

Justification: A Pragmatic Survey

John Calvin said that Justification was **“The main hinge on which religion turns”** and unless we have received this gift we have no righteousness with God. Therefore our faith is vain, because without it we have no real reason to go on. At heart we are all rebellious sinners (Rom 3:23) and we need to know that we are justified with God to be able to continue in the faith. So this makes it imperative that we are sure we are justified by His Grace. (Rom 3:22-24) Only God alone can justify the ungodly. We can never earn our way to salvation, we must trust in Him who has made this wonderful provision for sin and sinners alike, Messiah is made to us, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption (1 Cor 1:30).

The Catholic theological idea of this whole subject is starkly different from their Protestant counterparts. They believe that faith with works brings justification. The Protestant view of all this is that Justification in Messiah will bring a whole hearted response from believers, who will automatically do the works as they are now free from their bondage of sin, because they have received the Grace of God in its fullness.

So Protestantism is seen as:

Faith = Justification = Works

As apposed to the Catholic belief;

Faith + Works = Justification

Justification is a gift and part of the gift of Salvation to all believers.

But many Catholic believers are seen to be slain on the sin question, because without justification you will constantly need reassurance that your sins are being forgiven. This is why they feel they need to confess sins to men in the confessional, constantly, going to the priest when scripture teaches us

“There is one God and one mediator between God and man the man Christ Jesus” (1 Tim 2:5, Heb 12:24)

This also has a habit of making you feel more vulnerable to other people, as well as undermining your relationship with the Messiah who bought you with His own blood in the first place. Many believers get caught in the sin trap because they have no Justification that their sins have been dealt with on the cross, and it comforts them to then confess them to men. They even use scripture to justify it:

“Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another that you may be healed” (James 5:16)

This scripture is talking about unintentional transgressions, not every thing that goes wrong. Some people have taken this to the extreme and want to confess everything that happens to them, just in case they might have sinned. The whole sin question should have been dealt with at the cross, the blood of Messiah is efficacious which means it cleanses and goes on cleansing throughout your life. If you fall you simply take the time to confess to Messiah and He is just and faithful to forgive you. Some people I have met have chosen to give themselves a prayer ministry going around delving into peoples past and trying to make mileage out of it. You have to be very careful about who you share with and what you share. In my early days as a believer I became totally in bondage to this sort of thing because I wanted to do things so right I went the extra mile, and people like to make merchandise of you. We live this life by faith, and we must use that faith to trust the Lord that He can, and will free you from things that cause you grief and sadness. So because its by faith don't expect a receipt from Heaven to prove God has done what He promised. He is utterly faithful in these matters. So if you are still having trouble after your confession to God, you probably have a new problem which is living under condemnation. This is also something the Bible has encouragement information on:

“There is therefore now no condemnation to those who live in Messiah, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. For the Law of the Spirit of Life in Messiah has made me free from the Law of sin and death.” (Rom 8:1&2)

He alone is the burden bearer, Furthermore dealing with God alone build's character and strengthens your faith and resolve to go on: He died to give you a personal salvation, that is to deal with you personally, so why would you bring men into it. Has He not earned the right to reward your faith with more of His wonderful Grace?

“Therefore humble yourself under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time. Casting all your cares upon Him, for He cares for you.” (1 Peter 5:6-7)

This is truly when you know you have been justified, when He removes your guilt and shame and you can start again .We all make mistakes, but His grace is our portion and He has provided more than we could ask or think, nevertheless we must not take that as a reason to sin wilfully or to give in easily to temptation. We must fight the good fight of faith lay hold on eternal life and be bold in the face of hardship because a great reward is waiting for us in Messiah's Kingdom. Now speaking of temptation, many young believers mistake temptation itself as the sin. But we all get tempted, but we should not give in to the temptation because the temptation is not the sin, provided we don't follow through. “The birds can fly above you , but you must not let them land”. is an old Christian saying.

These are all issues that can come as a result of not knowing justification. Another issue that can and often does crop up from this subject is, people say to me **“I don't think I am saved” “I confessed my sins and gave my heart to the Lord, but how do I know I am saved”** The moment you repent wholeheartedly, and confess your sins asking Messiah to come into your life you are regenerated. You may say what is regeneration? Well regeneration is a process that happens when you give your life to Messiah. Its one of the Laws of this planet just like gravity, you become a new person not outwardly but inwardly and start a process of change that continues till you leave this mortal coil.

Your eyes are opened and you begin to see things in a new and exciting way, God's Holy Spirit enters your body and you are sealed in the Holy Spirit. (Eph 1:13-14) This energises your spirit and makes it anew from then on you will have something of a tussel with your own will and nature. as it surrenders to the Spirit of God.

If you have gone through this process you will know it, and it is because it is so real that you have the assurance that God has justified you and cleansed you and given you the wisdom to walk in day by day.