

How does God being righteous justify the wicked?

All the questions arise because there is a lack of understanding of how God's justice is given. How does God justify the wicked (Rom. 3:26), if He Himself stated that He never justifies the wicked (Ex 23: 7). If it is right for justice to condemn the guilty, does a judge who absolves or justifies the unjust act unjust?

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Introduction

One of the priceless doctrines of Christianity is justification. Such a doctrine was addressed by the apostle Paul when he wrote to Christians in Rome, however, it is misunderstood by many Christians.

The misunderstanding of the doctrine of justification is clear from the earliest church fathers, and it continued to do so in the Middle Ages.

With the advent of reform, many think that there has been a return to gospel principles, and that, from then on, the concept of justification is the same as that presented by the apostles. Big mistake!

Forensic justification

As for the meaning of the term translated 'justify' in the Old Testament, most of the error stems from the moral and ethical connotations they attribute to the term. However, the most pernicious aspect is that which sees in the term forensic aspects, such as when a person appears before a court and is declared judicially fair for having a life consistent with legal requirements, since the New Testament sense of the term "justify" has no relation with the justice of the courts, for God's justice is through his power.

The apostle Paul is clear in saying that the gospel of Christ is the power of God for the salvation of all who believe, because in the power of God the justice of God is discovered (Rom. 1:16 -17). Jesus, when healing a paralytic, said: "Now that you may know that the Son of Man has power over the earth to forgive sins (he said to the paralytic), I tell you, get up, take your bed, and go to your home" (Luke 5:24). That is, justification is given by the power of God, without any reference to a court.

Forensic justice does not justify defendants, they only issue a sentence that that person is innocent or guilty, which is different from declaring someone fair. In a court there is only an isolated conduct, that is, the life of the judge is not analyzed, which makes it impossible to declare someone fair or unfair.

When thinking of a divine court, we have to consider that such a court was established in Eden, when Adam sinned. At that moment he was judged and sentenced with death, separation, alienation from God "For just as by a single offense came judgment on all men for condemnation, so also by a single act of justice came grace on all men to justification of life" (Rom. 5:18).

In that event all men sinned. In that 'court' all mankind

became deprived of the glory of God (Rom. 3:23; 1 Cor. 15:22). How could the penalty issued in Eden's 'court' be applied to Christ if the penalty cannot pass from the person of the offender? How can Christ's righteousness be attributed by God to the guilty?

In that court there was a single sentence: conviction!

And how can a condemned person be declared righteous by God if biblical justification is not forensic?

Because of these questions, many theologians, when speculating on the nature of justification, consider that the justified man does not become just, but is only declared just. That is, although it is not fair, God makes a statement and treats such a man as if he were just, but in reality it is not fair. This is the prevailing theory in academic circles that has been established since the reform with Luther.

For academics, 'make fair' and 'declare fair' are separate claims, in stating that God declares man righteous without making him righteous.

Is it possible for true God to declare a lie? Isn't it unfair to treat the unjust as if it were just?

Even if it is considered that being declared righteous has no direct relationship with being righteous, it cannot be ignored that the declaration comes from God who, besides being righteous, watches over his word to fulfill it, and his word never returns empty. If God declares righteous a man who is not righteous, he does injustice, just as he is also powerless to keep his word, which would be harmless.

Therefore, in accordance with the Old Testament, justifying implies the certainty that the person is innocent and, afterwards, declaring what is in fact the truth: that the person is free from guilt, just, who behaves according to the law. If this was required of human courts, what about God?

(Deut 25: 1)

In the Protestant Reformation, Luther sought to reaffirm a forensic sense for the term 'justification', considering that 'justification' would be a 'legal right' to have fellowship with God. He presented this proposal in order to escape the assertion that justification would be a justice infused in man. But, where did such a 'legal' right come from so that the man could use it?

In the Protestant Reformation, Luther sought to reaffirm a forensic sense for the term 'justification', considering that 'justification' would be a 'legal right' to have fellowship with God. He presented this proposal in order to escape the assertion that justification would be a justice infused in man. However, where did such a 'legal' right come from so that the man could use it?

All the questions arise because there is a lack of understanding of how God's justice is given. How does God justify the wicked (Rom. 3:26), if He Himself stated that He never justifies the wicked (Ex 23: 7).

If the law of justice condemns the guilty, the judge may absolve or justify the unjust act?

Millard J. Erickson, in his Introduction to Systematic Theology, defines that justification is a forensic act of imputing the righteousness of Christ to the believer ', but that' it is not in fact an infusion of holiness in the individual '. He concludes by saying that 'it is not a question of making a person righteous or changing his spiritual condition' Erickson, Introduction to Systematic Theology, p. 409.

In the same sense Scofield says that 'the believing sinner is justified, that is, treated as righteous (...) Justification is an act of divine recognition and does not mean making a person righteous ...' Scofield, Scofield Bible with references, Rom. 3:

28, p. 1147.

Dr. Emery H. Bancroft says that the method of justification is divine and not human, since man can only justify the innocent and God justifies the guilty, being that 'God justifies on the basis of mercy' and 'man justifies base of merit 'Bancroft, Elementary Theology, p. 256.

Finally, he claims that man must be saveding from his character, forgetting that it was not the character that established alienation from God, but sin.

It is certain that, in terms of the foundation, justification is baseding on the righteousness of Christ, since man is unable to promote his justification. Although the premise that Christ made himself justice for humankind is true, the question persists: how does God's justice proceed when he justifies the unjust, since He is just?

The answer is founding in the gospel, that is, in the power of God.

God's power for justification

The need for justification came from the fall of Adam. With Adam's disobedience sin entered the world and humanity inherited an alienated nature from God, a separate nature and, consequently, all humanity is unjust from its birth (Ps 51: 5; Ps 58: 3; Gen 8:21).

Justice is right: the soul that sins the same will die (Eze 18:20). Likewise, the Bible makes it clear that all have sinned and been deprived of sharing fellowship with God (Rom. 3:23). In this sense, everyone must be paid with death, because the penalty cannot pass from the person of the transgressor and God never declares the wicked righteous.

Although God is merciful, his justice is not basending on mercy, but on his power. As all men are determined to die only once, after this the judgment of works will take place before the great white throne, a judgment where no one will be justified in view of the condemnation of Eden "And since men are commanded to die one time, after that the judgment came... " (Heb 9:27; Rev. 20:12 -13), the gospel is the divine providence for man to be condemned with Christ, and not with the world.

When man believes in Christ according to what the Scriptures say, at that moment he takes upon himself the cross and follows after Christ "And whoever does not take up his cross, and does not follow after me, is not worthy of me" (Mt 10:38). By believing, man becomes a participant in the flesh and blood of Christ, a moment when Christ's afflictions, reproaches and death are communicated "To know him, and the virtue of his resurrection, and the communication of his afflictions , being done according to his death "(Phil 3:10).

Whoever believes goes with Christ to the camp and bears the reproach of Christ, for he is crucified and killed together with Christ "Let us therefore go out to him outside the camp, taking his reproach" (Heb 13:13).

When man is killed with Christ, God executes justice and, consequently, his word, because the soul that sins the same will die, that is, the penalty is nothing more than the person of the transgressor, because whoever is dead is justified from sin.

When man believes in Christ, that is, he admits (confession) that He is the Son of the living God; it is because he also admitted (confession) that he is a sinner.

At this moment, the man is crucified, dies and is buried with Christ "Or do you not know that all who were baptized in Jesus Christ were baptized in his death? So we were buried with him

by baptism in death" (Rom. 6: 3 – 4).

That is, the justice demanded by God is establishing, since the predicted penalty is nothing more than the person of the transgressor is. Although Christ's physical death was substitutive, yet the cross, death and burial are not, for those who believe are partakers of Christ's circumcision, which is the stripping of all flesh (Col 2:11).

Through the death of Christ, the guilty man who appeared through the seed of Adam will receive the death penalty, so that God never justifies the wicked.

The soul that sins, it will die and, through death with Christ, divine determination will be fulfilling.

Divine wrath requires judgment and his mercy does not prevent that judgment from being carried out man must die with Christ.

That is why the apostle Paul says, "For he who is dead is justified from sin" (Rom. 6: 7), for the old man was crucified, killed and buried as he deserved. The man generated according to Adam's corruptible seed will never receive the declaration of righteousness from God. God never justifies the wicked, for there is no peace for the wicked, but a sword, death.

We demonstrate that God is just, now we need to demonstrate how He is the justifier of those who believe in Christ "For the demonstration of his righteousness in this present time, so that he may be just and justifier for him who has faith in Jesus" (Rom. 3:26) .3

Justifier

When the sinner dies with Christ God is just, when a new man rises from the dead with Christ by the power of God, God is

justifier! Without any contradiction! The Lord is just and justifying!

The moment a new man is created, God declares him righteous, free from guilt, because the new man is created in perfect justice and holiness (Eph 4:24). The old creature is never declared righteous, but those who are empowered to become children, these God declares them righteous.

When God looks at the resurrected man with Christ, he does not need to look at Christ to declare him righteous, since when looking at the Christian God sees one of his children, generated according to the word of truth. God only declares the born again righteous and, for the born again, behold, everything has become new.

When God announces that he never justifies the wicked, we have to consider that He refers to Adam's begotten man. When we read the apostle Paul saying that God justifies the wicked, we have a new context, because he refers to the faith that the wicked professes "But to him who does not practice, but believes in him who justifies the wicked, his faith is imputed to him as righteousness" (Rom. 4: 5).

The Bible demonstrates that Jesus rose for our justification "Who was delivered for our sins, and rose for our justification" (Rom. 4:25), because in rising with Christ, man is created righteous and declared righteous, for such a declaration it implies a divine attestation that the new creature in Christ was indeed created in truth and justice, therefore, it is just.

Just as Adam's sin was imputed to mankind because of the corruptible seed, so Christ's righteousness is imputed to man as a result of the incorruptible seed, for in regeneration men become partakers of the divine nature, being just and perfect as is the heavenly Father when they rise from the dead with Christ (Rom. 1: 4).

The means by which man appropriates justification is by faith alone. When we say that it is by faith, I do not mean that it is the belief of the man who works such a work, rather it is the faith that was to be manifested, Christ, the power of God, and the gospel. As we already mentioned. Justification is due to the power of God, that is, just trust the power of God contained in the gospel "Buried with him in baptism, you also rose in him through faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead" (Cl 2 : 12).

That is why Jesus forgave the sins of the paralytic based on his power.

The justification is giving by the power that brings the new man to light.

The justification don't based on forensic principles.

"Or does the potter have no power over clay, to make a vase for honor and another for dishonor from the same mass?" (Rom 9:21).

The same power that was manifesting in Christ raising him from the dead is the power that works in those who believe in the strength of the power of God, which is the gospel.

All those who have reemerged are in fact justified, because in addition to being declareding righteous, they were also madding righteous.

"And what is the super-great greatness of his power over us, those we believe, according to the operation of the power of his power, which he manifested in Christ, raising him from the dead, and placing him at his right hand in heaven "(Eph. 1:19 -20; 1Co 1:18, 24).