

## DISCOVER

Each topic will provide a scriptural foundation, the concepts underlying the topic, and questions for the students to demonstrate their understanding of the topic. It is anticipated that these will be taught in a small group setting and take approximately 45-50 minutes. You are free to modify the concepts taught into your own words, but actual scriptural references should be included. There is a student handout for each teaching module which also includes student assignments.

## DEMONSTRATE

In preparation for this topic, think of examples of how God's Grace has impacted your own life and how it could be incorporated into your group's walk with the Lord.

## DEVELOP

Each module will contain questions for the students to answer that should give you an opportunity to determine if the Key Considerations are understood.

## DEEPER

Be sure to leave time at the start of each meeting to allow the students to share their answers/responses to their previous assignments.

## DISCERNMENT

The Disciple has a good understanding of the subject.

The Disciple has expressed ownership of the concepts.

The Disciple is integrating the concepts into his/her personal walk with Christ.

## DAILY LIVING

A memory verse is provided at the end as a suggestion for them to practice and pray through each day.

## LEADER OVERVIEW

*This is an introductory session on the Biblical topic of justification and sanctification.*

## DEFINITIONS

Let's start with brief definitions of justification and sanctification.

**Justification:** The process by which an individual is brought into a right relationship with another person, including God. Justification is frequently referred to as righteousness.

**Sanctification:** The process of being made holy resulting in a changed life-style for the Believer.

The concepts of both justification and sanctification are found in the Old and New Testament.

## JUSTIFICATION

### In The Old Testament

Justification is a term which explains how an individual enters into a right relationship with God and outlines the obligations of that relationship. Justification is the remedy for the chief problem of sin which separates God and sinners. God called Abraham and promised to make him into a great people (see Genesis 12:1-3).

Effectually, Abraham was called to counteract the sin of Adam. The only proper response to that call was faith. Although advanced in his years, Abraham was promised a son, Isaac, through whom innumerable descendants would emerge. Abraham's response to this promise is the crux of the whole idea of justification in the Old as well as in the New Testament. *"Then he [Abraham] believed in the LORD; and He reckoned it to him as righteousness"* (Genesis 15:6). Righteousness is not something Abraham possessed that prompted a reward from God. Quite the contrary, a condition was fulfilled on the part of Abraham, and subsequently on the part of God. The Old Testament teaches that to be righteous is to fulfill the conditions of the covenant relationship. Therefore, to act righteously is to act in compliance with the covenant.

A search for the word "justification" in the Old Testament is fruitless. However, the verb, "to justify," is found occasionally. All of these references clearly reveal the nature of justification: it is something that God does. A search for "righteousness" yields much better results.

*Job 13:18; 25:4 / Psalms 51:4; 143:2 / Isaiah 43:9; 45:25*

## DISCUSSION

*Based on this simple definition, how is justification different from the process of reconciliation?*

*Given the current state of your walk with the Lord, do you recognize that you have changed your life-style from what it used to be?*

*Look up Genesis 12:1-3. Does this promise apply to us today? If so, how? If not, why not?*

*Do you recall the Bible story that sealed Abraham's right relationship with God? (See Genesis 22—the story of Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac.)*

## Justification In The New Testament

Justification in the New Testament is also dependent on the concrete activity of God. The major difference is that, in the New Testament, God dealt with the sin of humankind by the highest and most intimate form of revelation, His Son Jesus Christ. The earliest Christians believed that they were “made right” with God through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

*Romans 3:21-26; 4:16-25 / 1 Corinthians 1:30; 6:11  
1 Peter 3:18*

In his letter to the Romans, Paul conveyed the message that God did not consider sin lightly. Sin created a massive gulf between God and people. This gulf required a bridge to bring all of humanity into a right relationship with God. Theologians call God’s bridge building “reconciliation.” Reconciliation functions to bring humans “justification.” The main character who affected this divine plan was Jesus Christ. Uniquely, His death on the cross made it possible for God and His people to be reconciled (see Romans 5:10) and thus for humans to be justified.

The necessity of justification, however, is sufficiently expressed by Paul in Romans 5:12-21. All people are in the deplorable state of being separated from God due to sin. All people desperately need deliverance. The redemptive activity of Christ provides the only avenue to a right relationship with God.

Justification does not encompass the whole salvation process. It does, however, mark that instantaneous point of entry or transformation which makes one “right with God.” Christians are justified in the same way Abraham was, by faith.

*Romans 4:16; 5:1*

Human works do not achieve or earn acceptance by God. The exercise of faith alone ushers us into a right, unmerited relationship with God.

*Galatians 2:16 / Titus 3:7*

Biblically, our spiritual journey begins at the point of justification. This immediate act has far-reaching consequences that establish the future. God in the present moment announces the verdict He will pronounce on the day of final judgment. He declares that trusting faith in Jesus Christ puts people in right relationship with God, bringing eternal life now and forever.

## DISCUSSION

*Look up Romans 5:12-21.  
What is your understanding  
of what Paul wrote?*

*Is it possible to earn your  
acceptance by God?*

Paul taught that faith in Jesus Christ is an obedient response which results from hearing the Gospel. *“So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ”* (Romans 10:17). He drew a connection between the Christian’s faith and the faith of Abraham. Abraham’s faith in God can be seen as an exemplary foreshadowing, which would find ultimate expression in every Christians’ relationship to God through Jesus Christ.

Paul found no justification within the law that would allow anyone (Jew or not) to sidestep faith in Jesus Christ. Paul eliminated all doubt when he argued that being a Jew is neither a prerequisite (see Romans 4:1-25) nor a prerogative (see Romans 9:1-33) for justification. The only stipulation, accessible to all, is faith.

Paul is not the only adherent or spokesman for the doctrine of justification by faith. The apostle James, among others, taught this crucial doctrine also.

*James 2:14-26*

As Believers in Jesus Christ, we were justified with God the moment we said Yes to Jesus by faith.

## SANCTIFICATION

### In The Old Testament

In the Old Testament the focus of sanctification was the holiness (*kadosh*) of God.

- He is holy (Psalm 99:9).
- His name is holy (Psalms 99:3; 111:9).
- His name may not be profaned (Exodus 20:7; Leviticus 20:3).

Since God exists in the realm of the holy rather than the profane, all that pertains to Him must come into that same realm of holiness. This involves time, space, objects, and people.

Certain times are sanctified in that they are set apart, especially to the Lord:

- Sabbath (Genesis 2:3; Exodus 20:8).
- God’s appointed times for festivals (Leviticus 23:4-44).
- The year of Jubilee (Leviticus 25:12).

## DISCUSSION

*What is the relationship between faith and the Old Testament law?*

*What is the relationship between faith and works?*

*Do you have any questions regarding justification?*

*What is your understanding of the concept of holiness?*

By strictly observing the regulations governing each, Israel sanctified (or treated as holy) these special times of the year.

Perhaps the most important writing in the Old Testament is recorded in Exodus. God gave to Moses the moral code that He desired His chosen people to observe.

- The Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:1-17; Deuteronomy 5:1-21).

### Sanctification In The New Testament

As indicated earlier, sanctification is the process of being made holy resulting in a changed life-style for the Believer. The English word sanctification comes from the Latin meaning the act or process of making holy, consecrated, or setting apart.

Objects may be made holy or treated as holy, but mostly the word group stresses the personal dimension of holiness. Sanctification is vitally linked to the salvation experience and is concerned with the spiritual obligations assumed in that experience. We were set apart to God in conversion, and we are living out that dedication to God in holiness. Objects that can be sanctified are mentioned in the following verses:

*Matthew 6:9 / Matthew 23:17, 19 / 1 Timothy 4:4-5*

The link of New Testament thought to Old Testament backgrounds of sanctification is most clearly seen in the book of Hebrews. Christ's crucifixion makes possible the moving of the sinner from the profane to the holy so that the Believer can become a part of the temple where God dwells and is worshiped

*Hebrews 2:9-11 / Hebrews 10:10,14,29  
Hebrews 13:11-16*

Hebrews also emphasizes the ethical aspect of sanctification. Sanctification or holiness is to be pursued as an essential aspect of the Believer's life. The blood of sanctification must not be defiled by sinful conduct.

*Hebrews 12:14 / Hebrews 10:26-31*

## DISCUSSION

*Since God set apart certain times during the year to honor Him, should we continue to observe these times?*

*Are the Ten Commandments still relevant to Believers? If so, why?*

Paul stressed both the individual's commitment to holy living and the enabling power of God for it.

*Romans 6:19-22 / 1 Thessalonians 3:13; 4:3-8  
2 Corinthians 7:1*

Paul and Peter both affirmed the work of the Holy Spirit in conversion as a sanctification, a making the Believer holy so as to come before God in acceptance.

For further study see:

*Romans 15:16 / 1 Corinthians 1:2; 6:11  
Ephesians 5:26-27 / 2 Thessalonians 2:13 / 1 Peter 1:2*

The summation of the ethical necessity for sanctification is seen as Peter quotes from Leviticus 11:44; 19:2; and 20:7. *"But like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior; because it is written, 'You shall be holy, for I am holy'"* (1 Peter 1:15-16).

**CLOSING:** While we are not only justified at the time of our acceptance of Jesus as our Lord and Savior, we begin the process of becoming sanctified. You may have heard the expression that we are sanctified, we are being sanctified, and we will be sanctified.

## DISCUSSION

*Do you have any questions regarding sanctification?*