

# The Doctrine of Justification—Part Three

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Previously we saw that the Scriptures teach that God is both just and the justifier of those who place their faith in Jesus (Rom. 3:23-26). Here, then, is:

## Further Scripture Proof for the Doctrine of Justification

Abraham **believed** the Lord, and he **credited** it to him as righteousness. (Genesis 15:6)

Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord **does not count against him**. (Psalm 32:2)

No weapon that is formed against you shall prosper; and every tongue that accuses you in judgment you will condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and **their vindication is from Me**, declares the Lord. (Isaiah 54:17 NAS [New American Standard Bible])

In his days Judah will be saved and Israel will live in safety. This is the name by which he will be called: **the Lord our righteousness**. (Jeremiah 25:6)

Behold, as for the proud one, his soul is not right within him; but **the righteous will live by his faith**. (Habakkuk 2:4 NAS)

For what does the Scripture say? “And Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness.” Now to the one who works, his wage is not reckoned as a favor but as what is due. But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his **faith is reckoned as righteousness**, just as David also speaks of the blessing upon the man to whom God **reckons righteousness apart from works**. (Romans 4:5-6 NAS)

What shall we say then? That Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, attained righteousness, even the righteousness which is by faith; but Israel, pursuing a law of righteousness, did not arrive at that law. Why? Because they did not pursue it by faith, but as though it were by works. They stumbled over the stumbling stone, just as it is written, “Behold, I lay in Zion a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense, and he who believes in Him will not be disappointed.” Brethren, my heart’s desire and my prayer to God for them is for their salvation. For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not in accordance with knowledge. For not knowing about God’s righteousness, and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God. For **Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes**. (Romans 9:30-10:4 NAS)

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 Christ, and in the Spirit of our God. (1 Corinthians 6:11 NAS)

And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would **justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel** beforehand to Abraham, saying, “All the nations shall be blessed in you.” So then those who are of faith are blessed with Abraham, the believer. (Galatians 5:8-9 NAS)

Is the Law then contrary to the promises of God? May it never be! For if a law had been given which was able to impart life, then righteousness would indeed have been based on law.... Therefore the Law has become our tutor to lead us to Christ, that we may be **justified by faith**. (Galatians 3:21,24 NAS)

## Important Applications of the Doctrine of Justification

1. Justification demands that we trust in Christ's righteousness alone and not our own:

And through Him everyone who believes is freed **from all things**, from which you could **not be freed** through the Law of Moses. (Acts 13:59 NAS)

More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them **but rubbish** in order that I may gain Christ, 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**, that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death. (Philippians 3:8-10 NAS)

You have been severed from Christ, you who are seeking to be **justified by law**; you have fallen from grace. (Galatians 5:4 NAS)

2. Justification properly orients Christian morality. The motive for Christian living and service becomes obedience out of love and gratitude to a Savior whose gift of righteousness made law keeping unnecessary:

So that you may walk in a manner **worthy** of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God. (Colossians 1:10 NAS)

I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, **acceptable to God**, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect. (Romans 12:1-2 NAS)

The doctrine of justification encourages morality and discourages sin when we consider the One who redeemed us and the cost of our redemption (see Romans 6:10-18):

What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace might increase? **May it never be!** How shall we who died to sin still live in it? (Romans 6:1-2 NAS)

But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became **obedient from the heart** to that form of teaching to which you were committed, and having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness. (Romans 6:17-18 NAS)

So that you may walk in a manner **worthy of the God** who calls you into His own kingdom and glory. (1 Thessalonians 2:12 NAS)

3. Justification means Christians may be assured that they *now* possess eternal life. A divine gift is perfect and cannot be taken back. The gifts and calling of God are without repentance (Romans 11:29). Perfect righteousness is a gift (James 1:17; Romans 3:24). If we are declared perfectly righteous by Him, God can only give the gift of perfect righteousness. What condition, then, can exist in the future so that we can lose our righteous standing? If righteousness is a gift to sinners and enemies (if He did the most for us when we hated Him and were His enemies), will God do less for us now that we are His precious children (Romans 5:8-9)?

Also, eternal life could only be a *present* condition on a "just" basis—if from the point of belief we were "eternally righteous," declared eternally righteous. This is why Scripture teaches that the believer now has *eternal* life:

Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, *has eternal life*, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life. (John

5:24 NAS)

He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood *has eternal life*, and I will raise him up on the last day. (John 6:54 NAS)

The one who believes in the Son of God has the witness in himself; the one who does not believe God has made Him a liar, because he has not believed in the witness that God has borne concerning His Son. And the witness is this, that God *has given us eternal life*, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life. (1 John 5:10-13 NAS)