

*GraceLife Church Presents . . .*

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# Soteriology

The Purpose,  
Accomplishment, Plan, and  
Application of Redemption

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# The Application of Redemption

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## Justification

### *Introduction*

- ❖ The last 2 lessons were on the doctrine of justification.
  - ❖ How it fits in the *ordo salutis* (order of the application of redemption)
  - ❖ Importance of the doctrine. Eternally significant question, 'How can a man be just with God?'
  - ❖ Defined it. Traced it through Romans

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# The Application of Redemption

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## Justification

### *Introduction*

- ❖ Today, we want to conclude our study of this important doctrine.
- ❖ Tie up some loose ends. Here's where we are going. . .
  - ❖ Definition
  - ❖ Transformation? (The Catholic View)
  - ❖ Imputation (2 Cor 5:21)
  - ❖ Vindication
  - ❖ Sanctification

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# The Application of Redemption

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## Justification

### *Definition*

- ❖ I always feel the need to remind you of the definition of whatever it is we are talking about.
- ❖ It does no good to talk about ‘justification’ or any other doctrine if you don’t know what that thing is.

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# The Application of Redemption

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## Justification

### *Definition*

- ❖ Justification is an act of God in which he declares us 'righteous' in his sight and treats and thinks of us as righteous righteous by faith alone.
- ❖ This declaration is founded upon the righteousness of Christ which is *imputed* (counted, reckoned) to the believer through faith.
- ❖ Justification includes the forgiveness of sins and the 'right' to inherit eternal life.

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# The Application of Redemption

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## Justification

### *Definition*

“Justified by faith is he who, excluded from the righteousness of works, grasps the righteousness of Christ through faith, and clothed in it, appears in God’s sight not as a sinner but as a righteous man. Therefore, we explain justification simply as the acceptance with which God receives us into his favor as righteous men. And we say that it consists in the remission of sins and the imputation of Christ’s righteousness.”

John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 726–27, (3.11.2).

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# The Application of Redemption

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## Justification

### *Definition*

“Therefore, we may define justification as that instantaneous act of God whereby, as a gift of his grace, he imputes to a believing sinner the full and perfect righteousness of Christ through faith alone and legally declares him perfectly righteous in his sight, forgiving the sinner of all unrighteousness and thus delivering him from all condemnation.”

John MacArthur and Richard Mayhue, *Biblical Doctrine*, 612.

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# The Application of Redemption

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## 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.”



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# The Application of Redemption

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## Justification

### *Transformation? The Catholic View*

- ❖ The *material* cause of the Reformation was the doctrine of justification by faith alone (*Sola fide*).
- ❖ The Reformers rightly recognized from Scripture that the only way a sinful man could be made 'just' with God was through faith in Jesus Christ.
- ❖ No good works whatsoever can free us from our guilt and sin.

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# The Application of Redemption

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## Justification

### *Transformation? The Catholic View*

- ❖ “By the works of the law no flesh will be justified in his sight” (Rom 3:20; cf. Gal 2:16).
- ❖ When we think of Roman Catholic theology we typically think of ‘works righteousness’ and rightly so.
- ❖ It may surprise you, however, that Catholicism affirms justification by grace through faith.

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# The Application of Redemption

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## Justification

*Transformation? The Catholic View*

- ❖ The difference between what the Catholic church teaches and what the Bible teaches is that, biblically, justification comes through faith *alone*.
- ❖ That one word, *alone*, makes a world of difference.
- ❖ Do we need something besides faith in order to be right with God?

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# The Application of Redemption

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## Justification

### *Transformation? The Catholic View*

- ❖ The Catholic view is probably more nuanced than I understand or can articulate here. And, in all fairness, I should probably admit that the Protestant view might seem difficult to a Catholic.
- ❖ The Protestant view however, is clearly laid out in Scripture.
- ❖ The Roman understanding of justification was presented in what is known as “The Counter-Reformation” at the Council of Trent (1545–1563 (6th Session on justification 1546–1547))

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# The Application of Redemption

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## Justification

### *Transformation? The Catholic View*

- ❖ The Catholic church teaches that justification is *by* faith but they don't mean '*by*' the same way we do.
- ❖ For them faith is not the instrumental cause of justification, nor is it the sufficient cause. Faith is not *enough*.
- ❖ For them justifying faith can be lost.

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# The Application of Redemption

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## Justification

*Transformation? The Catholic View*

“Trent emphasized the necessity of faith for justification. Trent declares: “We are therefore said to be justified by faith, because faith is the beginning of human salvation, the foundation and root of all justification.”

R.C. Sproul, *Faith Alone*, 146.

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# The Application of Redemption

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## Justification

*Transformation? The Catholic View*

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# The Application of Redemption

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## Justification

### *Transformation? The Catholic View*

- ❖ But in the Catholic system the sacrament [grace imparting] of baptism is the *primary* instrumental cause of justification. Justification begins at baptism.
- ❖ Justification grows or diminishes through life depending on one's conduct.
- ❖ We can see they must mean something different by the word justification as well. It is not the righteousness of Christ regarded as belonging to the believer through union with him.



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# The Application of Redemption

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## Justification

### *Transformation? The Catholic View*

- ❖ In the Catholic system this initial justification through baptism can be lost through “infidelity” and/or “mortal sins.”
- ❖ Justification, once lost, must be re-gained through another sacrament, that of penance. Penance is a religious duty prescribed by a Priest after he hears a confession of sins.

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# The Application of Redemption

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## Justification

*Transformation? The Catholic View*

“As regards those who, by sin, have fallen from the received grace of Justification, they may be again justified, when, God exciting them, through the sacrament of Penance they shall have attained to the recovery, by the merit of Christ, of the grace lost.”

Council of Trent Session VI, Chapter XIV.

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# The Application of Redemption

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## Justification

*Transformation? The Catholic View*

“In opposition also to the subtle wits of certain men, who, by pleasing speeches and good words, seduce the hearts of the innocent, it is to be maintained, that the received grace of Justification is lost, not only by infidelity whereby even faith itself is lost, but also by any other mortal sin whatever, though faith be not lost.”

Council of Trent Session VI, Chapter XV.

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# The Application of Redemption

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## Justification

### *Transformation? The Catholic View*

- ❖ From the Council of Trent we can see that the Catholic church see justification as something that can be gained, lost, and re-gained.
- ❖ They say that faith is 'the beginning, foundation, and root,' but more ultimately the grace inferring sacraments of baptism and justification result in justification.

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# The Application of Redemption

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## Justification

*Transformation? The Catholic View*

- ❖ Catholics also reject the idea that righteousness is *imputed* to the believer by faith.
- ❖ They call that a 'legal fiction.' God can't count us righteous based on the righteousness of Christ (they say) we must become *actually* righteous.

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# The Application of Redemption

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## Justification

### *Transformation? The Catholic View*

- ❖ They believe that in justification righteousness is *imparted* or *infused* into the believer making the believer actually righteous.
- ❖ They maintain that this 'righteousness' is 'by grace' but that it grows through a divine-human co-operation.
- ❖ Justification in the Catholic system is not 'complete' in this life.
- ❖ This is a confusion of justification and sanctification.

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# The Application of Redemption

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## Justification

### *Transformation? The Catholic View*

“It is essential to the heart of the gospel to insist that God declares us to be just or righteous not on the basis of our actual condition of righteousness or holiness, but rather on the basis of Christ’s perfect righteousness, which God thinks of as belonging to us. This was the heart of the difference between Protestantism and Roman Catholicism at the Reformation.”

Wayne Grudem, *Bible Doctrine*, 319.

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# The Application of Redemption

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## Justification

*Transformation? The Catholic View*

“This view may be said to understand justification as based not on *imputed* righteousness but on *infused* righteousness—that is, righteousness that God actually *puts into us* and that changes us internally and in terms of our actual moral character.”

Wayne Grudem, *Bible Doctrine*, 318.



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# The Application of Redemption

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## Justification

*Transformation? The Catholic View*

“For the justified eternal life is both a gift of grace promised by God and a reward for his own good works and merits. . . Salutory works are, at the same time, gifts of God and meritorious acts of man.”

Ludwig Ott, *Fundamentals of Catholic Dogma*, 264; Quoted in Wayne Grudem, *Bible Doctrine*, 320.

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# The Application of Redemption

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## Justification

### *Transformation? The Catholic View*

“If justification changed us internally and then declared us to be righteous based on how good we actually were, then (1) we could never be declared perfectly righteous in this life, because there is always sin that remains in our lives, and (2) there would be no provision for forgiveness of past sins (committed before we were changed internally), and therefore we could never have confidence that we are right before God.”

Wayne Grudem, *Bible Doctrine*, 319.

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# The Application of Redemption

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## Justification

### *Transformation? The Catholic View*

“The result of this traditional Roman Catholic view of justification is that people cannot be sure if they are in a ‘state of grace’ where they experience God’s complete acceptance and favor or not. Furthermore, under this view people experience varying degrees of justification according to the measure of righteousness that has been infused or placed within them.”

Wayne Grudem, *Bible Doctrine*, 318.

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# The Application of Redemption

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## Justification

*Transformation? The Catholic View*

“When we say that God *imputes* Christ’s righteousness to us, it means that God thinks of Christ’s righteousness as belonging to us, or regards it as belonging to us. He ‘reckons’ it to our account.”

Wayne Grudem, *Bible Doctrine*, 318.

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# The Application of Redemption

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## Justification

*Transformation? The Catholic View*

**Rom 5:1** Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,

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# The Application of Redemption

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## Justification

*Transformation? The Catholic View*

**Rom 8:1** Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

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# The Application of Redemption

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## Justification

### *Transformation? The Catholic View*

- ❖ We could never believe Romans 5:1 or 8:1 if we held to the Catholic understanding that justification is a righteousness infused into us by grace by which we are *subsequently* declared righteous.
- ❖ The Council of Trent wrote some ‘Cannons’ aimed at the Reformation teaching of imputed righteousness by faith alone.
- ❖ They miss the mark to varying degrees but they do show what the church believed.

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# The Application of Redemption

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## Justification

*Transformation? The Catholic View*

“If any one saith, that by faith alone the impious is justified; in such wise as to mean, that nothing else is required to co-operate in order to the obtaining the grace of Justification, and that it is not in any way necessary, that he be prepared and disposed by the movement of his own will; let him be anathema.”

Council of Trent Canon IX



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# The Application of Redemption

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## Justification

*Transformation? The Catholic View*

“If any one shall say that justifying faith is nothing else than confidence in the divine mercy pardoning sins for Christ's sake, or that it is that confidence alone by which we are justified ... let him be accursed.”

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# The Application of Redemption

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## Justification

### *Transformation? The Catholic View*

“If any one saith, that, by the Catholic doctrine touching Justification, by this holy Synod inset forth in this present decree, the glory of God, or the merits of our Lord Jesus Christ are in any way derogated from, and not rather that the truth of our faith, and the glory in fine of God and of Jesus Christ are rendered (more) illustrious; let him be anathema.”

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# The Application of Redemption

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## Justification

### *Transformation? The Catholic View*

- ❖ The Catholic view is not the biblical view of justification.
- ❖ We already saw that ‘justification’ does not mean ‘make righteous’ it means ‘declare righteous.’
- ❖ The righteousness imputed in justification is Christ’s perfect righteousness not our so-called works or righteousness (not even works done by grace).

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# The Application of Redemption

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## Justification

*Imputation. 2 Corinthians 5:21*

- ❖ 2 Corinthians 5:21 is a key verse on the doctrine of justification.
- ❖ It shows us a number of key things about 'the righteousness of God' which is what justification is all about.

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# The Application of Redemption

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## Justification

*Imputation. 2 Corinthians 5:21*

**2 Cor 5:21** He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

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- ❖ The first 'He' is God.
- ❖ 'Him who knew no sin' is Jesus Christ.
- ❖ God made Jesus Christ 'sin on our behalf.' This is the first half of the equation. Jesus Christ was not made to be sin in the sense that he became sinful or that he literally became sin. I'll lean on John MacArthur here. . .

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# The Application of Redemption

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## Justification

*Imputation. 2 Corinthians 5:21*

“It would be blasphemous to suggest that the God-man was actually made a sinner, for God cannot sin. Instead, since justification is a legal declaration, the Father judicially reckoned Christ to have committed the sins of those for whom he was giving himself as a substitute.”

John MacArthur and Richard Mayhue, *Biblical Doctrine*, 615.

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# The Application of Redemption

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## Justification

*Imputation. 2 Corinthians 5:21*

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**2 Cor 5:21** He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

- ❖ Jesus was 'made sin' that is, God treated him as though he had committed all the sins of those who are 'in Him.'
- ❖ This was 'so that' we might become the righteousness of God in Him.
- ❖ In the same way that God reckoned Jesus as sin so we are reckoned as having the righteousness of God when we are 'in Christ' by faith.

**2 Cor 5:21** He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

- ❖ Our union with Christ allows our sin to be counted as his and his righteousness to be accounted as ours.
- ❖ God looks at us and treats us as his own beloved Son in whom he is well-pleased.
- ❖ Our sins are removed and paid for by Christ.
- ❖ Our righteousness is not our own we receive the righteousness of our sinless, perfect representative.

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# The Application of Redemption

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## Justification

*Imputation. 2 Corinthians 5:21*

**2 Cor 5:17** Therefore if anyone is in Christ, *he is* a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.

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# The Application of Redemption

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## Justification

*Imputation. 2 Corinthians 5:21*

**Phil 3:9** and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from *the* Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which *comes* from God on the basis of faith,

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# The Application of Redemption

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## Justification

*Imputation. 2 Corinthians 5:21*

**Luke 18:10** “Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. **11** “The Pharisee stood and was praying this to himself: ‘God, I thank You that I am not like other people: swindlers, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. **12** ‘I fast twice a week; I pay tithes of all that I get.’ **13** “But the tax collector, standing some distance away, was even unwilling to lift up his eyes to heaven, but was beating his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me, the sinner!’ **14** “I tell you, this man went to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but he who humbles himself will be exalted.”

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# The Application of Redemption

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## Justification

### *Vindication*

- ❖ We can't fully deal with the doctrine of justification without interacting with James' use of the term.
- ❖ James and Paul are using the word differently.
- ❖ Paul uses 'justification' in the sense it is most often used 'to declare righteous.'

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# The Application of Redemption

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## Justification

### *Vindication*

- ❖ James uses 'justification' in his book in the sense of 'to show to be righteous' or 'to vindicate.'
- ❖ Paul is speaking about salvation, James is speaking about how true faith is revealed.
- ❖ James says a so-called faith that doesn't change your life is no faith at all.

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# The Application of Redemption

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## Justification

*Vindication*

**Luke 16:15** And He said to them, “You are those who justify yourselves in the sight of men, but God knows your hearts; for that which is highly esteemed among men is detestable in the sight of God.



**Luke 16:15** And He said to them, “You are those who justify yourselves in the sight of men, but God knows your hearts; for that which is highly esteemed among men is detestable in the sight of God.

“The point here was not that the Pharisees went around making legal declarations that they were ‘not guilty’ before God, but rather that they were always attempting to show others that they were righteous by their outward deeds.”

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# The Application of Redemption

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## Justification

### *Vindication*

**Jas 2:14** What use is it, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but he has no works? Can that faith save him? **15** If a brother or sister is without clothing and in need of daily food, **16** and one of you says to them, “Go in peace, be warmed and be filled,” and yet you do not give them what is necessary for *their* body, what use is that? **17** Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead, *being* by itself.

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# The Application of Redemption

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## Justification

### *Vindication*

**Jas 2:18** But someone may *well* say, “You have faith and I have works; show me your faith without the works, and I will show you my faith by my works.” **19** You believe that God is one. You do well; the demons also believe, and shudder. **20** But are you willing to recognize, you foolish fellow, that faith without works is useless?

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# The Application of Redemption

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## Justification

### *Vindication*

**Jas 2:21** Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up Isaac his son on the altar? **22** You see that faith was working with his works, and as a result of the works, faith was perfected; **23** and the Scripture was fulfilled which says, “AND ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD, AND IT WAS RECKONED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS,” and he was called the friend of God.

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# The Application of Redemption

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## Justification

### *Vindication*

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# The Application of Redemption

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## Justification

### *Vindication*

**Jas 2:24** You see that a man is justified by works and not by faith alone. **25** In the same way, was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out by another way? **26** For just as the body without *the* spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead.

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# The Application of Redemption

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## Justification

### *Vindication*

“James, however, is not speaking of forensic justification and the imputation of righteousness. He is not speaking about good works that are the ground of our salvation. Rather, he is speaking about good works that are the necessary evidence of our salvation.”

John MacArthur and Richard Mayhue, *Biblical Doctrine*, 622.

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# The Application of Redemption

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## Justification

### *Vindication*

“Abraham’s works demonstrated his faith was true faith and not dead faith (cf. James 2:17, 26). True faith is shown by its works (James 2:18), but those works are the evidence and result of justification and initial sanctification not the ground of our justification.”

John MacArthur and Richard Mayhue, *Biblical Doctrine*, 622.



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# The Application of Redemption

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## Justification

### *Vindication*

“James . . . explains that the ‘faith’ of professing Christians who fail to make progress in practical holiness, continuing to walk in patterns of unrighteousness, is no true and saving faith at all. Theirs is a dead faith (James 2:17, 26), a demonic faith (James 2:19), and a useless faith (James 2:20) that marks them out as those who address Jesus as Lord but to whom he will chillingly declare, “I never knew you; depart from me you workers of lawlessness” (Matt 7:23).”

John MacArthur and Richard Mayhue, *Biblical Doctrine*, 622.

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# The Application of Redemption

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## Justification

### *Vindication*

- ❖ Theologians sometimes distinguish between ‘Actual’ justification in which we are imputed with the righteousness of Christ and ‘Declarative’ justification in which actual justification is vindicated.
- ❖ James is speaking only of declarative justification. The transformed lives of God’s people show that they have been justified by faith apart from works.

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# The Application of Redemption

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## Justification

### *Vindication*

**Matt 12:34** “You brood of vipers, how can you, being evil, speak what is good? For the mouth speaks out of that which fills the heart. **35** “The good man brings out of *his* good treasure what is good; and the evil man brings out of *his* evil treasure what is evil. **36** “But I tell you that every careless word that people speak, they shall give an accounting for it in the day of judgment. **37** “For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.”

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# The Application of Redemption

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## Justification

### *Vindication*

“The distinction between actual and declarative justification—viewed in connection with the difference between a living and a dead faith—affords a sufficient explanation of the apparent discrepancy between the teaching of Paul and James. . . . it is sufficient for the establishment of the proposition which is now before us if it can be shown, by a correct exposition of the language of both apostles; that Paul is treating of actual, and James of declarative, justification; and that, when their respective statements are thus understood, there is not even a shadow of discrepancy between them.”

James Buchanan, *Justification*, 224.

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# The Application of Redemption

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## Justification

### *Vindication*

“Paul contended against legalism and the self-righteous tendency which leads men ‘to go about to establish their own righteousness’ and to seek justification by the works of the law. James contends against libertinism, or the antinomian tendency which leads men to pervert the gospel itself and to ‘turn the grace of God into licentiousness.’”

James Buchanan, *Justification*, 232.

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# The Application of Redemption

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## Justification

### *Adoption*

- ❖ Justification makes us right with God so that God views us as righteous on the basis of Christ's perfect life, but God's salvation blessings go beyond even that to adoption.
- ❖ *After* justification logically but *simultaneous* with justification chronologically God adopts us as his own children.

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# The Application of Redemption

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## Justification

### *Adoption*

- ❖ We become the sons and daughters of God.
- ❖ We are children of God through faith.
- ❖ I will likely say more about adoption when we return after the break.

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# The Application of Redemption

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## Justification

### *Sanctification*

- ❖ Sanctification follows justification in the *ordo salutis* as well.
- ❖ Sanctification is a progressive work of God *and* man in which we turn away from sin and become more and more like Christ in our actual lives.



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# The Application of Redemption

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## Justification

### *Sanctification*

- ❖ In order for us to grow in the Christian life in sanctification we must *first* be justified (saved) through faith.
- ❖ We must be born-again before we can put off sin and be renewed in Christ-like growth.

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# The Application of Redemption

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## Justification

### *Sanctification*

- ❖ Without the foundation of justification we will not be able to grow in progressive sanctification, because we must know that God has accepted us and is favorable towards us. Otherwise we will be plagued by a continual sense of fear and guilt which is not conducive towards Christian growth.

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# The Application of Redemption

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## Justification

### *Conclusion*

“The doctrine of justification runs straight to the very heart of the gospel. It offers the only hope of salvation to guilty sinners, who, apart from Christ, have no hope of a restored relationship with the holy God of the universe, yet who, in him, are clothed with the perfect righteousness of God’s own beloved Son. The good news of the biblical gospel is that this blessing is offered freely to all who would receive it, apart from any works, through faith alone.”

John MacArthur and Richard Mayhue, *Biblical Doctrine*, 623–24.

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# The Application of Redemption

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## Justification

### *Conclusion*

**Isa 61:10** I will rejoice greatly in the LORD,  
My soul will exult in my God;  
For He has clothed me with garments of salvation,  
He has wrapped me with a robe of righteousness,  
As a bridegroom decks himself with a garland,  
And as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.

