

Faith Alone

Justification is by faith alone. That is the clear teaching of the Bible: "But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness" (Romans 4:5).

All of us are sinners, ungodly and guilty. Yet there are some sinners among us whom God justifies; whose faith is counted for righteousness and who are at peace with God. What makes the difference? Who is the person who receives this grace from God?

Am I justified because I strive with all my might to please God by good works? Or because I do penance and exercise myself in religious works to make satisfaction for sin and merit God's favour? No! Such a person is not justified. He is no better than a wicked blasphemer, a thief, and a mass murderer. With them, he ends up in Hell. For the apostle Paul says by the Holy Spirit that it is "him that worketh not" - the man who does not work - who is justified by God.

Am I justified because I receive divine help to reform, clean and makes myself righteous? Does God look at me at the end of this process and declares, "He is justified because he is now a good and righteous fellow"? No! The Gospel does not say that God justifies the "godly." On the contrary, God justifies the "ungodly"! Praise the Lord, He absolves and acquits me for a reason that is outside himself. My sins are transferred to my immaculate Saviour and His righteousness is credited to my account (2 Corinthians 5:21).

Whom then does God justify? The Bible declares that God justifies the person who "believeth" in Him. With great sorrow I confess my wickedness and guilt. I am aware that my hands can do no work to merit God's grace. I have no hope in myself and I have no other refuge to turn to, therefore I turn to the God I offended and ask for mercy. "I am guilty and I cannot pay my debt. Have mercy on me and forgive me. I trust and rely completely on you, Lord, because I am sure that your promise is true: You justify the ungodly who believes in you!" That is the faith that justifies.

Works do not justify before God.

Faith and works do not justify before God.

It is *faith alone*, not works, that justifies before God.

To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.