

Completely Done: Justification & Adoption

Introduction

- *And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified. Rom. 8:30*
- **“The present pilgrimage of the people of God falls into its place in [the] determinate and undefeatable plan of God that is bounded by two foci, the sovereign love of God in his eternal counsel and glorification with Christ in the age to come.” John Murray**

1. Justification

Justification answers the most important question: *How can sinful men & women be accepted by God & counted righteous before God?*

3.1 In their union with Christ, believers freely receive all the benefits of the gospel. **3.2** Those whom God effectually calls to himself, he justifies in Christ, forgiving all of their sins and declaring them righteous and acceptable in his sight. **3.3** This declaration is judicial, addressing not our nature but our status with regard to God's law; it is definitive, being neither gradually gained nor able to be lost; and it is gracious, a free gift of God's righteousness based on nothing worked in us or by us, but received freely by faith. **3.4** The sole ground of our justification is the righteousness of Christ, whose life of perfect obedience is imputed to us and whose substitutionary death on our behalf completely satisfies the demands of God's justice toward our sins.

(a) The meaning of justification: declared righteous.

- Justification is not earned but given.
 - ... *He saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy ... being justified by his grace. Titus 3:5,7*
 - ... *for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift. Rom. 3:23-24*
 - ... *We know that a person is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ. Gal. 2:16*
- Justification is not gradually gained or lost but received.
 - *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. Rom. 4:4-5*

- Justification is not perfectly righteous character but righteous status.
 - *For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything, but only faith working through love. Gal. 5:6*

(b) The ground of justification: the substitutionary sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

Now the question is: *How can God accepted & count righteous sinful men & women without being unjust?*

²¹ But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it— ²² the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, ²⁵ 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. ²⁶ 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. Rom. 3:21-26

1. Our sins are imputed or credit to Christ & we are forgiven by God.

- *Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree.” Gal. 3:13*
- *For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God. 1 Pet. 3:18*

2. The righteousness of God is imputed or credit to us & we are accepted before God.

- *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. Rom. 3:25b-26*
- *For in [the gospel] the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, “The righteous shall live by faith.” Rom. 1:17*
- *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. Phil. 3:8-9*
- *“The notion which the phrase ‘penal substitution’ expresses is that Jesus Christ our Lord, moved by a love that was determined to do everything necessary to save us, endured and exhausted the destructive divine judgment for which we were otherwise inescapably destined, and so won us forgiveness, adoption and glory. To affirm penal substitution is to say that believers are in debt to Christ specifically for this, and that this is the mainspring of all their joy, peace and praise both now and for eternity.” J.I. Packer*

(c) The means of justification: faith.

Now the question is: *How do we receive the benefits of justification?*

(d) The (glorious) significance of justification are many.

2. Adoption

Adoption answers another question: *What does it mean that believers are accepted by God? How does the God feel about and relate to those whom he justifies?*

3.5 Those whom God justifies, he adopts into his family, granting them the full status, rights, and privileges of beloved sons. 3.6 As God's children, we receive his name, enjoy access into his presence, experience his care and discipline, and eagerly await the glorious inheritance he promises his own.

(a) The meaning of adoption: welcomed into the family of God.

(b) The ground of adoption: sons through Christ Jesus.

- *He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. ¹⁴ I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son. **2 Sam 7:13-14***
- *The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham. **Mt. 1:1***
- *Behold, a voice from heaven said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased." **Mt. 3:17***
- *For in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. **Galatians 3:26***
- *The one who conquers will have this heritage, and I will be his God and he will be my son. **Rev. 21:7***

(c) The significance of adoption: loved by God the Father.

- "Adoption is a *family* idea, conceived in terms of *love*, and viewing God as *father*. In adoption, God takes us into his family and fellowship—he establishes us as his children and heirs. Closeness, affection, and generosity are at the heart of the relationship. To be right with God the Judge is a great thing, but to be loved and cared for by God the Father is a greater [thing]."
J.I. Packer

The blessings of adoption are many:

1. Receive God's name (Rev. 22:14)
2. Access into God's presence (Eph. 2:18, 3:12)
3. Experience God's loving care & discipline (Heb. 12)
4. Await the glorious inheritance (Eph. 1:13-14; Rom. 8:23-26; 1 Peter 1:3-5)

Conclusion

All of this flows to us freely by virtue of our union with Christ.

“We thus see that union with Christ has its source in the election of God the Father before the foundation of the world and it has its fruition in the glorification of the sons of God. The perspective of God's people is not narrow; it is broad and it is long. It is not confined to space and time; it has the expanse of eternity. Its orbit has two foci, one the electing love of God the Father in the counsels of eternity, the other glorification with Christ in the manifestation of his glory. The former has no beginning, the latter has no end. Glorification with Christ at his coming will be but the beginning of a consummation that will encompass the ages of the ages. . . . What is it that binds past and present and future together in the life of faith and in the hope of glory? Why does the believer entertain the thought of God's determinate counsel with such joy? Why can he have patience in the perplexities and adversities of the present? Why can he have confident assurance with reference to the future and rejoice in hope of the glory of God? It is because he cannot think of past, present, or future apart from union with Christ.” **John Murray**