

190724 Doctrine Series, Justification of Stand & State-CThurman

30. Justification*

Those that have union with Christ are justified from all their sins by the blood of Christ. This justification is a gracious and full acquittance of a guilty sinner from all sin by God through the satisfaction that Christ has made by His death for all their sins, and this applied through faith.

1Jn.1:7; He.10:14, 9:26; 2Co.5:19; Ro.3:23; Ac.13:38, 39; Ro.5:1, 3:25, 30.

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Job asks the question in light of the fact that all men come into this world sinners.

Job 25:4 How then can man be justified with God? or how can he be clean that is born of a woman?

The Biblical doctrine of justification answers this question. Every man in Adam enters into this world a sinner & condemned. To have standing before God he must become righteous. That is what justification does. It places a man in right standing before God.

There are three points to make at the beginning of this lesson which might be of some help as we consider this subject tonight.

1. The Bible does not teach eternal justification.
2. The Bible teaches the justification of the *standing* of the elect, which is by Christ's blood. And,
3. The Bible teaches the justification of the *state* of the elect which is by faith.

Over the years I have both read materials and listened to sermons by great brethren of the past and present that support the doctrine of eternal justification. I have been unable to conclude this doctrine from the word of God. My objection is very simple: if there is such a thing as eternal justification, that the elect of God were justified by God from eternity, what purpose was there for the Father sending His only begotten Son into the world to die if it wasn't to justify the ungodly?

Ro 4:5 But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.

So, if the elect were justified from eternity, then why justify the justified?

Concerning the first statement in our confession of faith:

‘Those that have union with Christ [refers to the elect of God from eternity past] are justified from all their sins by the blood of Christ ...’ [in other words, Christ’s death for the elect resulted in their justification before God.]

The Elect of God Are Justified in Their Standing

So, there is a justification of all of the elect of God when the Son of God died for them. This is a once-for-all justification of the standing of God’s elect. If we do not understand the biblical doctrine of election, that God chose some and gave them to Christ before the foundation of the world, you’re going to have difficulty understanding this once-for-all justification.

Think of the elect as one, whole group that is in Christ. These all were justified before God at one & the same time. That time was when the Lord Jesus died on the cross. Their standing was corrected from being condemned & dying in sins, to being justified & living before God. Our confession of faith says that much. Justification is the act of God making one righteous in the eyes of God.

Ro 5:19 For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.

If we receive the Scriptures as they are written we know that the Father unconditionally gave some to the Son in eternity *past*, or before the foundation of the world, by the act of *choosing*. (Jn.6.39; Eph.1.4) These are the people for whom God sent His only begotten Son to die so that they might be justified before God. (Mt.1.21; Jn.10.26-29; 11.52)

Joh 10:15 As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep.

Joh 17:9 I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine.

...

20 Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word;

The Son of God stood *in their behalf* and represented them when He came among men. He is their Head, Chief, and Captain. So, as *in Adam* all men suffered the consequences of Adam's sin, which is condemnation & death, so those *in Christ*, the elect, received the results of Christ's righteousness through his death: justification and everlasting life.

1Co.15.21 For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead.

22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

The preposition *in* is the key word. All of those *in Adam* die; all of those *in Christ* shall be made alive.

Ro.5.19 For as by (διά, through) one man's disobedience many were made sinners (again many excepts Christ), so by (διά, through) the obedience of one shall many (which exclude those not of the elect) be made righteous [or, just, δίκαιοι, nom. pl. masc., tss. right, righteous, just meet.].

When Jesus Christ died on the cross He died in the place of His people. He bore their punishment in His body. When He gave up his spirit and died, He died for the entire election of grace in that moment. The Father punished His only begotten Son because of their sins.

Isa 53:6 All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

...

10 ¶ Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief:

...

12 ... he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

And it is because He died in the place of His people they were justified.

Ro 4:25 Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.

The punishment that the Son of God bore under His Father's hand resulted in *righting* the stand of all of the elect before God. Here is what took place in order for our justification. Justification involves the word *imputation*.

Imputation is a legal term. It is legal because God makes a legitimate substitution of positions between the innocent and the guilty parties. There is a legal transference between two parties. When the sins of the elect were imputed to Christ He was *treated* as if He were a sinner, though He really wasn't. And when the righteousness of Christ was imputed to us God *treated* us as if we were righteous, though we really are not. Our real sins, past, present, and future (all of them & all of the elects'), were imputed to Christ, and His real righteousness was imputed to us.

2Co 5:21 For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. (He made him sin ... and we are made righteous.)

On the one hand our sins were imputed, accounted as being upon Jesus Christ so that He was condemned, punished and died in our place as if He were a sinner. He was treated as if He was a sinner.

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The issue of imputation is seen throughout the sacrificial system of the priesthood. When the Israelites sinned against the Lord, they and their

priests brought animals of the herds and flocks to be sacrificed before the Lord. Upon these animals they laid their hands & confessed their sins over them. This was imputation of sins to the animal. The animal was killed, and the people forgiven. (cf. Leviticus ch.4) In reality, God was showing Israel that there was coming the Righteous Servant of God, who would bear all of the sins of the election of grace in that one act of His death on the cross. (cf. He.10.1-14)

But on the other, His righteousness was imputed to us so that we might have a right standing, being redeemed from all iniquity (Tit.2.14) before God. We are treated as if we were righteous.

The righteousness imputed to the elect is the result of the works which Christ wrought when He was among men.

Joh 15:10 ... I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.

It is heresy and blasphemous to accuse the Lord Jesus of real sin. Notice what the Scriptures say with respect to Christ and sin. There was nothing in the Lord Jesus that could be plied to sin. (Jn.14.30, ... *the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me.*) He knew no sin. (2Co.5.21) He was without sin. (He.4.15) He did no sin. (1Pe.2.22) In him is no sin. (1Jn.3.5)

Ro.3.20 Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

Because all men descended from Adam are sinners the conclusion is that apart from the imputation of Christ's righteousness no man can be justified in the sight of God.

21 *But now the righteousness of God without (apart from) the law is manifested,*

is manifested, πεφανέρωται, 3ps, perf, ind. pass. of φανερώω, KJV tss. to manifest, to manifest forth, appear, show; the Greek perfect tense (time) communicates a

complete action, and the passive an act by another, so Wigram
tss. 'has been manifested.'

being witnessed by the law and the prophets;

*Moses, De 18:15 The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet
from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye
shall hearken ...*

*Isaiah said, Isa 53:11 He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall
be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify
many; for he shall bear their iniquities.*

*Zephaniah, Zep 3:5 The just LORD is in the midst thereof; he will not
do iniquity: every morning doth he bring his judgment to light, he
faileth not; but the unjust knoweth no shame.*

22 *Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ*

Which refers to what Jesus Christ wrought in our place by faith
during his earthly ministry as He subjected Himself fully & perfectly
to the Father's will; no man cooperates with Christ in this work.

And notice to whom Christ's righteousness comes:

unto all and upon all them that believe:

This is not saying that the righteousness of God by Christ is to all and
on all *because* of their faith. It simply marks out those for whom
Christ wrought that righteousness. When was that righteousness
manifested? At the cross of Christ.

*for there is no difference ... (that the children are Jew or Gentile matters
not)*

Concerning the second statement of our confession of faith:

‘This justification is a gracious and full acquittance of a guilty sinner from all sin by God through the satisfaction that Christ has made by His death for all their sins ...’

We have touched on the issue of sins to some extent. Here I’d like to focus on the fact that justification is freely by His grace.

Ro.3.24 Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus ...

Freely comes from the Greek δίδωμι, to give. Here it is an adverb would be *how* we are justified. He graces us *freely*. This justification is of the free grace of God. That means that the elect of God contributed nothing to the justification of their *standing* before God. God did it because He was pleased in Himself to do so. But there are texts which seem to say that faith is involved. Again, there is a justification which has to do with our standing before God, and another which has to do with our state or condition.

The Bible says that we are also justified by faith, and this refers to justification of our *state*. This is the righting of a sinners state in life. He begins to act like a different person. Real faith alters the way we live. In this way it could be said that faith is a cause.

Ro 5:1 Therefore being justified by (ἐκ, of, from) faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ ... (cf. Ro.3.28; Gal.3.24)

But let’s make a distinction in justification by grace and justification by faith. The first is of the free grace of God. *Faith* is not a means for receiving grace. It is not a means for the new birth. It is not the means for justifying our standing before God. When faith or any other part of the fruit of the Spirit is applied like this it becomes a work. But faith is part of the fruit of the Spirit.

Ga 5:22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith ...

So it cannot be the cause of grace or else God did not act of His free grace. Grace is the cause of faith. So, listen carefully, did God bestow His grace of life upon us

because we believed? Well, let's consider the other fruit of the Spirit. Did God bestow His grace upon us *because* ...

- of our love for Him,
- our joy in Him,
- our peace with him, and
- our longsuffering, gentleness, & goodness to others; and so forth.

When the fruit of the Spirit is applied in this manner it becomes a work. But what was our standing before God prior to His free grace of justification? The Bible says that Christ He died for the *ungodly*. (Ro.5.6) That He reconciled us when we were enemies. (Ro.5.10) That He commended His love to us while we were yet sinners. (Ro.5.8) Then there was no faith, no love, no joy, no peace, and so forth. The fruit of the Spirit is not a means for grace, but grace is the only means for the gifts of God & the fruit of the Spirit. Otherwise we have perverted the doctrine of Christ.

Concerning the last phrase of our statement of faith:

And finally the confession closes with the words, '... and this applied through faith.' Faith *rights* the life of the children of God. Remember the episode of the Pharisee and the publican? It was the Publican that demonstrated true faith in Christ.

Lu 18:11 The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican.

12 I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.

This Pharisee was not in a right standing before God, and there was no faith that justified his life.

13 And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon 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 every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

14 I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

Do you know why the Publican prayed so? His faith justified his life. Do you know why His faith justified his life? Because God in His free grace justified him by the blood of His only begotten Son on the cross. And one day God, for Christ's sake, brought that Publican to life and revealed in him the Son of God crucified for his sins.

Jesus Christ represented all of the elect of all of history when He died. It didn't matter if they lived before His death or after, their justification was founded upon the shed blood of Jesus Christ.

So today we have tried to establish in our minds the doctrine of justification. The elect of God all fell in Adam. But because they are Christ's they were all justified at once by the death of Christ to have standing before God. (Ro.3.23, 24; 8.33; Tit.3.7) Now, they shall all experience justification by faith. (Ro.3.28; 5.1; Ja.2.21-25) What is that but the time when faith works in them to right the condition of their lives? So, by the word of God, there are two parts to justification. First it restores the standing, and then the state; the position, then the condition. First He sets our feet upon the Rock, and then He establishes our goings.

Ps 40:2 He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings.