

## ARTICLE 5

**We believe that justification, regeneration, and the new birth are wrought by faith in the blood of Jesus Christ.**

### 1. Justification

- a. The biblical term “to justify” (*dikaioō*) means God acquits and accepts the sinner who trusts in Jesus.**

Scripture references: Romans 3:24, 28; Colossians 1:14; 1 John 2:12; Psalm 103:12

- (1) **The term “justify” was used in courts of law during biblical times and pictured God as a judge.**

- (2) **In God’s court, individuals are acquitted because of Christ, not because they try to be good people.**

- b. Through God’s unique plan of justification, He demonstrates His grace and his compassion toward us.**

Scripture references:

Justification as a demonstration of God’s grace—Romans 8:33; Luke 18:10-14; Romans 3:24

Uniqueness of justification—Romans 1:18; 4:5; see also Proverbs 17:15

- (1) **No biblical doctrine emphasizes more the work of God’s grace than justification.**

- (2) **God’s justification is unique in that through His justification, guilty people are acquitted.**

- c. The primary results of justification are that we are brought into a right relationship with God and we have peace with God.**

Scripture references: Romans 5:1-5; compare 8:6; 14:17

## 2. Regeneration (The New Birth)

### a. When we believe in Christ, we experience a new birth.

Scripture references: John 3:7-8; Titus 3:5; 1 Peter 1:23

(1) The New Testament Greek word “*palingenesia*,” used to describe the new birth or regeneration, literally means “to be born again,” suggesting a rebirth.

(2) What God does to renew us spiritually is deeply mysterious.

(3) This new beginning of life is described in various ways in the Bible:

#### “Circumcision of heart”

(Romans 2:29; 3:30; 1 Corinthians 7:18-19; Galatians 5:2-11; 6:15)

#### “Dying with Christ and being raised to a new life”

(Romans 6:1-11; Ephesians 2:5-6; Colossians 2:13)

#### “Brought out of darkness into the light”

(Colossians 1:12-13; 1 Peter 2:9-10)

### b. The experience of regeneration (the new birth) revolutionizes one’s whole being.

Scripture references: 2 Peter 1:4; Ephesians 4:17-24; Romans 12:2

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## Discussion

### Justification

- 1) Can we secure a right relationship with God by trying to obey His laws? Explain.
- 2) What is unique about God’s justification?

### **Regeneration (The New Birth)**

- 3) What happens to a person when he or she experiences regeneration, that is, the new birth?
- 4) Explain the significance of Jesus' use of the wind to illustrate regeneration (the new birth).
- 5) List some ways the new birth is described in the Bible.

### **Prayer**

Praise be to Your beloved name, Lord Jesus.

By the shedding of Your precious blood, You have provided for our salvation. Through Your sacrificial gift of the Cross, we have been forgiven our past, and the Holy Spirit has transformed our hearts.

We now pray that You will enable us to see and to love those who need the justifying grace of the Father and the transforming power of the Holy Spirit. Give us also the opportunity to share with them the Good News of Your saving love, which You expressed so completely through the Cross.

Amen.

### **Resources for Additional Study**

Arrington, French L. *Christian Doctrine: A Pentecostal Perspective*, Vol. 2. Cleveland, Tenn.: Pathway, 1992; pp. 209-227.

Forde, Gerhard O. *Justification by Faith: A Matter of Death and Life*. Ramsey, N. J.: Sigler Press, 1991.

McGrath, Alister E. *Justification by Faith: What It Means for Us Today*. Grand Rapids: Academie Books, 1988.

Sproul, R. C. *Faith Alone: The Evangelical Doctrine of Justification*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1995.

White, James R. *The God Who Justifies*. Minneapolis, Minn.: Bethany House Publishers, 2001.