

How did David use the word “justification”?

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“Against you, against you, I have only sinned, and done what is evil in your sight, that you may be justified when you speak, and pure when you judge.” (Psalm 51: 4)

The word ‘justified’ is used by the psalmist David to let his readers know that God is just (justified). As the psalmist knows that God is just, this motivates the psalmist to admit his condition. Thus, it appears that the word ‘justified’ (declaring fair) only applies to what is true in essence.

It seems to be redundant, but it is not: David declares that God is just because He is truly just, and not simply because the psalmist understands that he is this way.

The apostle Paul in declaring that ‘God is true’ is based on the declaration of King David, that is, when we declare something that concerns our God, we are fully aware that it is the truth, because it is what the Scripture tells us.

“He who accepted his testimony confirmed that God is true”
(John 3:33)

We come to a crucial point: if the apostle Paul uses the word ‘justified’ (declaring righteous) to express something about Christians, that statement must also be true, that is, mirror the reality relevant to Christians.

There is no way to declare that someone is justified without

that person not being effectively just, that is, the Christians effectively died “We, who are dead to sin...”, and were declared righteous “... because the one who is dead is justified from sin”.

When the apostle Paul writes that Christians have been declared righteous, he does not refer to an amnesty, or an acquittal, or a concession, or to take into account or to make believe. Paul makes reference to something that is full of everything: the one who is dead is justified.

No one who is not a Christian lives up to such a declaration, as it is certain that he did not die to sin. Is it possible that someone who is not included in the first person pronoun in the plural of Romans six, verse two ‘We...?’ (Rom. 6: 2), receives the statement that it is just? No! Because? Because this person is not dead to sin!

Whoever is not dead to sin cannot be justified (declared righteous), because such a statement would not be true.

There is no way to apply the word ‘justified’ to those who have not died, since everyone who is born of the flesh is not true “... and every lying man as it is written” (Rom. 3: 4).

Not all men born of Adam are true, but God is true.

The condition of him who is not in Christ is a lie, in contrast to God, who is true “But if the truth of God stands out for my glory because of my lie ...” (Rom. 3: 7).

In quoting Psalm 51, verse 4, the apostle Paul sets the necessary parameter for us to understand the extent of the word ‘justify’ when it is used by him.

The apostle Paul only uses the word ‘justify’ for something that is categorically true. If there was a shadow of doubt, or a possibility that the one who is dead is not justified before God, then Paul would not use the word ‘justify’.

It is true that 'justifying' does not refer to a condescending divine conduct in declaring an unjust person to be someone just.

Is it possible for God, who is true, to declare an unjust person just? We will conclude in another way: God does not justify the one who is alive to sin.

Since, through the quotation from the psalmist David, it is possible to measure the extent of the expressions 'justify' and 'justification', it remains that Christians should consider their death with Christ to be certain (Rom. 6: 2-3 and 7 and 11) , and that, in the same way, their justification is certain, since the one who is dead is also justified.

If Paul recommends Christians to effectively assume the condition of being dead to sin (Rom. 6:11), it is because they needed to be aware that they were fully justified before God "Being therefore justified by faith..." (Rom. 5: 1).

Christians are just before God for the following reasons:

1. It is God who justifies us "It is God who justifies us" (Rom. 8:32);
2. We have peace with God, real evidence that we have been justified by faith "Having therefore been justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. 5: 1), and;
3. There is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, for we have been fully justified "Therefore, now there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus ..." (Rom. 8: 1).

There is no justification for those who weigh condemnation on him. It is not justified who is still at enmity with God. It is not justified who does not trust in God, who can justify him.

If a person does not believe in what God has already provided

free salvation, it remains that that person does not believe in Christ Jesus, as all these blessings were providing on the cross.

The apostle demonstrates that only those who are effectively dead to sin are justified and recommends Christians to be aware of this condition (Rom. 6:11).

Only those who were crucifying with Christ, planted with Him, buried by baptism in death and who rose with Him are justified.