising God, etc.
 - Ritual works: circumcision, baptism, etc.
 - Psychological works: crying, pleading, etc.
 - Corporate works: tithing, church programs, etc.
 - Religious works: keeping the 10 commandments, rededicating the life, vows, etc.
 - Behavioristic works: changing lifestyle or conversation, etc.
 - Emotional works: tongues, "slain in the spirit," other ecstasies, etc.

At best some works can be legitimate expressions of spirituality, but never are works the basis for justification. Legitimate works can be one of the eventual results of justification, but not the cause.
3. Justification takes place at the point of acceptance of Jesus Christ as Savior—Rom. 3:28; 5:1

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4. Justification does not occur through the Mosaic Law. –Rom 3:20: *"Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin."* Also, –Gal. 2:16: *"Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified."*
5. Justification means vindication, to clear, to deliver, to set free. Romans 4:6, 7: *"Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, saying, blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered."*
6. Justification involves imputation of divine righteousness—God credits His perfect righteousness to the believer. –Romans 3:22, *"Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:"* Also see Romans 4:11b; 9:30–32.
7. Justification is brought to us by the total work of Christ on the cross. We are justified by His blood, which represents His total work. –Romans 5:8–9: *"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him."*
8. Justification also involves the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. –Romans 4:25: *"Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification."*
9. Justification by grace eliminates any boasting, any system of human efforts, and all self righteousness. –Romans 3:28: *"Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law."* Also, –Ephesians 2:8–9: *"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast."*