

## **Session 10. Justification (part two)**

### **Introduction and recap**

Bible-reading and opening prayer - **Galatians 3:1-14**.

Last week we began thinking about the Bible's teaching on justification. We saw that justification is a legal declaration that we are right with God. God imputes the perfect righteousness of Christ to ungodly and wicked people who are joined to Jesus in faith-union.

Last time we only skimmed briefly over the fact that righteousness is imputed to those who believe, to those who exercise faith in Jesus. But believing and not earning is so central to justification that the doctrine of justification is frequently spoken of as "justification-by-faith" – faith and righteousness are glued together inseparably.

Because it's so important we're going to spend this whole session thinking about **justification BY FAITH**. We'll see that in the Bible. We're going to see why the Roman Catholic doctrine of salvation is fatally flawed at this point. And we're going to think about our works – **where DO the good works of the Christian fit in**.

### **1. Christ's righteousness is imputed to those who BELIEVE**

#### **(a) justification is by faith alone – it is not by works**

The necessary means of justification is personal faith in Jesus Christ as crucified saviour and risen Lord (Rom 4:23-25, 10:8-13). (Or to put it another way the instrumental cause of justification is faith.)

Remember how we described saving faith in our last session: it is merely an instrument. It's like an empty hand that reaches out to take hold of the free gift of salvation. The meritorious ground of our justification – the merit – is all in Christ. Faith ALONE is merely the means of taking hold of salvation.

There are *many, many* Bible texts that make this point. Let's look at some of them:

Galatians 2:15-16, "'We who are Jews by birth and not 'Gentile sinners'<sup>16</sup> know that a man is not justified by observing 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 observing the law, because by observing the law no one will be justified."

Galatians 3:8-9, "The Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, and announced the gospel in advance to Abraham: "All nations will be blessed through you."<sup>9</sup> So those who have faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith."

Galatians 5:4-5, "You who are trying to be justified by law have been alienated from Christ; you have fallen away from grace."<sup>5</sup> But by faith we eagerly await through the Spirit the righteousness for which we hope."

Philippians 3:8-9, "What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ<sup>9</sup> and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ-- the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith."

Romans 1:17, "For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: "The righteous will live by faith.'"

Romans 3:22-30, "This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference,<sup>23</sup> for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,<sup>24</sup> and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.<sup>25</sup> God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. He did this to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished--<sup>26</sup> he did it to demonstrate his justice at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus.<sup>27</sup> Where, then, is boasting? It is excluded. On what principle? On that of observing the law? No, but on that of faith.<sup>28</sup> For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from observing the law.<sup>29</sup> Is God the God of Jews only? Is he not the God of Gentiles too? Yes, of Gentiles too,<sup>30</sup> since there is only one God, who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through that same faith."

Romans 4:3-5, "What does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness."<sup>4</sup> Now when a man works, his wages are not credited to him as a gift, but as an obligation.<sup>5</sup> However, to the man who does not work but trusts God who justifies the wicked, his faith is credited as righteousness."

Romans 4:16, "Therefore, the promise comes by faith, so that it may be by grace and may be guaranteed to all Abraham's offspring-- not only to those who are of the law but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham. He is the father of us all."

Romans 4:23-24, "The words "it was credited to him" were written not for him alone,<sup>24</sup> but also for us, to whom God will credit righteousness-- for us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead."

### **(b) why it has to be by faith alone**

You might know that at the heart of the Reformation rediscovery of Biblical truth were five "alone" statements – the five *solas*. These matter a lot. We should know them by heart.<sup>1</sup>

- Scripture alone
- Faith alone
- Grace alone
- Christ alone
- To the glory of God alone

They belong together – and they "work" together. It's a package deal, if you like. Notice a couple of things:

First, we're saved by grace. Nothing inside us could deal with our problem. No righteous deeds *in us* could be good enough. Even the saintliest Christian is still a sinner through and through. None of our works could ever earn merit. We're saved by grace – by the free gift of God.

Second, faith alone fits with grace alone. Grace is a gift, and faith is the open-handed response of receiving a gift that is given. Earning and deserving does not fit with grace.

Third, salvation by Christ, by grace, through faith works to bring glory to God alone. No merit or praise accrues to us. All glory goes to Him.

Next, we're going to think about justification and the teaching of the Roman Catholic church.

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<sup>1</sup> Latin: *sola scriptura, sola fide, sola gratia, solus Christus, soli deo Gloria.*

## 2. Justification and Roman Catholic doctrine

### (a) Does this really matter?

It was on this point – justification by faith – that the Protestant Reformers in the 16<sup>th</sup> century divided from the Roman church. Why do we care about this now?

There's lots we share in common with Roman Catholics – the same doctrine of the Trinity and adherence to the same early church creeds. We have a shared commitment to sexuality morality and ethics. We see a robustness in Roman Catholic bishops that tragically we often do not see in our own.

Should we entirely put to one side our historical differences? Should we even go off and become Roman Catholics?

Some evangelicals on both sides of the Atlantic have made that move. They've been put off by what you might call our "evangelical" culture with its light weight worship, a culture of entertainment, a lack of transcendence, doctrinal shoddiness and an almost complete disconnection with the tradition of the church in the past. They've seen in Roman Catholicism a depth, conviction, a historical continuity, often a greater quality of scholarship.

Particularly if you're in church leadership in any way you need to understand fairly deeply why we divide from our Roman Catholic friends. All of us, actually, need to think clearly and deeply about Roman Catholicism – so that we can appreciate its strengths but also understand why being Protestant and Reformed is so important. We'll see why the eternal good of our souls relies upon it.

### (b) Justification is NOT something that God does IN us

Justification is often misunderstood. It does not mean to *make us inwardly* righteous, or good, or holy, or upright. Justification does not refer to this renewing and sanctifying grace of God. It is NOT about moral transformation.

God DOES do this inward work – in regeneration and sanctification, completing it in glorification. But we mustn't confuse justification with regeneration and sanctification.

As we said in our previous session, justification is a legal declaration it is forensic, judicial, legal in character. Saving righteousness is alien to us. It is outside of us, not internal to us.

Here's how John Murray explains the distinction:

"Regeneration is an act of God in us; justification is a judgment of God with respect to us. The distinction is like that of the distinction between the act of a surgeon and the act of a judge. The surgeon, when he removes an inward cancer, does something in us. That is not what a judge does – he gives a verdict regarding our judicial status. If we are innocent he declares accordingly."  
(*Redemption accomplished and applied*, p121)

Consider the distinction between these different phases in the order of salvation:

<b>Regeneration</b>	<b>Saving righteousness</b>	<b>Personal righteousness / Growing holiness / Progressive sanctification</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• By God's grace</li><li>• In us</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• By God's grace</li><li>• NOT in us</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• By God's grace</li><li>• In us</li></ul>

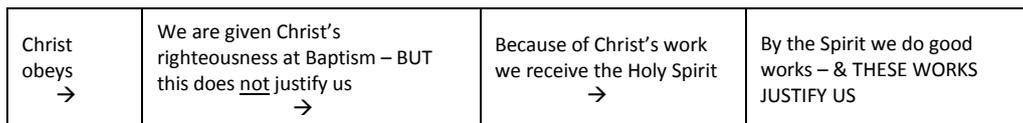
### (c) Roman Catholicism confuses justification and regeneration

- **Justification at the Council of Trent (1545-1547)**

Roman Catholic doctrine on justification was clarified at the council of Trent (1545-47). This church council met in deliberate opposition to Reformation theology. What they taught is still the official doctrine of the RC church.

We're now going to spend a few moments looking at Roman teaching on justification in a little detail. I know that some of us were converted out of Roman Catholicism – or have Catholics in your family. So it might be useful to have a bit more detail

Here's a flow chart showing what the Roman Catholic church believes about justification. Let me talk you through it, from left to right:



The problems with the RC doctrine of justification are huge. It conflicts with the Bible's teaching at so many different points:

- on this schema, justification goes up and down: on a good day you're more righteous, on a bad day you're less righteous.
- assurance is impossible (and is specifically condemned by Trent). And you can see why: if saving righteousness is reliant on my works then I can *never* be sure that I'm going to be saved or stay saved.
- the Church and the human Priest are exalted as channels of grace:
  - o what the Priest does at Baptism and at the Mass dispenses grace
  - o specifically, the Mass is thought of as a re-sacrifice of Christ, week by week by week. It's implied that his death on the Cross was insufficient. And so a human priest must re-sacrifice him again and again. Why? In order to get divine grace to give to people, to forgive past sins and enable them to do good works, by which they'll be saved.

But the biggest problem of all is that it teaches salvation by works. You could sum it up like this:

“Christ earns us grace so that we can produce good works and earn our way to heaven.”

In technical language, the RC church teaches infused righteousness, not imputed righteousness. It is righteousness IN US that saves.

Where does this error stem from? At one level from confusing justification with regeneration and sanctification.<sup>2</sup>

The key question to ask of RC theology is this:

Question: “Where do we find justifying righteousness?”

Answer: Not in Christ, but in us – in our good works.

Why does that matter? If justifying righteousness is found in OUR WORKS, then those works are meritorious. They earn credit. They are the meritorious cause of justification.

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<sup>2</sup> The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (1994), citing the Council of Trent (Sixth Session, Chapter VII, 1547), declares: “Justification is not only the remission of sins, but also the *sanctification and renewal of the interior man*” (para. 1989, emphasis supplied). It also states: “Justification is conferred in Baptism” and by it God “*makes us inwardly just by the power of his mercy*” (para. 1992, emphasis supplied). Cited from Robert Reymond, *A new systematic theology of the Christian faith*, fn.44, p741.

The RC church teaches salvation by works. Yes, it's a bit more complicated than just saying "you earn your way to heaven." Roman theology and liturgy is full of the language of grace – which can be confusing to our eyes. But it genuinely is salvation by works - which is entirely opposed to the Gospel.

THE great re-discovery of the Reformation is this: the Bible teaches justification by GRACE alone, through FAITH alone. Faith excludes all works from our saving righteousness.

John Murray writes: "If justification is confused with regeneration or sanctification, then the door is opened for the perversion of the gospel at its centre. Justification is still the article of the standing or falling Church" (*Redemption Accomplished and Applied*, p121).

### **3. Where DO our good works fit in?**

Can we just live how we want – is it enough to trust Christ, and then live however we like? If we know that's wrong the question still remains: what is the relationship between saving righteousness and obedience?

You can sum up the Bible's teaching like this...

#### **(a) We are not saved by good works. But we are not saved without works**

Or to put it another way: we are saved by grace alone. But grace is never alone. It is always accompanied by good works.

This is what James 2:24 is getting at. "You see that a person is justified by what he does and not by faith alone." Is this denying the principle of grace alone? Martin Luther, bless him, got James completely wrong at this point – he called his letter a "strawy epistle" and wanted it chucked out of the Bible.

We need to read that verse in context – looking at vv14-26. James' point is this. Saving faith is ALWAYS accompanied by good works. We are saved by faith alone, but saving faith is *never* alone. If you find someone professing faith but with absolutely no good works, then the Bible would say they DON'T have saving faith and are not justified.

#### **(b) Good works do not justify us. Good works are evidence of justification**

Jesus' words in Matthew 7:15-23 are helpful here. Let's look at that passage. The principle is this: fruit shows what a heart is like. Fruit or good works reveal the state of someone's heart. They are evidence of the person's spiritual state: justified or not, converted or not, saved or not.

### **4. Summary**

By way of summary let's look at what two Reformed statements of belief have to say about justification:

#### **(a) From the 39 Articles of Religion**

##### **Article 11 The justification of man (modernised English)**

We are accounted righteous before God solely on account of the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ through faith and not on account of our own good works or of what we deserve. Consequently the teaching that we are justified by faith alone is a most wholesome and comforting doctrine. This is taught more fully in the homily on Justification.

##### **Article 12 Good works (modernised English)**

Although good works, which are the fruits of faith and follow on after justification, can never atone for our sins or face the strict justice of God's judgment, they are nevertheless pleasing and acceptable to God in Christ and necessarily spring from a true and living faith. Thus a living faith is as plainly known by its good works as a tree is known by its fruit.

### **(b) From the Westminster Confession of Faith – Chapter XI – Of Justification**

1. Those whom God effectually calleth, he also freely justifieth: not by infusing righteousness into them, but by pardoning their sins, and by accounting and accepting their persons as righteous; not for anything wrought in them, or done by them, but for Christ's sake alone; nor by imputing faith itself, the act of believing, or any other evangelical obedience to them, as their righteousness; but by imputing the obedience and satisfaction of Christ unto them, they receiving and resting on him and his righteousness, by faith; which faith they have not of themselves, it is the gift of God.
2. Faith, thus receiving and resting on Christ and his righteousness, is the alone instrument of justification: yet is it not alone in the person justified, but is ever accompanied with all other saving graces, and is no dead faith, but worketh by love.
3. Christ, by his obedience and death, did fully discharge the debt of all those that are thus justified, and did make a proper, real, and full satisfaction to his Father's justice in their behalf. Yet, inasmuch as he was given by the Father for them; and his obedience and satisfaction accepted in their stead; and both, freely, not for anything in them; their justification is only of free grace; that both the exact justice and rich grace of God might be glorified in the justification of sinners.
4. God did, from all eternity, decree to justify all the elect, and Christ did, in the fullness of time, die for their sins, and rise again for their justification: nevertheless, they are not justified, until the Holy Spirit doth, in due time, actually apply Christ unto them.
5. God doth continue to forgive the sins of those that are justified; and, although they can never fall from the state of justification, yet they may, by their sins, fall under God's fatherly displeasure, and not have the light of his countenance restored unto them, until they humble themselves, confess their sins, beg pardon, and renew their faith and repentance.
6. The justification of believers under the old testament was, in all these respects, one and the same with the justification of believers under the new testament.

## **5. Applications: humble confidence and joy**

My works do not justify me. My good works do not enhance my justification. Justification is by grace alone, through faith alone. And so it's to the glory of Christ alone.

As a result we may exult and rejoice:

Isaiah 45:24-25, "They will say of me, 'In the LORD alone are righteousness and strength.'" All who have raged against him will come to him and be put to shame.<sup>25</sup> But in the LORD all the descendants of Israel will be found righteous and will exult."

Isaiah 54:17, "no weapon forged against you will prevail, and you will refute every tongue that accuses you. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and this is their vindication [justification] from me," declares the LORD."

Isaiah 61:10, "I delight greatly in the LORD; my soul rejoices in my God. For he has clothed me with garments of salvation and arrayed me in a robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom adorns his head like a priest, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels."

Zechariah 3:1-5 – a great picture of justification from the OT.

Romans 8:33, "Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies."

Here's how the old hymn writer put it:

"Nothing in my hand I bring, simply to thy Cross I cling.

Naked come to thee for dress, helpless look to thee for grace."

Amen. To God alone by the glory.

**Rock of Ages, cleft for me,**  
Let me hide myself in Thee;  
Let the water and the blood,  
From Thy wounded side which flowed,  
Be of sin the double cure;  
Save from wrath and make me pure.

Not the labor of my hands  
Can fulfill Thy law's demands;  
Could my zeal no respite know,  
Could my tears forever flow,  
All for sin could not atone;  
Thou must save, and Thou alone.

Nothing in my hand I bring,  
Simply to the cross I cling;  
Naked, come to Thee for dress;  
Helpless look to Thee for grace;  
Foul, I to the fountain fly;  
Wash me, Savior, or I die.

While I draw this fleeting breath,  
When mine eyes shall close in death,  
When I soar to worlds unknown,  
See Thee on Thy judgment throne,  
Rock of Ages, cleft for me,  
Let me hide myself in Thee.  
(Augustus Toplady).

## **Appendix: the Westminster Confession and the 39 Articles on Justification**

### **Westminster Confession of Faith – Chapter XI – Of Justification**

1. Those whom God effectually calleth, he also freely justifieth: not by infusing righteousness into them, but by pardoning their sins, and by accounting and accepting their persons as righteous; not for anything wrought in them, or done by them, but for Christ's sake alone; nor by imputing faith itself, the act of believing, or any other evangelical obedience to them, as their righteousness; but by imputing the obedience and satisfaction of Christ unto them, they receiving and resting on him and his righteousness, by faith; which faith they have not of themselves, it is the gift of God.
2. Faith, thus receiving and resting on Christ and his righteousness, is the alone instrument of justification: yet is it not alone in the person justified, but is ever accompanied with all other saving graces, and is no dead faith, but worketh by love.
3. Christ, by his obedience and death, did fully discharge the debt of all those that are thus justified, and did make a proper, real, and full satisfaction to his Father's justice in their behalf. Yet, inasmuch as he was given by the Father for them; and his obedience and satisfaction accepted in their stead; and both, freely, not for anything in them; their justification is only of free grace; that both the exact justice and rich grace of God might be glorified in the justification of sinners.
4. God did, from all eternity, decree to justify all the elect, and Christ did, in the fullness of time, die for their sins, and rise again for their justification: nevertheless, they are not justified, until the Holy Spirit doth, in due time, actually apply Christ unto them.
5. God doth continue to forgive the sins of those that are justified; and, although they can never fall from the state of justification, yet they may, by their sins, fall under God's fatherly displeasure, and not have the light of his countenance restored unto them, until they humble themselves, confess their sins, beg pardon, and renew their faith and repentance.
6. The justification of believers under the old testament was, in all these respects, one and the same with the justification of believers under the new testament.

## **Westminster Confession of Faith**

### **Chapter XI - Of Justification (with Scripture proofs)**

I. Those whom God effectually calleth, He also freely justifieth;(a) not by infusing righteousness into them, but by pardoning their sins, and by accounting and accepting their persons as righteous, not for anything wrought in them, or done by them, but for Christ's sake alone; nor by imputing faith itself, the act of believing, or any other evangelical obedience to them, as their righteousness, but by imputing the obedience and satisfaction of Christ unto them,(b) they receiving and resting on Him and His righteousness by faith; which faith they have not of themselves, it is the gift of God.(c)

(a) Rom. 8:30; Rom. 3:24.

(b) Rom. 4:5, 6, 7, 8; II Cor. 5:19, 21; Rom. 3:22, 24, 25, 27, 28; Tit. 3:5, 7; Eph. 1:7; Jer. 23:6; I Cor. 1:30, 31; Rom. 5:17, 18, 19.

(c) Acts 10:43; Gal. 2:16; Phil. 3:19; Acts 13:38, 39; Eph. 2:7, 8.

II. Faith, thus receiving and resting on Christ and His righteousness, is the alone instrument of justification;(d) yet is it not alone in the person justified, but is ever accompanied with all other saving graces, and is no dead faith, but worketh by love.(e)

(d) John 1:12; Rom. 3:28; Rom. 5:1.

(e) Jam. 2:17, 22, 26; Gal. 5:6.

III. Christ, by His obedience and death, did fully discharge the debt of all those that are thus justified, and did make a proper, real, and full satisfaction to His Father's justice in their behalf.(f) Yet, inasmuch as He was given by the Father for them;(g) and His obedience and satisfaction accepted in their stead;(h) and both freely, not for anything in them; their justification is only of free grace;(i) that both the exact justice, and rich grace of God, might be glorified in the justification of sinners.(k)

(f) Rom. 5:8, 9, 10, 19; I Tim. 2:5, 6; Heb. 10:10, 14; Dan. 9:24, 26; Isa. 53:4, 5, 6, 10, 11, 12.

(g) Rom. 8:32.

(h) II Cor. 5:21; Matt. 3:17; Eph. 5:2.

(i) Rom. 3:24; Eph. 1:7.

(k) Rom. 3:26; Eph. 2:7.

IV. God did, from all eternity, decree to justify all the elect,(l) and Christ did, in the fulness of time, die for their sins, and rise again for their justification:(m) nevertheless, they are not justified, until the Holy Spirit doth, in due time, actually apply Christ unto them.(n)

(l) Gal. 3:8; I Pet. 1:2, 19, 20; Rom. 8:30.

(m) Gal. 4:4; I Tim. 2:6; Rom. 4:25.

(n) Col. 1:21, 22; Gal. 2:16; Tit. 3:3, 4, 5, 6, 7.

V. God doth continue to forgive the sins of those that are justified:(o) and although they can never fall from the state of justification;(p) yet they may, by their sins, fall under God's fatherly displeasure, and not have the light of His countenance restored unto them, until they humble themselves, confess their sins, beg pardon, and renew their faith and repentance.(q)

(o) Matt. 6:12; I John 1:7, 9; I John 2:1, 2.

(p) Luke 22:32; John 10:28; Heb. 10:14.

(q) Ps. 89:31, 32, 33; Ps. 51:7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12; Ps. 32:5; Matt. 26:75; I Cor. 11:30, 32; Luke 1:20.

VI. The justification of believers under the old testament was, in all these respects, one and the same with the justification of believers under the new testament.(r)

(r) Gal. 3:9, 13, 14; Rom. 4:22, 23, 24; Heb. 13:8.

## **From 39 Articles of Religion**

### **XI. Of the Justification of Man.**

We are accounted righteous before God, only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ by Faith, and not for our own works or deservings; Wherefore, that we are justified by Faith only is a most wholesome Doctrine, and very full of comfort, as more largely is expressed in the Homily of Justification.

#### **11 The justification of man (modernised English)**

We are accounted righteous before God solely on account of the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ through faith and not on account of our own good works or of what we deserve. Consequently the teaching that we are justified by faith alone is a most wholesome and comforting doctrine. This is taught more fully in the homily on Justification.

### **XII. Of Good Works.**

Albeit that Good Works, which are the fruits of Faith, and follow after Justification, cannot put away our sins, and endure the severity of God's Judgement; yet are they pleasing and acceptable to God in Christ, and do spring out necessarily of a true and lively Faith; insomuch that by them a lively Faith may be as evidently known as a tree discerned by the fruit.

#### **12 Good works (modernised English)**

Although good works, which are the fruits of faith and follow on after justification, can never atone for our sins or face the strict justice of God's judgment, they are nevertheless pleasing and acceptable to God in Christ and necessarily spring from a true and living faith. Thus a living faith is as plainly known by its good works as a tree is known by its fruit.

## **Appendix: Miscellaneous notes on justification**

### **Notes from John Murray, Redemption Accomplished and Applied – on Justification**

THE key question is that of our relation to God:

- how can man be right with the Holy God?
- more than that: how can SINFUL man be right with God? Sin is always against GOD, to which God responds in righteous indignation.
- Answer: we CANNOT be right with him – we are all wrong with him.

If we are to grasp the gospel of justification, we must have in view a deep sense of the reality of God's majesty and holiness and a deep view of our own sinfulness.

So the key question actually is: how can sinful man BECOME right with God? ie. there needs to be a complete reversal in our relation to God. Justification is the answer and justification is the act of God's free grace. "It is God who justifies: who is he that condemns?" (Rom 8:33).

GOD justifies. WE do NOT justify ourselves.

Justification is NOT...

- our apology
- a process of self-excusation
- our confession
- any religious exercise we perform, however good it may be

[p118] "At no point is the free grace of God more manifest than in his justifying act."

Justification often misunderstood:

- [p118] "Justification does not mean to make righteous, or good, or holy, or upright. It is perfectly true that in the application of redemption God makes people holy and upright... He begins to do this in regeneration and he carries it on in the work of sanctification. He will perfect it in glorification. But justification does not refer to this renewing and sanctifying grace of God. It is one of the primary errors of the Romish [p119] Church that is regards justification as the infusion of grace, as renewal and sanctification whereby we are made holy."
- ie. it confuses these two distinct acts of God's grace and eliminates from the message of the gospel the great truth of free and full justification by grace.

When WE justify a person we don't make that person good or upright.

- When a judge justifies an accused person he does not make that person an upright person. He simply declares that in his judgment the person is not guilty of the accusation but is upright in terms of the law relevant to the case.

ie. "justification is simply a declaration or pronouncement respecting the relation of the person to the law which he, the judge, is required to administer."

And Scripture uses justification in the same way – justification is DECLARATORY:

1. OT and NT passages where "justify" can only mean "declare to be righteous."

- Deuteronomy 25:1, "When men have a dispute, they are to take it to court and the judges will decide the case, acquitting [*dikaiow*] the innocent and condemning the guilty."
  - judges don't make someone righteous, simply make a declaration.
- Proverbs 17:15, "Acquitting the guilty and condemning the innocent-- the LORD detests them both."
  - it would not be an abomination to the Lord to *make* the wicked upright (This is what God does when he regenerates a man). The meaning is more obvious: *declaring* someone to be righteous when they are not – that is detestable.
- Luke 7:29, the people "justified God" (lit.): doesn't mean that they made God righteous (a blasphemous thought), but that they declared God to be righteous.

2. Justification is contrasted with condemnation. "Condemn" never means to make wicked, and so justify cannot mean to make good or upright.

- Eg. Deut 25:1 and Prov 17:15 (above).

- Romans 8:33, “Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies.<sup>34</sup> Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died-- more than that, who was raised to life-- is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.”

### 3. Texts which indicate that justification has to do with giving a legal judgment

- Rom 8:33-34 (above)
  - “justify” has to do with “bringing a charge”, not doing anything inwardly in the elect.
  - Plus, these verses show that justifying the ungodly is declaratory, and is contrasted with condemn. This is consistent meaning throughout Romans
  - ie. [p121] In Romans “justify” = “to declare to be righteous. Its meaning is entirely removed from the thought of making upright or holy or good or righteous.”

This is what is meant by insisting that j'cation is FORENSIC.

[p121] “It has to do with a judgment given, declared, pronounced; it is judicial or juridical or forensic. The main point of such terms is to distinguish between the kind of action which justification involves and the kind of action involved in regeneration. Regeneration is an act of God in us; justification is a judgment of God with respect to us. The distinction is like that of the distinction between the act of a surgeon and the act of a judge. The surgeon, when he removes an inward cancer, does something in us. That is not what a judge does – he gives a verdict regarding our judicial status. If we are innocent he declares accordingly.”

- This is a key distinction and the purity of the gospel is bound up in maintaining this distinction. “If justification is confused with regeneration or sanctification, then the door is opened for the perversion of the gospel at its centre. Justification is still the article of the standing or falling Church.”

BUT – next key question – how can God justify the UNGODLY? People who are not righteous but who are totally unrighteous? He we face something completely unique:

- man must NOT justify the ungodly (only the righteous).
- but God DOES and CAN justify the ungodly. Eg...

Romans 4:5, “However, to the man who does not work but trusts God who justifies the wicked, his faith is credited as righteousness.”

Romans 3:19-24, “Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be silenced and the whole world held accountable to God.<sup>20</sup> Therefore no one will be declared righteous in his sight by observing the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of sin.<sup>21</sup> But now a righteousness from God, apart from law, has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify.<sup>22</sup> This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference,<sup>23</sup> for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,<sup>24</sup> and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.”

How can God justly justify the unjust?

The factor which is unique in God’s justifying act (ie. we don’t find it in human acts of justification) is this:

- [p123] “he causes to be the righteous state or relation which is declared to be... He constitutes the ungodly righteous, and consequently can declare them to be righteous... we may say that the declarative act of God in the justification of the ungodly is constitutive. In this consists its incomparable character.”

And Scripture states that God’s justification is constitutive:

- Romans 5:17-19, “For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ.<sup>18</sup> Consequently, just as the result of one trespass was condemnation for all men, so also the result of one act of righteousness was justification that brings life for all men.<sup>19</sup> For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous.”
  - v19, disobedience of the one man “constitutes” many sinners, and Christ constitutes many righteous. [“constitute” / “make” = *kathistemi*.]
  - v17, we receive righteousness as a free gift.
  - And this r’ness is none other than the righteousness of the one man Jesus Christ. It is the righteousness of his obedience.

This is the truth sometimes expressed as the IMPUTATION to us of the r’ness of Christ. This answers the question “how can God justify the ungodly?”

[p124] "Justification is... a constitutive act whereby the righteousness of Christ is imputed to our account and we are accordingly accepted as righteous in God's sight."

- "God cannot but accept into his favour those who are invested with the righteousness of his own Son."
- God's wrath is revealed from heaven against all unrighteousness. But his good pleasure is also revealed from heaven upon the righteousness of his Son.

As a result we may exult and rejoice:

Isaiah 45:24-25, "They will say of me, 'In the LORD alone are righteousness and strength.'" All who have raged against him will come to him and be put to shame. <sup>25</sup> But in the LORD all the descendants of Israel will be found righteous and will exult."

Isaiah 61:10, "I delight greatly in the LORD; my soul rejoices in my God. For he has clothed me with garments of salvation and arrayed me in a robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom adorns his head like a priest, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels."

Isaiah 54:17, "no weapon forged against you will prevail, and you will refute every tongue that accuses you. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and this is their vindication [justification] from me," declares the LORD."

Romans 8:33, "Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies."

[p124] "Justification is both a declarative and a constitutive act of God's free grace. It is constitutive in order that it may be truly declarative. God must constitute the new relationship [p125] as well as declare it to be. The constitutive act consists in the imputation to us of the obedience and righteousness of Christ."

- ie. the GROUND of justification is the obedience of Christ, which God reckons to our account.

NB. It is not faith that is reckoned as righteousness. (Gen 15:6, quoted in Rom 4:3,9,22, Gal 3:6, Jam 2:23). It might appear so from these texts that *faith* then is the ground of j'cation. But NO.

- Scripture says we're justified BY or THROUGH or UPON faith. But never that we are justified ON ACCOUNT OF or BECAUSE OF faith.

Other factors show that faith is not itself the righteousness.

1. Even a perfect r'ness in us would not meet the requirements of the full justification which Scripture presents j'cation to be. Because it would not deal with past sin and God's wrath upon it. We need a r'ness that deals with this. \*Inwrought r'ness does not deal with this need.\* And the r'ness wrought in us by regeneration is never perfect in this life.
2. J'cation is not by works/performance. Repeated insistence of Scripture. Rom 3:20, 4:2, 10:3,4, Gal 2:16, 3:11, 5:4, Phil 3:9.
3. We are justified by grace. (Rom 3:24ff, 5:15-21).

So, for perfect justification we must look away from ourselves.

1. In Xt are we justified. Union with Christ.

Acts 13:39, "Through him everyone who believes is justified from everything you could not be justified from by the law of Moses."

Romans 8:1, "Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus,"

1 Corinthians 6:11, "And that is what some of you were. 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."

Galatians 2:17" "If, while we seek to be justified in Christ, it becomes evident that we ourselves are sinners, does that mean that Christ promotes sin? Absolutely not!"

2. Through Xt's blood/Cross are we justified. (Rom 3:24, 5:9, 8:33-34).

Cross is brought into centre of attention when we think of justification.

3. It is by God's righteousness that we are justified – not by our righteousness. [alien r'ness].

Rom 1:17, 3:21-22, 10:3, Phil 3:9.

4. It is the r'ness and obedience of Xt (Rom 5:17-19)

This is the final reason why we are pointed away from ourselves to Xt and his accomplished work.

[p127] "And this is the reason why the r'ness of j'cation is the r'ness of God. It is the r'ness of Christ wrought by him in human nature, the [p128] r'ness of his obedience unto death, even the death of the cross. But, as such, it is the r'ness of the God-man, a r'ness which measures up to the requirements of our sinful and sin-cursed situation, a r'ness which meets all the demands of a

complete and irrevocable justification, and a righteousness fulfilling all these demands because it is a righteousness of divine property and character, a righteousness undefiled and inviolable.”

The instrument connected to justification is FAITH. Justification is by faith, or thru faith, or upon faith.

- Rom 1:17, 3:22-30, 4:3-5, 16, 24, Gal 2:16, 3:8-9, 5:4-5, Phil 3:9
- Gal 2:16 particularly clear that we have faith in Christ in order to be justified.

There are good reasons why justification is by faith – and by faith alone.

1. It is consonant with the fact that it is by grace (Rom 4:16). [p130]
2. It is congruous with the fact that the ground of justification is the righteousness of Christ. “The specific quality of faith is that it receives and rests upon another, in this case Christ and his righteousness.”
3. “By faith alone” exemplifies the freeness and richness of the gospel of grace.

[p131] “It is an old and time-worn objection that this doctrine ministers to licence and looseness... Justification is by faith alone, but not by a faith that is alone... Faith alone justifies but a justified person with faith alone would be a monstrosity which never exists in the kingdom of grace. Faith works itself out through love (cf. Gal 5:6). And faith without works is dead (cf. James 2:17-20).

See Rom 6:1-2.

## **Extract from Capitol Hill Baptist Church “Core Seminar” on Justification.**

The next step in the logical order of salvation is that of justification.

Justification is “an instantaneous legal act of God in which He 1) thinks of our sins as forgiven and of Christ’s righteousness as belonging to us, and 2) declares us to be righteous in His sight.” This is the step that happens simultaneously with our conversion. It is the step that changes our legal position, or standing, before God immediately and forever.

Unlike the steps of regeneration and conversion that are done internally and spiritually, justification is an external, legal work. If we think of regeneration as comparable to the work of a surgeon creating a new heart, justification would then be comparable to the work of a judge. It is an external, legal declaration by God of our position before God – namely that we are now righteous, or clean, or “not guilty” before Him.

So how does this work? Well, the process by which we are justified before God following conversion is called imputation. Imputation is “the process whereby God ‘credits Christ’s righteousness to our account,’ just as He ‘credited our sins to Christ’s account’ on the cross.”

***It is instantaneous upon our true confession of faith in Christ. It is based on that faith alone, not on any works of merit, and it is a final determination of our position before God. In other words, God thinks of Christ’s righteousness as belonging to us, and He thinks of our sin as belonging to Christ. “Christ does not simply merit for us grace so that we can then produce good works and earn our way to heaven,”<sup>3</sup> as is the position of Roman Catholicism.<sup>4</sup> Scripture is clear on this point.***

***In Galatians 2:16 Paul writes “that a man is not justified by observing 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 observing the law, because by observing the law no one will be justified.”***

It is very important that we remember the reason for the occurrence of this process and declaration. Our faith in Christ is the “trigger” for justification. Faith is itself a gift of God that we have no ability to obtain or exercise on our own. Left alone we simply cannot produce saving faith, and we cannot earn faith or salvation by any act or merit on our part. Therefore, we must conclude that we are justified by God’s grace alone through faith alone.

Have you ever wondered why faith is the means that God uses to justify the sinner? Why didn’t God use love or humility or kindness? Well, God uses faith because it goes exactly contrary to dependence on ourselves. Trusting in God for our righteousness is in direct conflict with man’s desire to depend on his own good works for salvation. It is God who will receive the praise and glory in salvation and not man. It is Christ’s righteousness that makes us not guilty.

This doctrinal point of “justification by faith alone”, rather than by works or faith and works, is the cornerstone of protestant theology and – more importantly, the gospel.

**“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God – not by works, so that no one can boast” (Eph. 2:8-9). Romans 5:1 states, “Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”**

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<sup>3</sup> J. White, *The Roman Catholic Controversy*, p. 152.

<sup>4</sup> Grudem on p. 728-729 of his *Systematic Theology* says that the Roman Catholic view of justification is based on infused righteousness rather than imputed righteousness. By being infused, God actually puts righteousness into us, which changes us internally and morally. Then based on the measure of righteousness God has infused into us, we are given varying measures of justification and not total justification. In this sense, we are justified by God’s grace plus some merit of our own, as we make ourselves fit to receive the grace of justification as we grow in it through good works.

## Justification – notes from Garry Williams' lectures

*Articulis stantis et cadentis ecclesiae* – the article by which church stands & falls

### A: JUSTIFICATION

#### The post-Tridentine Roman Catholic view:

Basic issue: Is Justification declarative OR about moral transformation?

#### Trent ch7:

- Final** cause (goal) = glory of God and Christ, life everlasting [TRUE]
- Efficient** cause (moves the whole thing) – mercy of God (still) [TRUE]
- Meritorious** cause (deserves our justification) = righteousness of Christ (still) [TRUE]
- Instrumental** cause (means) = baptism: move from Adam → grace [? – Hmmm.]
- Formal** cause (shape of justifying righteousness) = righteousness of God in us [BAD!!]

*i.e.: our Xt-enabled righteous works are the formal cause of our justification: they will be finally sufficient to merit eternal life.*

*On the RC scheme, justification actually increases – we become more righteous.*

#### **The RC doctrine of imputation – Trent: ‘mediate satisfaction’**

God, in response to Xt’s obedience, gives us HS by whom we do good works by which we merit just’n

i.e.: imputation of Xt’s righteousness is accepted, though...

**NOT:** for our immediate justification

**BUT:** as basis for gift of HS by whom we work & are justified (“mediate satisfaction”).

Xt satisfies for our sins but does not pay for them

**BUT:** we believe that the merit of the cross is given to us directly by imputation

**Killer question: where is Xt’s righteousness when it justifies us?**

**RC Answer: in our works**

**THEREFORE,** because justifying righteousness is found in our works, those works are the meritorious cause of justification.

### New Perspective

#### **Reformed argue that RC view is wrong because**

1. Justification is by faith (not good works) – Rom 4:3, Phil 3:9
  2. Good works are never sufficient – James 3:2, 1 Jn 1:8, Gal 5:17
  3. Works of the law are specifically excluded – Rom 3:20, 28.
- THEREFORE we need an alien righteousness.

#### **New Perspective says:**

Your attack on Rome is based on a wrong C16th reading of NT & esp. of Paul.

Sanders: 1<sup>st</sup> C Judaism not about salvation by good works

Dunn: Works of law = ways of maintaining Jewish national boundary markers

Paul simply says “No just’n by works of law = no just’n by ‘wearing’ national boundary markers” – and that’s because Gentiles are now included.

3 questions:

#### **Q. 1) What was C1st Judaism like?**

C 1<sup>st</sup> Judaism has emphasis on general moral good works as justifying

Gathercole finds reward for obedience both in this life & the next in 1<sup>st</sup> C Judaism

#### **Q. 2) Have Protestants misread Paul by arguing that he attacks a RC style justification by general moral good works?**

Paul does attack the kind of reliance on general moral works that was present in Judaism:

**(i) Rom 2.12-16:** Gentiles do ‘works of law.’ ie. those without the law can do the work of the law. So works of the law are more than national boundary markers like circumcision.

ii) **Rom 2.21-23:** opposite of works of law: stealing, adultery, theft

iii) **Rom 4.4:** Paul's opponents think justification is earned

iv) **Rom 4.5-6:** David has national badges but no deeds (coz he's an adulterer.) He is justified apart from his deeds.

v) **Phil 3:** v5 = Jewish identity, but then goes beyond it – 'blamelessness under law' = general moral obedience.

This critique applies to non-Jewish works too:

i) Gentiles can do law – Rom 2.14

ii) If Jews unsaved by obedience to greater rev of God, how Gentiles with lesser nat rev?

**Q. 3) Does Paul only attack PRE-grace works as Newman said?**

No: he attacks post-grace works too

i) Abraham and David in Rom 4 are post-conversion

ii) God justifies the wicked, not post-conversion good Christians

iii) J'cation by post-conversion good works would be by the law that prescribes them. They would then be the opposite of grace, because grace is opposed not just to works but to law.

iv) Pharisee in Lk 18 condemned even though attributes good works to God

v) Paul explicitly prohibits *continuing* by law/flesh in Gal. 3:3.

**Conclusion:**

a) We are justified neither by pre-conversion nor by post-conversion works

b) If we are to be justified, it can only be by the alien work of Christ

c) This is not pedantry, it is as important as what we plead before throne of God

d) Some Romans (Contrarini & Bellarmine) have wavered in this direction

**NB 1 Protestants do not deny infused righteousness**

Jas 2: Only a living, active faith saves. We DO believe in works. There is an infused righteousness, but as distinct (yet not separable) from justification. Justified by faith alone... but faith which justifies is never alone.

**NB 2 Protestants do not believe in a 'legal fiction'**

Declaring the unrighteous to be righteous would be an abomination to God. Union with Christ makes his righteousness truly ours. We believe that God in this way declares what is not to be so. Legal fictions would be immoral. Justifying righteousness *is not infused*, but it is *true*.

Turretin on union with Christ – *Institutes of Elenctic Theology*, vol. 2, p647.

"Further, as long as Christ is outside of us and we are out of Christ, we can receive no fruit from another's righteousness. God willed to unite us to Christ by a twofold bond – one natural, the other mystical – in virtue of which both our evils might be transferred to Christ and the blessings of Christ pass over to and become ours. The former is the communion nature by the incarnation. By this, Christ, having assumed our flesh, became our brother and true Goel and could receive our sins upon himself and have the right to redeem us. The latter is the communion of grace by mediation. By this, having been made by God a surety for us and given to us for a head, he can communicate to us his righteousness and all his benefits. Hence it happens that as he was made of God sin for us by the imputation of our sins, so in turn we are made the righteousness of God in him by the imputation of his obedience (2 Cor 5:21)."

**B: THE PLACE OF FAITH IN JUSTIFICATION – Rom 4:3**

A range of opinions (even within Protestant opinion):

- **Reformed:** **instrumental cause:** links us to rtsness of Xt which merits justification  
i.e. faith has in itself no justifying virtue at all
- **RC:** faith is a *sine qua non* as the beginning of justification: it is not the sole instrument
- **Arminian:** faith itself, by itself, merits justification, by itself – we co-operate in it  
**Baxter:** neo-nomianism: faith = fulfilment of the law: it is your justifying righteousness  
**Amyraldian:** faith is your justifying righteousness

- **Gundry:** More recently, Gundry has denied the *instrumentality* of faith, arguing that the righteousness which saves us is not the imputed righteousness of Christ, but our faith itself.

**Romans 4.3 – a key verse – “Abraham believed God and it was counted to him as righteousness.”**

Gundry lists every instance of *logizomai eis* to show that A is reckoned as B, that A is ‘**identified**’ with B. Thus Faith = justifying righteousness

- What does righteousness consist in? ‘*God’s counting faith as righteousness.*’
- **Penal sub’n removes unrt’sness, but our faith provides +ve r’ness.**
- Gundry’s claim: When we are in Christ we have r’ness from God, but not because Christ’s own r’ness is reckoned to us. It is because when we are in Christ God counts our faith as r’ness.

**BUT:**

**(i) meaning of *eis* in Rom 4.3:**

Murray / Piper argue that the preposition *eis* describes aim / purpose: faith *results in* righteousness

Rom 10.10: chiasm: salvation =NOT= verbal confession; neither in Rom 4.3 If Gundry were right then here confessing is being saved, which is nonsense.

**Yes:** this is a use of *eis*: Mt 26.28; Rom 8.15; 6.16; 10.4

Moo: ‘*eis* functions as a purpose or result clause attached to the assertion as a whole’

Piper: Apply this to 4.3, 5, 9, 22 and the issue is solved.

**HOWEVER:** as Gundry rightly says: they’re looking at *eis* and not *logizomai eis + acc*  
Although this traditional argument fails, there are two others which succeed.

**(ii) We should consider not *logizomai eis + acc* but *logizomai + dat eis + acc***

Pattern of Rom 4:3

- **NOT:** A is reckoned as C,  
ie. Faith is reckoned as righteousness
- **BUT:** A is reckoned **to B** as C  
ie. Faith is reckoned to Abraham as righteousness.

*This means we need to consider phrases with explicit or implied indirect object.*

Therefore, most of Gundry’s examples are not strict parallels:

**a) non-Pauline list:** Gen. 31:15; Lev. 25:31; Job 13.24; 19.15; 41.24, 27; Acts 19.27 – these fail

**b) Pauline list:** Rom 9.8; 2 Cor 12.6 – these fail

There are only 5 non-Pauline & 1 Pauline (Rom 2.26) true parallels...

**BUT:** - all 5 non-Pauline examples = reckoning of smthg for what it actually is e.g. Ps 105.31  
Whereas in the argument in Romans 4 is the reckoning of something the sinner does not have.  
Cranfield points out that Gen 15:6 was used by the Rabbis to show that Abraham *did* merit righteousness (1 Macc 2:52). Paul needed to disprove this accepted understanding.

In fact only **Rom 2:26 is the only true parallel:**

“... will not his uncircumcision be regarded as circumcision?”

**A reckoned to B as C where A =NOT= C.**

**Un-circumcision (A) reckoned to Gentiles (B) as Circumcision (C)**

- Gundry is right that un-circumcision is not the *instrumental cause* of circumcision
- **BUT** neither is un-circumcision the **sole basis** of the reckoning:  
(Gundry calls this reading: ‘absolute nonsense’)
- The ground of the reckoning of A as C lies not in A but elsewhere – (in Rom 2:26 in the fact that Gentiles keep the law).

**SO:** Gundry must show in Rom 4.3 that faith is the sole ground of the sinner’s justification  
Which he cannot do.

The Reformed can grant that *eis* in Rom 4:3 means “as” and yet still claim that this does not preclude introducing a further notion, namely the righteousness of Christ, to explain *why* faith is counted as righteousness.

- **faith reckoned as rtsness on basis of alien rtsness to which faith connects him**

NB: Rom 4.3 not used by Reformed to prove imputation of Xt's righteousness.  
It is used by Gundry to disprove it. He fails.  
Rom 2.26 supports Reformed position.

**Further arguments for the instrumentality of faith:**

- 1 **In John faith is described as eating (ch6) & seeing** – it functions as a bridge – a means by which one comes into contact with another reality. cf. 1.12. Faith is not an end in itself.
- 2 **Faith is described instrumentally using dia + gen in Rom 3.22 & Phil 3.9**  
We do not find dia + acc: dia pistin 'on account of faith' in NT.  
ie. never the case that faith is identified with righteousness.
- 3 **Scripture identifies Davidic king & God himself: Jer 23.5-6; Phil 2.11**  
→ ok to connect righteousness of God with that of Christ: God's righteousness is Christ's. Scripture calls Christ the r'ness of God. (cp. Gundry's objection that the Reformed move from Scripture which talks of "God's" righteousness to "Christ's" righteousness.)
- 4 **1 Cor 1.30** – Christ is the wisdom of God in himself  
Christ is the righteousness of God in himself: it is this which he imputes to us
- 5 **2 Cor 5.21** – Christ is the locus of God's righteousness: it becomes ours in Christ. Imputation happens "in" him.
- 6 **Phil 3.9** - righteousness is 'from God', but that does not preclude it being from Christ
- 7 **Rom 9.30-10.4**: there is no disjunction between God's righteousness and Christ's:  
Christ's work results in righteousness for believers, here defined as God's righteousness.  
NB: 9.30 righteousness is *ek pisteos*, it is not faith itself.
- 8 **Rom 5.19: The link to Christ's righteousness is firmly made in Rom. 5:19:**  
Parallel betw Adam's disobedience making many sinners & Xt's obedience making many righteous

**Question:** What is the process with Adam which is repeated with Christ?

End of v12 "death spread to all men bcs all sinned" (not Augustine's reading "in whom all sinned")

How did all sin?

NOT their own sins, but when Adam sinned (vv18-19) his one act condemns us.

Not just because we copy Adam (= Pelagianism).

Not simply because we receive a sinful nature from Adam (this intermediate step was added by Luther and Calvin).

But because Adam sinned and we sinned in him and so were condemned (federalism). As Moo argues, there is no intermediate step here in Rom 5 – Adam sinned, we were condemned. Also the case in v16 (one trespass → condemnation) and v17 (one trespass → the reign of death).

**By parallel:** 'just as' Adam's sin became ours, so too Xt's r'ness becomes ours → j'cation.

**Conclusion:** parallel w Adam shows that it's **NOT** our faith **BUT** Xt's rtsness is our justification

- 9 **Rom 5.16** **Xt's righteousness becomes ours – it is a 'free gift' we 'receive'**

v16: the free gift produces justification

v18: the one act of righteousness produces justification

They are parallel bcs (a) same result and (b) Adam's sin paralleled in both verses

## Systematic Arguments for the imputation of Christ's righteousness

### 1. Necessities of the law

Law requires not merely punishment for transgression, but obedience  
Punishment as a total *alternative* to obedience undermines obligation to obey  
Our salvation requires the second Adam's perfect obedience to be imputed to us

### 2. Necessities of heaven

To feast at king's table we need not only removal of sin but positive bestowal of virtue

### 3. Necessities of union with Christ

Union with his righteous life must be a consequence of our union with him  
Unless his righteousness is part of his private life & not his public office???  
But we still need righteousness imputed to us from somewhere to satisfy law & be fit for heaven

### 4. Necessities of substitution

Law required a human to be punished for us - Jesus had to be a man (Heb 2.17)  
Similarly, bcs law requires positive righteousness, we need a human righteousness – Jesus'

### 5. Necessities of justice

If faith is considered our righteousness, God has to pretend faith = total obedience to law  
technically this *acceptatio* – part payment reckoned as total  
(cf. *acceptilatio* – no payment being reckoned as total). Both defy justice: Ex 23.7, 34:6-7  
**Owen:** 'the judgment of God is according unto truth' (5:250)  
Reckoning faith to be righteousness would be a violation of divine justice.

**NB:** Saved

**NOT JUST** by obedience of his death (Phil 2.8; Rom 5.18)

**BUT ALSO** by the whole course of his life

- i. whole life was obedience unto death
- ii. Rom 8.4 *dikaiwma* is singular but requires obedience in plural acts; cf. 5.18
- iii. Adam shows us a whole course of obedient life was required