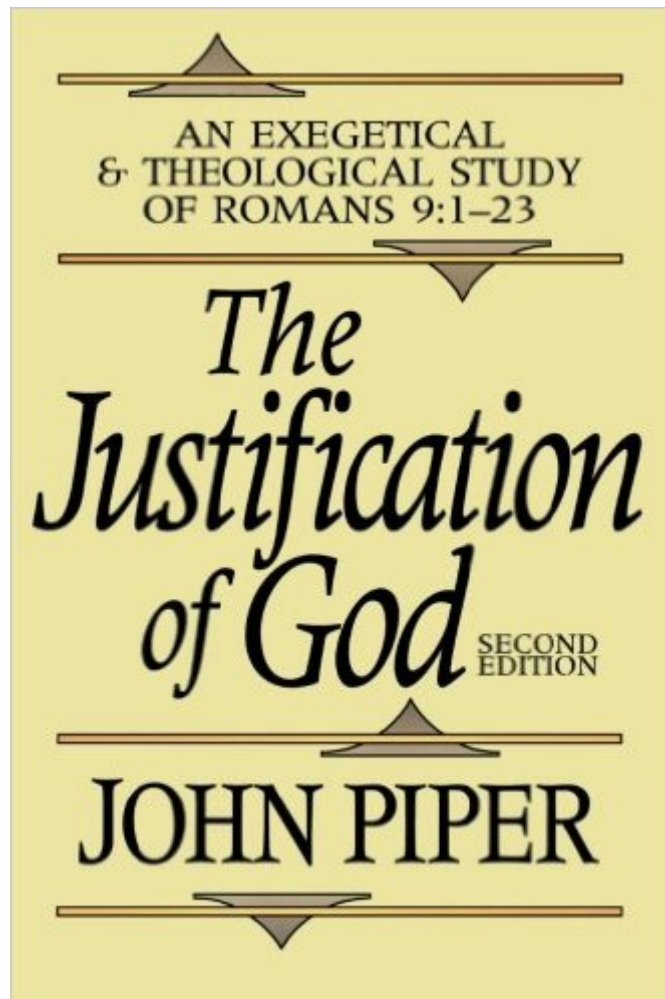


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The Justification Of God: An Exegetical And Theological Study Of Romans 9:1-23



Synopsis

John Piper presents a careful, reasoned study of the doctrine of election. He dissects Paul's argument to highlight the picture of God and his righteousness painted in Romans 9. Undergirded by his belief that the sovereignty of God is too precious a part of our faith to dismiss or approach weakkneed, Piper explores the Greek text and Paul's argument with singular deftness.

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Customer Reviews

This is THE book that convinced me of the Doctrines of Grace. I was an Arminian and very proud of it. I made it my personal challenge to refute the most revered works on election I could find. When I got to Piper's book I met my match. His exegesis was unbelievable. I fought him through the book but couldn't resist Piper's conclusions. As I moved through the book I saw my conceptions about God being shifted and at first I hated it. But as I saw Piper exposit the apostle's thought I saw the beauty in God's sovereignty and have loved Him more for it ever since. A hearty thanks to the modern day theologian who has done the most for my Christian walk.

Here is a side of Piper that I had not seen before. While most of his books are written for the average person, here he unleashes exegesis of the highest quality, with all of the meticulous care that difficult passages like Romans 9:1-23 deserve. By examining carefully the context, semantics, and Hebrew background of this passage, Piper rises to the challenge in his attempt to rescue it from broad surface interpretations that are theologically motivated by those who oppose the doctrines of

grace. Among modern theologians with great influence among common people, Piper is as good as they come. He is fair to the text and to his opponents as always. This work left me in awe of the magnificent glory of God in His sovereign dealings with man. Another masterpiece for John Piper!

John Piper and I were classmates at Wheaton College (class of '68). Once we graduated, our paths diverged considerably. Wheaton College strengthened John's faith, whereas I lost mine. John went on to study theology, and after teaching at Bethel College for six years, became the pastor of Bethlehem Baptist Church in Minneapolis. I earned a doctorate in philosophy from Johns Hopkins and became an assistant professor at the University of Nebraska. Though I did not believe the Gospel, I could not ignore it completely and remained fascinated by its claims. In the fall of 1978 a former student of mine, whom I had sought out, and I were discussing the doctrine of election (which was one of the stumbling blocks in the way of my returning to the faith) and were going over Romans 9. It was clear to me that Paul was defending unconditional election, a doctrine that I found particularly offensive. Eventually we came to verse 19, where Paul writes, "One of you will say to me, 'Then why does God still blame us, for who resists his will?'" My former student said to me, "Paul gives the right response to this question." I looked at the text of verse 20: "But who are you, O man, to talk back to God? Shall what is formed say to him who formed it, 'Why have you made me this way?'" I was about to respond when I was overwhelmed with the realization that this is exactly what I had been doing for nearly twelve years. I had been talking back to God. And I had been doing it despite the fact that I was a finite, sinful creature, and God is the eternal, omnipotent creator of the universe. That day I accepted the Gospel of God's gracious provision of salvation for his people. Five years after this Baker Book House published John Piper's "The Justification of God: An Exegetical and Theological Study of Romans 9:1-23." Shortly thereafter I read it and found his study to be an accurate and to-the-point interpretation of what Paul is saying. Not that I needed convincing, for I had already come to the same conclusions as had Piper. However, what I found valuable in his discussion, is that he lays out the case for God's sovereignty in election in a way that is both compelling and easy to understand. Moreover, he deals with the objections to unconditional election in a way that is forceful and yet fair to the objections themselves. I would highly recommend this book to anyone who wants to have a better understanding of the doctrine of salvation by grace through faith alone and in particular to those who have questions regarding the biblical idea of election.

For Calvinists who want to be Biblical (as all TRUE Calvinists do!) this book lays an excellent

FOUNDATION. It is a thorough and insightful study of Romans 9:1-23. No difficult questions are dodged. Dr. Piper carefully exegetes the text (be prepared for technicalities!) and develops from it a thoroughly robust doctrine of the righteousness of God, which he defines as God's unwavering commitment to uphold and display the glory of His name. This is the foundation of the doctrines of grace - even before the sovereignty of God comes the glory of God. To Arminian theology, this book is a FOE (though it might become a FRIEND to open-minded Arminians themselves!). Piper is kind to those he opposes and he fights for Biblical theology with fierce allegiance to the text and an eye to the glory of God. But he doesn't hold anything back. His arguments are like sharp double-edged swords beaten out in the fires of exegesis and honed on the anvil of meditation. No Arminian theologian has refuted it. Their swords just aren't strong enough or sharp enough. To Christian Hedonists, this book is a FEAST! It is different from Piper's more popular books like *Desiring God* and *The Pleasures of God*. It is not as easy to read. This book is strong meat. But oh is it nourishing! If you want to know about the theology that undergirds *Desiring God*, then this is the book to read.

In spite of the in depth greek analysis, I found this to be the best defense of Predestination from a scriptural standpoint. The book is tightly and coherently written, so that each point builds upon itself. It is comprehensive and the extra chapters on God's righteousness are very convincing and insightful. Piper's ability to analyze Paul's opponents are not only helpful, but extraordinary. The book has many insights that you will not find in an ordinary commentary on the subject. I cannot see how anyone who reads this book could not be convinced that Predestination is taught in the bible. With a religious world clamouring for scriptural support, this book is the answer to their dilemma. I'm on my second reading and my amazement of the depth and theological consistency of this book continues to grow. It is one of the greatest modern works by a Calvinist.

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