

Session 7: Justification

The Definition

Dikaioo in the greek - declared to be righteous.

The legal act of God whereby He instantaneously declares the sinner's debt paid and His wrath satisfied by Christ's death and credits the sinner with the righteousness of Christ.

The Process

Romans 3:19-31

Does the Law justify? No. Holds mankind accountable to God v. 19. The Law informs us of our sin v. 20

Whose righteousness are we talking about? God's vv. 21-22, 25-26. This is a foreign or alien righteousness. Important: this is not a righteousness God identifies in us. Romans 4

How is this righteousness received? Through faith in Christ vv. 22, 25-30. Sola Fide, faith alone.

Who judges and justifies? God vv. 19-20, 26, 30 It is His actions that justify.

We are not justified by keeping the law or our own righteousness. It is God's action and His righteousness.

Romans 4:1-8

- Abraham not justified justified by works v. 2
- Abraham counted righteous by faith v. 3
- If it were by works, God would owe us wages for our righteousness v. 4
- Instead He justifies the ungodly through faith v. 5
- God credits believers with righteousness apart from works v. 6
- Lawless deeds are forgiven for the believer v. 7
- Sin's penalty is forgiven and not counted against the believer vv. 7-8

God justifies sinners by the righteousness received through faith in Christ.

Romans 5:12-21

Note the contrasts:

Verse	Adam	Christ
15	one trespass	abundance of grace
16	Result of sin condemnation	free gift Justification
17	trespass death	Abundance of grace, gift of righteousness, life
18	Trespass to condemnation	Righteousness to justification and life
19	Disobedience made many sinners	Obedience made many righteous
21	Sin reigns in death	Grace reigns in righteousness

Note the similarities:

- Both serve as a representative for others (Adam v14, Christ v15)
- Their performance under the Law is ascribed to others (v17)
- Their verdicts have eternal consequences (v20)

Representative	Performance	Verdict	Consequence
Adam	Trespass	Condemnation	Death
Christ	Obedience	Justification	Life

Imputation - to ascribe or attribute

2 Corinthians 5:21

Philippians 3:9

Adam's sin imputed to all. The Christian's sin is imputed to Christ. Christ's righteousness is imputed to the Christian.

Romans 8:30

Who receives justification? The elect. Notice the effectual call or irresistible grace. If He calls you, justifies you.

Can this be limited or changed in any way by us? No. Each step starting in v29 foreknew > predestined > called > justified > glorified is tied together... the past, present, and future are all lined up here showing us the completeness of His plan. Interestingly these verbs are all past tense!

The Necessity

God is perfectly holy

- **Leviticus 11:44**
- **Isaiah 6:1-6**
- **Habakkuk 1:12**
- **1 Peter 1:15-16**

God is perfectly righteous

- **Psalms 11:7**
- **Psalms 145:17**
- **Daniel 9:7**
- **2 Timothy 4:8**

We are utterly sinful -

- **Psalms 51:5** inherited sin
- **Romans 5:12** imputed sin
- **Romans 3:23** personal sin

Our legal standing before God, the holy judge, is guilty of sin and condemned to death.

To reconcile us, God the Father's wrath was poured out on God the Son.

- **Isaiah 53:4-5**
- **Isaiah 53:11**
- **1 Peter 2:24**
- **Romans 3:23-26**

Christ's propitiation for our sin justifies the Father in His justification of Christians.

Matthew 5:17 - the law and prophecy is fulfilled in Christ through His life, death, and resurrection.

The Challenge

Aspects of the definition: legal and observational

See both uses in our culture... guilty in court but justified in public or justified in court but guilty in public.

See both uses in scripture...

- **Luke 7:29** - this is the observational declaration of righteousness
- **Galatians 2:15-16** - this is the legal declaration of righteousness

James 2:14-26

Was Abraham legally justified, that is declared righteous by God, for the combination of his faith and works? No. Romans 3, 4, & 5; Galatians 2:15-16

What does James mean here? This is the observational declaration of righteousness.

How do you know? vv. 14-20 The works are proof of saving faith. See also James 3:11-12

The Benefits

Romans 5:1-11

- Peace with God (v.1)
- Access to God (v. 2)
- Grace of God (v.2)
- Hope in God (v.2)
- Love of God (v. 5)
- Indwelling of God (v. 5)
- Salvation of God (vv. 6-8)
- Saved by God from the wrath of God (v. 9)
- Reconciled to God (vv. 10-11)
- Rejoicing in God (v. 11)

The Connections

How does the doctrine of justification fit in the context of the other teachings you've studied in this class?

Radical depravity

Unconditional election

Particular redemption

Regeneration

Irresistible grace

The Resources

The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary - Merrill Tenney

Systematic Theology - Wayne Grudem

Basic Theology - Charles Ryrie