

Lesson 29 – Justification

1. What question shall be answered by this study? **Job 25:4**

EGW: Some shortsighted, short-experienced friends cannot, with their narrow vision, appreciate the feelings of one who has been in close harmony with the soul of Christ in connection with the salvation of others. His motives are misunderstood and his actions misconstrued by those who would be his friends, until, like Job, he sends forth the earnest prayer: Save me from my friends. God takes the case of Job in hand Himself. His patience has been severely taxed; but when God speaks, all his pettish feelings are changed. The self-justification which he felt was necessary to withstand the condemnation of his friends is not necessary toward God. He never misjudges; He never errs. Says the Lord to Job, "Gird up now thy loins like a man;" and Job no sooner hears the divine voice than his soul is bowed down with a sense of his sinfulness, and he says before God, "I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." {3T 509.2}

2. How are we justified? **Romans 5:9**

EGW: The Lord who made the world has not left it to run itself; he manages its affairs by his almighty power. The same God who so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life, "has not left the purchase of the blood of Christ to the mercy of the adversary of God and man. Having given to the world the best gift of heaven, he gave heaven itself. The love and benevolence of God have not ceased; his mercy is still directed toward the fallen children of Adam. Through every age, through every hour, the love of God has been exercised toward the world, notwithstanding the perversity of men; and when the fulness of time had come, Deity was glorified by pouring upon the world a flood of healing grace that was never to be obstructed or withdrawn till the plan of salvation was fulfilled. The Lord has set before the world an open door, and no man can shut it. God so loved the world, that having given his Son, who was equal with himself, he could not withhold heaven itself. Having given the greatest gift, he could not withhold that which was less. 'He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?' 'God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.'" {YI, December 13, 1894 par. 2}

3. What influences the justification process? **Matthew 12:37**

EGW: Closely connected with Christ's warning in regard to the sin against the Holy Spirit is a warning against idle and evil words. The words are an indication of that which is in the heart. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." But the words are more than an indication of character; they have power to react on the character. Men are influenced by their own words. Often under a momentary impulse, prompted by Satan, they give utterance to jealousy or evil surmising, expressing that which they do not really believe; but the expression reacts on the thoughts. They are deceived by their words, and come to believe that true which was spoken at Satan's instigation. Having once expressed an opinion or decision, they are often too proud to retract it, and try to prove themselves in the right, until they come to believe that they are. It is dangerous to utter a word of doubt, dangerous to question and criticize divine light. The habit of careless and irreverent criticism reacts upon the character, in fostering irreverence and unbelief. Many a man indulging this habit has gone on unconscious of danger, until he was ready to criticize and reject the work of the Holy Spirit. Jesus said, "Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned." {DA 323.1}

4. What happens when we make excuses for our ways trying to justify why we do not obey all that God commands? **Luke 16:15**

EGW: Christ declares: "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon"--cannot serve God and your riches, too. "The Pharisees also, who were covetous, heard all these things: and they derided Him." Mark the words of Christ to them: "Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men [which is riches acquired by oppression, by deception, by overreaching, by fraud, or in any other dishonest manner] is abomination in the sight of God." Then Christ presents the two characters, the rich man who was clothed with purple and fine linen, and who fared sumptuously every day, and Lazarus, who was in abject poverty and loathsome to the sight, and who begged the few crumbs which the rich man despised. Our Saviour shows His estimate of the two. Although Lazarus was in so deplorable and mean a condition, he had true faith, true moral worth, which God saw, and which He considered of so great value that He took this poor, despised sufferer and placed him in the most exalted position, while the honored and ease-loving man of wealth was thrust out from the presence of God and plunged into misery and woe unutterable. God did not value the riches of this wealthy man, because he had not true moral worth. His character was worthless. His riches did not recommend him to God nor have any influence to secure His favor. {1T 539.2}

5. What are we considered when we try to justify ourselves? **Job 9:20**

EGW: No comment

6. What type of heart do we need to have to receive justification? **Luke 18:10-14**

EGW: While there are many who lay claim to the promises of God while they are not fulfilling their conditions, there is another class who are humble and conscientious, but faint hearted, and they overlook the precious promises of God that are for their appropriation. They are continually in fear that Jesus does not love them. They walk in fear and trembling, and the hand of faith seems too feeble to reach up and grasp and hold the promises of God. They continually look to themselves to find an assurance that they are good enough to become the children of God. But to look to self is to look in the wrong direction. The parable of the Pharisee and the publican has forcible lessons for both these classes. The Pharisee is full of self-sufficiency, and rests in carnal security that he is saved, while the publican has a deep sense of his unworthiness, and stands afar off. He does not feel worthy to draw nigh to God, but smites upon his breast in self-condemnation, and will not so much as lift up his eyes unto heaven to meet the eyes of the heart-searching God. His cry is one of soul agony, "God be merciful to me a sinner." Yet this was the one that Jesus himself declares went down to his house justified. But the Pharisee had no such divine favor. The publican looked away from himself, for he could see nothing there in which to trust for salvation. He felt the need of a physician, and his humble prayer was heard, while the prayer of the boasting Pharisee was an offense to God. {ST, February 28, 1895 par. 8}

7. Regarding the class of people, which ones are justified? **1 Kings 8:32**

EGW: Christ is a risen Saviour; for, though He was dead, He has risen again, and ever liveth to make intercession for us. We are to believe with the heart unto righteousness, and with the mouth make confession unto salvation. Those who are justified by faith will make confession of Christ. "He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (John 5:24). The great work that is wrought for the sinner who is spotted and stained by evil is the work of justification. By Him who speaketh truth he is declared righteous. The Lord imputes unto the believer the righteousness of Christ and pronounces him righteous before the universe. He transfers his sins to Jesus, the sinner's representative, substitute, and surety. Upon Christ He lays the iniquity of every soul that believeth. "He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Corinthians 5:21). {1SM 392.2}

8. When it comes to the Ten Commandments, who are justified? **Romans 2:13, Galatians 2:17**

EGW: Those who had accepted the light concerning the mediation of Christ and the perpetuity of the law of God, found that these were the truths presented in Revelation 14. The messages of this chapter constitute a threefold warning, [SEE APPENDIX, NOTE 8.] which is to prepare the inhabitants of the earth for the Lord's second coming. The announcement, "The hour of his Judgment is come," points to the closing work of Christ's ministration for the salvation of men. It heralds a truth which must be proclaimed until the Saviour's intercession shall cease, and he shall return to the earth to take his people to himself. The work of judgment which began in 1844, must continue until the cases of all are decided, both of the living and the dead; hence it will extend to the close of human probation. That men may be prepared to stand in the Judgment, the message commands them to "fear God, and give glory to him," "and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." The result of an acceptance of these messages is given in the words, "Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." In order to be prepared for the Judgment, it is necessary that men should keep the law of God. That law will be the standard of character in the Judgment. The apostle Paul declares, "As many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law; . . . in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ." And he says that "the doers of the law shall be justified." [Romans 2:12-16.] Faith is essential in order to the keeping of the law of God; for "without faith it is impossible to please him." And "whatsoever is not of faith is sin." [Hebrews 11:6; Romans 14:23.] {GC88 435.2}

9. But what must we be careful not to think regarding the Ten Commandments? **Romans 3:20, 28; Galatians 2:16, Galatians 3:11, Galatians 5:4**

EGW: The law stands firm, and justice sternly points the sinner to its holy precepts. It is not the province of the law to save the sinner, but to condemn, not to pardon, but to convict. It can not be changed to meet man in his fallen condition. Then how is God's justice to be satisfied and His favor obtained? Not by works; "for by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight." In his own strength the sinner can not meet the demands of God. He must go for help to the One who paid the ransom for him. It is impossible for him of himself to keep the law. But Christ can give him strength to do this. The Saviour came to this world and in human flesh lived a life of perfect obedience, that the sinner might stand before God justified and accepted. {ST, July 31, 1901 par. 9}

10. How do we receive justification? **Romans 3:24, Romans 5:16-18**

EGW: "Being justified freely by His grace," the apostle Paul says, "through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His

righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time His righteousness; that He might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." {ST, May 19, 1898 par. 10}

Here the truth is laid out in plain lines. This mercy and goodness is wholly undeserved. The grace of Christ is freely to justify the sinner without merit or claim on his part. Justification is a full, complete pardon of sin. The moment a sinner accepts Christ by faith, that moment he is pardoned. The righteousness of Christ is imputed to him, and he is no more to doubt God's forgiving grace. {ST, May 19, 1898 par. 11}

11. What do we need to have to know we are justified? **Galatians 3:24**

EGW: "The law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith" (Galatians 3:24). In this scripture, the Holy Spirit through the apostle is speaking especially of the moral law. The law reveals sin to us, and causes us to feel our need of Christ and to flee unto Him for pardon and peace by exercising repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. {1SM 234.5}

12. What must we not do with faith? **James 1:6**

EGW: While we laid open our situation before God, a voice was heard full of sweetness and melody, saying: "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering; for he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord." The voice continued, "Cast the net on the right side of the ship. Walk not in the shadow of the cross, but in the path where the Sun of Righteousness is ever shining, to impart life and vitality, and to give grace for grace. The cross of Calvary is to you a pledge of forgiveness, of righteousness, of peace, and of fullness of joy. It is as a well of water to every believer, springing up unto everlasting life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. {ST, July 25, 1895 par. 2}

13. What do we do once we have the faith of being justified? **James 2:20-24**

EGW: James writes of Abraham and says, "Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he

had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? And the Scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the friend of God. Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only." In order for man to be justified by faith, faith must reach a point where it will control the affections and impulses of the heart; and it is by obedience that faith itself is made perfect. {RH, November 4, 1890 par. 5}

14. Upon receiving justification, what happens to the requirement of keeping the Ten Commandments?
Romans 3:31

EGW: Is he now free to transgress God's law? Says Paul: "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid; yea, we establish the law." "How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" And John declares, "This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments; and his commandments are not grievous." [Romans 3:31; 6:2; 1 John 5:3.] In the new birth the heart is brought into harmony with God, as it is brought into accord with his law. When this mighty change has taken place in the sinner, he has passed from death unto life, from sin unto holiness, from transgression and rebellion to obedience and loyalty. The old life of alienation from God has ended; the new life of reconciliation, of faith and love, has begun. Then "the righteousness of the law" will "be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." [Romans 8:4.] And the language of the soul will be, "O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day." [Psalm 119:97.] {GC88 468.1}

"The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul." [Psalm 19:7.] Without the law, men have no just conception of the purity and holiness of God, or of their own guilt and uncleanness. They have no true conviction of sin, and feel no need of repentance. Not seeing their lost condition as violators of God's law, they do not realize their need of the atoning blood of Christ. The hope of salvation is accepted without a radical change of heart or reformation of life. Thus superficial conversions abound, and multitudes are joined to the church who have never been united to Christ. {GC88 468.2}

15. Who does God not justify? **Exodus 23:7**

EGW: How necessary that all who take part in these transactions should be men proved, men of self-culture, men of honesty and truth, of stanch integrity, who will spurn a bribe, who will not allow their judgment or convictions of right to be swerved by partiality or prejudice. Thus saith the Lord, "Thou shalt not wrest the judgment of the poor in his cause. Keep thee from a false matter; and the innocent and righteous slay them not, for I will not justify the wicked. And thou shalt take no gift; for

the gift blindeth the wise and perverteth the words of the righteous." {ST, July 8, 1880 par. 7}

16. What makes a person wicked? **Exodus 9:27**

EGW: The only true safety of nations and individuals is to be obedient to the voice of God, and to ever stand on the side of truth and righteousness. Pharaoh now humbled himself and said, "I have sinned, the Lord is righteous, and I and my people are wicked." He entreated the servants of God to intercede with Him that the terrific thunder and lightning might cease. {ST, March 18, 1880 par. 4}

17. Who justifies? **Isaiah 45:25, Romans 8:33, 1 Corinthians 6:11**

EGW: The souls that turn to Him for refuge, Jesus lifts above the accusing and the strife of tongues. No man or evil angel can impeach these souls. Christ unites them to His own divine-human nature. They stand beside the great Sin Bearer, in the light proceeding from the throne of God. "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." Romans 8:33, 34. {DA 568.5}

18. What are people considered when they get into the business of justifying and condemning people?
Proverbs 17:15

EGW: No comment

19. What do we receive when we are justified? **Romans 5:1, Galatians 5:22-23**

EGW: We have a living Saviour. He is not in Joseph's new tomb; he is risen from the dead, and has ascended on high as a substitute and surety for every believing soul. "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." The sinner is justified through the merits of Jesus, and this is God's acknowledgment of the perfection of the ransom paid for man. That Christ was obedient even unto the death of the cross is a pledge of the repenting sinner's acceptance with the Father. Then shall we permit ourselves to have a vacillating experience of doubting and believing, believing and doubting? Jesus is the pledge of our acceptance with God. We

stand in favor before God, not because of any merit in ourselves, but because of our faith in "the Lord our righteousness." {ST, July 4, 1892 par. 6}

20. What are we made into after receiving justification? **Titus 3:7**

EGW: The mission described by the prophet is the mission of every disciple of Christ. We are to practice the words of Christ, and present before others the covenant of grace, the righteousness of Christ. We are to make it manifest to the world that we have the oil of grace in our vessels in our lamps. The work of every representative of Christ, both in the ministry and among the laymen, is to tell of the great salvation brought to them as God's free gift. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." {RH, March 27, 1894 par. 4}