

God's Gracious Justification through Faith (alone) of Ungodly Sinners to Bear Christ's Righteousness

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- I. Introduction: the bad news of our condemnation and good news of justification
- II. Romans 4:4-5 – ⁴ Now to the one who works, his wage is not credited as a favor, but as what is due.
⁵ But to the one who **does not work**, but believes in Him who **justifies the ungodly**, his **faith is credited as righteousness**.
 - A. Justification is Granted by Faith, Apart from any and all Works (Rom 4:5a)
Our justification – i.e., our being declared righteous in God's sight – is by faith, not by works, simply because we could never be justified by works. We cannot work to make ourselves righteous. Cf. Rom 3:20-22, 28; Acts 13:38-39; Gal 2:16; Eph 2:8-9; Titus 3:5
 - B. Justification is Granted to those who are Fully and Thoroughly Ungodly (Rom 4:5b)
Romans 4:5 declares something surprising, even shocking, i.e., that God “justifies the ungodly,” not the “formerly ungodly,” or “the ungodly who have now become godly in God's sight.” Cf. Prov 17:15; 24:24; Isa 5:23 – so how can God be both just and the justifier the *ungodly*!?
 - C. Justification by Faith Imputes/Credits Another's Righteousness to Guilty Sinners (Rom 4:5c)
So, how can God justly justify those who are ungodly? True saving faith – trusting in Christ alone for the forgiveness of one's sin and their only hope of eternal life – is the divinely designed means by which God credits the righteousness of Christ to the sinner who savingly believes thus establishing the legal basis whereby God can *declare the sinner righteous*! Cf. “counting” or “crediting” righteousness by faith: Rom 4:3, 5, 6, 9, 10, 11, 22, 23, 24
- III. Titus 3:3-8 – ³ For we also once were foolish ourselves, disobedient, deceived, enslaved to various lusts and pleasures, spending our life in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another. ⁴ But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared, ⁵ He saved us, **not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness**, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, ⁶ whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, ⁷ so that **being justified by His grace** we would be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. ⁸ This is a trustworthy statement; and concerning these things I want you to speak confidently, so that **those who have believed God will be careful to engage in good deeds**. These things are good and profitable for men.
 - A. Our own deeds *cannot* make us right. All we are capable of, on our own, are the kinds of “deeds” described in Titus 3:3. As those enslaved to sin, we cannot make ourselves right with God.
 - B. The only hope there is of standing righteous and acceptable before God is by receiving by grace, through faith, what Another has done for us. Believers should rejoice every day that our right standing before God is through Christ's perfect righteousness alone, granted us by grace.
 - C. Those justified apart from works are justified in order to produce good works. Titus 3:8 follows Titus 3:5 (cf. 2:14; 3:1, 14); Eph 2:10 follows Eph 2:8-9!