

Systematic Theology II

Justification definition:

“Justification is an instantaneous legal act of God in which he (1) thinks of our sins as forgiven and Christ’s righteousness as belonging to us, and (2) declares us to be righteous in his sight.”

Justification is a legal
declaration.

Luke 7:29; Romans 4:5; Proverbs 17:15

Justification is instantaneous.

Romans 3:26; Romans 3:28; Romans 5:1;
Galatians 2:16

Justification is a declaration of
righteousness.

Romans 4:5



Justification declares us righteous
in two senses: (1) forgiven and (2)
(positively) righteous.

(1) Romans 8:1, 33-34; Romans 4:6-8

(2) Isaiah 61:10; Romans 3:21-22; Romans 4:3;
Romans 5:19

In justification, Christ's
righteousness is imputed to us.

Romans 4:3; Romans 5:17; 1 Corinthians 1:30

In contrast, for Roman Catholics,
justification is an infusing of
righteousness.

In contrast, for Roman Catholics,
justification must be maintained and
developed.

We cannot merit this kind of
justification.

Romans 3:20-24; Ephesians 2:8-9

We are justified through faith.

Galatians 2:16; Romans 4:16

What about James? James uses
“justify” in a slightly different way
but is complementary to Paul.

James 2:24

Good works give evidence of justification, but they are not the basis of justification.

1 John 2:4-5; James 2:17-18

Justification

So what?

- We have full assurance of pardon and welcome instantaneously.
- We have full assurance of full pardon because it is not based on us but Christ.
- It reframes our ongoing struggles with sin.
- It offsets the consequences of sins.
- It reframes moments when God disciplines us.
- What else?