Calvary Chapel Living Water

JUSTIFICATION

Galatians 2:14-21 (Psalm 51)

Justification – The root word of justification is just, commonly defined as being “based on or behaving according to what is morally right and fair.” The word justification in the Bible refers to what God says is morally right and fair.

Psalm 51:

vs.1-6 We recognize our sinfulness before a holy God and that only He can declare us just and save us by His mercy.

vs.7-11 We desire God’s forgiveness and for His Holy Spirit to recreate in us a new, clean heart, which comes from being born again by His Spirit into His family.

vs. 12 We allow God the Holy Spirit to convince us to believe in His truth and trust in Him alone to forgive us and save us.

vs. 13-19 We are motivated to openly praise and justly serve God out of appreciation for what He has done for us.

God’s justification is described Biblically in three ways:

1. **The source of justification is determined by God**

Man’s source of justification is based on what he declares as morally right and fair. God’s Word tells us that no man has a righteous standard (Psalm 143:2; Romans 3:10-18). Despite this, man tries to justify his actions before others, but before long, he even violates his own standards. This does nothing more than condemn himself and show that he is a hypocrite (Job 9:20; Luke 10:25-37).

Psalm 143:2Do not enter into judgment with Your servant, For in Your sight no one living is righteous.

Romans 3:10-18As it is written: “There is none righteous, no, not one; **11**There is none who understands; There is none who seeks after God. **12**They have all turned aside; They have together become unprofitable; There is none who does good, no, not one.” **13**“Their throat *is* an open tomb; With their tongues they have practiced deceit”; “The poison of asps *is* under their lips”; **14**“Whose mouth *is* full of cursing and bitterness.” **15**“Their feet *are* swift to shed blood; **16**Destruction and misery *are* in their ways; **17**And the way of peace they have not known.” **18**“There is no fear of God before their eyes.”

Job 9:20Though I were righteous, my own mouth would condemn me; Though I *were* blameless, it would prove me perverse.

Luke 10:25-37And behold, a certain lawyer stood up and tested Him, saying, “Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?”

**26**He said to him, “What is written in the law? What is your reading *of it?*”

**27**So he answered and said, “ ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind,’[a] and ‘your neighbor as yourself.’”[b]

**28**And He said to him, “You have answered rightly; do this and you will live.”

**29**But he, wanting to justify himself, said to Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?”

**30**Then Jesus answered and said: “A certain *man* went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, who stripped him of his clothing, wounded *him,* and departed, leaving *him* half dead. **31**Now by chance a certain priest came down that road. And when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. **32**Likewise a Levite, when he arrived at the place, came and looked, and passed by on the other side. **33**But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was. And when he saw him, he had compassion. **34**So he went to *him* and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; and he set him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. **35**On the next day, when he departed,[c] he took out two denarii, gave *them* to the innkeeper, and said to him, ‘Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I come again, I will repay you.’ **36**So which of these three do you think was neighbor to him who fell among the thieves?”

**37**And he said, “He who showed mercy on him.”

Then Jesus said to him, “Go and do likewise.”

This makes Christ just and the source of our justification (Deuteronomy 32:4; 2 Samuel 23:3; Acts 3:13-15; 7:51-52). Yet, as a man, even Christ received His justification from God the Father and the Holy Spirit (John 5:30; 1 Peter 2:21-23; 1 Timothy 3:16). Therefore, our specific source of justification is the blood of Christ that was shed when He died for our sins on the cross (Romans 5:6-10).

Deuteronomy 32:4*He is* the Rock, His work *is* perfect; For all His ways *are* justice, A God of truth and without injustice; Righteous and upright *is* He.

2 Samuel 23:3The God of Israel said, The Rock of Israel spoke to me: ‘He who rules over men *must be* just, Ruling in the fear of God.

Acts 3:13-15The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of our fathers, glorified His Servant Jesus, whom you delivered up and denied in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let *Him* go. **14**But you denied the Holy One and the Just, and asked for a murderer to be granted to you, **15**and killed the Prince of life, whom God raised from the dead, of which we are witnesses.

Acts 7:51-52“*You* stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears! You always resist the Holy Spirit; as your fathers *did,* so *do* you. **52**Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? And they killed those who foretold the coming of the Just One, of whom you now have become the betrayers and murderers,

John 5:30I can of Myself do nothing. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is righteous, because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent Me.

1 Peter 2:21-23For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: **22**“Who committed no sin, Nor was deceit found in His mouth”; **23**who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed *Himself* to Him who judges righteously;

1 Timothy 3:16And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh, Justified in the Spirit, Seen by angels, Preached among the Gentiles, Believed on in the world, Received up in glory.

Romans 5:6-10For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. **7**For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. **8**But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. **9**Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. **10**For if when 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.

2. **The act of justification is performed by God**

We become justified by God the moment we believe that Christ died and shed His blood on the cross for our sins (Acts 13:38-39; Romans 3:20-4:2; Galatians 3:11-26). By faith we forsake of our standard of justification and believe what God says about His standard (Luke 18:9-14; Romans 10:17). In doing so, we also trust that God’s standard of judgment through Christ is true (Exodus 23:7; John 8:13-18).

Acts 13:38-39Therefore let it be known to you, brethren, that through this Man is preached to you the forgiveness of sins; **39**and by Him everyone who believes is justified from all things from which you could not be justified by the law of Moses.

Romans 3:20-4:2Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law *is* the knowledge of sin. **21**But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, **22**even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference; **23**for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, **24**being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, **25**whom God set forth *as* a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed, **26**to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus. **27**Where *is* boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? No, but by the law of faith. **28**Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law. **29**Or *is He* the God of the Jews only? *Is He* not also the God of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also, **30**since *there is* one God who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith. **31**Do we then make void the law through faith? Certainly not! On the contrary, we establish the law. **4**What then shall we say that Abraham our father has found according to the flesh? **2**For if Abraham was justified by works, he has *something* to boast about, but not before God.

Galatians 3:11-26But that no one is justified by the law in the sight of God *is* evident, for “the just shall live by faith.” **12**Yet the law is not of faith, but “the man who does them shall live by them.” **13**Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, “Cursed *is* everyone who hangs on a tree”), **14**that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. **15**Brethren, I speak in the manner of men: Though *it is* only a man’s covenant, yet *if it is* confirmed, no one annuls or adds to it. **16**Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, “And to seeds,” as of many, but as of one, “And to your Seed,”[d] who is Christ. **17**And this I say, *that* the law, which was four hundred and thirty years later, cannot annul the covenant that was confirmed before by God in Christ,[e] that it should make the promise of no effect. **18**For if the inheritance *is* of the law, *it is* no longer of promise; but God gave *it* to Abraham by promise. **19**What purpose then *does* the law *serve?* It was added because of transgressions, till the Seed should come to whom the promise was made; *and it was* appointed through angels by the hand of a mediator. **20**Now a mediator does not *mediate* for one *only,* but God is one. **21***Is* the law then against the promises of God? Certainly not! For if there had been a law given which could have given life, truly righteousness would have been by the law. **22**But the Scripture has confined all under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe. **23**But before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed. **24**Therefore the law was our tutor *to bring us* to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. **25**But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor. **26**For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.

Luke 18:9-14Also He spoke this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: **10**“Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. **11**The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, ‘God, I thank You that I am not like other men—extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. **12**I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.’ **13**And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise *his* eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me a sinner!’ **14**I tell you, this man went down to his house justified *rather* than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”

Romans 10:17So then faith *comes* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

Exodus 23:7Keep yourself far from a false matter; do not kill the innocent and righteous. For I will not justify the wicked.

John 8:13-18The Pharisees therefore said to Him, “You bear witness of Yourself; Your witness is not true.” **14**Jesus answered and said to them, “Even if I bear witness of Myself, My witness is true, for I know where I came from and where I am going; but you do not know where I come from and where I am going. **15**You judge according to the flesh; I judge no one. **16**And yet if I do judge, My judgment is true; for I am not alone, but I *am* with the Father who sent Me. **17**It is also written in your law that the testimony of two men is true. **18**I am One who bears witness of Myself, and the Father who sent Me bears witness of Me.”

3. **The fruit of justification is produced by God**

Differing sources of justification result in differing lifestyles and beliefs, or fruit between believers and unbelievers (Psalm 37:12). It also results in differing judgments. Those who base their judgments on God’s Word will produce just results (Deuteronomy 25:1-2; 2 Samuel 23:1-3).

Psalm 37:12The wicked plots against the just, And gnashes at him with his teeth.

Deuteronomy 25:1“If there is a dispute between men, and they come to court, that *the judges* may judge them, and they justify the righteous and condemn the wicked,

2 Samuel 23:1-3Now these *are* the last words of David. *Thus* says David the son of Jesse; *Thus* says the man raised up on high, The anointed of the God of Jacob, And the sweet psalmist of Israel: **2**“The Spirit of the Lord spoke by me, And His word *was* on my tongue. **3**The God of Israel said, The Rock of Israel spoke to me: ‘He who rules over men *must be* just, Ruling in the fear of God.

Likewise, those who allow the Holy Spirit to change them to be more like Christ will be seen as justified in the eyes of others (Luke 2:25; 1 Timothy 3:16). They behave in a just manner that is different than others (Proverbs 10:1-31; Isaiah 26:7; Hosea 14:9; Matthew 12:37; Galatians 5:22-23).

Luke 2:25And behold, there was a man in Jerusalem whose name *was* Simeon, and this man *was* just and devout, waiting for the Consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him.

1 Timothy 3:16And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh, Justified in the Spirit, Seen by angels, Preached among the Gentiles, Believed on in the world, Received up in glory.

Proverbs 10:1-31The proverbs of Solomon: A wise son makes a glad father, But a foolish son *is* the grief of his mother. **2**Treasures of wickedness profit nothing, But righteousness delivers from death. **3**The Lord will not allow the righteous soul to famish, But He casts away the desire of the wicked. **4**He who has a slack hand becomes poor, But the hand of the diligent makes rich. **5**He who gathers in summer *is* a wise son; He who sleeps in harvest *is* a son who causes shame. **6**Blessings *are* on the head of the righteous, But violence covers the mouth of the wicked. **7**The memory of the righteous *is* blessed, But the name of the wicked will rot. **8**The wise in heart will receive commands, But a prating fool will fall. **9**He who walks with integrity walks securely, But he who perverts his ways will become known. **10**He who winks with the eye causes trouble, But a prating fool will fall. **11**The mouth of the righteous *is* a well of life, But violence covers the mouth of the wicked. **12**Hatred stirs up strife, But love covers all sins. **13**Wisdom is found on the lips of him who has understanding, But a rod *is* for the back of him who is devoid of understanding. **14**Wise *people* store up knowledge, But the mouth of the foolish *is* near destruction. **15**The rich man’s wealth *is* his strong city; The destruction of the poor *is* their poverty. **16**The labor of the righteous *leads* to life, The wages of the wicked to sin. **17**He who keeps instruction *is in* the way of life, But he who refuses correction goes astray. **18**Whoever hides hatred *has* lying lips, And whoever spreads slander *is* a fool. **19**In the multitude of words sin is not lacking, But he who restrains his lips *is* wise. **20**The tongue of the righteous *is* choice silver; The heart of the wicked *is worth* little. **21**The lips of the righteous feed many, But fools die for lack of wisdom. **22**The blessing of the Lord makes *one* rich, And He adds no sorrow with it. **23**To do evil *is* like sport to a fool, But a man of understanding has wisdom. **24**The fear of the wicked will come upon him, And the desire of the righteous will be granted. **25**When the whirlwind passes by, the wicked *is* no *more,* But the righteous *has* an everlasting foundation. **26**As vinegar to the teeth and smoke to the eyes, So *is* the lazy *man* to those who send him. **27**The fear of the Lord prolongs days, But the years of the wicked will be shortened. **28**The hope of the righteous *will be* gladness, But the expectation of the wicked will perish. **29**The way of the Lord *is* strength for the upright, But destruction *will come* to the workers of iniquity. **30**The righteous will never be removed, But the wicked will not inhabit the earth. **31**The mouth of the righteous brings forth wisdom, But the perverse tongue will be cut out.

Isaiah 26:7The way of the just *is* uprightness; O Most Upright, You weigh the path of the just.

Hosea 14:9Who *is* wise? Let him understand these things. *Who is* prudent? Let him know them. For the ways of the Lord *are* right; The righteous walk in them, But transgressors stumble in them.

Matthew 12:37For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.”

Galatians 5:22-23But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, **23**gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.

Romans 10:9-10that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. **10**For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Hebrews 11:1-2Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. **2**For by it the elders obtained a *good* testimony.

James 2:14-26What *does it* profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him? **15**If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, **16**and one of you says to them, “Depart in peace, be warmed and filled,” but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what *does it* profit? **17**Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. **18**But someone will say, “You have faith, and I have works.” Show me your faith without your[a] works, and I will show you my faith by my works. **19**You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble! **20**But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead? **21**Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar? **22**Do you see that faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect? **23**And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, “Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.” And he was called the friend of God. **24**You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only. **25**Likewise, was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works when she received the messengers and sent *them* out another way? **26**For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.

Those who are justified by God experience peace (Romans 5:1) because they know that they are saved from the wrath to come (Romans 5:9) and will be rewarded and glorified in the resurrection (Acts 24:15; Luke 14:14; Romans 8:29-30). They also know they have an inheritance in Heaven that never fades away (Galatians 3:6-9; Ephesians 1:12-14; Titus 3:7; Hebrews 9:14-15; 1 Peter 1:3-4).

Romans 5:1Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,

Romans 5:9Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him.

Acts 24:15I have hope in God, which they themselves also accept, that there will be a resurrection of *the* dead, both of *the* just and *the* unjust.

Luke 14:14And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you; for you shall be repaid at the resurrection of the just.”

Romans 8:29-30For whom He foreknew, He also predestined *to be* conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. **30**Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.

Galatians 3:6-9just as Abraham “believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.” **7**Therefore know that *only* those who are of faith are sons of Abraham. **8**And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel to Abraham beforehand, *saying,* “In you all the nations shall be blessed.” **9**So then those who *are* of faith are blessed with believing Abraham.

Ephesians 1:12-14that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory. **13**In Him you also *trusted,* after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, **14**who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.

Titus 3:7that having been justified by His grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

Hebrews 9:14-15how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? **15**And for this reason He is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.

1 Peter 1:3-4Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, **4**to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you,

**Conclusion**

Justification is the process by which God declares that someone is morally right. The source of justification is determined by God; the act of justification is performed by God; and the fruit of justification is produced by God. (Dr. Michael Williams – Pastor of Selah Mountain Ministries in Albuquerque, New Mexico)

Galatians 2:11-21Now when Peter had come to Antioch, I withstood him to his face, because he was to be blamed; **12**for before certain men came from James, he would eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing those who were of the circumcision. **13**And the rest of the Jews also played the hypocrite with him, so that even Barnabas was carried away with their hypocrisy.

**14**But when I saw that they were not straightforward about the truth of the gospel, I said to Peter before *them* all, “If you, being a Jew, live in the manner of Gentiles and not as the Jews, why do you compel Gentiles to live as Jews? **15**We *who are* Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles, **16**knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified.

**17**“But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, *is* Christ therefore a minister of sin? Certainly not! **18**For if I build again those things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor. **19**For I through the law died to the law that I might live to God. **20**I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me. **21**I do not set aside the grace of God; for if righteousness *comes* through the law, then Christ died in vain.”