

The Attackers: The Sovereign Executive of Witnessing: The Lord's Concise Statement of the Peace Treaty, John 3:16; God Is Party of the First Part Who Gave His Son; the Condition for Human Ratification Is to Believe in the Gift; the Purpose of Faith Is Deliverance from the Lake of Fire; the Result of Believing Is the Imputation of Eternal Life; Principle: Ratification Must Precede Salvation; Justification: God's Recognition that the Believer Possesses His Righteousness

20. To believe in Christ is an individual's ratification of God's peace treaty. Our Lord completed the treaty with His finished work on the cross.
21. God ratified it with propitiation. By means of grace, He offers every person in human history an invitation to ratify the treaty through faith alone in Christ alone.
22. The Lord gives a concise statement of what could be entitled the Treaty of Reconciliation in John 3:16:

John 3:16 - "God loved the world so much He gave [δίδωμι (didōmi): this is grace, no gift can be a gift that requires anything on the part of the recipient] His uniquely-born Son, so that [ἵνα (hína): introduces both purpose and result] whoever [unlimited atonement] believes in Him [πιστεύω (pisteúō): this is the necessary condition to achieve the purpose and the result] shall not perish [ἀπόλλυμι (apóllumi): purpose of believing: Nicodemus would be delivered from the lake of fire after he dies] but have eternal life [ζωή αἰώνιος (zōé aiōnios): result of believing: Nicodemus would be imputed eternal life and would go to heaven when he dies].
23. "God" is the party of the first part while "the world" is party of the second part. God is said to "give," an act of divine grace permitted by righteous approval of Jesus as a qualified substitute and subsequent judgment of all human sin.
24. Jesus is cited as "His only begotten Son." This is better phrased "His uniquely-born son," since there was no human male involved in the pregnancy (parthenogenesis).
25. This constitutes the impeccability of Jesus. Absent a human father there was no imputation of Adam's original sin or the presence of the sin nature in His DNA.
26. What follows is the sub-final conjunction ἵνα (hína) which introduces a condition which, if ratified, will produce a purpose and a result.
27. The one that ratifies is indicated by the singular adjective πᾶς (pás), translated "every," plus the singular pronoun ὁ (ho), translated "one." Together they may be expressed as "whoever." This signifies the party of the second part, in this case, Nicodemus.
28. The condition is the present active participle of the verb πιστεύω (pisteúō). This is a transitive verb which demands an object which is "His uniquely-born Son."
29. Faith alone in Christ alone is the necessary condition for the purpose and result to be realized.
30. The purpose of believing in Christ is deliverance from the lake of fire. This is the ultimate consequence of rejecting the love of God expressed in the gift of His uniquely-born Son.

31. If Nicodemus chooses not to believe, then his soul will be transferred to the Torments division of Hades at his physical death and later transferred to the lake of fire following the close of human history.
32. Should he choose to believe, then he would realize the purpose of that faith: he “shall not perish.” The word is *ἀπόλλυμι (apóllumi)* and it refers to eternal death. The negative conjunction *μή (mḗ)* negates this death.
33. Next is the result of having the prospect of eternal death not-prosessed; the imputation of *ζωή αἰώνιος (zōḗ aiōnios)*, eternal life.
34. From this verse it may be clearly discerned that ratification must precede salvation. God ratifies the treaty by removing three of the barriers with redemption, expiation, and propitiation.
35. Man ratifies the treaty by faith in Christ which results in regeneration, the imputation of divine righteousness and resultant justification, and the baptism of the Holy Spirit (position in Christ).
36. As Nicodemus came to realize, salvation is simple to comprehend and easy to appropriate. Jesus, Who is perfect, agreed to receive punishment for our sins so that the integrity of God would not be compromised by allowing us into His kingdom.
37. The expression of personal faith in Christ is all that is required to activate our redeemed status by walking out of the slave market of sin and into the freedom provided by imputation and justification.

V. Justification:

1. Justification may be summarized as follows:
 - (1) Justification is a third doctrine of our study that needs to be defined, the others being propitiation and reconciliation.
 - (2) Justification is a legal act by the integrity of God which occurs when an individual expresses faith in Christ.
 - (3) This results in justification which means that God pronounces the believer justified: “to treat as righteous and worthy of salvation.”¹
 - (4) This is technically a forensic justification which means it is a decision made by a court of justice, namely, the Supreme Court of Heaven.
 - (5) Justice executes what righteousness demands which is to impute God’s righteousness to the believer.
 - (6) This results in the vindication of the believer by the justice of God. Vindication means “to set free from allegation or blame.”
 - (7) Vindication also “may refer to persons that have been subjected to imputation of guilt and implies a clearing effected by proving the unfairness of such blame.”²

¹ Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary, 11th ed., s.v. “justify.”

² Ibid., s.vv. “vindicate,” “exculpate.”

- (8) The blame was fairly placed at the moment of physical birth when the individual was condemned due to the judicial imputation of Adam's original sin.