

Overflow: Justification  
Bethany Assembly of God  
6.30.24

**Central Proposition: It is by faith in Christ alone that we can be justified.**

**Introduction**

In this series on Overflow we are looking not merely to cover a series of topics. Rather, the intended goal is that as we build upon our understanding of the elements of renewal so that not only will our knowledge increase, but also our passion for the things of God and that with the increased competency will come an expanded capacity for seeing God's glory fill this place. As we've already learned, the holiness of God and the sinfulness of man leave us asking some very melancholy questions: How can a holy God associate with vile sinners? Is it possible for man by his own efforts to match the holiness of God and thereby become acceptable to God? The Gospel assures that man can be in the right before God. The cross and the resurrection are the works of Christ that provide for our justification, according to Romans 4:25. Today, we are going to examine justification as the reconciliation of the two disparate realities of God's holiness and man's sinfulness.

**What is justification?**

To say that someone is justified is to say that they are in right standing with God. Michael Bird states it this way. "*Justification is fundamentally a divine declaration that a believer is in the right with God and righteous before God. It refers to a person's status before God apart from their moral status.*"

**We can trust God to be just.** See Romans 3:26.

Only God can justify sinners because only God is qualified to provide justification. His unique attributes establish His authority. He seeks His own honor which is only good and in so doing sacrificed for our justification.

**We cannot earn justification.** See Titus 3:5-7; Ephesians 2:8-9.

Justification is not earning righteousness, rather, it is the act of *declaring* one righteous. Only Christ makes this possible. God's holiness demanded justice and desired mercy. This was perfectly satisfied by Jesus' death on the cross. Michael Bird says, "*Justification is the act whereby God creates a new people, with a new status, in a new covenant, as a foretaste of the new age.*" It is by faith in Christ alone.

**We are positioned as accepted by God through justification.**

Justification changes your standing with God and gives you His righteousness, not your own. Acceptance is not based on morality or behaviors so it is not your behaviors or morality that are accepted or rejected. YOU are accepted by God through the works of Jesus.

**We are positioned for a lifestyle of faith through justification.** See Galatians 3:11.

Justification is a lifestyle. The just live by faith. Faith is not just some mental assent to a set of ideas. It has an object, Christ, which is not visible, but it also must have an outward expression because it encompasses your entire being.

**Conclusion**

While the actual justification is invisible in regard to our own efforts and standing, justification is also demonstrable through a lifestyle of faith. We run the risk of what Bonhoeffer referred to as "cheap grace"

when we degrade justification to simply acknowledging a set of facts. Justification is secured through living faith only.