

## **“Re-Justification”**

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July 29, 2008

I am fascinated by the creative ways that theology students in the [UPCI](#) are handling the doctrine of [justification](#). Because their doctrine of Acts 2:38 is-the-New Birth rejects the historic teaching of justification by faith there is an attempt to redefine or caricature justification into something the Bible or orthodox Christianity has never believed. This is leading to a few novel terms or phrases that reveal a misguided understanding of the biblical teaching of justification by faith.

One of those is the phrase “repetitive justification”. The problem with this phrase is that the word repetitive is unnecessary. Why? Because ‘repetitive justification’ is a tautology (redundancy). The very nature of justification makes it necessarily ongoing. Thus, the word ‘repetitive’ is superfluous.

A companion phrase I see being used is “re-justification.” This is really another way of saying repetitive justification. Instead of re-justification a more descriptive phrase for the same idea is “transformational justification.” I posted this on my website (at: <http://inchristalone.org/TheFullGospelError.htm>):

### *Re-justification?*

*A gross misconception of justification is too often seen among “full Gospel” advocates. It is the mistaken idea that, after a Christian has a serious lapse of faith or behavior, that one would need to be re-justified in the form of a second conversion. At the heart of this whole issue is the question of the status of the lapsed Christian. It appeared to those of the Roman Catholic tradition that the answer is to view justification as synonymous with sanctification. This means the believer cooperates with Christ’s grace by obedience to cause justification. Justification would not occur until one is completely transformed into the image of Christ. Of course, this would only occur (except for some saints) at the Consummation. Thus, no one (again, except for a few rare saints) is truly justified in this life. In their view, the lapsed Christian would need the sacraments of Confession, Penance, and the Mass in order to be restored, if they had not committed the unpardonable sin. Justification is viewed as the process of transformation, the “renewing of the Holy Ghost,” by which a person is actually made righteous.*

*This teaching of “transformational justification” is the opposite of what the Reformers saw. They saw justification as the state of the believer by which he is right with God because of the merits of Christ. Rather than being made perfectly righteous, the believer is counted righteous on Christ’s behalf. This enables the sinner to enter into favor and right standing with God, so that the work of the Spirit can proceed within the one who is justified. This made it possible for the Holy Spirit to transform the believer. This transformation is called sanctification and not justification. This transformation would advance, never perfect in this*

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*life, to a perfection received at the Coming of Christ. It is justification that makes sanctifying transformation possible and not the other way around.*

The error of the term “re-justification” is the same as the mistaken idea of “transformational justification.” Justification is a once-for-all-time reality that has vital, ongoing consequences in the future life of the Christian. The justified person does not need to be re-justified. Just like in our natural, physical birth, a person is born once. This event is the beginning of a long life of being a “born” person. But there is no need to be born (in the natural sense) again or repetitively. This fact is so obvious that it sounds ridiculous to even state it. But, the idea of “re-justification” is just as ridiculous as saying a person has to be repetitively born.

Justification is like regeneration. Initially regeneration occurs when God plants a new heart or nature in a sinner and makes him or her alive to God. When a person is born again they do not need to be “born again” again. The Bible teaches that when a person is born of the Spirit it is a one time event that provides a new creation or new nature that continues on in the remainder of one’s life. The presence of the new creation or nature continues through the believer’s life, but the believer does not need to be born again over and over. Therefore, using the phrase “re-justification” is as unnecessary as saying one must be “born again” again.