

Romans 8:33-34 -- "who will bring a charge against God's elect? God is the one who justifies; who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us."

b. Principles derived from these facts

As a term used frequently in legal or judging contexts in Scripture, "to justify" does not mean to make someone subjectively righteous. Rather it means to declare someone to be righteous or to display someone as being righteous. Of course, it is possible to declare someone righteous or to display someone as being righteous who is not. However, to do this is wrong; and when it is done in a court purporting to represent God's justice, it is an abomination. Sometimes "to justify" seem to shade into the idea of "to treat as righteous" (as when one judges another to be righteous and then treats him accordingly).

2. Justification is more than pardon, although it includes the idea

- a. Pardon releases from a penalty, but not from guilt. The pardoned murderer is still guilty. But the justified person is declared "not guilty." Christ took his guilt and became legally guilty of his sin. God legally transferred the sinner's guilt to Christ and declared His Son to be legally righteous. Then God dealt with Christ as one who was guilty!

I Peter 3:18 -- "For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, in order that He might bring us to God"

I John 3:5 -- "And you know that He appeared in order to take away sins; and in Him there is no sin."

Revelation 1:5 -- "To Him who loves us, and released us from our sins by his blood,"

I Peter 2:22, 24 -- "who committed no sin, nor was any deceit found in His mouth; . . . and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed."

II Corinthians 5:21 -- "He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf"

- b. Pardon is purely negative

Justification includes, not only the removal of the guilt and penalty, but the gift of righteousness and a title to eternal life. Pardon absolves from the penalty of death, but offers nothing positive in its place.

- c. Pardon must be based upon pity, leniency, or some ground other than justice; justification is based on complete