

## **Justified by Faith**

Did you know that if you are a Christian, you have been justified by Almighty God? The word “justified” means being declared righteous, not guilty. You see, mankind is sinful and guilty before God (**Romans 3: 9-18**), and the law demands punishment for sinners. Yet God justified us. Why? He pronounces a sinner righteous because of that sinner’s faith in Christ. At the heart of the Gospel is the promise of salvation by grace and of justification by faith in Christ alone. Paul says that God is “*the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus*” (**Romans 3:26**) and explains that this is God’s final, total, and all-sufficient sacrifice, made possible through faith in the atoning death and shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus finished the work required for our justification on the cross. **Romans 5:9**: “*Since we have now been justified by His blood, how much more shall we be saved from God’s wrath through Him!*” He was then raised to life for our justification. **Romans 4:25**: “*He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification,*” and **Romans 3:22,24**: “*This righteousness is given through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe .... and all are justified freely by His grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.*” So, you may rightly ask, is this justification just? If God is holy, how can He forgive a guilty sinner? The answer is that justification neither excuses, ignores, nor condones our sin. Rather, our sin is fully punished, Christ having taken our penalty. He is our substitute. Our redemption stimulates us to focus on worship, holy living, and faithful evangelism of the Gospel. **1 Peter 3:18**: “*For Christ also suffered for sins once for all time, the just for the unjust, so that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit.*” The wrath of God is satisfied in Christ, **Isaiah 53:4-5**: “*However, it was our sicknesses that He (Jesus) Himself bore, And our pains that He carried; Yet we ourselves assumed that He had been afflicted, Struck down by God, and humiliated. But He was pierced for our offenses, He was crushed for our wrongdoings; The punishment for our well-being was laid upon Him, And by His wounds we are healed.*” When we personally receive Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior, justification comes to us as a gracious, legal declaration by God that forgives guilt and grants freedom from condemnation. **Romans 8:1**: “*Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.*” God remains both fair and just, and He makes sinners right in His sight when they believe in Jesus. The righteousness of Jesus Christ makes all believers pleasing to God. He sees us united with Christ and, as a result, clothed in His perfect righteousness. **Romans 5:1**: “*Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.*” Because we are justified, we can rejoice. Our anticipation of Judgment Day no longer fills us with dread but with joy and hope. Like the prodigal son in the parable, we are now clothed in “*the best robe*” (**Luke 15:22**). God the Father sees us as perfect and unblemished. Praise be to Jesus, our Lord and Savior.