

JUSTIFICATION.

To justify is either to make just and right that which is wrong, or to prove and show to be just that which is free from blame.

"Justification by faith" is well known to be a Scriptural doctrine, yet we think its real meaning and scope are not fully understood by many who profess to have been so justified.

The tendency of the times is toward a still more unscriptural idea, and while we doubt not many have been saved in the past who did not understand it, in this age and land it becomes more than ever our duty to "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." – 2 Pet. 3:18.

Paul's statement of the case is as follows: – In the first two chapters of Romans he shows that all mankind are sinners; that the natural tendency is downwards; that neither the Gentiles with the light of nature, nor the Jews with the light and law of Moses, are able to free themselves from sin and sinful tendencies. When he reaches Rom. 3:21, he thus explains God's simple yet wonderful provision for the race. "But now apart from law a righteousness [justness] of God hath been manifested, *being witnessed by the law and the prophets*; even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ unto all them that believe; for there is no distinction: for all have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace *through the REDEMPTION that is in Christ Jesus*: whom God set forth to be a mercy-seat *through faith in his blood*, to show his righteousness in passing by the sins formerly committed, during the forbearance of God: and to a showing of his righteousness in the present time, in order that he may be righteous [just] while justifying him who hath faith in Jesus."

Mark the following points: –

1. All have sinned, are unjust, therefore need justifying – that is, to be made just or right.

2. Neither Nature nor Law can justify the sinner.

3. God remains strictly just himself, while justifying the sinner.

4. God's method of justification has been witnessed [attested] by the Law and the Prophets.

5. It is granted us through *redemption* made by Christ Jesus.

6. It is attained through faith *in his blood*.

7. It accomplishes the passing by (so cancelling or crossing off) of former sins, and the restoration of the sinner to favor.

Statement **No. 1** is admitted by the class we wish to talk to; those who do not believe it are out of our present reach, but will be reached effectually by the judgments of the coming age.

No. 2. As to the light of nature. The ante-diluvians had that light with evidently better physical and mental natures than we to work with, but they developed characters that even Noah's flood could not wash out and leave them living. Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities about them had this light, but a fiercer flame overtook them. The Amorites and other nations of Canaan had this light, but it led them to destruction. (Deut. 18:9-12; Gen. 15:16; 2 Kings 17:29-41.) And it has been true all down the ages that "The dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty."

As to the Jew, if the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service, and the promises (Rom. 9:3-5), and all the light of Sinai could not save them, how say some among you that the heathen may be saved by the light of nature? That there have been remarkably noble specimens of humanity among the heathen – considering their surroundings – there is no doubt; and through the

plan of mercy God has provided, such will have a reward: even the giving of a cup of cold water will not be forgotten. (Mark 9:38-41.) Some even to this day retain more of the original Adamic nature or character than others. We see this both in civilized and barbarous lands. Lingerings of the original noble, generous nature that God created in Adam (His own likeness) reassert themselves, and come up, sometimes in families, and sometimes in individuals, and sometimes under circumstances that least favor such a character.

But such a character could not, and can not *now* save a man whose life is already forfeited. Can any little kindness done to his fellow-prisoners by a man under sentence of death, and waiting the day of his execution, legally save his life? So the human race who have been *under the dominion of death* ever since the day of Adam's transgression, whatever good they may do, are powerless to save themselves from the penalty.

Paul in Rom. 3:9-20 first states clearly this helpless condition of both Jew and Gentile, and then points out the plan of justification that the God of Love has provided.

No. 3. But this plan cannot interfere with God's justice and integrity. He cannot, as some claim, *withdraw* his sentence, and by a sovereign will to do as he pleases, forgive whom he will, or even those who seek his forgiveness. Having enacted a law and pronounced its penalty [R1030 : page 8] upon a race who had been brought under its condemnation, He cannot *eat his own words*, speaking humanly, and reverse his decree. His justice, his holiness, his unchangeableness of character (Mal. 3:6,) must remain perfect.

In that beautiful 55th chapter of Isaiah we read: "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts. For as the rain cometh down and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither [in vain], but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, and giveth seed to the sower, and bread to the eater; so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my

mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereunto I sent it."

Our loving Father, then, had a wise purpose in making his decree which brought such condemnation; and when it has accomplished his will, we will see that his LOVE is equal to his JUSTICE, that his WISDOM devised the plan, and that his infinite POWER was nowise taxed to carry out his purpose without confusion or clash. Let us study His "way" in the light of our next point:

No. 4. What did the Law witness in reference to justification? *Emphatically* that "without shedding of blood there is no remission." (Heb. 9:22.) Every sacrifice, day by day, and year by year, proved this.

But why *blood*? Some people seem to have a terrible horror of coupling blood with salvation. Any subject, perhaps, may be made a tiresome hobby, but the allwise God has seen fit to use blood as a symbol and as an instrumentality, and we may not instruct HIM.

"Through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin: and so death passed unto all men, for that all sinned:" – being of the Adamic nature. Life being forfeited, life only could redeem; so the Lord tells us, "The life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement by reason of [being] the life." – Lev. 17:11,14; Gen. 9:4; Deut. 12:23.

Did these sacrifices day by day make the Jews perfect? No, says Paul (Heb. 10:1-4), else having been cleansed once for all, they might have ceased their offerings. But he says "In those sacrifices there is a remembrance made of sins year by year." What were they then, and what for? Inspiration answers "*a shadow* of the good things to come, not the *substance* of the things themselves." – *Syriac*. But the shadow must be a true outline of the substance, so they pointed to the complete and perfect justification from sin by the "better sacrifice," the "body"

that the Father himself prepared; offered *once for all [time]*. – Heb. 10:5,10.

The Prophets [Ps. 22, Isa. 52, 53, 63, etc.,] testified to the same truths. Both describe a vicarious or substitutionary justification; that is, the guilty one is freed by an act done, or a price or penalty paid by some one else.

But why some one else, why not the one really guilty? Because, as before shown, the penalty being *death, i.e.*, his right to *life*, he had no equivalent to redeem it with. Having lost *his all*, what had he left to buy it back with? But as we have seen, a "body" has been prepared, a sacrifice well pleasing to God has been made, a Redeemer is found.

No. 5. John the Baptist was the divinely appointed herald of this divinely appointed Redeemer, and his words of introduction were: – "Behold the LAMB of God, which taketh away the sins of the world." (John 1:29.) How could those Jews understand such a declaration only as referring to one who was to be in some way offered up, as a sacrifice in the place of some one else who had sinned.

A new school of wise (?) men have arisen who say: "Away with this talk of Christ's death atoning for us, and of his blood being required to satisfy the Father, as if the Father was a Shylock demanding his pound of flesh. It was not his death, but his life that was efficacious; his pure self-denying life; giving us an example that we should follow in his steps."

No doubt this sounds very sensible to some extremely esthetic religionists of today; but it is sophistry, nevertheless.

We appreciate that spotless life. We believe that short as it was, it was without a parallel in nobility, wisdom and blessing; we believe too that only those who make it their pattern, and that glorious **[R1031 : page 8]** character their highest ambition, will be privileged to become members of that Divine body of which he will be the Head.

There was a grand purpose in his life; there was one – even more necessary – in his death.

Imagine an athlete finely developed and bounding with life, coming to a dying man whose every power was hopelessly shattered, who could at most live but a few hours, saying to him: "Look at me, see what I am; my system of exercise not only keeps me in full health but I believe will add years to my life."

Would not this be mockery? Have we not seen that the whole race passed under the dominion of death when Adam fell? Rom. 5:12. "Death reigned from Adam to Moses." The law was given, but it only revealed man's weakness; so death continued to reign. Jesus came. His body was a miraculous fornication of the Father in the womb of Mary. (Heb. 10:5.) His life came directly from heaven (Heb. 1:5, Luke 1:35,) and he was therefore, though human, yet free, both from Adamic sin and its penalty, death.

He was the second man, perfect, sinless, in the likeness of God. The first one, Adam, had failed in the test, and falling carried the race (yet in his loins) with him.

The second one, Jesus, had come to REDEEM this lost and ruined race. He must first stand the test to show to angels and to men that he was the peer, the equal of the first Adam *then*, not before, he paid the redemption price, – *a life for a life*. Having first redeemed Adam, and all the race *in him*, his example, his character, became available to them as a pattern of the way of obedience; the reward of which is *eternal* life.

But eternal or any measure of life could not come to those under the dominion of death, *i.e.*, these whom death had a claim against, until they are first released from this claim; – *redeemed*, as had been clearly shadowed forth in the types of the Jewish covenant.

Redemption under the law could be made only by an estimated equivalent value. In some cases (Lev. 25:25-31; 27:14-34; Num. 3:44-51) it might be made with money; in most cases, and where sin was involved, only blood could atone, or justify. (Heb. 9:22.) Peter refers to this and clearly shows what justified us. "Knowing that ye were redeemed not with corruptible things, with silver or gold;...but with the precious blood of Christ; as of a lamb without blemish and without spot; who was foreknown indeed before the foundation of the world, but was manifested at the end of the times for your sake." – 1 Pet. 1:18-20.

No. 6. This justification [*salvation*] is attained by faith in his blood. "O yes," says some one, "*blood* again, always blood. Do not the Scriptures clearly teach that we are saved by *grace*, that is *favor*? How then by blood, and by a purchase? Is it a favor to receive that which is bought and paid for?"

If we were without means and starving or freezing and a passerby should find us, and go and get food and help and rescue us, it might or might not be a favor to him, it would certainly would be a great favor to us. But because it is of favor, it is not less "by faith;" nor because by faith is it less "through blood." It is all three – by *faith* in the *blood* ransom provided by the *favor* of God, who "was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself."

In turning away from the distorted view of the sacrifice presented in some hymnbook theology, let us be careful that we do not turn away from the Scriptures of truth. If our theories do not agree with the words of inspiration, we had better search the Word for a more harmonious theory; better void the theology than avoid the Scripture.

No. 7. How are these sins passed by? Suppose as was once possible a man got badly in debt and could not pay. Having nothing, he himself is sold and afterward put in prison. A friend discovers him and asks to be shown his account. It is brought and the friend says, "Here is the amount, mark that *paid*. Now, turn over a new leaf – so passing

the old account by. Write my name at the top, he is my slave, whatever he needs give him and charge it to me." Having done this the friend makes him *free*, but the man filled with gratitude, while rejoicing in his freedom, gladly yields willing obedience and service to his new and kind master.

Thus to the world, whose millions have been enslaved to Satan and his minions, the picture illustrates Sin's tyranny and degradation, and God's love and deliverance and *favor* as perhaps nothing else would.

The Law, with its sacrifices and typical justification; its jubilee cycles, enslavement and purchased redemption (Lev. 25:8-28.) etc., were all given as pictures, as object lessons to illustrate God's wonderful plan of salvation. A blind Church has neglected God's pictures, (failing to see them clearly herself) but under the restored Levitical priesthood, in the coming age, enlightened by that of the order of Melchisedec, these illuminations will be powerful instrumentalities in the accomplishment of the work they were really intended for: great index fingers pointing unerringly to the justification and redemption and RESTORATION of the race of slaves (of Sin and Satan), by Jehovah's way – through the *blood* of the world's Redeemer and Master, Jesus Christ our Lord.

W. I. MANN.

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"A VERY unpleasant complication has arisen in a wealthy and fashionable church in Cincinnati. For some time past a woman of previously doubtful reputation has been a constant attendant at the services of this church. She has frequently been affected to tears by the sermons, and in other ways manifested a great interest in religion. The

prominent members of the church, however, and especially the ladies, are indignant at her for venturing to sit among respectable people, and the pastor has been requested to inform her that she is not wanted. Thus far he does not appear to have done this, and a number of people talk of leaving the church, unless this woman is made to do so. Wonder if these ladies ever read the eighth chapter of John, from the third to the eleventh verses. Probably not, or if they have, it is very likely they don't believe in any such spirit as that shown by Jesus the Christ."

– *Sel.*

WHOSE is this fastidious? "Church;" Whose spirit has it? Surely the church founded by Christ included Mary Magdalene. The great fashionable congregations of the worldly have its spirit, which is against (contrary to) Christ's spirit.

– W. M. WRIGHT.

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C. H. SPURGEON in a sermon on Rev. 5:10 said: "Do you know I am a fifth monarchy man? In Cromwell's time some said there had been four monarchies and the fifth would come and overturn every other. Well, I never wish to do as they did; but I believe with them that a fifth monarchy shall come. There have been four; – and *there never shall be another* until Christ shall come....I am afraid we cannot hope for much better times until the Lord Jesus Christ comes a second time. Often do I cheer myself with the thought of His coming....For that day do I look: it is to the bright horizon of that second coming that I turn my eyes."

THE *Protestant Churchman* says: "What is the view we are to take, and the duty to which we are called?...To take the view of earth

which the Lord's word suggests, Till the glorious coming of the Saviour we may anticipate nothing but successive overturnings of men and earthly things...The history of men, in the closing period of the times of the Gentiles, is a history of warfare and revolution, until the Saviour appears in the power and majesty of His coming. Thus are we to look at the coming state of the world and men, till He appear to take the kingdom."

"WE are living in the very age towards which all eyes have been directed as those of the closing days of the church's conflict, as long ago as the time of Luther."

– *Samuel Garratt.*
