



Introduction

- Justification – the material cause of the Reformation
- Faith alone – the instrumental cause of the Reformation

Justification Defined

- Forensic justification – someone is declared righteous before God
- Transformative justification – someone is made righteous before God
- Imputed righteousness – declared righteous before God on the basis of the righteousness of Jesus Christ
- Infused righteousness – righteous before God because the justifying grace of God has transformed him or her into a righteous person

Transformative Justification

- Transformative justification held sway from Augustine, through Aquinas, up to the time of the Reformation
- Augustine held to “make righteous” instead of “declare righteous”
- Justification includes sanctification
- Thomas Aquinas – developed a soteriology that became known as the *via antiqua*, or “old way”
- God initiates the salvation process by freely granting grace to a person
- The person can cooperate with God’s grace to progress in righteousness
- This meritorious cooperation is combined with grace and rewarded with eternal life
- Man could initiate the salvation process by doing his or her best and God would reward them with grace. This became known as the *via moderna*, or “new way.”

Forensic Justification

- Melancthon
 - Helped Luther understand grace as God’s favor instead of an attribute of the human soul



- Helped Luther to understand that the Greek term translated “substance” was better translated as “essence” or “existence.”
- Faith does not contribute to righteousness. Faith simply means trust in something already accomplished
- *Simul iustus et peccator*

Infused Righteousness

- Romans 1:16-17 – The “righteousness of God” in verse 17 must be transformative because it is parallel with the “power of God” in verse 16 and the “wrath of God” in verse 18. The “power of God” and the “wrath of God” effect change so the “righteousness of God” must as well
- Romans 1:17 says God’s righteousness is “revealed,” and Romans 3:21 says God’s righteousness has been “manifested.” The Greek word for “revealed” is the word from which we get apocalyptic so this represents an apocalyptic unleashing of God’s power
- Romans 5:19 says, “For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous.” Those holding the transformative view latch onto the words “made righteous”
- Romans 6:7 says, “For one who has died has been set free from sin.” The Greek verb translated “set free” comes from the Greek verb that translates to the English word “justify”
- Justification includes the death and resurrection of Jesus, so justification isn’t just limited to forgiveness; it also includes new life
- 2 Corinthians 3:7-9 – Note that verse 8 references “the ministry of the Spirit,” and verse 9 references “the ministry of righteousness.” If you benefit from the ministry of righteousness then you must also benefit from the ministry of the Spirit, and it is the Spirit that transforms believers

Imputed Righteousness

Old Testament

- The term *forensic* is often used in judicial contexts (in law court contexts), where a declarative meaning is evident
 - Keep far from a false charge, and do not kill the innocent and righteous, for I will not acquit the wicked. (Exodus 23:7 ESV)
 - If there is a dispute between men and they come into court and the judges decide between them, acquitting the innocent and condemning the guilty (Deuteronomy 25:1 ESV)



- He who justifies the wicked and he who condemns the righteous are both alike an abomination to the LORD. (Proverbs 17:15 ESV)
- Woe to those...who acquit the guilty for a bribe and deprive the innocent of his right! (Isaiah 5:22-23 ESV)
- In each of these passages we see that the judge does not make someone guilty or innocent, they declare guilt or innocence
- Job's friends tell him he is guilty before God, but Job wants God to declare him righteous
- The Prophets give the image of a court case. Look at Isaiah 43:26 and Jeremiah 12:1

Paul's Letters

- Romans 8:33-34 – God will not make anyone unrighteous on the Day of Judgment, but he will declare many unrighteous. Therefore, justify must mean “declare righteous” not “make righteous”
- Romans 3:20a, 28; Galatians 3:11 – These verses show that “justify” means that no one is declared righteous by law keeping
- Galatians 3:24; Romans 3:24; Romans 5:1 – We see the same idea of declaring righteous when, positively, Paul says we are justified by faith
- Romans 4:1-8 – There is language of being counted righteous

Analytic vs Synthetic Justification

- Analytic justification = transformative justification
- Synthetic justification = forensic justification

Justification By Faith Alone

- Reformers – instrumental cause of justification is faith alone
- Roman Catholic Church – instrumental cause of justification is the sacrament of baptism

The Gospels

- Luke 7:36-50 – Note that Jesus forgives the woman of her sins, and he tells her “Your faith has saved you”
- Gospel of John – believe is used 98 times
 - John 6:68-69 – Simon Peter says they have believed
 - John 11:27 – Martha confesses she believes



- John 3:15-16; 6:40 – whoever believes has eternal life
- John 20:30-31 – gospel written so that we would believe that Jesus is the Christ

Acts

- But many of those who had heard the word believed. (Acts 4:4a ESV)
- Many believed in the Lord. (Acts 9:42b ESV)
- And by him everyone who believes is freed (Gk. justified) from everything from which you could not be freed (Gk. justified) by the law of Moses. (Acts 13:39 ESV)
- He greatly helped those who through grace had believed (Acts 18:27b ESV)

Paul's Letters

- Faith – occurs 152 times
 - For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. (Ephesians 2:8-9 ESV)
 - And to the one who does not work but believes in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness. (Romans 4:5 ESV)
 - Know then that it is those of faith who are the sons of Abraham. And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, "In you shall all the nations be blessed." So then, those who are of faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith. (Galatians 3:7-9 ESV)
 - Now before faith came, we were held captive under the law, imprisoned until the coming faith would be revealed. So then, the law was our guardian until Christ came, in order that we might be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian, for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. (Galatians 3:23-26 ESV)
 - For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, "The righteous shall live by faith." (Romans 1:16-17 ESV)
- Believe – occurs 54 times

General Letters

- And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him. (Hebrews 11:6 ESV)
- Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls. (1 Peter 1:8-9 ESV)



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- For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. Who is it that overcomes the world except the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God? (1 John 5:4-5 ESV)

Faith and Works

- The Roman Catholic Church claims the Bible nowhere explicitly says justification is by faith *alone*
- The Catholic Church emphasizes that Bible does *explicitly* say that justification is not by faith alone (James 2:24)
- The Bible never says a person is justified by faith alone but it does very clearly say a person is *not* justified by faith alone.

Saving Faith

- *Notitia*, or knowledge, refers to what is believed, the content of our faith
- *Assensus*, or assent, means we believe our knowledge to be true
- *Fiducia*, or trust, results in salvation

Working Faith

- Catholics – faith + works = justification
- Protestants – faith = justification + works
- We are saved by faith alone but not by a faith that is alone
- We are also saved by a faith that perseveres