

Some thoughts on tentative justification since 1954 for Br. Leon Snyder

I have read all the references you have sent additionally to the ones sent before and I do not find any mention, either directly or impliedly, to tentative justification being granted to the Epiphany Camp for building up the Camp only for those who go on to full Consecration. I have divided my comments into four parts.

1) All the Epiphany references point out the fact that since 1954 both justification and consecration take place outside of the Court, in the Epiphany Camp, which is obvious. Not a word do they say about any change in the moment or stage tentative justification is granted, i.e. at one's consecration instead of after one's manifesting repentance and believing in Jesus. If it was really so, it would mean that after repenting and believing in Jesus nothing happens in one's life; that if such an individual does not consecrate, the two acts avail to nothing. In other words, it would mean that since 1954 there do not exist unconsecrated tentatively justified ones. However, they are often mentioned in our literature as one of the three classes existing in the unfinished Epiphany Camp, even in the references you have sent to me.

And what about the quasi-elect? If after 1954 tentative justification is granted only to those who do consecrate, meaning when they consecrate, are there any quasi-elect now? They are known to enjoy tentative justification. Do they or don't they? Or maybe they did before 1954 but don't after 1954?

But most importantly, what do we do with this very logical and powerful statement from a star member, in **E 4, 419**:

(17) Question: Is it correct to say that since Spirit begetting for the High Calling has ceased, the Youthful Worthies can obtain Tentative Justification by consecration only?

Answer: **Since Tentative Justification throughout the Gospel Age has been obtained at the time one has exercised faith in Jesus after exercising repentance toward God; and since we know of no Scripture that teaches a departure from this procedure in the case of any one**, we would be safe in holding to the Scripturally expressed thought relative to the process by which **all, including the Youthful Worthies**, receive Tentative Justification, i.e., the acceptance of Jesus as their Savior after exercising repentance toward God. However, the fact that they consecrate puts a seal on their Tentative Justification and as they prove faithful prevents their losing it as do those who fail to consecrate (Rom. 4: 11).

That directly concerns our problem: the time, the moment, or the stage tentative justification is obtained in the Gospel Age, the only difference being the class talked about, which does not change anything, however, as Bro. Johnson makes it very plain that it concerns **all**, adding he knew of no Scripture teaching a departure from the procedure of obtaining tentative justification at the time one exercises repentance and faith. Doesn't what you say militate against this interpretation by a star member? In his opinion, a change like that would require a Scripture to base it on.

This very question could now be repeated with reference to the CECs. What would a star member say in reply to it? Seeing that both classes in question (the YWs and CECs) stand related to the doctrine of justification exactly in the same way, both of them being non-Spirit begotten, his answer would most probably be the same. In other words, a claim like that cannot be baseless, just on someone's saying so. Baseless claims can only come by inspiration. When they do, we don't question their validity; we don't examine them by any axioms or harmony with previously given Truths because we know that such harmony does exist. We treat them as the base by which to test all the teachings given by God's servants as interpretations of the inspired Truth to see if what we are given really is the Truth as due, sent to us by God Himself.

Please note also a very late reference by Bro. Gohlke from PT 1981, 11, years after 1954:

We must keep in mind the basic truth that since the beginning of this Age whether or not one is (1) tentatively justified and (2) consecrated, is determined by whether or not he (1) is "truly repentant and believing," trusting in Jesus' merit for his salvation (Acts 4: 12; 16: 31), and (2) has given up his own will selfward and worldward and has accepted God's will as his own (Psa. 40: 8; Prov. 23: 26; Rom. 12: 1; Heb. 10: 7); it is not determined by where his standing is typed in the Tabernacle and Camp arrangement of Israel, for this varies according to dispensational changes. [So far the P '72, p. 70 quotation.]

Please note the correspondence between the two colors: being tentatively justified is tantamount to truly repenting and believing and being consecrated to giving up one's will and accepting that of God. And then he goes on to say that what matters is not where one's standing is shown (in the Holy, Court, or Camp) but what his heart attitude is in relation to God. I just can't see how it could be otherwise. It's so plain and coherent.

- 2) All the Parousia references to the effect that a full justification comes only at the stage of consecration are not relevant to this discussion as at that time there were two kinds of justification, tentative and vitalized, the full and complete one being the latter, with the Adamic sentence cancelled and such a consecrated believer being fully justified in the sight of God (justification on the third and seventh day, the latter in the reckoned or imputed Millennium). The non-Spirit begotten classes do not have the latter kind of justification at all, it coming to them only in the real seventh day, under the New Covenant. Accordingly, the fact of full (vitalized) justification becoming a reality for the Spirit-begotten classes only at consecration does not prove anything as to when tentative justification is granted to those who are not Spirit-begotten, they not obtaining a full justification in this life at all.
- 3) The way this teaching is being taught speaks against it, too. This new way of looking at tentative justification has not been published in the PT yet. It is exactly what Bro. Puzdrowski was trying to teach at the Poznań convention. He devoted one talk to it on the first day, with no one understanding what he was saying. The thinking ones noticed the departure from the teachings of Bro. Johnson and wanted to talk to him after the talk, but he said he didn't have the time. The non-thinking ones didn't notice any difference or any new approach, not understanding the difference between the ransom's application, imputation and reckoned imputation.

On the second day, there was a question meeting chaired by Bro. Woźnicki and he had some questions about this new idea from some brethren. However, he wouldn't answer them himself but asked Bro. Puzdrowski up on the podium during the question meeting for him to answer the questions. He did go up but didn't say anything logical; he just said it could be understood somehow and he would do it in the next talk devoted to that problem the next day. He did, but again no one understood what he was saying. The only thing the brethren did understand was that if anyone opposes the new teaching he or she is not consecrated at all.

This raises a very serious question. Why is a pilgrim teaching new things without them first being published in the *Present Truth*? Why is he teaching against a star member's teaching?

Whereas in E 4, 345 Bro. Johnson says that "(4) as concerns the things imputed, the former [tentative justification] has its faith actually, and Jesus' merit reckonedly (Rom. 3: 21-28; 4:3-8, 21-25; 10: 4), the latter [vitalized justification] its faith and Jesus' merit actually, imputed as righteousness (1 Cor. 1: 30; Gal. 2: 16-20; 3 : 22; Phil. 3: 9)

Bro. Puzdrowski from the convention platform says to this "NO, NO, NO.", adding that both Bros. Johnson and Jolly didn't understand it correctly because it was too early to be understood and they had other things on their minds. Isn't it revolutionistic in the first place to preach new things without them being announced in the PT first directly by the leader of the Lord's people at any given time, for the brethren to examine there?

I know only of one evangelist who is spreading the same ideas in his talks among Polish classes and when asked where he is taking such things from he replies he talked to Bro. Puzdrowski, who talked to Bro. Ralph Herzig, who told him to preach it to the brethren. Is this the way the Truth should be passed on to the brethren? Why the change? It is destroying the Lord's cause. We are losing the brethren, not to mention we are not encouraging any new ones to consecrate. If it was the result of our defending the Truth, I would have nothing to say against it, it being the normal course of events. However, when I see we are losing ground because some brethren are violating arrangements, practicing clericalism, undermining founding Truths by the star members, claiming at the same time everyone must be obedient to them because they are God's representatives to us, I cannot stand for it. I must and will stand up against it. This plague is spreading, having killed some already and all the time killing even more.

4) In the materials you have already sent to me and in some articles appearing in the PT a great emphasis is being laid on the Truth being progressive and on the need to adapt the teachings from the times of Parousia or Epiphany to the new conditions, which I heartily agree with. However, **the fact that we should expect the Truth to progress does not mean that just any Truth is that progression.** For a Truth to be part of one and the same shining path it must be in harmony with the seven axioms, with the voice of the one Shepherd we have had since the Gospel Age began and with the voices of the star members so far. If I said I was the 50th star member, would you accept it on the ground of "the path of the righteous shining more and more unto the perfect day" and the need to adapt the Truth to the changing conditions? I don't think so.

I examine things carefully and accept or reject them depending on whether they seem to come from my God or not, as plainly taught in **E 3, 313-314**; I need the Spirit of our magazines to be pervaded with the Spirit of Christ; I want the right not to accept anything that does not seem to me to come from Him without being anathemized from the convention platform by another "servant of God" that I am a sifter or not consecrated only because I demand proof; I hate clericalism (because Jesus does, too; Rev. 2:6) and those who stand for or defend it; I can't accept comparing the Lord's people to this world's armed forces, where grass root soldiers have to show absolute obedience to their superiors, who in turn have to be obedient to their superiors, it going on and on like that until the general, highest rank, is reached; it cannot be like that among us; that's not what I find in the Parousia and Epiphany teachings. Sad to say, all these phenomena are becoming increasingly lacking or present, as the case may be, in our Movement. Their having been with us for the past few years makes me think what's going on. So I am looking around, trying to read the different pieces of His providence and waiting for Him to show me what He wants me to do. We are living in suspension.

18 February 2013

Adam Urban