

Rectification ('Justification') in Paul, in Historical Perspective and in the English Bible: God's Gift of Right Relationship

Part Two: Paul's Doctrine of Rectification in Its Historical Development

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This is the second volume of a three-part series authored by Richard Moore, formerly head of the New Testament Department at the Baptist Theological College of Western Australia and a lecturer at Murdoch University, on Paul's doctrine of justification by faith. This middle volume examines the doctrine of justification in its historical development, builds on initial discussion of the doctrine in volume one and is a bridge for volume three.

A substantial, clearly printed, hard-cover publication of 427-plus pages, the book includes appendices, indexes and a comprehensive thirty-page bibliography. The three-volume production belongs with a continuing series of Studies in the Bible and Early Christianity, listed in the back of the book, which at last count numbered fifty-four.

The title introduces the term 'rectification' ('justification'), a new word for me. Moore writes in the Preface that Part One, which I have not read, 're-examined the doctrine of rectification ('justification') in the writings of the Apostle Paul' (p 11). He announces that this second volume will cover the era from the end of the apostolic period to the conclusion of the twentieth century, a formidable task even in four hundred plus pages.

An Introduction in any academic presentation sets directions and allows the reader to know the writer's emphasis. It is essential not only to spend time with the Introduction but to recognise that this volume is set between two others. Although each of the three volumes is complete in itself, they have the continued theme of 'rectification', so in that sense the start and finish are elsewhere.

Focusing on Galatians and Romans, Moore claims that the interpretation of the 'body of exegetical tradition' that developed about Paul's statements concerning 'God's rectification of the ungodly' were soon 'completely misunderstood and misrepresented...In the majority of cases Paul's ideas were completely turned on their head.' He argues that 'works-righteousness' became the thrust of the developing church (p 1).

Many today might argue that the twenty-first-century church also understands 'justification and grace' as work-righteousness.

After describing the official Roman Catholic view of 'justification' as a moral *process*, 'to make right' morally, Moore examines the Protestant position and introduces his

understanding of the main two theological views in God's action of *dikaioun*. He writes that the one with widest support is the *forensic* view of justification, in which the action of God is as judge and the death of Christ is a substitutionary sacrifice. In this action God's wrath is appeased through Christ paying the penalty of sin by his death. He describes Christ's death from such perspectives as the sacrifice of an innocent victim through which moral righteousness can be transferred to the believing sinner. Moore explains that this Protestant doctrine was dominated by the view 'that in rectification the righteousness of Christ is imputed to the believer...Christ has borne the punishment demanded because of human sin and provided that perfect (moral) righteousness which alone will satisfy God' (p 3).

Moore refers to the ongoing *process* of sanctification for those declared morally righteous but whose 'lives still fall short of the ideal of moral righteousness' (p 3). No reviewer can know what other understandings are in the author's mind and, despite the above statements being introduced in the Introduction and obviously not meant for development, the explanations do not go far enough. Justification in the forensic understanding means that a holy God declares a person righteous through the death and resurrection of Christ, the God/man. He, Christ, is the ideal, for we never achieve an ideal, else it becomes an idol.

The author then turns to an alternative view, one that he believes has its genesis in the nineteenth century and one which he seeks to defend in his thesis: 'Not a *moral* righteousness but a rightness of *relationship*' (p 3). Moore adds that through rectification God brings the person who had accepted the gospel about Christ and has come to faith into a right relationship with himself, therefore the relational model is adequate *in itself* and does not need propping up by other approaches. Moore explains that this can 'equally well be expressed as *the act by which God gives the gift of a right relationship* to the ungodly person who has responded in faith' (p 4). Again there is the matter of not knowing what the author is thinking beyond his computer. Is this good news about Christ presented, as Paul has presented it in Romans, in the context of unrighteousness, evil and sin and being short of the glory of God? The presented explanation has too many unknowns for this reviewer and requires expanding so that the reader understands more clearly the author's position of coming to such a *relationship*. Certainly God brings us into the gift of a right relationship with himself, but only through the death and resurrection of Christ, and Moore does not emphasise this.

The inclusion of bibliographic listings at the start of the chapters and the use of footnotes rather than end notes is most appropriate for further study.

Moore begins the main chapters in the patristic period prior to Augustine with a brief focus on the Apostolic Fathers, the apologist Tertullian, then Cyprian and a few lines on Hilary of Poitiers. His first sentence may surprise some who imagine that the church did not move away from apostolic theology until the later middle ages, but Moore is correct: 'When we trace the fortunes of Paul's doctrine of "justification" among his immediate spiritual heirs, we are faced with the remarkable fact that the doctrine which constitutes the main theme of both Galatians and Romans is scarcely to be encountered' (p 5). His sources, including K E Kirk, T F Torrance, J N D Kelly and J Pelikan, support his argument.

The next chapter features Augustine, ‘the doctor of grace’ (p 13), then thirty-five pages on the medieval period and the place of ‘justification’ in medieval thought. Included also are Thomas Aquinas, Johannes Duns Scotus and William of Ockham.

Luther, Erasmus and the influence of Melanchthon are noted, with Melanchthon in his final German 1555 edition of *Loci communes* presenting ‘a view of “justification” that is thoroughly Christocentric (as did Luther). Christ, as mediator between God and humankind, has become the means by which our “justification” is possible’ (pp 79 and 86). The early English Reformers, the Council of Trent, then Calvin and the Puritan traditions, along with the Westminster Confession, John Owen, John Bunyan and Jonathan Edwards receive attention in respect to their understanding of ‘justification’. However, Moore sums up at the end of this long section that ‘the attribute emphasized in God (the Father!) was “wrath”, while the role of Christ the Son was presented primarily propitiatory, to appease the wrath of the Father’. He believes that this emphasis ‘brought about a distortion of Paul’s presentation of the divine initiative (motivated by grace and love) in sending his Son into the world as a sin-offering for the sin of humankind (Gal 4:4; Rom 3:24)’ (p 214). If this is so, where is the power of the gospel of Christ? Grace and love are too often presented as soft options, and surely God’s wrath is an expression of his love, not an entity in itself.

Nineteenth-century expressions are presented, with ‘justification’ still understood in forensic terms, along with stirrings pointing to a change of status, a new relationship established by God (p 215). The chapter comprises familiar names like J H Newman, C G Finney, H A W Meyer, A B Ritschl and C H Spurgeon. It is helpful to have one’s opinions and theological thinking challenged, and the author does this on a number of occasions. The chapter concludes with a questioning word on Spurgeon: ‘The most influential preacher of the nineteenth century (Spurgeon), like the Apostle Paul, placed a great deal of emphasis on “the Gospel”, but—unlike the apostle—hardly ever spoke directly on the theme of rectification, and when he did so Spurgeon utilized categories drawn from the historical development of the doctrine of “justification” rather than expounding it in Pauline terms’ (p 241).

The final section of twentieth-century insights includes inter-denominational dialogue, treated in broad chronological order. The reader is prepared for additional examination of ‘rectification’ in volume three by the introduction here of some New Testament translations. Reference is made to Karl Barth’s *Church Dogmatics*, where his ‘understanding of “justification” was thoroughly forensic’ (p 261). Hans Küng’s response to Barth is an essential inclusion in this volume.

The necessary Summary Essay refers to Alister McGrath’s comprehensive history of ‘justification’, in which he rightly states that the doctrine ‘has undergone development in its own right, independent of biblical roots’.

Moore would not expect everyone to agree with his own thesis, but he would expect continued evaluation by serious readers (p 354).

The doctrine of justification concerns God's gracious judicial verdict in advance of the day of judgment, pronouncing guilty sinners as morally upright. In the gospel God reveals his way of putting sinners right with himself. Jesus, the Son of God, became the sinner's representative and substitute. As God's obedient servant, he lived a righteous life and died the atoning death of the cross. Justification is one of the key components of God's saving work. It concerns the "great exchange" where both the sins of his people were put to Christ's account and he paid the price, and also the righteousness of Christ's obedience to the Father in life and death was put to their account. It is by faith alone in Christ alone that sinners are justified. is justified before God, in the right with God. This is his legal standing in the presence of the Divine Judge. Secondly, the believing sinner is adopted by God, a child of the Father. This is his familial situation, his "social-covenantal" environment. Thirdly, the believing sinner is. historical reliability. 16 What he reported was not only factual; they came from Paul and. accurately capture his own thought and perspective. After his blindness and baptism, Paul right. away preached that Jesus is the "Son of God" and the Christ, God's anointed Messiah. 17. Paul's first recorded message to his fellow Jews informs us of several things. 18 First, Paul. saw that God's relationship with the patriarchs and Israel reached its climax in the death and. Start studying Bible Test2. Learn vocabulary, terms and more with flashcards, games and other study tools. From Paul's perspective, why is the gift of prophecy more important than speaking in tongues? It is given to all It is given only to the Apostles It is more edifying to the one who possesses it It is more helpful to the church. It is more helpful to the church. A later admirer of Paul wrote Ephesians in Paul's name to continue Paul's legacy and to gain an audience for the letter's teachings. A disciple or companion of Paul wrote Ephesians after Paul's death, providing the church a generic statement of what the Apostle would have written. Paul wrote Ephesians as a rough draft for Colossians, but it was mistakenly inserted into the collection of Paul's letters. His previous publications include Rectification ("Justification") in Paul, in Historical Perspective, and in the English Bible (2002-3) and Under the Southern Cross: The New Testament in Australian English (2014). He is currently a research associate at Vose Seminary. show more. Product details. Goodreads is the world's largest site for readers with over 50 million reviews. We're featuring millions of their reader ratings on our book pages to help you find your new favourite book. Close X. Learn about new offers and get more deals by joining our newsletter.

historical-critical search for the "historical Jesus" has led to the "search for the real Paul." Though many historical critics nominally maintained a Reformed perspective on Pauline literature, their work provided the fodder for the eventual confluence of ideologies that emerged in the latter half of the twentieth century as the NPP. Sadly, historical criticism has provided not only the avenue to produce the unorthodox concepts of the "historical Jesus" but also an unorthodox concept of the "historical Paul," a Paul that bears little resemblance to the letters he wrote. For the NPP, eisegesis... Pauline Theology's Radical Change in the Last Century Some may not be aware of the qualitative and even substantively radical. Have evangelicals misunderstood Paul? Was the Reformation doctrine of justification a mistake? The New Perspective on Paul has serious implications for that pivotal doctrine of the gospel. Guy Waters lays out the theological, historical, and cultural antecedents to the New Perspective and examines its leading proponents. He offers a trenchant critique of their work and warns us of problems that the New Perspective may pose within the Church. Read more... 1121 The passages in the rabbinic literature that speak of God's delivering Israel at the exodus because of the merit of their deeds were attempts "to find a reason for the election," and so were not themselves "a systematic explanation of God's election of Israel" and therefore do not entail merit. Find and Load Ebook Rectification ("Justification" in Paul, in Historical Perspective and in the English Bible: God's Gift of Right Relationship : Paul's Doctrine of Rectification in the Bible and Early Christianity). The FB Reader service executes searching for the e-book "Rectification ("Justification" in Paul, in Historical Perspective and in the English Bible: God's Gift of Right Relationship : Paul's Doctrine of Rectification in the Bible and Early Christianity)" to provide you with the opportunity to download it for free. Click the appropriate button to start searching th