

William A Baker - Justification

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SA Jesus Christ.

After many years spent in the present truth, I am today convinced that the teachings and the doctrines found in the Bible and topically set forth in the six volumes of Scripture Studies and Tabernacle Shadows are still of paramount importance.

Many today among us are inclined to discount, we are sorry to say, this fact. They would substitute their own personal vagaries for the simple but profound logic of Brother Russell. In this they follow an old tavern of turning unto another gospel, which is no gospel. We would not deny them the right thus to turn aside, but we do not bid them. God speed unto you and unto me the Lord speaks.

Jeremiah 6:16 Stand ye in the ways and see, and ask for the old path. Where is the good way? And walk ye therein, and ye shall find rest unto your soul the world today has its many secret societies. Their rituals are supposedly known only unto the initiator. Membership in them is said to confer honor, prestige and influence upon the individual.

Their membership is terribly screened. The candidate must pay his initiation for admittance fee, then must apply himself to the study of the society's rituals. If he diligently applies himself, he is then received into full fellowship in his chosen organization, the Apostles. Paul tells us the Lord also has a secret society. He says, Ephesians 5:23 this is a great secret, but I speak concerning Christ and the Church.

This society is the custodian of the mystery which was kept secret from before the world began. Romans 16:25 but now is made manifest. Within this lodge only is to be found all the wisdom and the knowledge of God. Romans 11:23 Access into this communion is conditional. Not everyone that saith Lord, Lord shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father in heaven.

Matthew 7:21 it is not alone what we profess, but more importantly what we do that opens up the way into this divine order. The master of this lodge says to all aspiring candidates, earnestly endeavor. The Greek reads, agonize. Agonized to enter through the narrow door. For many, I tell you, will seek to enter in and will not be able not unto him that saith Lord, Lord, but unto him that doeth the will of my Father in heaven.

Again, Romans 9:16 not unto him that willeth, nor unto him that runneth, but unto God who showeth mercy to you who have heard his voice. Jesus said, John 14:6 I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man cometh unto the Father, but by me. We heard him say unto us, I am the light of the world. John 8:12 Again I am the bread of life, John 6:35 Again I am the door I am the Good Shepherd, John 10 and 7 I am the resurrection and the life.

John 11:25 so little by little, from time to time, through intermittent gleams in our former doctors, the light of the knowledge of the goodness of God shone in upon our hearts and our minds. These four gleams of the glory to follow were the overruling providences of the heavenly Father, guiding us by his spirit and his word, into a knowledge of the only name given unto heaven among men, whereby we must be saved.

Yet no man cometh unto the Father but by me, and yet again Jesus declares, John 6:44 no man cometh unto me except the Father, which sent me draw him. Membership in this order. The church

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of God, we are told by its master, is very selective. No man can come to Mata except the Father, which sent me Draw him.

This restriction or limitation was directed at his audience of murmuring Jews, but applied later also to the Gentiles, as they in their due time would be brought under the ministry of the Gospel. This church of God is said to be the house of God, the church of the living God, the pillar and the ground of truth. First Timothy 3:15 the House of which Jesus is said to be the head, Hebrews 3:6 and made up solely of those invited according to a purpose, Romans 8:28 they are to constitute a royal house thou hast made them unto our God, Kings and priests. Revelation 5 In his first epistle to the church at Corinth in the second chapter, Paul justifies the singleness of purpose in his ministry toward them. He was preaching Jesus and him crucified.

It was this crucified Jesus unto the Greek foolishness, unto the Jews, a stumbling block who Paul says of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. Chapter 1, verse 30. But many among them at Corinth, and since were unable to grasp the full significance of the gospel which Paul preached. There were factions, schisms, cliques, and divisions among them. They did not get the real thought that while human servants of God might pray and water, only God gave the increase.

Chapter three, Verse six Not an increase in the membership of the congregation, that is unimportant, but an increase in growth as new creature growth in grace and in knowledge, growth in the character likeness of her head while unto the many he found it necessary to speak as unto babes in Christ. Chapter three, Verse one. There was among them the more mature and unto these he we speak wisdom among them that are perfect. The Greek here literally reads initiator, carrying the thought of a secret society. We speak wisdom among them that are initiated the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the world unto our glory.

Verses 6 and 7, chapter 3 Yet they that dwell in the secret place of the Most high, Psalms 91:7, speak often one to another. Malachi 3:16 and what is and should be the topic of their conversation?

But Psalmist tells us, Psalm 145:11 they shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power. Not only by their fruits is their membership to be known, but by their words they manifest their exception as sons of God without rebuke in the midst of a crooked and a perverse generation. This crooked and perverse generation, of whom the apostles speak, is not the world of mankind.

It is made up of the clandestine sons of God, illegitimate children, begotten not of the will of God, but of the will of man.

So we are warned by the apostle. 1st Corinthians 15:33, 34 Be not led astray. Vicious intercourse corrupts virtuous habits. Awake to sobriety as is fit and sin not for some of you are ignorant of God. For shame to you, Isaiah he was speaking to professed believers, not to the world of mankind.

As Bible students, you will recall that the Society's publication under the ministry of Brother Russell and the dawn on its back cover carried a summary of the fundamental factors of our faith, the faith once delivered to the saints. This statement sets forth to us the Scriptures clearly teach to us The Scriptures clearly teach There are three distinct stages in passing from death, the Adamic death unto life, the more abundant life as new creatures. These stages are first, justification, second, sanctification, third, glorification.

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In the tabernacle type, the court, the holy, and the most holy. Each of these stages involves a number of steps to accomplish completion. This matter of becoming New Testament Christians is not as simple as many have been misled to believe.

It is not simply a matter of subscribing to a ritual of conforming to certain required acts on the part of the candidate.

No, it is much more than all this. So the apostle tells us. Hebrews 4:12, 13 thy blood again, the word of the Lord is living and energetic, able to judge the thoughts and the intents of the heart, and no creature is concealed in his sight, but all things are naked and exposed to his eyes, whose words are addressed to us, not to the world.

In Psalms 25:14 we are told the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he has covenanted to make them know us. Marginal Renderings we are told, as already quoted, that God the Father does the drawing during this gospel age. Contrary wise to this, Jesus said, speaking of the millennial age, ay, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me. This is not true in this gospel age. It is God who now does the drawing.

Jesus will do the drawing in the millennial age.

Since God heareth not sinners, how is it accomplished? The answer is, by his word received into good and honest hearts. God has sent forth his word into the world, and his providences have moved to overrule its influence among mankind. Isaiah 55:8 11 for your thoughts are not my thoughts, neither are your ways my ways for as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, my thoughts than your thoughts. Then he uses the illustration of the snow and the rain coming down from heaven and watering the earth, and of the earth bringing forth seed for the sower, food for the ear, and adds, so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth.

It shall accomplish that which I please, and prosper in the thing whereunto I sent it. What a definite declaration of his will operating through his word, and the general sending of it among mankind.

And this is what Paul meant when he said, First Corinthians 1:30 Christ of God is made unto us wisdom. Jesus confirms this saying, search the Scriptures. In them ye think ye have eternal life, and that was right, for in them was eternal life, and these are they that testify of me unto his disciples when he met them after his resurrection on the shores of Galilee.

He says that Moses and the prophets and the Psalms all speak of me.

Yes, God sent forth his words into the world.

Jesus confirmed this preface, saying, search the Scriptures. It is the inspired word of God that brings conviction for sin, the realization of the need of the Savior, and informs us that God has set forth Jesus as our sin atonement and the way, the only way to reconciliation with him. Jesus, in that prayer recorded by John in the 17th chapter of his Gospel, said, concerning his disciples, I have given them the word that thou gavest me.

Yes, God gave the testimony, the message unto Jesus, and Jesus assured his heavenly Father that he had been faithful to his commission and had given that same word unto his disciples. We have an illustration of the use and the power of the word of God as sent to accomplish in this gospel age one definite purpose among men, a just man, and one who prayed unto God. You

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remember, he sent three of his servants unto Peter to hear words of thee. Yes, Peter, having been taught of Jesus his head, who had been taught of God, had certain words essential to Cornelius being inductive into the house of sons.

Not any old word, not every kind of a sermon, a definite setting forth of truth. Not all truth, special truth. Father, sanctify them by thy word. Thy word is truth.

Acts 10:22 and under that godly household, Peter preached Jesus and the resurrection. Peter, later reciting his experiences to the brethren at Jerusalem, quoted Cornelius as saying, peter, who will tell thee words thereby zeal, and all thy house shall be saved. Notice how this statement is. Cornelius declares that he had been informed of the angel which God had sent unto him, that when Peter would come, Peter would tell thee words. Verse 5 Thou and thy house shall be saved the first step on our way to the doing of the will of God is the step of knowledge, understanding, essential information.

This is but the beginning, for we must continue to grow not only in the grace of God, but to continue to grow in the knowledge of God. We must know the truth, and it is the truth that is to make us free all things in the text already cited, that Jesus had been made not only unto us wisdom, but righteousness. Justification for the word righteousness is synonymous with the word justification, and here I want to read from the reprint page. 59, 59 September 15, 1916. Justification really means only one thing, a making right, a making just.

Justification may be either partial or complete. In Abraham's case it was partial. The justification of this gospel church is an instantaneous work. It is God who justifies. But the basis of this justification, still quoting, is the sacrifice accomplished by Jesus and finished at Calvary.

Before the Savior will impute to us the merit of his sacrifice, we must know of him, and trust him, and accept his terms of discipleship, and consecrate ourselves fully as his disciples, even unto death. The moment he imputes the merit of his sacrifice to us, covering our blemishes, we are acceptable to the Father, received into his family by the begetting of the Holy Spirit, and thus thereafter, members of the Church of the Firstborn, still continuing the reading, the world's justification will not be an instantaneous one, but will progress during the 1000 years of the millennial age. The world might then be said to be tentatively justified through the Mediator and his kingdom, but their justification will be accomplished in their absolute perfection at the close of the millennial age, when they will be presented to the Father and accepted by Him. It is God that justifies end of pope Notice in this article, Brother Russell is contrasting the millennial age justification with the Gospel age justification.

In both cases there is a Preliminary condition from First Corinthians 1:30 Paul covers all this in the praise made unto us. Justification the merit of Jesus Christ is the basis of all justification, and God alone does the justify not you nor me, nor a covenant nor a ritual.

It means God's approval, and it may be partial or it may be complete. The need for justification is due to the fall and the death sentence passed upon mankind. The perfect do not need justification, for they are just. All God's finished works are perfect. The work in process of justification being counted or made right, are for the benefit of sinners, and is the outworking of divine grace among fallen males.

Note carefully how this is stated in the Scriptures. God is The Justifier Romans 8:26 that justification invites the grace of God. Romans 3:24 Titus 3:7 Justification is by the blood of Jesus

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Christ. Romans 5:9 Hebrews 9:14 1 John 17 we are justified by the resurrection of Jesus. Romans 4:25 we are justified by faith Romans 5:1 we are justified by works James 2:24 from these you see that many factors are involved in this process of a sinner's justification before God.

The word petitive used to cover the preliminary steps that is used by Brother Russell between conversion and sanctification, is from the Latin, meaning to try or experimental in the tabernacle trait. Tabernacle shadows in the Gospel age picture, all who are in the favor of God, whether partially or complete, are represented as in the court.

They are inside the surrounding white curtains. To those outside a wall of unbelief, no believer is outside that wall. To those inside a wall of faith, read your tabernacle shadows. It is true some of our brethren want to change.

Woe unto him who would lay unholy hands on that which the Lord provideth for his people and these the last hour of the Gospel age.

Yet the entrance to this condition is the gate representing Jesus alone as the way a ransom for all in types places represent conditions. Court is the condition of favor with God partial or complete? The tabernacle represents the condition of all the sanctified in Christ Jesus. The Spirit begotten and the Spirit born respectively, by the holy and the most holy. But how does Brother Russell use this phrase, tentative justification?

I answer as representing the standing in faith of all believers to whom God reckons the merit of Christ as imputed, whereas it is not actually so imputed.

Note this point carefully the merit of the ransom sacrifice could not be actually imputed unto Abraham and others of the faithful before Pentecost because it had not yet been actually provided. That logical as well as scriptural. You cannot actually impute something that does not actually exist. That too is logical and scriptural.

What advantage has this manner of justification for the individual before Pentecost for sins?

I answer. It provides the only basis of which God can or will accept his consecration and his service. Jesus said Matthew 23:19. It is the altar that sanctifies the gift. Not the gift, the altar.

The brazen altar in the court types the perfect humanity of Jesus. It was this fundamental fact, that is the perfection of his humanity, that made his right to life as a man an acceptable sacrifice for Adam and his race. It is upon the same atypical oge, in the same antitypical course our consecrated humanity is acceptable in the beloved and nowhere else, nor under any other set of circumstances. This justification, tentative or partials, was the only justification operating before Pentecost. It is a faith justification.

It is based upon the believer's faith and was effective toward God because of God's foreknowledge of Jesus. Ransom, sacrifice, Genesis 15:16 Psalms 32, 1:5 Romans 4, 4, 11, 21, verses 21, 24 the Diaglo 7, 14 Romans 12 wounds, Romans 8, 29, 30. This same principle carries over into this gospel age up to a point where an actual imputation is made, namely the door or the first nail, which represents Christ as the truth now made unto believers their sanctification of Mother Eve for the statement from our Pastor, the Tower, February 15th.

When our Redeemer imputes to us his merits covering our blemishes. This brings us to the place of vital justification. We have done nothing to accomplish this justification. We have merely presented

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ourselves that we might become servants of righteousness. We have merely placed ourselves in the position of readiness to receive the blessing.

When our Savior's merit was imputed, all our past was forgiven, our blemishes covered, the Father accepted the offering, and our high priest sacrificed us as justified human beings. This brings us to the consideration of what Brother Russell correctly calls idolized justification. You know, we sometimes hear the argument justification is justification. Well, that is true in a sense, a very good sense. But it is only a partial proof.

Properly stated, tentative justification is tentative justification. Vitalized justification is vitalized justification. That's the correct statement of the matter. What is the second step which Brother Russell called vitalized justification? We are informed it is that standing of the believer to whom God has Christ's merit actually imputed because he intends to accept his consecration by a begetting of the Spirit and thus induct him into his house of sons.

This vital change in the relation between God and the members of the church occurs at the door of the tabernacle, not at the gate. Keep in mind, always it is the same kind of faith justification that operates in the patriarchal Jewish and Gospel ages, just as there are two steps and progressing from tentative or partial justification to vitalized justification. Brother Russell points out in Volume 6, pages 124 to 125 and elsewhere that the candidate for the high calling experiences two definite stages in his progress in consecration.

These parallel the two steps in justification. They are first, a consecration to righteousness second, a consecration to sacrifice. Many who are called do not progress beyond the first step and never become of God's elect. This is distinctly spectator shown in New Testament Greek. It is obscured on our English version by careless translations of the Greek prepositions EPI and eis e p I and e I s EPI meaning on and the second in.

There is a great difference, and the New Testament emphasizes the difference between being or believing on Christ and believing into Christ. Take the dialogue check John 17:21 23 and other portions of Jesus prayer. Jesus prays for all those who would believe into him through their words. King James Version reads own him, which is an entirely different thought.

This is an important distinction, one with which Bible students should be by this time familiar.

What is the difference in these two? These are some of the differences between these two steps of justification. Partial justification operates without the actual imputation of the merit of Christ. Complete justification operates only with the imputed merit of Christ. Partial justification as his faith actually and Jesus merit recordly.

Romans 3:21 28 complete justification have both their faith and Jesus merit actually partial justification.

Those that experience only that are justified to friendship Complete justification They are justified to sonship under partial justification the Adamic sentence is not cancelled under complete justification. Vitalized justification the Adamic sentence is cancelled under partial justification. All such are still members of Adam's race under complete or vitalized justifications they are a new creation, a new order of stuff. Those who are only partially justified and die in that state die in faith, but they die in Adam. Those who have complete justification die in faith, but they die in Christ under partial justification they are moved by by the Spirit of God.

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Under complete justification they are begotten by the Spirit of God. At a question meeting in Los Angeles in October 1916 eight hours before his death brother Russell four times uses the phrase tentative justification. We first in the court is shown what we term tentative justification. 2. The process of tentative justification in some may be very slow.

3. All the various steps in connection with tentative justification are getting quite clear. 4. These steps of tentative justification in the court are simply leading one to finalizing his justification. End of quote.

Yet we are told that Brother Russell changed his mind on this and other matters. Some say he was old and sick and not mentally responsible. On the other deep conviction. I would rather take Brother Russell's words sick than his critics words. Well mark that point.

Will remember too that for two years prior to his death he was literally sold by Rutherford and his clique. In this matter of tentative justification and the wail of the hound are still echoing down through all these years.

Closing let's take a general view this matter. Let us look at the general situation of mankind as God reveals it and as it appears unto him. Adam sinned and involved the whole world in his family by one man's disobedience. Sin unto the world and death by sin. His death stands against each and every member of the race.

The human race consists of two classes under the curse. First, a faith class capable of character development for spiritual natures of different orders. Second, an unbelief class capable of no higher development than perfect human nature. Therefore God predetermined or elected to deal with the state when fast on faith exacting conditions we sing Salvation is free but nothing is further from the truth. The gospel in salvation is not free.

It is a very costly thing. Jesus and his disciples emphasize this he that admonished us if we would become his disciples to sit down and count the cost.

It's a costly venture. It will cost you everything you have and are.

Adam's death holds against all. But God is testing these two classes under two different dispensational provisions as it would take all the Christ's redemptive merit to redeem the faith class under the first dispensation of grace. Some provision or arrangement was necessary to make the credit available for the second class under the millennial dispensation. This was done by arranging first for a reckoned purchase. Thus God arranged for Christ to reckon, not actually purchased the gospel age believers.

To do this Christ first had to deposit not pay the ransom price in God's hands. Secondly, he had personally to appear before God and reckonedly purchase the church. Luke 24:46 47 Hebrews 9:24 Revelation 5:9 Revelation 14:3 4 Doing this by imputing the credit of his deposit with God for the Church. This credit was good for everyone believing into Him. During this gospel age, God could and did accept the loan of this deposit without violating his justice.

Three factors are involved.

First, the deposit covered the death bully. Second, it left the full price in the hands of justice. Third, Christ as the Church's High Priest was pledged first, to put to death sacrificially willing and obedient among the overcomers. Secondly, to put to death ministerially the great company class. Third, to

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put to death eternally those who go into the second death.

It is God who justifies. Three agents in this are actively involved. God the Father, the Benefactor and Judge. He is the originating and effective cause, Jesus Christ alone the meritorious cause for Jesus alone random Father Adam and His race. Third, the believer's faith is the one and only instrumental cause of their justifications.

All justified believers receive not Adam but Jesus right to life.

Ransoming the Church by a reckoned ransom, ransoming the world of mankind by an actual ransom, the actual purchase of Father Adam and his race. May the Lord have his Bless God our Father, we come before thee with our harassed bowed and deepest reverence and humility, recognizing that it is the who justifies. We come in the name of Jesus, who bought us with his own precious blood and opened up unto us this way to a newness of life. Bless the ministry of the power, whatever way may have come short of manifesting thy full goodwill and pleasure. Blessed by people everywhere, each and all in sincerity and in truth, serving thee with an eye single to thy glory, we ask it in Jesus name.

Amen.