THE QUESTION

What did the early Christians believe about justification?

Asked by a THF member on May 22, 2026 · published November 9, 2026 · 12 numbered quotations · the 39 early Christian passages and 263 Bible verses we kept are listed at the back, each with a link.

Read it online: thehistoricfaith.com/early-church-questions/what-did-the-early-christians-believe-about-justification

The short answer *From the text: says what the passages say*

Early Christian writers taught that God justifies people by faith and by his grace, not by their own wisdom, holiness or works of the law. They pointed to Abraham as the pattern and to Christ's righteousness as what covers sin. Yet this faith was expected to obey, love and do good.

LIBRARY ONLY	This study was written only from The Historic Faith's library of early-Christian writings and the Bible, never from the web. Every passage we kept from what the library gave is listed at the back, with a link to read it.
HOW IT WAS MADE	Compiled by machine learning from The Historic Faith's library of early-Christian writings and the Bible only. Every quotation was matched word for word against our stored text. Not yet reviewed by The Historic Faith.
SHARING WITH AN AI?	Every quotation here comes from The Historic Faith's library. If you paste this study into an AI, anything it adds beyond these pages comes from that AI, not from us.

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POINT 1 OF 8

We are not justified by ourselves

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Clement of Rome lists the things people might trust in, such as wisdom, godliness and holy works, and says none of them justify us. He says God justifies by faith, and that he has done so for all his people from the beginning.

1 "And we, too, being called by His will in Christ Jesus, are not justified by ourselves, nor by our own wisdom, or understanding, or godliness, or works we have accomplished in holiness of heart; but by that faith through which, from the beginning, Almighty God has justified all people; to whom be glory forever and ever."

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Clement of Rome,** *First Epistle to the Corinthians* **Source 35, page 8** **Read it in the library ›**
THF's updated English

POINT 2 OF 8

Abraham shows how faith justifies

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Irenaeus says faith toward God is what justifies a person, and he points to Abraham. Clement of Alexandria says the same of Abraham in plain words. Both treat Abraham's trust in God as the model for believers.

2 "This is why it was counted to him by the Lord as righteousness. For faith towards God justifies a man; that is why Abraham said, "I will stretch forth my hand to the most high God, who made the heaven and the earth.""

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Irenaeus,** *Against Heresies: Book IV* (c. 175–202 AD) **Source 12, page 7** **Read it in the library ›**
THF's updated English

3 "But Abraham was not justified by works, but by faith."

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Clement of Alexandria,** *Stromata* 1.7 (c. 190–215 AD) **Source 16, page 7** **Read it in the library ›**
THF's updated English

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POINT 3 OF 8

Abraham was justified before circumcision

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Irenaeus notes that Abraham was justified by faith while still uncircumcised. For him this shows that the same faith joins believers from both covenants, Jews and Gentiles alike, as children of Abraham.

4 “This man received the covenant of circumcision after being justified by faith while he was still uncircumcised, so that he could represent both covenants.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Irenaeus,** *Against Heresies: Book IV* (c. 175–202 AD)
THF's updated English

Source 10, page 7 Read it in the library ›

POINT 4 OF 8

Faith brings liberty, not servitude to the law

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Tertullian, reading Paul, says people are now justified by the freedom of faith rather than by bondage to the law. He adds that the faith is still in the same God who gave the law.

5 “It was so that from then on man might be justified by the liberty of faith, not by servitude to the law, because "the just shall live by his faith,"”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Tertullian,** *Against Marcion* 40 (c. 196–220 AD)
THF's updated English

Source 22, page 7 Read it in the library ›

POINT 5 OF 8

Christ's righteousness covers the ungodly

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

The Epistle to Diognetus says people learned they could not reach life by their own works. God then gave his Son, and only his righteousness could cover sin. The writer calls this a sweet exchange.

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6 “For what else could cover our sins but His righteousness? By whom else could we, the wicked and ungodly, be justified, but by the only Son of God?”

later in the same passage

“This was so that, realizing in that time our unworthiness of attaining life through our own works, it would now, through the kindness of God, be granted to us; and having shown that we were unable on our own to enter the kingdom of God, we might through the power of God be made able.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Mathetes,** *Epistle to Diognetus* (c. 80–200 AD) **Source 2, page 6** **Read it in the library ›**
THF's updated English

POINT 6 OF 8

Grace is the source of salvation

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Methodius repeats Paul's words that we are saved by grace and not of works, so that no one can boast. Clement of Alexandria calls faith itself grace, a gift rather than something people produce.

7 “Since grace and truth certainly came by Jesus Christ, as John 1:17 says, and since by grace we are saved, according to the apostle's word, "and that not of yourselves, nor of works, lest any man should boast," in Ephesians 2:8-9, by the will of God the Word was made flesh and was found in form as a man, as Philippians 2:7 says.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Methodius,** *Concerning Free Will* 1 (c. 270–311 AD) **Source 32, page 8** **Read it in the library ›**
THF's updated English

8 “For the teaching of godliness is a gift, but faith is grace.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Clement of Alexandria,** *Stromata* 1.7 (c. 190–215 AD) **Source 16, page 7** **Read it in the library ›**
THF's updated English

POINT 7 OF 8

Justifying faith obeys God

Our note · compiled by machine learning · Interpretation: our reading of the passages, not their words

Clement of Rome says Abraham practiced righteousness through faith and was found faithful because he obeyed. In his reading, faith and obedience go together rather than being set against each other.

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9 “Why was our father Abraham blessed? Was it not because he practiced righteousness and truth through faith?”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Clement of Rome,** *First Epistle to the Corinthians* **Source 38, page 8** **Read it in the library ›**
THF's updated English

10 “Abraham, known as "the friend," was found faithful because he obeyed the words of God.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Clement of Rome,** *First Epistle to the Corinthians* **Source 36, page 8** **Read it in the library ›**
THF's updated English

POINT 8 OF 8

Forgiveness is linked with baptism and love

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Cyprian says each person's sins are forgiven in baptism. Clement of Rome links forgiveness with keeping God's commands in love. These writers join forgiveness to entering and living the Christian life.

11 “Since in baptism each person has his own sins forgiven, the Lord proves and declares in His Gospel that sins can be taken away only by those who have the Holy Spirit.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Cyprian,** *Epistles* (c. 248–258 AD) **Source 27, page 8** **Read it in the library ›**
THF's updated English

12 “Blessed are we, beloved, if we keep the commandments of God in the harmony of love so that through love our sins may be forgiven us.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Clement of Rome,** *First Epistle to the Corinthians* **Source 37, page 8** **Read it in the library ›**
THF's updated English

THE LIMITS

What these passages don’t tell us

- These passages do not give a step-by-step definition of justification.
- They do not settle later debates about whether righteousness is only counted to us or also made ours.
- None of these passages explains James 2 directly.

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- A word-for-word match shows that a quotation really is in our text. It does not show that our reading of it is right, or who wrote each work.

WHERE EVERY QUOTE CAME FROM

The Sources

The 39 early Christian passages and 263 Bible verses we kept for this question (repeats and weak or off-topic search hits were left out): early Christian passages first (sources 1–39, grouped by writer, earliest first), then Bible verses in The Faith Once Delivered Bible (sources 40–157, in Bible order), then 145 more verses THF links to these passages, by reference. **Quote 1, page 2** beside a source shows where the study quotes it. Passages are in THF's updated English unless marked "1885 English" (the Roberts–Donaldson translation, public domain). "… [continues online]" marks a passage the library gave only in part. **On paper?** At **thehistoricfaith.com**, Bible verses are in the **Audio Bible** and early Christian writings in the **Library** (search for the title).

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITERS *39 passages from 16 writers*

Barnabas, *c. 70–132 AD · source 1*

1 *Epistle of Barnabas* (1885 English; on point 2) "then, says He to Abraham? "Because thou hast believed, it is imputed to thee for righteousness: behold, I have made thee the father of those nations who believe in the… [continues online] **read ›**

Mathetes, *c. 80–200 AD · source 2*

2 *Epistle to Diognetus* **Quote 6, page 4** "sweet exchange! O unsearchable operation! O benefits surpassing all expectation… [continues online] **read ›**

Hermas, *c. 90–150 AD · source 3*

3 *Shepherd* (1885 English; on point 8) heard, sir, some teachers maintain that there is no other repentance than that which takes place, when we descended into the water and received remission of our former sins… [continues online] **read ›**

Ignatius of Antioch, *c. 98–117 AD · sources 4–6*

4 *Epistles of Ignatius* (1885 English; on point 4) be ye steadfast, "for the just shall live by faith;" be ye… [continues online] **read ›**

5 *Epistle of Ignatius to the Ephesians* (on point 7) "as faith cannot do the works of unbelief, nor unbelief the works of faith… [continues online] **read ›**

6 *Epistle of Ignatius to the Ephesians* (on point 7) "as faith cannot do the works of unbelief, nor unbelief the works of faith… [continues online] **read ›**

Polycarp, *c. 100–155 AD · source 7*

7 *Epistle to the Philippians* (1885 English; on point 6) which joy many desire to enter, knowing that "by grace ye are saved, not of works… [continues online] **read ›**

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Justin Martyr, *c. 130–165 AD · sources 8–9*

8 *Dialogue with Trypho* (on point 3) “the law, after many generations, that those who lived between the times of Abraham and Moses be justified by circumcision, and those after Moses be justified by both circumcision and… [continues online] **read ›**

9 *Dialogue with Trypho* (1885 English; on point 7) “indeed, you repent of your sins, and recognise Him to be Christ, and observe His commandments, then you may assert this… [continues online] **read ›**

Irenaeus, *c. 175–202 AD · sources 10–14*

10 *Against Heresies: Book IV* **Quote 4, page 3** God raised from the stones, and placed beside him who was made the leader and forerunner of our faith. This man received the covenant of circumcision after being justified by… [continues online] **read ›**

11 *Against Heresies: Book IV* (on point 2) “taught when he says in the Epistle to the Galatians: “So, the one who gives you the Spirit and works miracles among you, does he do it by the works… [continues online] **read ›**

12 *Against Heresies: Book IV* (1885 English) **Quote 2, page 2** “it was accounted to him by the Lord for righteousness… [continues online] **read ›**

13 *Against Heresies: Book II* place simply because they are souls, as being of the same nature with it, then it follows that faith is entirely unnecessary, as would also be the descent of the… [continues online] **read ›**

14 *Against Heresies: Book IV* (1885 English; on point 2) “believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness.” In the first place, [he believed] that He was the maker of heaven and earth, the only God… [continues online] **read ›**

Clement of Alexandria, *c. 190–215 AD · sources 15–21*

15 *Instructor* 1.6 (on point 8) human faith and divine grace, our transgressions being taken away by one Paeonian medicine, the baptism of the Word. We are washed from all our sins and are no longer… [continues online] **read ›**

16 *Stromata* 1.7 **Quotes 3, 8, pages 2, 4** “Abraham was not justified by works, but by faith… [continues online] **read ›**

17 *Stromata* 2.6 (on point 2) “this husband, who is the Word, formerly desolate of the bridegroom. Now "the just shall live by faith," which is according to the covenant and the commandments, since these, which… [continues online] **read ›**

18 *Stromata* 5.1 the end, the agreement and harmony of both forms of faith lead to one goal: salvation. We have the apostle as a sure witness: "For I desire to see you… [continues online] **read ›**

19 *Stromata* 5.1 (on point 2) “to Abraham, on believing, righteousness was reckoned… [continues online] **read ›**

20 *Fragments* 1 (1885 English; on point 7) “is, the spirit which is by faith, which supervenes through the practice of righteousness… [continues online] **read ›**

21 *Stromata* 4.6 is torn away. But in losing it, he will find it, according to the obedience that lives again to faith, but dies to sin. This, then, is what it means… [continues online] **read ›**

Tertullian, *c. 196–220 AD · sources 22–23*

22 *Against Marcion* 40 **Quote 5, page 3** “together against the Lord and against His Christ. It was so that from then on man might be justified by the liberty of faith, not by servitude to the law… [continues online] **read ›**

23 *Against Marcion* 40 (1885 English; on point 4) “the rest, the apostle must (be permitted to) go on with his own statement, wherein he says that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but… [continues online] **read ›**

Origen, *c. 215–254 AD · sources 24–25*

24 *Commentary on John* 6 (on point 8) repentance,” teaching that the benefit of baptism is connected with the intention of the person baptized. To him who repents it is salutary, but to him who comes to it… [continues online] **read ›**

25 *Commentary on Matthew* 10 (1885 English) “If any one be perfect in righteousness, and in the rest of virtues, and the righteousness and the rest of the virtues that are from You be wanting to him… [continues online] **read ›**

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Cyprian, *c. 248–258 AD · sources 26–28*

26 *Treatises* (1885 English; on point 8) “because in baptism remission of sins is granted once for all, constant and ceaseless labour, following the likeness of baptism, once again bestows the mercy of God… [continues online] **read ›**

27 *Epistles* **Quote 11, page 5** “Since in baptism each person has his own sins forgiven, the Lord proves and declares in His Gospel that sins can be taken away only by those who have the… [continues online] **read ›**

28 *Epistles* (on point 8) Holy Spirit not also be poured out on that temple? For the one who has been sanctified, with his sins taken away in baptism, and has been spiritually remade into… [continues online] **read ›**

Apostolic Constitutions, *c. 250–380 AD · source 29*

29 *Apostolic Constitutions* “again, "By acts of righteousness and faith iniquities are purged… [continues online] **read ›**

Archelaus, *c. 270–300 AD · source 30*

30 *Disputation with Manes* 1 “and many are still perishing. I mean those who have not chosen to give themselves to works of righteousness. But only those who have received Him, and who still receive… [continues online] **read ›**

Methodius, *c. 270–311 AD · sources 31–33*

31 *Oration Concerning Simeon and Anna* 1 (on point 6) sanction, as it were, of so many and such great blessings might make the justifying gifts of grace sure and unquestionable rights for those who have obtained mercy. And this… [continues online] **read ›**

32 *Concerning Free Will* 1 (1885 English) **Quote 7, page 4** “certainly grace and truth came by Jesus Christ, John 1:17 whence also by grace we are saved, according to that word of the apostle, and that not of yourselves… [continues online] **read ›**

33 *Fragments* 1 (1885 English; on point 6) “certainly grace and truth came by Jesus Christ, John 1:17 whence also by grace we are saved, according to that word of the apostle, and that not of yourselves… [continues online] **read ›**

Anonymous · *source 34*

34 *Treatise on Re-Baptism* 1 (1885 English) “this remission of sins that woman also which was a sinner in the city obtained, to whom the Lord said, Your sins are forgiven you… [continues online] **read ›**

Clement of Rome · *sources 35–39*

35 *First Epistle to the Corinthians* **Quote 1, page 2** “by that faith through which, from the beginning, Almighty… [continues online] **read ›**

36 *First Epistle to the Corinthians* (1885 English) **Quote 10, page 5** “shall thy seed be. And Abram believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness.” On account of his faith and hospitality, a son was given him in his… [continues online] **read ›**

37 *First Epistle to the Corinthians* (1885 English) **Quote 12, page 5** “is the man whose sin the Lord will not impute to him, and in whose mouth there is no guile.” This blessedness cometh upon those who have been chosen by… [continues online] **read ›**

38 *First Epistle to the Corinthians* (1885 English) **Quote 9, page 5** “it not because he wrought righteousness and truth through faith… [continues online] **read ›**

39 *First Epistle to the Corinthians* (1885 English; on point 7) shall we do, then, brethren? Shall we become slothful in well-doing, and cease from the practice of… [continues online] **read ›**

THE BIBLE *118 verses, The Faith Once Delivered Bible (Old Testament from the Septuagint), in Bible order*

40 **Genesis 6:8** But Noah found grace before the Lord God. **read ›**

41 **Genesis 15:6** Abram believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness. **read ›**

42 **Genesis 30:33** And my righteousness shall answer for me tomorrow, for that is my wages before you: every one among the goats that is not spotted and white-marked, and every one among the lambs that is not gray, shall be stolen property in my possession.” **read ›**

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43 **Leviticus 5:13** And the priest shall make atonement for him for his sin which he has sinned in any one of these things, and it shall be forgiven him. What is left shall belong to the priest, like the sacrifice of fine flour.'" **read ›**

44 **Leviticus 5:16** What he has sinned in the holy things he shall repay, and he shall add the fifth part to it and give it to the priest; and the priest shall make atonement for him with the ram of the guilt offering, and it shall be forgiven him. **read ›**

45 **Leviticus 19:22** The priest shall make atonement for him with the ram of the guilt offering before the Lord for the sin that he sinned, and the sin that he sinned shall be forgiven him. **read ›**

46 **Numbers 5:31** then the man shall be free from sin, and that woman shall bear her sin." **read ›**

47 **Numbers 14:18** 'The Lord is long-suffering, great in mercy, and true, taking away lawlessness and unrighteousness and sins; yet he will by no means acquit the guilty, repaying the sins of fathers upon children to the third and fourth generation.' **read ›**

48 **Numbers 28:30** for a sin offering, to make atonement for you, besides the continual whole burnt offering; and **read ›**

49 **Deuteronomy 32:4** God—true are his works, and all his ways are judgment; God is faithful, and there is no unrighteousness; righteous and holy is the Lord. **read ›**

50 **2 Samuel 22:21** The Lord repaid me according to my righteousness; according to the cleanness of my hands he repaid me. **read ›**

51 **Psalms 106:31** And it was counted to him for righteousness for generation after generation, forever. (Septuagint Psalm 105:31 (Psalm 106:31 in most Bibles)) **read ›**

52 **Ecclesiastes 1:2** "Vanity of vanities," said the Preacher, "vanity of vanities; all is vanity." **read ›**

53 **Song of Solomon 3:5** I have charged you, O daughters of Jerusalem, by the powers and by the strengths of the field, that you not stir up or awaken love until it pleases. **read ›**

54 **Isaiah 13:3** I am giving command, and I bring them; giants are coming to fulfill my wrath, rejoicing and insulting together. **read ›**

55 **Isaiah 15:3** Wrap yourselves in sackcloth in her squares, and lament on her rooftops and in her lanes; all of you, wail with weeping. **read ›**

56 **Jeremiah 1:5** Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you; and before you came out of the womb, I sanctified you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations. **read ›**

57 **Jeremiah 10:5** they will set them up, and they will not move; it is carved silver, they will not walk; **read ›**

58 **Jeremiah 10:7** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

59 **Jeremiah 17:21** Thus says the Lord: Guard your souls, and do not carry burdens on the Sabbath day, and do not go out through the gates of Jerusalem; **read ›**

60 **Jeremiah 31:1** At that time, said the Lord, I will be God to the family of Israel, and they shall be my people. (Septuagint Jeremiah 38:1 (Jeremiah 31:1 in most Bibles)) **read ›**

61 **Jeremiah 31:2** Thus said the Lord: I found him warm in the wilderness with those who had perished by the sword. Go, and do not destroy Israel. (Septuagint Jeremiah 38:2 (Jeremiah 31:2 in most Bibles)) **read ›**

62 **Jeremiah 32:4** and Zedekiah shall by no means be delivered out of the hand of the Chaldeans, for he shall surely be handed over into the hands of the king of Babylon, and his mouth shall speak with his mouth, and his eyes shall see his eyes; (Septuagint Jeremiah 39:4 (Jeremiah 32:4 in most Bibles)) **read ›**

63 **Jeremiah 50:3** For a nation has come up against her from the north; it will make her land a desolation, and there will be no one dwelling in it, from man to beast. (Septuagint Jeremiah 27:3 (Jeremiah 50:3 in most Bibles)) **read ›**

64 **Lamentations 1:7** Zain. Jerusalem remembered the days of her humiliation and of her rejection, all her desirable things that were from days of old, when her people fell into the hand of the oppressor, and there was none to help her; her enemies saw it and laughed at her dwelling. **read ›**

65 **Ezekiel 22:3** and you shall say: Thus says the Lord God: O city that sheds blood in her midst, so that her time may come, and that makes inventions against herself, to defile herself! **read ›**

66 **Ezekiel 29:14** and I will turn back the captivity of the Egyptians, and I will settle them in the land of Pathros, in the land from which they were taken; and it shall be a lowly kingdom, **read ›**

67 **Ezekiel 35:7** And I will make Mount Seir a desolation and a waste, and I will destroy men and cattle from it, **read ›**

68 **Ezekiel 36:18** And I poured out my wrath on them, **read ›**

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69 **Daniel 11:5** And the king of the south shall grow strong; and one of their rulers shall grow strong against him and shall rule with great dominion. **read ›**

70 **Daniel 11:18** And he shall turn his face to the islands and capture many, and he shall make rulers cease from their taunts; but his own taunts shall return upon him. **read ›**

71 **Daniel 12:5** And I, Daniel, looked, and behold, two others were standing, one on this side of the bank of the river and one on that side of the bank of the river. **read ›**

72 **Amos 1:15** and its kings shall go into captivity, their priests and their rulers together, says the Lord. **read ›**

73 **Amos 2:12** But you gave the consecrated ones wine to drink, and you commanded the prophets, saying, “You shall certainly not prophesy.” **read ›**

74 **Amos 3:9** Proclaim it to the regions among the Assyrians, and to the regions of Egypt, and say, “Gather yourselves on the mountain of Samaria, and see the many marvels in her midst, and the oppression that is in her.” **read ›**

75 **Amos 3:10** And she did not know what would come against her, says the Lord—those who store up unrighteousness and misery in their regions. **read ›**

76 **Amos 5:5** But do not seek Bethel, and do not go into Gilgal, and do not cross over to the Well of the Oath; for Gilgal shall surely go into captivity, and Bethel shall be as though it were not. **read ›**

77 **Malachi 2:4** And you will know that I have sent this commandment to you, that my covenant might be with the Levites, says the Lord Almighty. **read ›**

78 **1 Esdras 1:23** And the works of Josiah were upright before his Lord, with a heart full of godliness. **read ›**

79 **Tobit 12:9** For alms delivers from death, and it will purge away every sin. Those who do acts of alms and righteous deeds will be filled with life; **read ›**

80 **Wisdom of Solomon 1:15** For righteousness is immortal. **read ›**

81 **Wisdom of Solomon 2:12** Let us lie in wait for the righteous man, because he is troublesome to us and opposes our works; he blames us for sins against the law, and charges us with sins against our discipline. **read ›**

82 **Wisdom of Solomon 3:9** Those who trust in him will understand truth, and the faithful will stay with him in love, for grace and mercy are for his chosen ones. **read ›**

83 **Wisdom of Solomon 3:10** But the ungodly will be punished as they reasoned, those who neglected the righteous and turned away from the Lord. **read ›**

84 **Wisdom of Solomon 4:16** The righteous man who has died will condemn the ungodly who are living, and youth quickly made perfect will condemn the many years of the unrighteous man’s old age. **read ›**

85 **Wisdom of Solomon 5:5** How has he been counted among the sons of God, and how is his lot among the holy ones? **read ›**

86 **Wisdom of Solomon 12:15** But being righteous, you govern all things righteously, deeming it foreign to your power to condemn one who does not deserve to be punished. **read ›**

87 **Wisdom of Solomon 14:7** For blessed is the wood through which righteousness comes. **read ›**

88 **Wisdom of Solomon 14:9** For equally hateful to God are the ungodly man and his ungodliness. **read ›**

89 **Wisdom of Sirach 3:30** Water will quench a blazing fire, and an act of mercy will make atonement for sins. **read ›**

90 **Wisdom of Sirach 5:5** Do not be so fearless about atonement as to add sin upon sins. **read ›**

91 **Wisdom of Sirach 16:14** He will make room for every act of mercy; each one will find according to his works. **read ›**

92 **Wisdom of Sirach 18:2** The Lord alone will be justified. **read ›**

93 **Wisdom of Sirach 21:1** My child, have you sinned? Do not do so again, and pray concerning your former sins. **read ›**

94 **Wisdom of Sirach 27:8** If you pursue what is right, you will obtain it, and put it on like a full-length robe of glory. **read ›**

95 **Wisdom of Sirach 37:21** for grace was not given him from the Lord, because he was deprived of all wisdom. **read ›**

96 **Wisdom of Sirach 38:10** Put away trespass, and direct your hands rightly, and cleanse your heart from all sin. **read ›**

97 **Wisdom of Sirach 42:2** of the law of the Most High and of the covenant, and of judgment, to justify the ungodly; **read ›**

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98 **Wisdom of Sirach 46:15** By his faithfulness he was proved a prophet, and by his faithfulness he was known to be faithful in vision. **read ›**

99 **Baruch 1:17** because we have sinned before the Lord, **read ›**

100 **Baruch 5:2** Put on the double cloak of the righteousness that comes from God; set on your head the miter of the glory of the Everlasting. **read ›**

101 **1 Maccabees 2:52** Was not Abraham found faithful in trial, and it was counted to him for righteousness? **read ›**

102 **2 Maccabees 1:2** May God do good to you, and may he remember his covenant with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, his faithful slaves. **read ›**

103 **2 Maccabees 12:42** and they turned to pleading, asking that the sin that had been committed might be wholly blotted out. And the noble Judas urged the multitude to keep themselves free from sin, since they had seen with their own eyes what had happened because of the sin of those who had fallen. **read ›**

104 **3 Maccabees 3:5** Yet by adorning their manner of life with the good conduct of the righteous, they had won a good name among all people. **read ›**

105 **4 Maccabees 13:3** but as it is, it is not so; rather, by the reason that is praised, they prevailed over the passions. **read ›**

106 **4 Maccabees 15:3** loved more the godliness that saves to eternal life according to God. **read ›**

107 **1 Enoch 1:7** The earth shall be split apart, torn by a crack, and all that is on the earth shall perish, and there shall be judgment upon all. **read ›**

108 **1 Enoch 22:10** And so this one was created for sinners, when they die and are buried in the earth and judgment has not come upon them in their lifetime. **read ›**

109 **1 Enoch 39:6** And in that place my eyes saw the Elect One of righteousness and of faith; and righteousness shall prevail in his days, and the righteous and chosen shall be without number before him forever and ever. **read ›**

110 **1 Enoch 39:7** And I saw his dwelling place under the wings of the Lord of Spirits. And all the righteous and chosen before him shall be strong as fiery lights, and their mouth shall be full of blessing, and their lips shall exalt the name of the Lord of Spirits, and righteousness before him shall never fail, and uprightness shall never fail before him. **read ›**

111 **1 Enoch 50:4** And he is righteous also in his judgment, and in the presence of his glory unrighteousness also shall not maintain itself; at his judgment the unrepentant shall perish before him. **read ›**

112 **1 Enoch 61:4** The chosen ones shall begin to dwell with the chosen ones, and those are the measures which shall be given to faith and which shall strengthen righteousness. **read ›**

113 **1 Enoch 63:8** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

114 **1 Enoch 92:3** The righteous one shall arise from sleep, shall arise and walk in the paths of righteousness, and all his path and conduct shall be in eternal goodness and grace. **read ›**

115 **1 Enoch 92:4** He will be gracious to the righteous and give him eternal uprightness, and he will give him power, so that he shall be endowed with goodness and righteousness, and he shall walk in eternal light. **read ›**

116 **Matthew 3:6** They were baptized by him in the Jordan, confessing their sins. **read ›**

117 **Mark 1:4** John came baptizing in the wilderness and preaching the baptism of repentance for forgiveness of sins. **read ›**

118 **Luke 3:3** He came into all the region around the Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for remission of sins, **read ›**

119 **Luke 4:7** If you therefore will worship before me, it will all be yours.” **read ›**

120 **Acts 1:16** “Brothers, this Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit spoke beforehand through the mouth of David concerning Judas, who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus. **read ›**

121 **Acts 2:38** Peter said to them, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. **read ›**

122 **Acts 5:23** “We found the prison shut and locked, and the guards standing before the doors, but when we opened them, we found no one inside!” **read ›**

123 **Acts 11:5** “I was praying in the city of Joppa, and in a trance I saw a vision: something like a great sheet descending, lowered from heaven by its four corners. It came down to me. **read ›**

124 **Acts 26:10** I also did this in Jerusalem. I both shut up many of the saints in prisons, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death I gave my vote against them. **read ›**

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125 **Romans 1:17** For in it God's righteousness is revealed from faithfulness to faithfulness. As it is written: But the righteous will live by faithfulness. **read ›**

126 **Romans 3:5** But if our unrighteousness commends the righteousness of God, what will we say? Is God unrighteous who inflicts wrath? I speak like men do. **read ›**

127 **Romans 3:11** there is none who understands; there is none who seeks God. **read ›**

128 **Romans 3:21** But now apart from the law, a righteousness of God has been revealed, being attested by the law and the prophets; **read ›**

129 **Romans 3:22** even the righteousness of God through the faithfulness of Jesus Christ, to all and upon all who believe. For there is no distinction, **read ›**

130 **Romans 3:24** being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, **read ›**

131 **Romans 3:26** in God's forbearance; to demonstrate his righteousness at the present time, so that he is just and justifies the one on the basis of Jesus' faithfulness. **read ›**

132 **Romans 3:28** We maintain therefore that a man is justified by faith apart from the works of the law. **read ›**

133 **Romans 3:30** since indeed there is one God who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith. **read ›**

134 **Romans 4:3** For what does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness." **read ›**

135 **Romans 4:5** But to him who does not work, but believes in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness. **read ›**

136 **Romans 4:6** Even as David also pronounces blessing on the man to whom God counts righteousness apart from works: **read ›**

137 **Romans 4:7** "Blessed are those whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. **read ›**

138 **Romans 4:8** Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will certainly not count sin." **read ›**

139 **Romans 4:22** Therefore it was also counted to him for righteousness. **read ›**

140 **Romans 10:3** For being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God. **read ›**

141 **Romans 11:6** And if by grace, then it is no longer of works; otherwise grace is no longer grace. But if it is of works, it is no longer grace; otherwise work is no longer work. **read ›**

142 **Romans 12:1** Therefore I urge you, brothers, by the compassions of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God, which is your reasonable service. **read ›**

143 **1 Corinthians 1:17** For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel, not with wisdom of speech, so that the cross of Christ would not be emptied of its power. **read ›**

144 **1 Corinthians 5:2** And you are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, so that the one who did this deed might be removed from among you. **read ›**

145 **1 Corinthians 6:11** And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and in the Spirit of our God. **read ›**

146 **Galatians 2:16** yet knowing that a man is not justified by works of the law but through the faithfulness of Jesus Christ, even we believed in Christ Jesus, so that we might be justified by the faithfulness of Christ and not by works of the law, because no flesh will be justified by works of the law. **read ›**

147 **Galatians 3:6** So it was with Abraham: he believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness. **read ›**

148 **Galatians 3:11** Now it is evident that no one is justified by the law before God, for the righteous will live by faithfulness. **read ›**

149 **Ephesians 2:8** for by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, **read ›**

150 **Philippians 3:9** and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own, that which is from the law, but that which is through the faithfulness of Christ, the righteousness from God that rests on faith, **read ›**

151 **James 2:17** Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead in itself. **read ›**

152 **James 2:18** But someone will say, "You have faith, and I have works." Show me your faith by your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. **read ›**

153 **James 2:21** Was not Abraham our father justified by works, in that he offered up Isaac his son on the altar? **read ›**

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154 **James 2:22** Do you see that faithfulness was working with his works, and by works faithfulness was made perfect? **read ›**

155 **James 2:24** You see then that by works a man is justified, and not only by faith. **read ›**

156 **1 Peter 3:21** Baptism, which corresponds to this, now also saves us—not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but the appeal of a good conscience to God—through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, **read ›**

157 **1 John 1:9** If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. **read ›**

ALSO LINKED BY THF TO THESE PASSAGES *145 verses, by reference*

Partly machine-linked: related to the passages, not always quoted in them. Each reference links to the verse in our audio Bible.

Genesis 9:18

Exodus 32:34

Deuteronomy 32:10 · 32:23

Psalms 18:26 · 32:1

Jeremiah 5:8 · 6:16 · 9:23

Daniel 6:16

Matthew 4:9 · 5:8 · 5:10 · 5:16 · 5:19 · 5:20 · 6:25 · 9:2 · 9:22 · 9:29 · 10:32 · 10:39 · 13:12 · 13:35 · 13:58 · 14:31 · 15:13 · 17:19 · 17:20 · 19:17 · 22:29

Mark 2:10 · 6:5

Luke 1:79 · 2:29 · 3:4 · 7:37 · 7:48 · 7:50 · 8:45 · 10:19 · 10:21 · 14:11 · 17:5 · 17:6

John 1:3 · 1:12 · 1:17 · 1:18 · 1:26 · 3:8 · 3:9 · 3:36 · 4:9 · 4:14 · 6:40 · 7:17 · 12:25 · 19:34 · 20:28

Acts 2:24 · 13:48 · 16:3 · 17:3 · 17:30 · 19:2 · 20:24 · 21:23

Romans 1:11 · 2:14 · 2:15 · 3:20 · 3:25 · 4:11 · 5:6 · 5:8 · 5:18 · 8:5 · 8:17 · 9:5 · 9:12

1 Corinthians 1:8 · 1:19 · 1:20 · 3:12 · 3:13 · 4:13 · 9:20 · 9:22 · 10:4 · 12:11 · 12:13 · 13:2 · 13:8 · 13:11 · 13:12 · 14:20 · 15:32 · 15:56 · 16:13

2 Corinthians 3:6 · 3:7 · 5:21

Galatians 1:1 · 1:6 · 2:1 · 2:2 · 2:3 · 2:4 · 2:9 · 2:10 · 2:12 · 2:18 · 3:7 · 3:13 · 3:23 · 3:26 · 3:28 · 4:4 · 4:7 · 4:21

Ephesians 4:8 · 5:8 · 6:14

Philippians 1:4 · 1:5 · 2:3 · 3:18

Colossians 2:4

1 Timothy 1:18

2 Timothy 2:23 · 4:6

Titus 3:4

Hebrews 6:4 · 10:26 · 11:17 · 12:16

James 2:23

1 Peter 1:2 · 1:8 · 3:18

1 John 3:9 · 4:10

Jude 1:2 · 1:11

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Searched: Ante-Nicene Fathers volumes 1–9 and the Bible, including the Septuagint.

ABOUT THIS STUDY

A THF member asked “What did the early Christians believe about justification?” on May 22, 2026. The Historic Faith answered it as a public study on November 9, 2026.

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How to cite this study. The Historic Faith, “What did the early Christians believe about justification?” Early Church Questions, published November 9, 2026, https://thehistoricfaith.com/early-church-questions/what-did-the-early-christians-believe-about-justification. To cite one quotation, add its number and source, for example “quote 1, source 35.”

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