



# GOOD NEWS

for the unsaved WORLD!

(#156)

Justification – life-changing blessings!

1

## Justification ⇒ Being "declared righteous."

★ Every aspect of it is a blessing! ★

- ✓ Its foundation. – Steadfast and firm; cannot fail.
- ✓ The way we receive it. – Not depending on our weak efforts, but on God's power.
- ✓ Its long-term effects. – Influences both now and forever.
- ✓ Its consequences. – Blessings that have eternal value. (These consequences *happen to us*.)
- ✓ Its life-changing effect. – Changing our heart's desires, so that we will become more Christ-like. (This consequence results in *us doing something!*)

2

## Justification ⇒ Built on a firm foundation.

↳ The grace (undeserved kindness) of God.

But now apart from the law the righteousness of God has been made known, *to which the Law and the Prophets testify.*

This righteousness is given through **faith** in Jesus Christ to all who **believe**. There is no difference between Jew and Gentile, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and all are **justified freely by his grace** through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.

Romans 3:21-24 (NIV)

They testified about the New Covenant.

The word "all" is defined by the context. Here, it refers to all *groups of people – whether Jew or Gentile.*

"Free to all" = none have to pay.

[MORE ABOUT GRACE]

3

[MORE ABOUT GRACE]

But when the kindness of **God our Savior** and his love\* for mankind appeared, he saved us—not by works of righteousness that we had done, but according to his mercy—through the washing of regeneration and renewal by **the Holy Spirit**. He poured out his Spirit on us abundantly through **Jesus Christ our Savior** so that, having been **justified by his grace**, we may become heirs with the hope of eternal life.

Titus 3:4-7 (CSB)

It was because of God's kindness & concern for humanity\* (not because of what we did).

What the Spirit accomplished through Jesus.

The end result.

\* The word "love" (v.4) does NOT refer to the special love God has for his people (= a different N.T. Greek word), but to a general affection toward humanity, and concern about their plight.

4

↳ The blood (sacrifice) of Jesus.

... Christ died for us. How much more then, since we have now been **justified by his blood**, ...

Romans 5:8b, 9a (CSB)

- ✓ We were powerless to save ourselves – v. 6.
- ✓ This is a demonstration of God's love for us who are *now* saved (v. 8a). (The word "love" in v. 8 refers to his "commitment love.")
- ✓ More details about what Jesus accomplished for us – v. 10-11. (Reconciliation through his death; salvation through his life; a change in our attitude toward God.)

↳ Because of what the Holy Spirit did (made possible by Jesus).

But you were washed, you were sanctified, **you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.**

1 Corinthians 6:11b (CSB)

- ✓ This passage is about how justification *changes* a person's life.

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## Justification ⇒ Received when we trust God.

Our faith does not cause our justification. We trust God and what he has accomplished to make it possible.

↳ By faith, NOT by religious rituals and "good deeds."

For we maintain that a person is **justified by faith** apart from the works of the law.

Romans 3:28 (NIV)

- ✓ The reason we can say this is found in the previous verses. Verse 24 (which we already looked at) is about God's grace.
- ✓ This does NOT mean the law has no value (v. 31). Even under the New Covenant, it has a purpose. (Example: The moral aspects of the law have NOT been cancelled. Also, the law can point people to Christ.)

[MORE ABOUT THIS FAITH/TRUST]

6

**[MORE ABOUT FAITH/TRUST]**

↳ *Though the law can be of value, it cannot justify a person.*

[We saved Jews] know that a person is **not justified by the works of the law**, but **by faith in Jesus Christ**. So we, too,\* have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be **justified by faith in Christ** and not by the works of the law, because **by the works of the law no one will be justified.**

Galatians 2:16 (NIV)

The **law, then, was our guardian** until Christ, so that we could be **justified by faith.**

Galatians 3:24 (CSB)

↳ *There are consequences to this justification by faith.*

Therefore, since we have been **justified by faith**, we have ... [various consequences mentioned in v. 2-5]

Romans 5:1a (CSB)

We will look at these later.

\*("We, too" = about Jews who trusted Jesus for justification, just like the Gentiles did.)

## Justification

 → **Has past, present and future aspects.**

↳ *The "past tense" act of being justified.*

This refers to the beginning point in the "process of salvation," *where the actual change occurs in our lives.*

... **you were justified** in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.  
1 Corinthians 6:11b (CSB)

> **This is the focus of most Scripture passages.** <

This "past tense justification" is what people normally refer to, when they use this word. *This is the way Paul normally uses it.* (When describing the *ongoing* life in Christ, the related word "righteous" tends to be used.)

↳ *A "present tense" effect on how we live.* (More about this later.)

Wasn't Abraham our father **justified by works** in offering Isaac his son on the altar? ...

You see that a person is **justified by works and not by faith alone.**

James 2:21, 24 (CSB)

↳ *A "future tense" effect on how we will be judged.*

"I tell you that on the day of judgment, people will give an account for every worthless word they speak. For by your words you will be **justified**, and by your words you will be **condemned**."

Matthew 12:36-37 (NET)

The emphasis isn't "If you say something bad, you're hopelessly condemned to hell." Rather, it's "*What's in your heart*" will be reflected by *what you say*." (See the context just before this statement.)

> **Present and future tense passages are not common.** <

But they remind us that once we are "justified" (past tense), *we remain that way.* (The word *righteous* is normally used.)

## Justification

 → **Associated with many blessings!**

↳ *The very nature of "justification" is a blessing!*

- ❖ **One's faith being "credited as righteousness."**

But to him who **does not work**, but **believes** in him who **justifies** the ungodly, his **faith** is credited as **righteousness.**  
Romans 4:5 (NHEB)

- ❖ **Forgiveness of sins.** [In past weeks, we've seen many verses that have this focus.]

↳ *Salvation.*

Since we have now been **justified** by his blood, how much more shall we be **saved** from God's wrath through him!  
Romans 5:9 (NIV)

(See also: Romans 10:9-10.)

↳ *Peace with God; and able to rejoice (or boast) in what God is accomplishing – both now and in the future.*

Therefore, since we have been **justified** through faith, we have **peace with God** through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand.

And we boast in the **hope** of the glory of God.

Not only so, but we also glory in our **sufferings**, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.

Romans 5:1-5 (NIV)

- "Glorying (boasting) in our sufferings" *doesn't* mean we enjoy suffering! Our boast is in what *God* is accomplishing through it. Everyone suffers at one time or another; but only *God's* people can have this hope. Compare to Romans 8:28-39.

↳ *Connected to being "washed" and "sanctified."*

But you were **washed**, you were **sanctified**, you were **justified** in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.  
1 Corinthians 6:11b (CSB)

- Here, "sanctified" may refer to the *initial* break with sin, rather than the ongoing process.

↳ *The final outcome – glorification – is guaranteed.*

And those he predestined, he also called; and those he called, he also **justified**; and those he **justified**, he also **glorified.**  
Romans 8:30 (CSB)

- All God's promises to us will be fulfilled. It's as good as already accomplished!
- The process of getting us from "justified" to "glorified" is called "sanctification."

↳ **Eternal life** (which actually begins *now* – 1 John 5:12).

So then, as through one trespass there is condemnation for everyone, so also through one righteous act there is **justification leading to life for everyone**.  
Romans 5:18 (CSB)

- The "everyone" is defined by the context – the specific category of people being mentioned. Justification "leads to life" *only* for "everyone" who is willing to trust Jesus for that justification.
- As the number of "justified" people increases, it reduces the number of people in the "condemned" category (though all people *began* in the "condemned" category).

↳ **Eternal life – as a future inheritance.**

... so that, having been **justified** by his grace, we may become **heirs with the hope of eternal life**.  
Titus 3:7 (CSB)

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# Justification

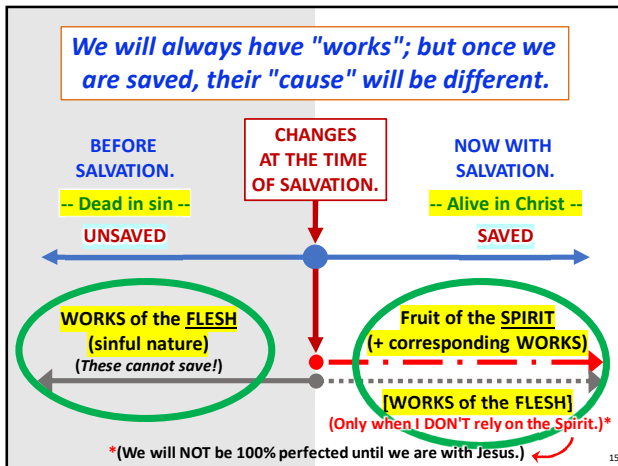
⇒ **Results in works!**

↳ **It has a lifelong effect on how we live.**  
This is why James was able to say this about Abraham:  
Wasn't Abraham our father **justified** by **works** in offering Isaac his son on the altar? ...  
You see that a person is **justified by works and not by faith alone**.  
James 2:21, 24 (CSB)

✓ **We examined this issue last time.** A person cannot work FOR justification, because all his works (as an unsaved person) are powered by the "flesh." But once saved (= justified), justification can express itself by works, because all such works are empowered by the Spirit.

**This is illustrated on the salvation timeline.** ↪

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✓ **BEFORE salvation:** Our works were empowered by **THE FLESH** (or sinful nature). This type of works cannot earn us salvation.

✓ **AFTER salvation:** Our works are empowered by the **SPIRIT**. Except for when we fall into sin (a temporary act), our works are the result of salvation. They still don't *earn* us salvation!

**SAVED OR UNSAVED, EVERYONE HAS WORKS!** The difference is the **power that controls them (and the eternal outcome)**. We will choose one or the other, based on whether or not we are following Jesus.

Those who live according to the flesh have their minds set on what the flesh desires; but **those who live in accordance with the Spirit** have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. ...  
For if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live.  
For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God.  
Romans 8:5, 13-14 (NIV)

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**WE CAN CONCLUDE THAT...**

⇒ **JUSTIFICATION** – which includes: ① *forgiveness* of sins, and ② an inclination for *righteous* living ...

- ↳ ... is the **work of God**, accomplished through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.
- ↳ ... is the **open door** that leads us into all the other consequences of salvation.
- ↳ ... is the **starting point** for having a desire (and power) to "follow Jesus" in daily living.

We are **declared** righteous... by God's **grace** (undeserved kindness)... so that WE can **live** righteously... trusting God for the power!

But to the one who **does not work, but believes on him** who justifies the ungodly, his faith is credited for **righteousness**.  
For we are his workmanship, **created in Christ Jesus for good works**, which God prepared ahead of time for us to do.  
Romans 4:5; Ephesians 2:10 (CSB)

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**If you are justified:**

- ⇒ Everything **truly good** about you is "**in Christ**."
- ⇒ Everything **bad** about you (even good done for the wrong reasons) is "**in yourself**."

**YOUR MISSION:**  
**Consider the nature of justification.**

⇒ **In Christ**, God has offered you forgiveness and a new life.

↳ **LEARN** from Scripture how that new life is to be lived... and pursue it – using the **power** that God gives with new life!

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★ But be careful *how* you LEARN! ★

UNSAVED PEOPLE:

They can learn *facts* about godly conduct.  
But "fact accumulation" does not change a person's life.

WE WHO ARE FOLLOWING JESUS:

God's GRACE – his undeserved kindness – *changes us!*  
It *justifies* us and also *teaches* us to live a godly life...  
and to live it NOW!

... they are *justified* freely by his *grace* through the  
redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

Romans 3:24 (CSB)

For the *grace* of God ... *teaches* us to say "No" to ungodliness  
and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and  
godly lives *in this present age*, ...

Titus 2:11a, 12 (NIV)

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WE WHO ARE FOLLOWING JESUS...

# God HELPS us!

The Spirit uses his **WORD** to change our values.

**All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful** for teaching,  
rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the  
servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 (NIV)

The Spirit uses his **POWER** to enable us to live according to those values.

For **God is working in you**, giving you the desire  
and the power to do what pleases him.

Philippians 2:13 (NLT)

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