



Justified From All Things

By

Mark McGee

Justified

“Therefore let it be known to you, brethren, that through this Man is preached to you the forgiveness of sins; and by Him everyone who believes is justified from all things from which you could not be justified by the law of Moses.” Acts 13:38-39

Paul taught that “everyone who believes is justified from all things from which you could not be justified by the law of Moses.” The word “justified” comes from the root Greek word *dikaioo*. It was used of people who did what was right and came to mean “a state of being right, righteous.” The word *dike* is translated as **justice**. The word justified is the translation of *dikaioo*, “to deem to be right.”

The idea of being right or righteous is based on someone who is already right/righteous pronouncing another person to be righteous. That pronouncement came from someone in the position of being a judge. The judge's pronouncement was based on what was right according to customs and laws. Customs and laws came from those who had the right to make laws (*nomothetes* – lawgiver). Our Lord's step-brother, James, made it clear that God is the only One Who can make just laws: "There is one Lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy. Who are you to judge another?" (James 4:12) The Psalmist made it clear that no one could stand before God if He counted our sins against us: "If You, LORD, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who could stand?" (Psalm 130:3) Fortunately, the Psalmist added an important truth about how God deals with us: "But *there is* forgiveness with You, That You may be feared." (Psalm 130:4)

God established the Laws and determined how justice would be determined. Interestingly, no one was able to be justified by the Law of God. That's why God instituted the blood sacrifice from the very beginning of sin. That sacrifice looked forward to the day when God's Son would shed His Blood for us. It also looked forward to the day when you and I would place our faith and trust in Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior and why we are "justified from all things from which you could not be justified by the law of Moses."

We call that being "justified by faith alone." It was the great cry of the Reformers centuries ago:

"Justification is the article where the church stand or falls ... This one and firm rock, which we call the doctrine of justification, is the chief article of the whole Christian doctrine, which comprehends the understanding of all godliness ... The first and chief

article is this: Jesus Christ, our God and Lord, died for our sins and was raised again for our justification. He alone is the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world, and God has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. All have sinned and are justified freely, without their own works and merits, by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, in His blood. This is necessary to believe. This cannot be otherwise acquired or grasped by any work, law, or merit. Therefore, it is clear and certain that this faith alone justifies us.” **Martin Luther**

“Justification is withdrawn from works, not that no good works may be done, or that what is done may be denied to be good, but that we may not rely upon them, glory in them, or ascribe salvation to them ... Our righteousness is not in us but in Christ, ... we possess it only because we are partakers in Christ ... We say that faith justifies, not because it merits righteousness for us by its own worth, but because it is an instrument whereby we

obtain free the righteousness of Christ ... The power of justifying, which faith possesses, does not lie in any worth of works. Our justification rests on God's mercy alone and Christ's merit, and faith, when it lays hold of justification, is said to justify." **John Calvin**

"Justification is the soul of Christianity and the fountainhead of all true comfort and sanctification. He who errs in this doctrine errs to his eternal destruction." **Wilhelmus `a Brakel**

The Protestant reformers were powerful in their persuasion because they returned to the true meaning of **justification** in the Bible. They returned to the great message of Christ through Paul, Apostle to the Gentiles:

"Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty

before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin. But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference; for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed, to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus. Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? No, but by the law of faith. Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the

law. Or is He the God of the Jews only? Is He not also the God of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also, since there is one God who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith. Do we then make void the law through faith? Certainly not! On the contrary, we establish the law.”
Romans 3:19-31

“What then shall we say that Abraham our father has found according to the flesh? For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. For what does the Scripture say? ‘Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.’ Now to him who works, the wages are not counted as grace but as debt. But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness, just as David also describes the blessedness of the man to whom God imputes righteousness apart from

works: 'Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, And whose sins are covered; Blessed is the man to whom the LORD shall not impute sin.'

Romans 4:1-8

"Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God ... Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life ... But the free gift is not like the offense. For if by the one man's offense many died, much more the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abounded to many. And the gift is not like that which came through the one

who sinned. For the judgment which came from one offense resulted in condemnation, but the free gift which came from many offenses resulted in justification. For if by the one man's offense death reigned through the one, much more those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.) Therefore, as through one man's offense judgment came to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so through one Man's righteous act the free gift came to all men, resulting in justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man's obedience many will be made righteous. Moreover the law entered that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more, so that as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. " Romans 5:1-2, 9-10, 15-21

“For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified. What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?” Romans 8:29-31

“We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles, 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. ‘But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is Christ

therefore a minister of sin? Certainly not!" Galatians 2:15-17

"Therefore know that only those who are of faith are sons of Abraham. And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel to Abraham beforehand, saying, 'In you all the nations shall be blessed.' So then those who are of faith are blessed with believing Abraham. For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, 'Cursed is everyone who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them.' But that no one is justified by the law in the sight of God is evident, for 'the just shall live by faith.' Yet the law is not of faith, but "the man who does them shall live by them ... But before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed. Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us

to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.”

Galatians 3:7-12, 23-25

“But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, that having been justified by His grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.” Titus 3:4-7

Do you see it? We are “made right before God” by Christ! We are justified by **faith** in Christ. It is not because of **works** that we have done. It is not because of our obedience to the Law of Moses. It is according to His **mercy** that He saved us, “that having been justified by His

grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.”

Praise God! What a Savior!

Scripture taken from the New King James Version®.
Copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson. Used by permission.
All rights reserved.

GraceLife © 1990-2021