

JUSTIFICATION

- I. Some Biblical references to "justification"
 - A. Hebrew word *sadeq* - "to do justice, vindicate, acquit, prove right"
 - Isa. 45:25 - "In the Lord all the offspring of Israel will be justified"
 - Isa. 53:11 - "the Righteous One, My Servant, will justify the many..."
 - B. Greeks words *dikaioo* (60), *dikaioma* (10), *dikaiois* (81), *dikaioisune* (92), *dikaiosis* (2) and *dikaiois* (5) - "right, righteous, righteousness, justify, justification"
 - Rom. 3:24 - "justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus"
 - Rom. 3:28 - "a man is justified by faith apart from works of the Law"
 - Rom. 5:9 - "having been justified by His blood"
 - Rom. 5:18 - "through one act of righteousness there resulted justification of life to all men."
 - Rom. 8:33 - "God is the One who justifies"
 - Gal. 2:16 - "we may be justified by faith in Christ, and not by the works of the Law; since by the works of the Law shall no flesh be justified."
 - Gal. 3:24 - "we may be justified by faith"
 - Titus 3:7 - "being justified by His grace we might be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life."
- II. Historical background of understanding "justification"
 - A. Greek thought
 - 1. *Dike* was mythological Greek god of justice - Acts 28:4
 - 2. Justification was acceptable alignment with cultural and moral values, the law of nature, the law of the land; civility, the customary
 - B. Roman thought
 - 1. System of Roman Empire based on law and order.
 - 2. Justification was alignment with Roman governmental law, and respect for Roman Emperor.
 - C. Jewish thought
 - 1. Mosaic law became basis of Judaic religious ethics.
 - 2. Justification was behavioral alignment with God's Law.
- III. Uniqueness of Christian understanding of "justification"
 - A. Christian gospel not formulated on law-concept, but on grace-concept.
 - 1. Christian justification not based on ethical behavioral alignment with God's law - Rom. 3:28; 9:31; 10:3,4; Gal. 2:2:16,21; 3:21; Phil. 3:6,9
 - 2. Grace is the dynamic divine provision for expressing God's character - Rom. 3:24; Titus 3:7
 - 3. Faith is man's responsibility for receptivity of God's activity of grace. - Rom. 3:28; Gal. 2:16; 3:24
 - B. Christian understanding of "justification" has reference to alignment with character of God
 - 1. God is Righteous - Ps. 11:7; 119:137,142; I Jn. 2:29; 3:7
 - 2. Jesus Christ is the Righteous One - Acts 3:14; 7:52; 22:14; II Tim. 4:8; I Jn. 2:1; Rev. 16:5
 - 3. Christians are made righteous in Christ - Rom. 5:19; II Cor. 5:21; Heb. 12:23
 - 4. Christ is our righteousness - I Cor. 1:30...

- IV. History of Christian understanding of "justification"
 - A. Concepts expressed by Jesus Christ and New Testament writers.
 - B. Reversion to Judaic religious concept of legal, moral, ethical righteousness
 - C. Adaptation to Greek concepts of social, cultural concepts of righteousness.
 - D. Adaptation to Roman concepts of institutional, governmental law.
 - E. Roman Catholicism
 - 1. Infused grace
 - 2. Alignment with ecclesiastical law (institutional, social, moral, legal)
 - 3. Co-operative performance of righteous "works"
 - F. Protestant Reformation
 - 1. Reaction to Roman "works" righteousness
 - 2. Objectification of righteousness
 - 3. Justification still cast in legal, judicial and forensic categories
 - 4. Justification primarily understood as status of right-standing with God.
 - G. Modern misunderstanding of "justification"
 - 1. References to "self-justification" - excuse, vindication
 - 2. Computer terminology of alignment - "left, right, center justification"
 - 3. Righteousness relativized to popular opinion, social consensus, majority rule.
 - 4. Religious righteousness = performance righteousness = works righteousness = self-righteousness = unrighteousness.

- V. Perspectives of Biblical understanding of "justification"
 - A. Objective
 - 1. Verdict - declared "Not guilty." Declared "Righteous"
 - 2. Ledger entry - in the "asset" column of the "Book of Life."
 - 3. Status conferred - child of God, saint
 - 4. Right standing - positional placement - imputation
 - 5. Reconciliation
 - B. Subjective
 - 1. Spiritual condition
 - a. Regeneration
 - b. Christ in us
 - c. Identity as "Christ-ones" - Christians
 - d. Made righteous
 - 2. Behavioral expression
 - a. Sanctification
 - b. Instruments of righteousness - Rom. 6
 - c. Grace impartation of righteous character
 - C. Consequences of over-emphasizing objective or subjective perspective
 - 1. Objective over-emphasis
 - a. Knowledge-based interpretations of objective truth
 - b. Focusing on benefits and blessings
 - c. Positive thinking of "reckoning"
 - d. Legalizing and moralizing basis of behavior
 - e. "Works" basis of behavior
 - 2. Subjective over-emphasis
 - a. Inherent or intrinsic condition of righteousness
 - b. Infused righteousness
 - c. Feeling right about relationship with God.
 - d. Feeling right about oneself