

# Simply Christ

Gospel Newsletter

*Sharing the simplicity that is in Christ*

April 22, 2022

## Justifying the Ungodly

### Part 5 of 5

#### Sin Destroyed

Just when we think Paul's explanation of God's justification cannot get any richer, it does! In this next aspect of God's justification, Paul shows us how it was all accomplished. In this single passage, we learn more about the purpose of the cross than in all other passages combined. Paul writes, *"Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin."* Romans 6:6-7. This passage tells us exactly how God's work of justification makes us righteous. It is not through a process or program. Neither is it through religious effort or the wisdom of men. It is the simple yet powerful work of the cross of Christ.

Paul told us what every believer must know.

**(1) "Our old man is crucified with Christ."** The old man is the sinner. It is the ungodly. It is who you were before you were born of God's Spirit.

**(2) "that the body of sin might be destroyed."** The *"body of sin"* is the entire sin nature you received from Adam. It is not just tamed, or

controlled. It is destroyed in the death of Christ and our death with him through faith. In the moment we are crucified with Christ by faith, sin loses its dominion and we are *“made free from sin.”* Romans 6:22

**(3) *“that henceforth we should not serve sin.”***

Those who through faith are united with Christ in his death, cease to serve sin. That old “sin master” is destroyed and they become servants of righteousness. Romans 6:18. This is not accomplished through a process. “Henceforth” means “from this point forward,” or “from now on.” The word *“should”* is not in the Greek text, but was added by translators, and was not intended to express possibility, but purpose. The reason we needed to be crucified with Christ was so we would no longer serve sin.

Sometimes the Bible translators hide the greatest of truths from us. In Paul’s next words, ***“For he that is dead is freed from sin”*** Romans 6:7, the Greek word translated as *“freed”* is *“dikaioō.”* In thirty-nine of the forty times *“dikaioō”* is used in the KJV Bible, it is translated as *“justified,” “justify,” “justifieth,” “justifier,”* and *“righteous,”* but in this one verse it is mistranslated as *“freed.”* The accurate translation of this verse reads, *“He that is dead (with Christ) is **justified** from sin.”* Paul is clearly stating that only through our crucifixion with Christ, which destroys the body of sin and delivers us from its power and presence, are we justified from sin.

This Greek word *“dikaioō,”* which is used so often by Paul to explain the working of God’s justice in

redemption, has a twofold meaning. The first meaning is *“to make or render right or just.”* The second meaning is *“to show to be right or just.”* It both a shame and an evidence of blindness that most Bible teachers (and even Bible dictionaries) always use the latter definition and ignore or hide the first. They often do this in an effort to convince us that justification declares the guilty to be innocent, disregarding the fact that this is the one thing God said he would never do. God told Moses that although he would forgive *“iniquity and transgression, and sin,”* he ***“...will by no means clear the guilty...”*** Exodus 34:7. God will forgive the guilty, but he does not declare the guilty to be innocent. His justification takes *“the guilty”* and, through the work of the cross of Christ, transforms them into *“the righteous!”*

### **Alive with Christ**

As Paul continues showing the vast riches of justification in the gospel, he takes us to our resurrection with Christ. He says, *“Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him:”* Romans 6:8. Not only are we delivered from sin through the death of Christ, but we are made alive *“to walk in newness of life”* Romans 6:4 through the resurrection of Christ. This also is the work of justification. Paul confirms this, saying, *“And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; **but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.**”* Romans 8:10. Paul did not say *“the body is sinful,”* but rather *“the body is dead because of sin.”* With the entrance of sin through Adam, the human body became *“dead”* in regards to doing the works of God. It must be quickened

by the infilling of the Holy Ghost. Romans 8:11. What is powerful in this passage is Paul's statement "*...but the Spirit is life **because of righteousness***. Righteousness, which is God's justice, is the end result of justification. This work which began with the forgiveness of past sins, concludes with us being made alive in spirit through the indwelling of the Spirit of Christ.

## Conclusion

Certainly, there are more aspects of God's "*justification*" I have missed in these five articles. Yet, even what we have seen is amazing and overwhelming. Consider that in this single work of justification, God forgives sins that are past, justifies us by faith, justifies the ungodly, gives peace with God, brings us into this grace, saves us from wrath, makes us righteous, destroys our "body of sin," and gives us the life of Christ within. As if all this were not enough, Paul tells us there is something else offered to those who have been justified through Jesus Christ. This second work is called "glorification," and is accomplished by the baptism with, and indwelling of, the Holy Ghost. Paul says, "*...and whom he justified, them he also glorified.*" Romans 8:30. It is little wonder Paul concludes the eleventh chapter with these words:

*"O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!"* Romans 11:33.