

The Doctrine of Salvation

A Study of the Ordo Salutis

July 1 – Oct. 14, 2018

The Ordo Salutis

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Justification – Declared Righteous

In regeneration, God performs that divine operation in the sinner's soul whereby he births new spiritual life into him. In conversion, God grants the necessary gifts of repentance and faith by which we are united to Christ and lay hold of the blessings of salvation. Then in justification, God legally declares that we are no longer deemed guilty under the divine law but are forgiven and counted righteous in God's sight.

– MacArthur, pg. 609

Justification – Declared Righteous

Justification is that instantaneous act of God whereby, as a gift of His grace, He imputes to a believing sinner the full and perfect righteousness of Christ through faith alone and legally declares him perfectly righteous in His sight, forgiving the sinner of all unrighteousness and thus delivering him from all condemnation.

Justification – Imputed Righteousness

Justification is a legal declaration. We are legally declared to be righteous and therefore right with God.

This is not an impartation or infusion of righteousness.

As an imputation, it describes what God declares about true believers and not what He does to change believers. Justification itself effects no change in the sinner's nature or character. It is a change of status before God and not a gradual transformation that takes place within us as we believe.

Similar legal declaration: “I now pronounce you husband and wife.” Before the pronouncement, you have 2 single people. After, you have one couple. The legal status of bride and groom is changed from single to married.

Justification – By Faith Alone

The work that Christ accomplished by paying for our sin and providing righteousness to be imputed to us happened over 2000 years ago. How can that work be applied to me personally?

By what MEANS can my sin be imputed to Christ and His righteousness be imputed to me?

The Scriptures teach that we are justified through faith alone, apart from works.

“Faith unites us to Christ in His death and resurrection, so that His punishment counts for our punishment and His righteousness counts for our righteousness.” – MacArthur, pg. 618

Justification – By Faith Alone

Romans 3:22 refers to “the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe.”

Romans 3:25 tells us this justification is “received by faith.”

Romans 3:26 says that God is “the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.”

Romans 3:28 concludes, “Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law.”

Justification – By Faith Alone

Romans 5:1 Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, 2 through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

Romans 9:30 and 10:6 speak of “the righteousness of faith.”

Galatians 2:16 knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified.

Justification – By Faith Alone

Righteousness cannot come by our keeping the Law. We cannot keep the law.

James 2:10 For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all.

Galatians 3:22, 24, 26

22 But the Scripture has confined all under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe.

24 Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

26 For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.

Justification – By Faith Alone

Upon death for the believer, there is no waiting period, purgatory, or penance needed. Jesus told the thief on the cross, “Assuredly, I say to you, **today** you will be with Me in Paradise.” (Luke 23:43)

Luke 18:9 Also He spoke this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: 10 “Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. 11 The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, ‘God, I thank You that I am not like other men—extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. 12 I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.’ 13 And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat 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 everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”

Justification – By Faith Alone

Romans 4:1 What then shall we say that Abraham our father has found according to the flesh? 2 For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. 3 For what does the Scripture say? “Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.” 4 Now to him who works, the wages are not counted as grace but as his due.

Faith alone is the means, the instrument through which we receive imputed righteousness and are therefore declared right with God.

Romans 4:16 Therefore it is of faith that it might be according to grace.

The Results of Justification – Good Works

James 2:24 You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only.

“Paul contended with those legalists who sought to base their justification on the works of the law. James contended with antinomians who claimed to have faith, but whose faith was merely an intellectual assent to the truth, and who denied the necessity of good works.” – Berkhof, pg. 502

So Paul contrasts faith alone without works for the basis of justification and James asserts that saving faith is faith that leads to good works. For James, our claim to justification is justified by the evidence of a working faith.

“It is therefore faith alone which justifies, and yet the faith which justifies is not alone.” – John Calvin

The Results of Justification – Good Works

Salvation is not the result of good works, but results in good works.

Ephesians 2:8 For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, 9 not of works, lest anyone should boast. 10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

2 Cor. 5:14 For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died; 15 and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again.

Divergent Views of Justification

The Roman Catholic View confounds justification and sanctification by teaching an infusion of grace and righteousness allowing the believer to perform meritorious works that then open the door for more grace to be bestowed. The grace of justification can be lost and then regained by the sacrament of penance.

The View of Piscator – only the passive obedience of Christ (His death) is imputed to the sinner. Christ's active obedience cannot be imputed to the sinner because as a man, Jesus had to present His obedience to the Father on His own behalf to maintain fellowship with Him.

Divergent Views of Justification

The View of Osiander – he attempted to bring the Lutheran view back into the essentials of the Roman view and added that justification came not by the imputation of Christ's righteousness, but by the implanting of a new principle of life which acts off of and is fed by the infused righteousness of Christ.

The Arminian View – Christ did not satisfy the justice of God for future sins, but only for past sins. The imputed righteousness covers our sins before we are saved, but then God imputes the faith of the believer to him for righteousness after salvation. So your obedience is counted as righteous and added to the imputed righteousness of Christ to give you future and final justification.

Divergent Views of Justification

NT Wright's New Perspective on Paul – Future Justification. God's justifying verdict on Jesus in his resurrection is passed upon believers now in anticipation of the final acquittal in the Day of Judgement. That final acquittal, or future justification of believers, will be in accordance with the whole life of grace led under the Spirit's leading. "Present justification declares, on the basis of faith, what future justification will affirm publicly on the basis of the entire life."

The Liberal View – The gospel allows us to discover our own potential, fueled by grace, and as we reach that potential, it is the good works that we do that are accounted by God as righteousness at the judgment.

Justification by Death – It is an implicit universalism that assumes everyone goes to heaven when he or she dies. Perhaps the most rank evildoers, such as Adolf Hitler or Joseph Stalin, may not make it, but the average person certainly has nothing to worry about. – RC Sproul

Divergent Views of Justification

Jehovah's Witnesses - "The act or process of making holy, separating, or setting apart for the service or use of Jehovah God." However this is applied only to the 144,000 who become true brother's of Christ and are therefore declared righteous. No one else will be declared righteous.

Mormons - To be pardoned from punishment for sin and declared guiltless. A person is justified by the Savior's grace through faith in Him. This faith is shown by repentance and obedience to the laws and ordinances of the gospel. Jesus Christ's Atonement enables mankind to repent and be justified or pardoned from punishment they otherwise would receive.

Conclusion

Justification is that instantaneous act of God whereby, as a gift of His grace, He imputes to a believing sinner the full and perfect righteousness of Christ through faith alone and legally declares him perfectly righteous in His sight, forgiving the sinner of all unrighteousness and thus delivering him from all condemnation.