

## **I. Justification Defined**

**(Galatians 2:16 NAU) “nevertheless knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, so that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the Law; since by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified.”**

**Scripture teaches: “by faith in Christ” (3X)  
“not by works of the Law” (3X)**

## **II. Justification/Justify defined (as used in Scripture, specifically in Galatians 2:16):**

### **A. Lexical definition (Thayer’s): to justify**

**-to declare or pronounce someone to be just, righteous, or such as he ought to be.**

**-to judge or declare worthy, to treat someone as worthy**

**-to declare the accused guiltless, innocent, acquitted of a charge or reproach.**

## **B. Theologians' definition (based on Scripture):**

### **1. JT Mueller, *Christian Dogmatics***

**-“The act of God by which He removes from the believer the sentence of condemnation to which he is subject because of his sin, releases him from his guilt, and ascribes to him the merit of Christ.” (p. 367)**

**-“Justification does not consist essentially in the inward transformation of the sinner, or in his sanctification, but rather in the divine act by which God declares a sinner righteous for Christ’s sake.... Justification is not essentially a change by which man is made just, but a change whereby he is declared just on account of the perfect righteousness of Christ which he appropriates by faith.... not a physical or medical, but a forensic, or judicial act.” (p. 374)**

**-“to justify signifies, according to forensic usage, to acquit a guilty one and to declare him righteous, but on account of the righteousness of another, namely of Christ, which righteousness of another is communicated to us by faith.” (p. 375)**

**2. From *Concordia, the Lutheran Confessions: A Reader’s Edition of the Book of Concord: JUSTIFICATION IS THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS* (a confessional definition).**

**-Apology, IV, 76: “To receive the forgiveness of sins is to be justified.” (p. 92)**

**-FC, Epitome, III, 7: “According to the usage of Holy Scripture the word justify means in this article ‘to absolve, that is, to declare free from sins’.” (p. 480)**

**-FC, Solid Declaration, III, 30: “The righteousness of faith before God stands only in the gracious reconciliation or the forgiveness of sins which is presented to us out of pure grace, only for the sake of the merit of the Mediator, Christ.” (p. 541)**

### **III. What does this mean?**

**A. justification is based upon God's gracious disposition in Christ Jesus, or upon divine grace, which is outside of man, "in God's own heart", though revealed and offered to him in the Gospel.**

**B. justification is a forensic act by which God declares the sinner who believes in Christ to be righteous.**

**C. justification has no degrees, but is instantaneous and complete.**

**D. faith justifies not as a virtue or good quality in man, but solely as the instrument, or means, by which the believer lays hold of the perfect righteousness of the divine-human Savior.**

**E. the believer may be sure of salvation, because salvation rests not upon his own worthiness but upon the imputed merits of Christ. (Mueller, p. 370.)**

#### IV. Summary: justification is not sanctification:

<b>JUSTIFICATION</b>	<b>SANCTIFICATION</b>
<b>1. holiness/righteousness before God</b>	<b>1. holiness/righteousness before man</b>
<b>2. instantaneous righteousness, perfect, not progressive</b>	<b>2. a process, more holy daily in the sight of man, never perfect in this life</b>
<b>3. passive righteousness</b>	<b>3. active righteousness</b>
<b>4. righteousness that always measures up to the law of God</b>	<b>4. righteousness that always falls short of the law of God (in this life)</b>
<b>5. -forensic (judge's declaration in court of law), -imputed (declared), -foreign righteousness: outside of you and placed upon/over you; ---legally righteous, not righteous in your being, -not a change in you</b>	<b>5. -infused righteousness  -beginning righteousness in your being.  -a change in you</b>
<b>6. Christ for you.</b>	<b>6. Christ in you.</b>
<b>7. Christ's life and doing for you.</b>	<b>7. your good works for your neighbor, in honor of God</b>
<b>8. the work of Christ as your substitute.</b>	<b>8. Christ as your example; the work of the Holy Spirit in changing you.</b>
<b>9. "righteousness of God"</b>	<b>9. good works produced by faith</b>
<b>10. the cause, the "mother"</b>	<b>10. the result, the "daughter"</b>

## **Sanctification/ good works are important:**

**-God is glorified by your good works and they are a testimony of what He has done, (Matthew 5:16 NAU "Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.")**

**-your good works are for the benefit of your neighbor (vocation); God doesn't need your good works, but your neighbor does.**

**-we are justified only by grace through faith, not of works lest any man should boast. (Galatians 2;16; Ephesians 2:8,9)**