

Soteriology Part 3

Justification & Adoption

- **What benefits accompany the effectual calling of the Holy Spirit and subsequent redemption of all those who believe?**

All believers, in this life and the life to come, partake of the benefits that accompany or flow from *justification*, *adoption* and sanctification.

All are unworthy of God's gift, but God justifies *in Christ and by His Spirit*.

1 Corinthians 6:9-11 – “Or **do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God?** Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. **And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.**”

- **What is justification?**

Justification is the act of God's free grace, in which He pardons sin and declares righteous the sinners upon whom His gracious grace is lavished. The righteousness is not inherent in the sinner, but a foreign righteousness earned by Christ, imputed by God and received by faith.

God lavishes grace by pardoning sin and pronouncing sinners as righteous.

Romans 3:20-27 – “For **by works of the law no human being will be justified** in his sight, since **through the law comes knowledge of sin**. But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it— the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: for **all have sinned** and fall short of the glory of God, and are **justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation** by his blood, to be **received by faith**. **This was to show God's righteousness**, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that **he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus**. Then what becomes of our boasting? **It is excluded.**”

Question: What does 'propitiation' mean?

Question: Which is the best description of Justification?

- A Second Chance
- A verdict of "Not guilty"
- A sinner declared Righteous before God

Question: What does it mean that God is both "just and the justifier" of sinners?

God declares sinners righteous **apart from any contribution from them.**

Romans 4:4-8 – "Now to the **one who works**, his **wages** are not counted as a gift but as **his due**. And to the one who **does not work** but **believes in him who justifies** the ungodly, his **faith is counted as righteousness**, just as David also speaks of the blessing of the one to whom God counts righteousness apart from works: "Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, and **whose sins are covered**; blessed is the man against whom the Lord will not count his sin."

God **imputes Christ's righteousness to the sinner, and it is received by faith.**

Romans 5:18-19 – Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so **one act of righteousness** leads to **justification and life** for all men. For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the **one man's obedience** the many will be **made righteous**.

Galatians 2:16 – [W]e know that a person is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, so **we also have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified** by faith in Christ and not by works of the law, because by works of the law no one will be justified.

Philippians 3:8-9 – Indeed, I count **everything as loss** because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. **For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ and be found in him**, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, **the righteousness from God that depends on faith**.

Question: What is the basis or grounds for the sinner's justification?

What are your assets before God?

What are your liabilities before God?

- **What is adoption?**

Adoption is the act of God's free grace, in which He brings sinners into His own family and they enjoy all of the rights and privileges of children of God.

God makes those who are naturally **outside of His family to be His children.**

Ephesians 2:1-3 – “And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and **were by nature children of wrath**, like the rest of mankind.”

John 1:9-13 – “The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. **But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.**”

1 John 3:1 – “**See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are.**

Romans 8:14-17, 23 – “**For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.** For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but **you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons**, by whom we cry, “Abba! Father!” The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him. ...And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as **we wait eagerly for adoption as sons**, the redemption of our bodies.”

Freeman on Romans 8:15 and 8:23 – “Among the Greeks and Romans, when a man had no son, he was permitted to adopt one even though not related. He might, if he chose, adopt one of his slaves as a son. The adopted son took the name of the father, and was in every respect regarded and treated as a son. Among the Romans there were two parts to the act of adoption: one a private arrangement between the parties, and the other a formal public declaration of the fact. It is thought by some that the former is referred to in this verse, and the latter in verse 23, where the apostle speaks of “waiting for the adoption.” The servant has been adopted privately, but he is waiting for a formal public declaration of the fact. After adoption, the son, no longer a slave, had the privilege of addressing his former master by the title of “father.”¹

God **adopts** sinners for His glory.

Ephesians 1:3-6 – “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that **we should be holy and blameless before him**. In love he predestined us for **adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace**, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved.”

Question: Have Christians now been adopted by God and brought into His family?

Question: Have Christians now received the ultimate fulfillment of that adoption?

¹ Freeman, J. M., & Chadwick, H. J. (1998). *Manners & customs of the Bible* (537). North Brunswick, NJ: Bridge-Logos Publishers.