What does justification mean?

Justification is the exact opposite of condemnation. To ‘condemn’ is to declare someone guilty; to ‘justify’ is to declare him not guilty, innocent, or righteous (Stott).

1. Justification is by faith in Christ alone.

   The question is: How can an unrighteous person be righteous before a holy God?

   The Answer: Faith in Christ Alone

   **Galatians 2:15-16 (ESV)** 15 We ourselves are Jews by birth and not Gentile sinners; 16 yet we know that a person is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, so we also have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ and not by works of the law, because by works of the law no one will be justified.

       A. Not “justified by works of the law”

          The Gospel is not what I can do for God, but what God has done for me.

       B. But “By Faith in Jesus Christ”

       C. To whom does this apply? Everyone!

2. Justified people are changed people.

   **Galatians 2:17-21 (ESV)** 17 But if, in our endeavor to be justified in Christ, we too were found to be sinners, is Christ then a servant of sin? Certainly not! 18 For if I rebuild what I tore down, I prove myself to be a transgressor. 19 For through the law I died to the law, so that I might live to God. 20 I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. 21 I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness were through the law, then Christ died for no purpose.

       A. A Question: (verses 17-19)

          God changes our hearts, not just our status, not just our position before Him.

       B. Illustration: Paul’s Life

          Does verse 20 look like a description of a person who wants to sin? No!
We can learn at least 6 truths about being a new person:

1. We have a new union! “I have been crucified with Christ”
2. We have a new identity! “I no longer live... the life I live”
3. We have new power! “Christ who lives in me”
4. We have a new way of life! “live by faith ... Son of God”
5. We have a new object of worship! “who loved me and gave himself for me”
6. We have a new love for grace and Christ’s cross!

Galatians 6:14 (ESV) But far be it from me to boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.