

# Justified: No Record of My Sin Romans 5

We have started a year-long look at the wonders of the gift of salvation. Today we ponder the gift of justification as we open to Romans 5

Salvation is of the Lord: initiated and designed by the Lord—and thus it is almost beyond human comprehension. But what we do know, revealed by God through His Word is incredible.

500 years ago an agonized Augustinian monk was starving himself to death, sleeping on a cold stone floor, hoping to please God.

He had already had the grace the church offered at his baptism, confirmation, and daily masses, he had taken Holy Orders and was doing endless penance—but his soul was tormented and his body was unable to be holy.

At the depths of his despair, guided by an older monk, he turned to Romans and in the Scriptures we read this morning, saw the wonder of justification by God, through faith alone.

Justification is the greatest doctrine in the Bible, and the most vital. Martin Luther (1483-1546), the great reformer was saved only after he realized that justification was by faith alone. When this truth dawned upon his heart he overflowed with the joy of the Gospel and spent the rest of his life proclaiming it everywhere he could. What is justification as presented by God in His Word the Bible?

## The Greatest Doctrine In the Bible

The theological term for salvation by grace, through the sacrifice of Christ Jesus on the Cross, is justification by faith. Justification is the "**act of God whereby He declares the believing sinner righteous in Christ on the basis of the finished work of Christ on the cross**". Each piece of this definition must be considered carefully.

First, justification is an act of God, not a process in our lives. Justification has no degrees; each believer gets the same righteous standing before God.

Next, God alone can justify, we are helpless and can only believe. But, justification does not mean that God makes us righteous, but that He declares us righteous. Justification is the legal recording of Christ's righteousness onto the record of our life, and the record of our sinfulness onto Him. Nothing can change this legal event.

Finally, justification begins sanctification. Sanctification is the life-long process whereby God makes each believer more and more Christ-like. Our sanctification will vary from day to day, but our justification never varies. The moment we trusted Christ, God declares us righteous, and His declaration can never be repealed. Once justified, God forever looks at us as if we had never sinned!

Now as we open to Romans 5:1-11 we see the doorway to all that God has done for sinners through the cross, the wonders of justification.

*Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, 2through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. 3And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; 4and perseverance, character; and character, hope. 5Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us. 6For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. 7For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. 8But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. 9Much 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. 11And not only that, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.*

Simply stated, the Bible says that all sinners (so that means all humans that have ever lived on planet earth except Jesus Christ) have seven basic Biblically described critical and soul threatening needs.

God's Word describes all humans as desperately in need of salvation. We each were born hopelessly lost, sitting in darkness awaiting destruction—unless saved by His grace. The Bible describes the gift of salvation using seven key terms:

1. **FORGIVENESS: When God removes my debts.** Ephesians 1:7 In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace
2. **JUSTIFICATION: When God Changes my State.** [Romans 5:1](#) Therefore, having **been justified by faith, we have peace with God** through our Lord Jesus Christ.
3. **REGENERATION: When God transforms my Heart.** [Ezekiel 36:26-27](#) I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. 27 I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them.

4. RECONCILIATION: **When God becomes my Friend.** Romans 5:10-11 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. 11And not only that, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.
  
5. ADOPTION: **When God Changes my Family.** [Romans 8:14-17](#) *For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. 15 For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but **you received the Spirit of adoption** by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father." 16 The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, 17 and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.*
  
6. REDEMPTION: **When God changes my ownership.** I Corinthians 6:19-20 Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? 20For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.
  
7. SANCTIFICATION: **When God Changes my Behavior.** [Hebrews 10:14-16](#) *For by one offering He has perfected forever those **who are being sanctified**. But the Holy Spirit also witnesses to us; for after He had said before, "This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the Lord: I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds I will write them."*

That is the whole list of the elements of the gift of salvation, let's return to the:

## **THE GIFT OF JUSTIFICATION**

The second element of the gift of salvation is justification; and *because of our sin—we are all guilty convicts in God's sight; so we need justification.*

In the last few months the newspapers of the world have been examining the problem we have in America of not knowing what to do with all of our restless, convicted lawbreaking inhabitants that live in our borders. We have the dubious recognition of being the most incarcerated peoples of the world. Here are some headlines from Britain.

### **A. U.S. has the most prisoners in the world<sup>1</sup>**

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - Tough sentencing laws, record numbers of drug offenders and high crime rates have contributed to the United States having the

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<sup>1</sup> By James Vicini <http://news.scotsman.com/latest.cfm?id=1832552006>

largest prison population and the highest rate of incarceration in the world, according to criminal justice experts.

A U.S. Justice Department report released on November 30 showed that a record 7 million people -- or one in every 32 American adults -- were behind bars, on probation or on parole at the end of last year. Of the total, 2.2 million were in prison or jail.

According to the International Centre for Prison Studies at King's College in London, more people are behind bars in the United States than in any other country. China ranks second with 1.5 million prisoners, followed by Russia with 870,000.

But the reality is actually vastly greater than one in 32—it is actually ALL of the inhabitants of the USA are convicts in God's sight; and so are all of the other people alive around the world this moment.

So Christ died to take guilty convicts and destroy any record that that ever committed a crime and takes their place in the punishment—**that's justification!** A Sinner stands before God as accused and is declared righteous by His imputed righteousness. The mark of a true believer is their agreement of their guilt before a Holy God. Listen to David, Isaiah, and Paul:

*Psalm 51:3-4 For **I** acknowledge **my** transgressions, And **my sin** is always before me. 4 Against You, You only, **have I sinned**, And done this evil in Your sight— That You may be found just when You speak, And blameless when You judge. NKJV*

*Isaiah 53:6 **All we** like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, **every one**, to his own way; And the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. NKJV*

## **Only Sinner Are Justified**

Justification is only for those who confess their crimes (sins) to the judge (God) and ask for His pardon and forgiveness. All of those who refuse to believe they are guilty, hopelessly sinful convicts in Christ's eyes; and are denied any relief from the penalty of their sins—both now and forever.

Have you experienced **the peace of justification, all guilt removed, all punishment forever taken away from God's sight?**

What does it mean to be "justified"? In popular, everyday language the word can be paraphrased: "just as if I'd never sinned". One Bible teacher from England liked to describe justification by the story of what happened when a wealthy Englishman bought a Rolls Royce car and took it to France on his vacation.

The new Rolls broke down. At great expense the factory flew out a mechanic, and not only repaired the car but entertained the customer in the best available hotel. When he arrived home he expected to receive a large bill but none came. Eventually he wrote, asking for his account to be rendered. He received this reply: "Dear Sir, We have no record of anything ever having gone wrong with your car."

That is exactly what it means to be justified. It means that God has no record of anything ever having gone wrong in our lives. The truth of justification can become the greatest truth in the Bible if you think about it long enough.

One believer, a century plus ago wrote down the results of the justifying work of Christ Jesus on the cross in the poem/hymn entitled:

## **Before the throne of God above**

Charitie Bancroft (1841-1923)

Before the throne of God above  
I have a strong and perfect plea.  
A great high Priest whose Name is Love  
Who ever lives and pleads for me.  
My name is graven on His hands,  
My name is written on His heart.  
I know that while in heaven He stands  
No tongue can bid me thence depart.

When Satan tempts me to despair  
**And tells me of the guilt within,**  
Upward I look and see Him there  
**Who made an end of all my sin.**  
Because the sinless Savior died  
My sinful soul is counted free.  
For God the just is satisfied  
To look on Him and pardon me.

Behold Him there the risen Lamb,  
My perfect spotless righteousness,  
The great unchangeable I am,  
King of glory and of grace,  
One in Himself I cannot die.  
My soul is purchased by His blood,  
My life is hid with Christ on high,  
With Christ my Savior and my God!

## **The Doorway to All Spiritual Blessings**

As we read in Romans 5, Christ's work finished on our behalf allows us to enter into all

of the promises of God for our new lives. Justification is the front half of salvation, the back half is called sanctification.

Romans 3-5 is about justification and Romans 6-8 is about sanctification. May I again remind you of the two sides of the coin of salvation? To best understand what God has done, let me contrast and explain justification and sanctification.

Because we are saved (justified) this is how we should live (sanctified).

- **Justification** is what Christ did for me on the cross--**sanctification** is what Christ is doing in me because of the cross.
- **Justification** is immediate and was completely finished in me the instant I was saved—**sanctification** is an ongoing process never completed on earth until I meet Jesus face to face at death or His coming.
- **Justification** is activated the moment I trust in the Person of Christ Jesus and His finished sacrifice of the cross—**sanctification** grows with each obedient choice I make empowered by the Holy Spirit.
- **Justification** is my position declared right in God's sight—**sanctification** is my practice made right by becoming more conformed to His image.

To apply these great truths to our daily lives, we need to decide that we will:

## OPEN THE GIFT OF JUSTIFICATION

*Because of our sin—we are all guilty convicts in God's sight; so we need justification.*

Jesus died to take guilty convicts and destroy any record that that ever committed a crime and takes their place in the punishment—**that's justification!** A Sinner stands before God as accused and is declared righteous by His imputed righteousness.

**In Justification we go from being accused and guilty before God to being righteous and with no record of wrongs!**

We need to experience what the Scriptures often declare—God has once and for all through Christ's sacrifice justified us. That means that He has accused us, declared us guilty of sin and then made us righteous and forever deleted the record of all our wrongs.

Turn over to Romans 8 and see how Paul applies the truth of our justification:

*Romans 8:33-34 "Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies.34 Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us."*

I have been justified and by Christ justifying me and because the record has been erased —***I am free forever from condemnation.*** Say that aloud with me

As the hymn writer so clearly says it:

When Satan tempts me to despair  
***And tells me of the guilt within,***  
Upward I look and see Him there  
***Who made an end of all my sin.***  
Because the sinless Savior died  
My sinful soul is counted free.  
For God the just is satisfied  
To look on Him and pardon me.

## **START A NEW SPIRITUAL EXERCISE**

If you have never tried this I'd encourage you to start a new dimension of your spiritual life by opening your gifts God gave you in salvation. Let me share with you one of the more wonderful spiritual exercises you can ever do.

As you begin each day, each month, and as we begin this new year, one of our greatest privileges is to open and enjoy the gift of salvation God has given to us. By faith we please God when we believe what He's said about us. We need to not live by what others say or have said about us all your life.

Satan is the Accuser and wants us to only remember all the many times we have fallen; Satan delights in the days, weeks, or months he can keep us condemning ourselves for what we've done. That is his plan, so don't fall for it. Resist Satan as you believe the truth; speak the truth; and preach the Gospel to yourself.

And when ever we fall down, God says to just turn back to Him and repent, confessing our sin immediately—and believe that what God has promised in His salvation. We are forgiven, justified, regenerated, reconciled, adopted, redeemed, and sanctified. That makes us precious in His sight, special in His plan.

One of the most powerful habits you could develop is to take these truths about the gift of salvation and rejoice by faith in what God has done and wants to do in you!

Keep this list of what God did in salvation for you in your Bible, at home, on your computer, put one on your mirror where you start your day, and in your car. Put this truth into your mind as a reminder of what great things God has promised and done through Christ's death for us!

Slowly as you understand and lay hold on these truths a life-changing transformation take place in our minds, and then in our emotions, and finally throughout our entire life as we live each day based on God's eternal truth.

### **And Can it be?**

Charles Wesley (1707-1788)

And can it be that I should gain an int'rest in the Savior's blood? Died He for me, who caused His pain? For me, who Him to death pursued?

He left His Father's throne above, so free, so infinite His grace! Emptied Himself of all but love, and bled for Adam's helpless race.

No condemnation now I dread; I am my Lord's and He is mine: Alive in Him, my living Head, and clothed in righteousness divine.

Refrain: Amazing love! How can it be that Thou, my God, shouldst die for me?

More truths to cling to as we remember Christ's justifying sacrifice for us:

- *1 Corinthians 6:17 "But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with Him."*

By Christ justifying me—***I am forever united with the Lord.*** Say that aloud with me

- *Ephesians 1:4 "... just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love".*

By Christ justifying me—***I was chosen by Jesus to be holy and blameless in his sight.*** Say that aloud with me

- *Ephesians 2:6 "...and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus".*

By Christ justifying me—***I am already seated with Christ in Heaven.*** Say that aloud with me

- *Ephesians 3:12 "... in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through faith in Him".*

By Christ justifying me—***I can always approach God with confidence.*** Say that aloud with me

- *Colossians 3:3 "For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God".*

By Christ justifying me—***I am safely hidden with Christ in God.*** Say that aloud with me

- Hebrews 4:15-16 "For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.16 Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need." By Christ justifying me—I always have His grace and help. Say that aloud with me