

THE DOCTRINE OF JUSTIFICATION

Justification means to make valid, to absolve, to vindicate, to set right, to acquit. In its Biblical setting *Justification* denotes the judicial act of God whereby on the basis of Christ's atoning sacrificial death on the Cross for the sins – past, present and future – of all mankind, Old Testament and New Testament alike, and His subsequent resurrection to life, repentant sinners who put their faith in the risen Christ as the fulfilment of God's Redemptive Plan for fallen man, are declared free from guilt, and absolved of the penalty of sin. All their sins are forgiven; they are restored to righteousness with God (CP Jn 14:19; Ac 13:26-39; Ro 3:21-30; 4:24-25; 5:1-2, 6-11, 15-21; 6:21-23; 8:28-34; 10:6-10; 1Cor 15:1-28, 51-58; 2Cor 5:15-21; Ga 3:8-11, 22-24; Eph 1:3-14; 2Ti 1:8-10; He 9:15-28; 1Pe 1:3-5, 18-21; 1Jn 1:9; 2:2; 4:8-10).

It needs to be stressed here – Scripture are clear: it was Christ's resurrection to life as well as His death that made His atoning sacrificial death on the Cross for the sins of all mankind effective. His assertion in Jn 14:19, "...because I live, ye shall live also" refers to His resurrection to life and the future resurrection of all who believe on Him. Jesus won the victory over sin and death for every human being who ever lived through His resurrection, and since He is risen from the dead and lives for evermore, New Testament Christians have the assurance that the next step in God's Redemptive Plan for fallen man is their resurrection to eternal life also (CP Jn 14:19; Ro 6:21-23; 8:28-34; 1Cor 15:1-28, 51-58; Eph 1:3-14; 2Ti 1:8-10; 1Pe 1:3-5, 18-21). Christ's resurrection is the fulfilment of Old Testament Prophecy (CP Psa 16:8-11 with Ac 2:22-36; 13:26-39). Believing in Christ's resurrection is a condition of salvation as Ro 10:6-10 plainly teaches (CP Ro 10:6-10).

Had Christ merely died and remained dead, His death would have been in vain – He would not have atoned for anyone's sins. He died to purchase what He rose again to supply. It was Christ's resurrection that ensures the justification of repentant sinners; otherwise they would still be under condemnation for sin (CP Ro 3:21-30; 4:24-25; 5:1-2, 6-11, 15-21; 6:3-11; 8:1-18, 28-34). *Propitiation* in Ro 3:25 means *Atonement*. The sins that are past refer to sins committed by those who lived in Old Testament times before the atoning death of Jesus in the New Testament. God merely suspended judgment for Old Testament sins until the price for them was actually paid by Christ's atoning death on the Cross (CP Ac 17:30-31; He 9:15-28; 1Jn 2:2). As New Testament Christians look back on the Cross for their redemption, so Old Testament Saints looked forward to the Cross for their Redemption. Everyone who took part in the sacrificial system under the Old Covenant was vindicated by the sacrificial death and subsequent resurrection of Jesus under the New Covenant.

Ro 8:28-34; Eph 1:3-14; 2Ti 1:8-10; He 9:15-28; and 1Pe 1: 18-21 above all teach that in the dateless past before the foundation of the world, God, who is omniscient – All Knowing; He knows the end from the beginning in all things – looked down through the corridors of time and foresaw the fall of man and his need for an atoning Sacrifice to pay for his sins and save him from Eternal damnation. God predestinated

Jesus to be the atoning sacrifice for the sins of all mankind and be raised up again for their justification (CP also Gen 3:15; Isa 7:14-15; 9:6-7; Isa 53:1-12; Mic 5:2 with Mt 3:1-12; Lu 3:1-6; Rev 13:8). Scripture does not teach as some in the professing Church would have us believe, that God has chosen certain individuals for salvation, while damning others to Eternity, (see also author's studies *Salvation – a Freewill Choice or Predestinated?* and *Chosen by God?* in his book **Advanced Studies in the Christian Faith (Volume 1)**).

All that is necessary on God's part for the Justification of sinners has been effected by Christ's propitiatory death and resurrection. It is now up to individual sinners to choose for themselves if they want to be partakers of God's Redemptive Plan for fallen man and be glorified with Christ in Eternity. There is no justification though without faith in the risen Saviour (CP Ro 9:30-10:12). The supreme expression of God's love for sinners is the death of His Only Begotten Son on their behalf (CP Jn 3:16-18, 36). By giving His life as a ransom for sinners Christ opened the way for those who repent of their sins and come to believe on Him, to enter into the very presence of God Himself to receive from the Throne of Grace all God's blessings for those who have received Christ as their Saviour (CP Eph 1:3; He 4:16; 10:19-22; 1Pe 1:3-9).

The Justification of sinners was foretold by Jeremiah, the Prophet, in the Old Testament (CP Jer 31:31-34). Jeremiah's prophecy here is also foretelling the fulfilment of the Old Covenant in its entirety and its complete abolition in order to be replaced by the New Covenant in Christ (CP He 10:1-18). The most detailed account in Scripture of the abolition of the Old Covenant and its complete replacement with the New Covenant in Christ is found in the Book of Hebrews, Chapters 7-10. See also author's study *The Old Covenant – Fulfilled in Christ and Completely Abolished* in his book **Advanced Studies in the Christian Faith (Volume 1)**.

See also author's comments on Jn 14:19; Ac 17:30; Ro 3:24-26(A) and (B), 4:23-25, 5:1, 5:9-10, 5:12-14, 5:15, 6:1, 6:17-20, 6:21-23, 8:1-2, 8:3-4, 8:11, 8:28-30, 9:30-33, 10:4, 10:6-11, 10:9; 1Cor 15:1-11, 15:51-58; Ga 3:8, 3:29; Eph 1:3-6, 1:11-14; 2Ti 1:8-9, 1:10; He 9:15, 9:16-17, 9:28, 10:14, 10:17-18; 1Pe 1:2, 1:18-21; 1Jn 1:9, 2:3-6 in his book **A Question and Answer Study of the New Testament** and his studies *The Resurrection* in his book **Foundational Truths of the Christian Faith** and *The Old Testament Day of Atonement and God's Plan of Salvation* in his book **Advanced Studies in the Christian Faith (Volume 1)**.

In closing this study here Christians are reminded that a condition of their justification and future salvation is that they must not only be hearers of God's Word, but doers also (CP Psa 119:9; Pr 4:4; Mt 7:21-27; Lu 11:27-28; Ro 2:13; Jas 1:22-25; Rev 1:3). See also author's comments on Mt 7:21, Ro 2:11-13, and Jas 1:22-25 and all cross-reference Scriptures and studies referred to therein in his book **A Question and Answer Study of the New Testament**.