

THE CROSS AND RESURRECTION MAKES POSSIBLE JUSTIFICATION

Gal. 2:16, 20
March 22 & 23, 2008

INTRODUCTION: The question should be asked, “*What makes Easter week a holy week?*” What is the big deal, if any, about Good Friday and Easter Sunday? Both Good Friday and Easter Sunday are magnified in one verse of the Bible
Romans 4:25, “who was delivered up because of our offenses, and was raised because of our justification.”

“delivered up” – speaks of his crucifixion

“was raised” – the resurrection provided proof that God had accepted the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ and validated His suffering and that He would be able to be just and yet justify the ungodly.

The Message of Easter is a message of grace. It is simply believing what the Bible says about Jesus Christ. That message being that salvation comes by faith in the Person and work of Jesus Christ. It is not:

Religion
Good Works
Education
Culture or Ordinances
Not Ritual
Prayers
Deeds or Charity

It is coming as a poor lost sinner, bankrupt and helpless, and trusting Jesus Christ to save you by His grace.

Man would like to have just some little part in his own salvation, but God says *No!*

Romans 4:5, “But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness”

The message of Jesus Christ, in the context of Easter, is the fact that anyone and everyone must end their attempt to earn God’s favor through personal merit.

Ephesians 2:8-9, “For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.”

If salvation was on the basis of one’s own effort, God would owe salvation as a debt; but it is a gift to received, not a debt to be paid.

I. JUSTIFICATION DEFINED.

At the cross on Good Friday, wrath was taken away and justification was now a reality.

Justification is the act of God whereby He declares the believing sinner righteous in Jesus Christ.

Romans 5:1, “Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ”

This is a subject that dates back to the oldest literature in the Bible.

Job 25:4, “How then can man be righteous before God? Or how can he be pure who is born of a woman?”

Justification is a term used of a judge’s declaring an accused person not guilty or right before the law. It refers to God’s declaring a sinner to be guiltless on the basis of faith in Him. It is the free and gracious act by which God declares a sinner right with Himself; forgiving, pardoning, restoring, and accepting him on the basis of nothing but trust in the person and work of His Son, Jesus Christ.

Justification means to have imparted righteousness; made righteous, just as though you have never sinned.

This teaching on justification is described in 7 ways:

1. **Its Source is God.**
Romans 3:26, “to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.”
2. **Its Essence is Grace.**
Romans 3:24, “being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus”
3. **Its Means is Faith.**
Romans 5:1, “Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ”
4. **Its Ground is the Blood of Christ.**
Romans 5:9, “Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him.”
5. **Its Position is in Christ.**

1 Corinthians 6:11, “”And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.”

6. Its Divine Agent is the Holy Spirit.

Note: 1 Cor. 6:11

7. Its Evidence is Works.

James 2:21, “Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar?

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

A faith that works.

FACTS:

Before justification, the sinner was as “bad off” as he could possibly be. After these divine acts have changed his spiritual standing, he is now as “good off” as he can be.

II. JUSTIFICATION DECLARED. Gal 2:16

A. DECLARED GENERALLY.

“knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ.”

B. DECLARED PERSONALLY.

“we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law.”

“faith” – is a commitment in trust. The object of that faith is Jesus Christ.

“believed” – a tense which indicates that a decisive and complete act of commitment had taken place. Paul’s confidence was not in his response to the law, but rather in Christ as his redeemer.

Psalms 143:2, “Do not enter into judgment with Your servant, for in Your sight no one living is righteous.”

C. DECLARED UNIVERSALLY.

“by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified”

All three claims that salvation is through belief in Jesus Christ.

III. JUSTIFICATION DEMONSTRATED. Gal. 2:20

A. MY LIFE IN CHRIST: POSITIONALLY

“crucified with Christ” – speaks of a definite beginning with continuous results. In God’s heart, *historically*, it happened before the foundation of the world. In my heart, *experientially* it happened Jan. 7, 1973.

B. MY LIFE IN CHRIST: SPIRITUALLY

“nevertheless I live” (it is no longer I who live)
Christ came to give me life.

John 10:10b, “I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.”

C. MY LIFE IN CHRIST: PERSONALLY

“Christ lives in me”

John 14:20, “At that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.”

Colossians 1:29, “To this end I also labor, striving according to His working which works in me mightily.”

D. MY LIFE IN CHRIST: PRACTICALLY

“the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God”

Not me living for Christ, but yielding myself to Christ and He living His life through me.

2 Peter 1:4, “by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.”

I have His divine nature in me.

E. MY LIFE IN CHRIST: PASSIONATELY

“who loved me and gave Himself for me.”

1. His Passion.

The motive behind His justification

2. His Provision.

“gave Himself for me”

John 10:17-18, "Therefore My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again. No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father."

Song in Kenya before baptism:

*O Happy Day
O Happy Day
O Happy Day
When Jesus washed
My Sins Away.*

*It is Christ alone that justifies
Nothing in my hands I bring
Simply to the cross I cling.
Not the labor of my hands,
Could fulfill Thy law's demand.
Could my zeal no respite know,
Could my tears forever flow
These for sin could not atone
Thou must save, and Thou alone.*