

WHAT IS JUSTIFICATION

‘By these words [Romans 4:6-7] we are taught that justification with Paul is nothing else but pardon of sin” John Calvin, (Albert Barnes Commentary on the Romans, p. 106)

"In response to heart faith a marvelous thing happens. In heaven, we are justified... our standing before God has changed. Justified means it is as though I had never sinned." Paris Reidhead (Finding the Reality of God, pg 111)

“What is gospel justification? It consists not in the law pronouncing the sinner just, but in his being ultimately governmentally treated as if he were just; that is, it consists in a governmental decree of pardon or amnesty – in arresting and setting aside the execution of the incurred penalty of law – in pardoning and restoring to favor those who have sinned, and those whom the law pronounced guilty, and upon whom it had passed the sentence of eternal death, and rewarding them as if they had been righteous... (Romans 4:6-7). This quotation from David shows both what David and what Paul understood by justification, to wit, the pardon and acceptance of the penitent sinner.” Charles Finney (Finney’s Systematic Theology, Published by Bethany House, p. 360).

“In response to heart faith a marvelous thing happens. In heaven, we are justified: The record against us has been changed; that is to say, our standing before God has changed. Justified means it is as though I had never sinned.” Paris Reidhead (Finding the Reality of God, Published by Bible Teaching Ministries, p. 111)

“It is very evident that in this text [Acts 13:38-39] forgiveness and justification are used interchangeably, as synonymous terms... In this rich passage [Rom. 3:25-26], which presents the fundamental elements of redemption, to remit sins and to justify, on the basis of the atonement, through the instrumentality of faith, are treated as precisely the same thing, and signify a release from the guilt and punishment of past sin, through the forbearance of God.” Asbury Lowrey, (Positive Theology, Published by R. P. Thompson, 1854, p. 211-212)

“What is justification then? To be justified is to have our sin forgiven, such that the penalty of that sin will not be carried out on us as the guilty parties. We remain guilty for the sin, but because of the atonement of Christ, and our meeting the conditions (repentance, faith), God is free to release us from the punishment we deserve to receive, He can treat us governmentally as if we were righteous, even though we are guilty of breaking his law. It is this governmental treatment as righteous, even though we are guilty, that constitutes justification.” Michael Saia (Understanding the Cross, Published by Xulon, p. 133).

IMPUTED RIGHTEOUSNESS

“This is, if I understand it, the true doctrine of ‘imputation;’ not that there is any transfer of moral character from us to the Redeemer, or from him to us, and not that God literally ‘reckons’ or imputes our sins to him as his, or his righteousness to us as ours, but that his work may be estimated as performed in the place and on the account of sinful men, and that in virtue of that we may be regarded and treated as if it had been performed by ourselves.” Albert Barnes (The Atonement, Published by Bethany House, p. 315)

“God imputeth righteousness. Whom God treats as righteous... forgiven, and whose sins are not charged on him, but who is freed from the punishment due to his sins. Being thus pardoned, he is treated as a righteous man. And it is evidently in this sense that the apostle uses the expression ‘imputed righteousness’ i.e. he does not impute, or charge on the man his sins; he reckons and treats him as a pardoned and righteous man.” Albert Barnes (Commentary on the Romans, p. 105)

“This passage [Rom. 4:5-8] deserves special attention, as it explains all those text that seem to favor, and have been construed to support the theory of the imputation of Christ’s active and passive righteousness to the sinner. Here it is manifest that justification, imputation of righteousness, forgiving iniquities, covering sins, and the non-imputation of sin, are phrases substantially of the same import, and decide positively that the Scripture view of the great doctrine under consideration, is an actual deliverance from the guilt and penalty of sin: from which it follows, that the phrases so often occurring in the writings of Paul – the righteousness of God and of Christ – must mean God’s righteous method of justifying the ungodly, through the atonement and by the instrumentality of faith – a method that upholds the rectitude of the Divine character, at the same time that it offers a full and free pardon to the sinner.” Asbury Lowrey, (Positive Theology, Published by R. P. Thompson, 1854, pg. 211-212)

“In theology, the remission of sin, and absolution from guilt and punishment; or an act of free grace by which God pardons the sinner, and accepts him as righteous, on account of the atonement of Christ.” Noah Webster’s 1828 Dictionary

“Holiness isn’t something you can borrow – you either have it or you don’t. The theological doctrine of ‘imputed righteousness’ has been grossly distorted in our day. We are told that God looks at us through the blood of Christ and see’s us as righteous, regardless of our actual state... Let’s stop kidding ourselves. God sees us exactly the way we are. If we are living in obedience, He sees it. If we are living selfish, unholy lives, we can be sure he sees that too.” George Otis Jr. (The God They Never Knew, Published by Mott Media, p. 40)

“As one ‘made under the law’ (Ga. 4:4-5), Christ was obliged to obey and keep the law. Since He had to obey for Himself, He could not obey for others in the sense that His obedience could be literally imputed to them... while Christ could not obey for us, He could die entirely in our behalf since there was not the least guilt charged against Him

for which He must die.” Gordon Olson (The Kindness of God Our Savior, Published by Revival Theology Promotions, p. 91)

“Forgiveness of sin, such that the penalty is not carried out, is sufficient to qualify as a definition of ‘imputed righteousness.... How could the Holy Spirit convict us of sin if he did not know we were sinning? How could we grieve the Spirit of God if he never saw us as anything other than righteous? God has a very good sense of reality, he knows when we sin, and he sees us exactly as we are.” Michael Saia (Understanding the Cross, Published by Xulon, p. 132).