

a) Justification by Grace (as opposed to justification by works)

i) It implies that we should stop trying to be something we are not.

(1) We are not worthy of God's love

(2) We cannot possibly earn God's love

(3) We have no right to eternal life and can never earn that right. God owes us nothing beyond the grave.

ii) What we can never do, God has done for us through Jesus.

(1) God loves us just as we are.

(2) God accepts us just as we are.

(3) God is thus for those who cannot help themselves.

(4) Justification is about healing relationships not dealing with right or wrong, reward or punishment.

(5) God heals the broken relationship between Himself and humankind; this is God's gift to us (grace)

b) Justification by Grace through Faith

i) This proclaims, "God loves you already, trust Him"!

ii) This proclaims "You need not try to earn God's love or His salvation; trust in this Good News".

iii) Faith is the way we accept God's love and acknowledge His gift of Eternal Life. By faith here we mean trust not intellectual assent.

iv) Faith itself is a gift; we cannot make ourselves trust.

v) We can however put ourselves in situations in which it is more likely that trust will come

(1) Reflecting over and over again on demonstrations of God's love both for the world and us in particular

(2) Experiencing God's love in the life of the church.

(3) By listening to God and obeying His commands.

Bonhoeffer wrote that "Faith comes with obedience."