

Justification **by Faith Alone**

Introduction: "Justification by faith alone is the article on which the church stands or falls."

- M. Luther

This doctrine is at the very heart of the Reformation.

I. Roman Catholic Perspective of Justification

A. Used the Latin Word/Meaning for Justification

1. Justificare = "to make righteous"
2. Idea = A person must become inherently righteous in order to be justified (able to enter heaven)
3. The Reformers focused on the Greek meaning of Justification
 - a. To be declared righteous
 - b. Justification precedes Sanctification

B. For Rome Justification takes place through the Sacraments

1. Ex opere operato
2. When one is baptized he/she is ex opere operato placed in a state of Justification (Grace)
3. Lose this grace by sinning
4. Two kinds of sins
 - a. Venial - "One commits venial sin in a less serious matter, he does not observe the standard prescribed by the moral law, or when he disobeys the moral law in a grave matter, but without full knowledge or without complete consent." - Catechism of the Catholic Church
 - b. Mortal - "Mortal sin is sin whose object is grave matter and which is also committed with full knowledge and deliberate consent." - Catechism #1857
 - (1) Kills justifying grace
 - (2) Include: Willful breaking of the commandments - leaving the Catholic faith - missing mass intentionally - having an abortion, etc. . . .

C. Restoration of the Sinner

1. Primarily through the Sacrament of Penance
2. Works of Satisfaction (Key Issue)
 - a. Prayer - Fasting - Restitution - giving of Alms, etc.
3. Justification is achieved through penance / purgatory until one eventually reaches a state of inherent righteousness

II. The Protestant View of Justification

A. Salvation by Grace Alone, Through Faith Alone, in Christ Alone

1. Grace alone (Ephesians 2:8-9)
2. Faith alone (Ephesians 2:8-9; Galatians 2:15-16)
3. Christ alone (John 14:6; 1 Timothy 2:5; Acts 4:12)

B. The Order of Salvation (see chart)

C. Justification

1. WSC #33 - What is Justification? Justification is an act of God's free grace, wherein He pardons all of our sins and accepts us as righteous in His sight, only for the righteousness of Christ imputed to us and received by faith alone.

2. Imputation vs. Infusion

- a. Imputation - A sinner is counted as righteous in the sight of God based on the perfect, finished work of Christ. It is a one time act and cannot be lost, undone, diminished by sin
- b. Infusion - Justifying grace ebbs and flows and may be lost altogether (Mortal sin) - A person must believe, but also "do" in order to become inherently righteous and therefore acceptable to God

*Simul Justus Et peccator

"At the same time just and a sinner."

- Martin Luther