

A study guide in the doctrine of justification by faith

by

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…and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. And we are writing these things so that our joy may be complete. 1John 1:3-4

Westminster Shorter Catechism, Question 1: What is the chief purpose for which man is made? Answer: The chief purpose for which man is made is to glorify God, and to enjoy him forever.[[1]](#endnote-1)

## Purpose

To show how to have a more profound fellowship with God the Father and to increase the joy of our salvation.

All Christians understand the importance of glorifying God. Yet many fail to enjoy fellowship with God the Father. They perceive him more as an entity to serve than a personality to enjoy. They have put a barrier between themselves and the Father. This study will help identify what is that barrier and how to remove it.

Effects of fellowship with God the Father

* A new security of salvation.
* Freedom from a guilty conscience.
* Avoiding legalism.
* Better understanding of how to grow in grace.
* Greater confidence in evangelism.

The essentials

## 1. Definition

Does justification mean, “*made* righteous”? Or does it mean, “*declared* righteous”? Lucas 7:29; 16:15; 1Tim.3:16

Justification means \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Justification does not mean \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Justification: The legal declaration that a person is righteous relative to God’s moral law. The basis is the perfect righteousness of Christ, attributed to the believer by faith alone in Christ alone.

* It is a \_\_\_\_\_\_declaration from God.
* It is relative to the moral law, which is still in force.
* Its basis is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* Righteousness is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_to the believer.
* The means is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

## 2. The importance of justification – Galatians 1:6-9

* What is the consequence of following another gospel? ­­­­­­­­­ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* How many correct perspectives are there of the gospel? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* When Paul uses the word *justification,* he means \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*.*

The background of justification

## 3. The problem

What happens to those whose righteousness does not exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Mt. 5:20

How does Gen.1:27 define a human being? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

What is the primary character attribute of God? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Is.6:3

What does God require of us as his image? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_1Pet. 1:16

How much obedience is required? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Mt. 5:48

## 4. The fall of Adam

What was the consequence of the fall of Adam? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Gen.2:17

What are two other consequences of the fall of Adam?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Rom.5:12-19

## 5. The first hint of God’s solution to the problem of man’s ungodliness

What was counted to Abraham for believing God? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Gen. 15:6

What did God establish with Abraham to make a relationship with him possible? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Gen. 17:1

Gen.17:1,7

* What is the condition? V.1 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* What is the benefit? V.7 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* Who are the participants? V.7 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* How long does it last? V.7 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Galatians Chapter 3

* According to verse 7, who are the participants? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* What does Paul call the covenant with Abraham in verse 8? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* What is the condition in verse 9? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* What is the benefit according to verse 14? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* What are we redeemed from according to verse 13? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* How long does the covenant lasts according to verse 15? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

From Genesis 17 and Galatians 3, can we conclude that the covenant with Abraham is the Christian covenant today? Yes or no? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

## 6. What defines perfection?

What did God promise as the reward for perfect obedience to the law and how many commandments must be obeyed? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Luke 10:28

## 7. The purpose of the law

What is the purpose of the law? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Rom.3:20; 7:7

Does God still require the righteousness of the Law to be fulfilled in Christians? Yes or no? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Rom.8:3-4

Is the moral law still in force? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_1Jn. 3:4

What reaction does breaking the law provoke in God and why? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Rom.4:15

From what does the gospel save us? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Rom.5:9

## 8. Partial Obedience

Does partial obedience count? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ James 2:11

What reward does our obedience deserve? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Lucas 17:10

God’s solution

## 9. Christ our substitute under the law

What was the effect of the sacrifice of Christ on our relationship to the law? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Col.2:13-14

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### Group Exercise

**Rom.3:24-25**

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* What makes the grace of justification possible? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* What is the price Jesus paid for our justification? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* What does propitiation mean? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* How do we appropriate this redemption? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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In what consists our righteousness? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_1Cor.1:30

What is our relationship to law as a means for obtaining righteousness? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Rom. 10:4

Why was it necessary for Christ to be born under the law? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Gal.4:4-5

Is Christ an addition or supplement to our own righteousness? Yes or no? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Is faith itself our righteousness? Yes or no? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Rom. 3:22

What do we have as a result of justification? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Rom.5:1

From what are we free? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Luke 1:74

How can we now approach God for mercy, yet do so with an attitude of confidence? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Heb.4:16

Why do we have eternal life? Is it based on being born again? Or based on justification? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Titus 3:4-8

## 10. Freedom of conscience

Discuss what these verses teach about the sense of sin-consciousness in the believer.

How is the sacrifice of Christ supposed to affect our conscience? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Heb.9:13-14

What is the difference between sin-consciousness under the law, versus under grace because of the sacrifice of Christ? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Heb.10:1-4

With what attitude do we draw near to God, relative to our conscience? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Heb.10:22

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### Group Exercise

******New security: Ro.8:30-34 (See the text in your Bible.)

* Does God accept accusations against his elect? If not, why not? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* Who has the right to declare them righteous? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* What relationship is there between the elect and justification? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* What does the continuing intercession of Christ have to do with the security of our salvation? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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Our astounding freedom

If sin does not condemn us, what is to prevent us from sinning all we please? The following exercise will help answer this.

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### Group Exercise

Based on the Rom.6:15-18, answer the following questions:

* Does being free from the condemnation of the law give us freedom to sin? Why or why not? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* Are sinners capable of not sinning? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* What do Christians naturally pursue? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

How do justified and non-condemned people behave and why? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Rom. 8:1-2

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## 11. 1John

What is the natural motivation of those who are saved? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 1Jn.3:3

Who or what is the cause of our obedience? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Phil.2:13

Those who are born of God are incapable of what? Why? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_1Jn.3:9

Who or what keeps the Christian from living a life of sin? Is it his own obedience to laws and rules, or something else? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 1Jn. 5:18

## 12. Galatians

From what is Paul exhorting Christians to be free? What is the *yoke of slavery*? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Gal.5:1

Paul says we have been called to freedom. What freedom is he talking about and what is the warning he gives? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Gal.5:13

The point

I promised to identify the barrier that keeps us from enjoying God the Father fully.

It seems we put rules between God and ourselves as conditions for him to accept us more than he already has. This is a performance-based rather than cross-based righteousness. There is nothing between God and us the Father but the cross. That is not a barrier. It is an invitation.

God is no longer our judge. He is our Father. His wrath has been satisfied and He will never be angry with us again. We are no longer criminals before a bar of judgment. We are children, with wounds.

Our new identity

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### Group Exercise

Ephesians Chapters 1-3

******How many of the epistles were written to “sinners” versus how many written to “saints?” Should we view ourselves primarily as sinners with grace or saints with remnants of corruption? Write a list of all the good things Christians are in Christ and have, found in the first three chapters of Ephesians.

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## From this study we learned…

* Justification by faith alone in Christ alone is the gospel.
* God requires absolute holiness and perfection from people as his image.
* God’s moral law is in force forever and defines perfection.
* The gospel saves us from the wrath of God for breaking his moral law.
* Partial obedience is disobedience.
* Christ’s death on the cross, freed believers from the condemnation of the law.
* God attributes perfect righteousness to those who trust in Christ.
* The gift of eternal life is based on justification.
* If we lack fellowship with God, we may have put rules on ourselves that God did not place there.
* Christians have a new identity as saints and are no longer considered sinners by God.

This corresponds to the material in the book Joyfully Justified available free

of charge at

http://www.smallings.com/english/books/JustEngBk.pdf

1. Westminster Shorter Catechism, Modern Translation, Question one. <http://matt2819.com/wsc/> [↑](#endnote-ref-1)