***The Doctrine of Justification  
RO27-01***

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Please turn in your Bibles to Romans 3:24-26. Our subject is "Justification by Faith." This is segment number three.

Verse 24 reads: "Being justified freely by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." After Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden of Eden, the whole human race was doomed to live forever in hell. Over the centuries, people were well aware of their alienation from God because of sin: sin that they were born with; sin that they had shared with in Adam; the nature of sin that was within them; and, their own personal acts of sin. Consequently, people tried different things over the centuries in order to be reconciled to God, but they never found a real solution. Religion after religion rose and fell, but nobody had the solution to be reconciled once more to the God from whom they had been alienated in the Garden of Eden.

As a matter of fact, as the centuries rolled by, it became quite evident that man was helpless to do anything about this problem at all. His finest efforts, and his most sincere efforts, were always doomed to failure. Man could not do anything to resolve this conflict between himself and the God who was there.

**Moral Guilt**

What man was in fact seeking was the removal of his moral guilt before God. That's called justification. Justification is a theological word. It's the Greek word, basically, "dikaios." It's the word that we translate sometimes as "righteous" or "righteousness." A related word is "justify" or "justification." They're all the same thing. They all mean declaring that a person never did a thing wrong. It declares that you do not have moral guilt. By moral guilt, we mean that you did not violate anything in the character or in the plan of God. When we violate that, then we are morally guilty. And what people were seeking was somehow to remove this fact of moral guilt that was upon them.

From the first, God made it clear that only He could solve the human disaster which had been caused by sin. Man must die spiritually to pay for his sins, but he's already spiritually dead, so he doesn't have the assets with which to pay. Man needs the absolute righteousness of God to enter heaven. But he's capable of producing only relative righteousness. He can never produce absolute righteousness. Man's finest good is produced by a nature which has been contaminated by sin – the old sin nature. Everything that flows out of us comes from the old sin nature. Consequently, everything is evil in God's sight. It's all contaminated.

So, the Bible says that the best of your human good is a filthy rag in the sight of God.

God declared, furthermore, that everybody is just plain under sin, and therefore, totally helpless to secure justification. Whatever doubt was left in anybody's mind that they had a problem, God, as the judge of the universe, made a declaration. He said, "I hereby proclaim everybody under sin." And with one blow, He wiped everyone out. Everyone was already wiped out, but that made it very definite and very clear.

So, the problem in time came into very, very sharp focus. There is a holy God who is out there; who is going to judge sin; and, who has prepared a place called the lake of fire for Satan and his angels and for all human beings who follow Satan; for all who are not born-again spiritually; and, for all who are not what the Bible calls "saved;" that is, those who do not possess absolute righteousness. The picture was very clear. There was no doubt as to what the problem was.

**Being Justified Freely by Grace**

That's a very gloomy picture. It's a very sad picture. But at this point enter stage center Romans 3:24, which we have been studying: "Being justified freely by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." Romans 3:24 comes into the picture like a burst of sunshine after a dark rainstorm. It's like the peace that follows pain. Here suddenly, God reveals that apart from the sinner's efforts, He has provided this justification that people have been seeking for centuries. God provides it as a free gift. That indeed was a fantastic, marvelous revelation to receive. This is the pinnacle of the expression of God's grace toward sinners. Because God's plan for justifying sinners had to be perfect (it couldn't miss), and God intended that He was going to solve this problem for mankind, and it was going to be a perfect solution, He saw to it that there was no human participation in it. You and I, as sinners, were not permitted to have anything whatsoever to do in providing this justification, in order that it would be perfect. God took no chances on letting any human element enter into the picture whatsoever.

**Salvation is Passive**

So, the word "being justified" here in Romans 3:24, we pointed out, is in the passive voice in the Greek grammar. Passive means that the person receives this action. He doesn't produce it actively. He simply passively receives it. That's a very important point. God does not permit people to participate in the matter of salvation. He only permits you to accept what He alone has produced.

**Unearned**

The word "freely" stresses the fact that the sinner in no way deserves, nor has he earned, this justification. The word "freely" does not mean that God has given it to us without any hesitation on His part. The word "freely" does not mean that it was given at no cost to God, because it did cost God a great deal. It cost His Son taking upon Himself the burden of all the sins of the world. This word "freely" means that the person who receives it didn't deserved, nor did he earn it. It was by means of God's grace. The word "grace" here stresses God's love as the motivation behind saving the undeserving and unlovable sinner. It is by means of God's grace that this was accomplished, just because he was kindly disposed of, and just because He was a loving God. It was not because we drew anything out of Him to bring this about. It was not because He needed to do this. It was not because He needed us in salvation in order to fulfill Himself in some way.

**Justification by Faith**

So, because there is no human contribution of any kind involved in justification, and there is no part that the sinner has played, this justification can never be reversed. You've talked a lot about justification by faith. You've heard it for a long time. But there are not many Christians who really understand what that means.

The first thing you must understand about it is that is a perfect plan because God alone produced it. You have not one thing to do with being saved. You have not one thing to do with being kept saved. No greater ignorance can be displayed on the part of a person than a person who suggests that you can be saved today, and then, if you don't behave yourself, you can be lost and headed for hell tomorrow. That is blasphemy. That is an insult to God, and it is the height of spiritual ignorance. It shows that you do not understand that God said, "I'm going to provide a justification that is absolutely perfect. Therefore, I will not let man have any part in it. I will produce it all. It's all going to be dependent upon Me – upon who and what I am." Now, that is a burst of sunshine after a thunderstorm.

**Redemption**

This gift of justification was made available by the redemption of sinners by Christ Jesus on the cross. Here is another great doctrine. You've talked about redemption. You've talked about "redeem." You and I stand here in church and we say, "Redeemed, oh how I love to proclaim it." Redemption means to deliver by paying a price. It is just like a person who goes to a pawn shop, and he redeems something that he has put in that pawn shop. By paying the price for that thing, he redeems it and gets it out.

The deliverance here was from the slave market of sin. So, redemption is directly related to the issue of personal slavery. The price of this deliverance from the slave market of sin was the death of Christ on the cross as the Lamb of God. So, here in verse 24, that we have touched upon, are two very monumental doctrines: the doctrine of justification; and, the doctrine of redemption.

Once a sinner trusts in Jesus Christ as his personal Savior, God pronounces him justified. That's what Paul is teaching here. Once you say, "I receive Christ as Savior," and once you believe in Him, that God in heaven, as judge of the universe, makes a statement of a verdict concerning you, and He says, "You are henceforth no longer morally guilty. You are now justified." God the Holy Spirit baptizes the believing sinner into Christ. 1 Corinthians 12:13 tells us that – that when you believe in Christ, the baptism of the Holy Spirit immediately takes place, and He puts you, by that act, into the body of Christ.

Those who are in Christ have the absolute righteousness of Jesus Christ credited to their account. It is because you and I have been baptized into Christ at the point of salvation that we have justification.

You can see what a travesty the whole charismatic movement (the whole Pentecostal movement), for example, is when they suggest that someplace along the line, you can receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit after you're a Christian. If it were not for the baptism of the Holy Spirit, you could not even be a Christian. It is the height of ignorance to tell people in an audience that they may stand, or come to this service, or raise their hand, or do something in order to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit. That's why we know that upon the charismatic movement, the Pentecostal movement, there is the stamp of Satan. The moving force behind those movements is not God, but Satan. It is a horrendous thing when people do not understand the baptism of the Holy Spirit as placing us in Christ, because then they cannot understand justification, and then the most precious doctrine in the Word of God goes down the tube. Justification is because you are in Christ. Because you are in Christ, you are now robed in His righteousness. When God looks at you, He doesn't see you in your moral guilt. He sees you as one who has been declared free. You are absolutely righteous in His sight.

So, since you, as a believer, being in Christ, as the result of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, now possess absolute righteousness, God can say "You're justified." God isn't fictionalizing this. God isn't pretending that you're absolutely righteous. He isn't saying, “Well, you and I know that you're not really absolutely righteous, but I'm going to say you are because I like you." He doesn't do that. We do that. He says, "You are righteous because you *are* righteous. You are in Christ.

Being justified then means certain things. It means that you are free from all moral guilt in God's eyes. It means that you're as good as Jesus Christ in God's sight. Being justified means that you will enter heaven after you die. Being justified means that you are now saved permanently. God can never reverse the verdict of justification. A judge in a court of law cannot declare a defendant not guilty; then go home and think it over; and, get on the bench next day and say, I'm reversing that decision today. You're guilty. I'm taking back what I said yesterday." You know that we can't do that. Even on a human realm, we don't do that. Certainly, God, as the judge of the universe, does not act that way. Justice requires that when the judge has pronounced a verdict, it sticks.

**The Doctrine of Justification**

Let's bring all this together in 17 specific points on the doctrine of justification. If you will listen carefully, and think through these points, you will know more than most preachers know. Here is the climax; the summit; and, the pinnacle of everything that the Bible has to teach relative to the work of Christ.

1. **The Word "Justify"**

The Greek word for "justify" means to declare that a person is free from all moral guilt, and that he is consequently righteous. If I ask you, "What does justify mean," don't tell me, "Well, it means that all my sins are forgiven." That isn't what it means. "Justify" means that God, as judge, has declared that you are free from all moral guilt; and, because you are not guilty, you are consequently righteous. And God has declared you to be righteous. This is a judicial term. This is a word that a judge uses in a court of law in passing upon the guilt of somebody who has been accused of something.

**Not Condemned**

The word "justify,' remember, is the opposite of "condemn." Either you justify a person, or you condemn a person. Either you declare that a person is right, or you declare that he's guilty of wrong. He is innocent of wrong; or, he is guilty of wrong. You judge him one way or another.

"Justified" means that a person has conformed to a certain norm or standard. And the norm or standard that we're talking about here is God. That's why we say that you have to be as good as Jesus Christ to go to heaven.

So, the next time you're talking to somebody about the issue of salvation, and they try to bring up the fact: "Well, I keep the Ten Commandments. And I live by the golden rule. I'm as good as the next person." Just ask them, "How good do you think a person has to be to go to heaven?" And after they give you all their human viewpoint answers, you say, "Well, I want to tell you that the Bible says that you have to be as good as Jesus Christ." That is an experience to see the look that comes on the face of a person when you say that. Their mouth opens, and if they have false teeth, they'll fall out, and they'll gag, and they'll say, "You're crazy. Who can be as good as Jesus Christ?" The one whom God declares to be just. That's the person. And that's what the word "justify" means. God, on some basis, makes it possible for Himself to say, "You are without guilt. In My eyes, you have never done wrong.

1. **The Declaration of God**

Justification in the Bible is the declaration of God about the sinner who trust Jesus Christ for salvation. This is the basis upon which God makes this declaration. He has provided the ground in the death of Christ. But it now depends upon whether you are willing to accept what He has provided – that you are willing to accept the provision of the payment of Christ. The sinner is declared by God to be in possession of absolute righteousness. In other words, the absolute righteousness of Jesus Christ is imputed to the believer because he has been placed in Christ by the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Because you are in Christ, you have His righteousness credited to your account.

So, once more, let's read 2 Corinthians 5:21:4: "For He has made Him (God the Father made God the Son) who knew no sin (the perfect sinless Jesus Christ) to be sin for us (to bear our sins) that we (who are sinners) might be declared the righteousness of God in Him (in Jesus Christ)." Because you are in Christ, as the result of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, which takes place at the moment that you believe in Christ as Savior, now God can look upon you and say, "You're just. You are absolutely perfect. You're qualified to enter heaven."

1. **Justification is Instantaneous**

Justification takes place instantaneously. One is either justified or he is not justified. You are never in the process of getting justified. You are never in the process of making your way to heaven. Justification takes place instantaneously. You're never in the process of getting justified. You are; or, you are not.

1. **Justification is not a Feeling**

Justification is not an experience that one feels. It is entirely a work of God external to ourselves. Some people, it is true, experience great emotion at the point of salvation when God because them to be justified. But they don't feel that emotion because of their justification. There is no feeling connected with justification. There's no such thing as feeling justified. There's no such thing as feeling saved. ... Very often, you'll find people who will talk about feeling saved and not feeling saved: "I just don't feel saved. I just don't feel born again. It's got nothing to do with your feelings. Your feelings have to do with your metabolism. Your feelings have to do with the fact that you ate too much spice Mexican food last night. Now today, you don't feel so good. Yesterday you felt saved. After you got through with your Mexican dinner, you felt lost. That's just how ignorant and ridiculous and foolish that is. In fact, if you eat the cooking of some people, you'll always feel lost. That's for sure.

It's got nothing to do with your feelings. Feelings are something that Satan can manipulate, and, man, he has a field day with it. Justification is not something you feel. The assurance of salvation, or the fact that you are justified, is based only on the fact that you have believed God's promise that, in Christ, He has paid for your sins, and you accept that provision. He has promised to give you eternal life. Your assurance is based on the authority that the Bible speaks the truth.

So, the words of a hymn we sing are: "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is faithful to keep that which I committed unto Him against that day." That is quoting the words of the apostle Paul. You're not going to feel saved. You're going to feel justified. You're going to know it, because you have accepted God's conditions for justification, which is to trust (to rely upon) Christ as your Savior.

1. **Justification is an Act of God Alone**

Justification is an act of God alone, apart from any human effort or merit. This is taught here in our Romans 3:24 passage and in Titus 3:5. Justification is not a process of getting more and more merit with God so that you will deserve the payment of Christ. This is what the Roman Catholic Church teaches. The Roman Catholic Church teaches: "Yes, Christ, in His merit provided for the salvation of sinners, but you cannot have access to that merit until you have earned it." So, justification, under Roman Catholicism, is a process of getting better and better, and nicer and nicer until finally God says, "OK, you're good enough now. You deserve to have the merit of Christ so that you can be saved." That is a horrible heresy, and it is one that you don't want to fall into. Justification is an act of God. It's not a process. Therefore, you don't have anything to do with preparing yourself for it. Sinners are not justified because of their good works; because of that character; or, because of their sincerity. None of that has anything to do with justification.

It's not secured through trying to keep the Mosaic Law easier. There are a lot of people still going around and thinking that if they keep the Ten Commandments, man, they're going to heaven. Hell is full of people who kept the Ten Commandments. But they did not meet the qualification for justification because they did not trust in Christ as Savior. All they had was religion, but they did not have faith in Christ.

Romans 3:28 and Galatians 2:16 teach us that. And incidentally, it's not only the rituals of the Mosaic Law. I don't care what your rituals are. If you're hung up on some ritual, you're never going to get to heaven. If you think that your water baptism is contributing to your salvation, you're in a lot of trouble. If you think that taking the Lord's Supper is going to receive forgiveness of some sins for you, you're in a lot of trouble. And you have some terrible misconceptions (false doctrine) that will take you straight into hell if you don't get straightened out on it. The only thing that's going to get you justified in God's sight is the fact that you believe what He has said concerning the provision His Son has made, and you accept it. And you don't make any pretenses of having anything to contribute. Just don't try to contribute to what God has provided for us in salvation. And you will not achieve it through the contribution of your observance of rituals. The Bible is very clear on that point.

1. **Justification is the Provision of God's Grace**

Justification is the provision of God's grace, not a divine obligation. Again, Romans 3:24 teaches this. The reason that justification is available is because of God's kindness toward us, not because he was obliged to do it.

1. **Justification Occurs at the Moment a Sinner Believes in Christ as Savior**

Justification occurs at the moment a sinner believes in Christ as Savior (Romans 5:1, Galatians 3:24). You are not going to become justified sometime in the future. It happens at the point of salvation.

1. **Justification is Different from Forgiveness of Sins**

Justification is not the same thing as forgiveness of sins. I hope you understand that now. Forgiveness for one's sins is a negative thing. It's the removal of your moral guilt. That's what forgiveness is. Forgiveness is what redemption did for us. Redemption provided removal of the moral guilt. Then God looks upon you, and you have accepted the redemption of Jesus Christ, and God says, "I see no moral guilt on you. Therefore, I pronounce you to be justified." Justification and forgiveness of sins are two very different things. Justification is a positive thing. It's the imputation of the absolute righteousness of Jesus Christ.

It is true that no one is justified who sins are not forgiven; and, no one is forgiven whose sins are not justified. The two go together, but they are two different things. I've pointed out to you before that it's amazing how often you see this error in gospel tracts. Tracts are often printed by people who are very good students of the Word. The tract in general is a good track, but they will get at the end, and they'll list certain things, and they'll say, "Now, here are things that happen to you if you receive Christ as Savior." And it lists certain things. And one of them that it will always list is forgiveness of sins. And one of them that they will practically never list is the fact that you have been given the absolute righteousness of Jesus Christ, and have been justified. So, they talk about the negative part: "My sins are forgiven," but they never realize that that's not enough to get you into the heaven. You also have to have the absolute righteousness of Jesus Christ credited to your account, or you're never going to get into heaven now?

Have you ever known that about justification? It's more important, isn't it? You thought that the main thing was to get your sins forgiven. That's only to get the chalkboard clean. Now you've got to put something up on the account. That's the thing that is equally important. Justification is not the same thing as forgiveness of sins. Please don't get that confused.

1. **Justification Excludes Going to Hell**

Here is a very important one. Justification, once pronounced upon a sinner, excludes him permanently from all possibility of going to the lake of fire. It is an irrevocable verdict by God, the judge of the universe. Romans 8:33 says, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? Shall God that justifies?" Now, if God Himself will never accuse you of anything, who in the world can? No, God will not accuse you. Once you have been justified, this can never be reversed. Justification is pronounced on the basis of a standing you possess. Here's why it cannot be reversed. Let's go into a little more detail into this.

* 1. **A New Creation**

First of all, the believer is permanently a new creation. 2 Corinthians 5:17-18 says that those of us who are born-again are in Christ, and we become new creatures (the King James says). "A new creation" is a better translation. A lot of people took that verse, and they said, "Oh, well, do you know what that means? That means that when you weren't a Christian, you were boozing it up; you were immoral; and, you were doing all these terrible things. But once you're a Christian, you become a new creature. Now you don't do these sinful things anymore." That isn't what it means. That's a notion that Satan has interjected in order to again confuse us on the real thing that that verse means.

What that verse is saying is that you have been taken permanently out of the position (we showed you this before) where you are in Adam in God's sight, which is the place of death, and have been placed instead into Jesus Christ, which is the place of eternal life. Every one of us is born in Adam. And at the point of our faith in Christ, God jerks us out of there, and He places us in to Jesus Christ by the baptism of the Holy Spirit. And because we are in Christ, we share His absolute righteousness, and God says, "I can declare you justified."

So, this verse says that the believer is permanently a new creation. Your old position in Adam is gone. You are now in Christ. You can never reverse this. This is why you're a new creature – because you have now been placed in Christ.

Now, because you are a new creature, we hope that sin that you once practiced will become a thing of the past, and that your conduct will improve. But whether your conduct improves or not, you're still in Christ, and you're still justified in God's eyes. You're changed to a new position. That's why we say it's permanent.

* 1. **Permanently Made the Absolute Righteousness of God**

A second point here is that the believer is permanently made the absolute righteousness of God. We have this in many verses. 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2 Corinthians 5:21 (that we read a little while ago); and, Philippians 3:7-9 all tell us that once you have received the righteousness of God, you have it forever. It is a permanent provision. If you have the absolute righteousness of God, how can you ever be lost again? It's impossible.

* 1. **Perfect Forever in Christ**

The third point here under this one is that the believer is in a class of human beings who are perfect forever in Christ. Hebrews 10:14 tells us that Christ has perfected us forever. That means that everything that Jesus Christ is, we too become.

* 1. **The Fullness of Christ Forever**

Another sub-point here is that the believer forever has the fullness of Christ (John 1:16, Colossians 2:9-10). We have been perfected forever; that is, we are absolutely perfect in God's eyes. Everything that Jesus Christ is, is credited to our account. So, again, we have something permanent. And it is on the basis of these permanent things that we have a permanent justification. Because we are permanently a new creature; because we permanently have the absolute righteousness of God; because we have permanently been perfected forever in Christ; and, because we have the fullness of Christ (all that He is in His being, in His relationship to God – because of these permanent things, we cannot lose our salvation. We cannot lose our justification.

1. **The Ground for our Justification Led to the Resurrection**

The resurrection of Jesus Christ occurred because the ground of our justification has been established. In Romans 4:25, we have this verse: "Who was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification." We'll get to that a little later, but for now this is just a little bit of a preview here. The resurrection of Jesus Christ occurred *because* we were already justified. The ground had been established. Jesus was not raised from the dead like the song says, "Dying He saved us; rising He justified" – that He rose, and thus we were justified. He rose *because* we were already justified. We'll find that the Great there has this word "dia." "Dia" is a little proposition, and with the accusative case in the Greek language, the translation has to be: "on account of," or "because of" – not: "in order to."

In the King James Version (the Authorized Version), we have the "for" here, which makes it sound like Jesus was raised so that we could be justified. No, Jesus was raised *because* we *were* justified. Thus, the resurrection of Christ is the confirmation to us that justification is a reality. It wasn't before, but now it is. If He had not been raised from the dead, we could never really be sure that His death had provided the ground for our justification. So, He was raised because of it – because God the Father now is rightly free to credit absolute righteousness to our account. For that reason, Jesus was raised from the dead. Death could not hold Him.

If God could not credit His righteousness to our count, then death would have held Christ. Christ was not resurrected to make justification possible, but because it was a reality. The resurrection of Christ is the proof that our moral guilt is gone. Therefore, we're qualified to be declared just.

1. **Justification is a Position Held by the Believer in Jesus Christ**

Justification is a position held by the believer in Jesus Christ. This is at the opposite statement of the fact that justification is not a process. You're not gradually becoming justified. You have it. You're in, or you're out.

1. **God Justifies the Ungodly in Perfect Holiness**

God justifies the ungodly in perfect holiness because of the death of Jesus Christ in order to pay for the penalty of all our sins (Romans 3:25-26, that we shall look at in more detail). Justification is made possible by the redemption which has been provided by Jesus Christ. It's a reality. It's not a fiction. It's not something God just says is so. Redemption was the critical factor (the basis) upon which justification could be declared.

So, if we wanted to reverse what Romans 3:24 in the relationship between justification and redemption, it could read something like this. This is how Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer, founder of Dallas Seminary, in Systematic Theology (volume VII, page 222), has translated this in reverse order. He says, "Because of the redemption which is secured in Christ Jesus, God is free to exercise His grace toward the ungodly sinner, even justifying Him eternally, though finding no cause for justification in the sinner outside the fact that the righteousness of God has been bestowed upon all who believe." That's putting it the other way around in that verse. Instead of putting justification first, he puts redemption first. Because of redemption, it is possible for us to be justified.

1. **A Person is Declared Justified because He is In Christ**

A person is declared justified by God, not because he is without sin, but because he is in Christ. I hope you get that one straight. You are not said to be justified because you are without sin, and because you do not any longer do wrong things. There have been Christians who have made that mistake. They thought to themselves, "Now if I'm justified, then I shouldn't sin anymore." So, they have sought to become sinlessly perfect. But that is not what justification means. Justification causes no one to become righteous in practice. Justification pronounces no one to be sinless in his life upon this earth. Justification only declares a standing that you have in the sight of God because of your relationship to Jesus Christ.

1. **The Agent of Justification is the Holy Spirit**

The Agent of justification is the Holy Spirit. The latter part of 1 Corinthians 6:11 tells us that the Holy Spirit applies justification to the believer. Of course he does that because it is God the Holy Spirit who baptizes us into Christ, which is the ground of our being declared just.

1. **The Justification of James and Paul**

Paul speaks of justification in terms of securing salvation – securing it apart from human good works (Romans 3:24, Romans 4:5). That's Paul's frame of reference. Before you are saved is what Paul is talking about. But James speaks of justification in terms of proving that one is saved, and this is evidenced by your divine good works (James 2:18). So, Paul speaks of pre-salvation justification while James speaks of post-salvation justification. If you'll get that straight, you'll also clear up a lot of confusion on this subject.

1. **Justification is the Climax of Salvation**

Justification is the logical climax of the order of God's work in salvation. We show you what we mean here. While all these things are complete in God's eyes and God's working at one time, there is a logical order in which God deals with us. In Romans 8:29, we read the logical order: "For whom he did (number one) foreknow (that is, God chose you to be born-again); he also did (number two) predestinate (now He has directed you – your destiny is to be born again); (number three) to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren (that is, that you are going to become like Jesus Christ)." Verse 30: "Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them He also called." The time came when somebody gave you the gospel information. The time came when He called you now, and brought conviction, and said, "Believe the gospel." And you may have been in religion for many years, and, finally, you discovered what it was to be born-again. That was because the God who had foreknown you, and had predesignated you to eternal life, now called you into that experience of being born-again: "Them He also called, and whom He called, He also justified." That's the pinnacle. You just go step-by-step, and the highest logical pinnacle is that He justified.

There's one more after this which we have not experienced yet, and that is that those He justifies, He'll also glorify. You are someday yet going to be glorified. And that means that you are going to come into an experience where your body is also going to be raised. It's going to be sinless. It's going to be perfect, and you'll be actually in heaven, the place of glory itself.

1. **Faith (not Works) is the Instrument of Justification**

Finally, Faith, not works, is the instrument of justification (Romans 3:28, Romans 4:5, Romans 5:1). Because God would not let His work be contaminated by human effort, Faith is the only way you can be justified.

**Redemption**

Now let's look at the other great doctrine in this verse. If you think through these points on justification, you'll have a clear idea of what justification by faith means. You'll know what the great rebellion of the reformers against the Roman Catholic system was all about. You'll know why Paul sat down and wrote this book to make a formal declaration on this issue of justification. But you'll notice once more in verse 24: "Being justified freely by His grace *through* (on the basis of) the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." So, what does it mean to be redeemed?

1. **Christ Paid for our Sins**

There are two Greek nouns of the New Testament uses for redemption. One is "lutrosis." The other is "apolutrosis." This one is intensified with this little "apo" preposition. Basically, these words mean "deliverance or release of a slave upon payment of a ransom." This is used in Scripture to describe the work of Christ on the cross in payment for the sins of the world. He was paying to let slaves out of a slave market. Hebrews 9:12 and Romans 3:24 teach this. This connotes releasing mankind from Satan's slave market. This was done with the payment of the sacrifice of sin.

So, always associate the word redemption with being a slave to Satan and to sin, and being released from that slavery by the work of Jesus Christ in your behalf. So, redemption has to do with our sins – Christ paying the price to redeem us. And that's exactly what Matthew 20:28 says that He came to do. Redemption frees the believer from any bondage to sin by securing forgiveness for that sin. Those are the nouns.

There are three Greek verbs, and they amplify what redemption is all about. If you understand these three Greek verbs, you will know what redemption is all about. The first one that the Bible uses is "agorazo." This word is used, for example, in Revelation 5:9 and 1 Peter 1:18-19. We won't start to look at those now. You may pursue those on your own.

When I was a student at Dallas Seminary, working on the carpenter work crews, there was a man who worked with us who found this a very precious word, because of the background of his life and the experience that he had come through, to discover redemption. He used to work, and as he would pound the nails in, or whatever we were constructing, he would say, "Agorazo." And every now and then, just all day long, you'd hear him say, "Agorazo." What he was saying was: "Redemption." It is just like the song says, "Oh, how I love to proclaim it." But this word means "to buy."

1. **Christ Purchased our Freedom**

To buy what? To buy in the marketplace. That's why it's the "agora." That was the Greek word for "marketplace." "Agorazo" means to go into the marketplace and buy something. We are born into a slave market of sin. Romans 7:14 tells us that we're sold under sin. Ephesians 2:2 tells us that we're controlled by Satan and by evil. And John 3:18-19 and Romans 6:23 tell us that we're under the eternal sentence of death.

What this word stresses is the fact that Christ has purchased our freedom from bondage to Satan for all who believe (1 Corinthians 6:20, 1 Corinthians 7:23, Revelation 5:9). Jesus Christ is entitled to be the owner of all mankind. Those who refuse Christ will remain in this slave market (2 Peter 2:1). In other words, this is as if Jesus Christ came on the scene, and here is a slave market, which was very common in the Roman Empire. And here all these slaves in the slave market. Jesus Christ came, and He said, "I'm buying all of them." Then he tells the slaves, "Here's the door. Come on out." They come out here, except for one, or two, or three here. They don't want to come out. Christ has purchased them, but they refuse to accept salvation, so they remain enslaved to sin.

This does not mean that Christ paid a ransom to the devil. This purchase was on the basis of God's holiness and what God's character demanded. But one of the words for redemption in the Bible is "agorazo," which means "to buy in the slave market of sin."

However, there is a little more to that, because there's another word that the Bible uses, which is "exagorazo" (Galatians 3:13). And I don't care how much you have read your Bible in English (or any other language), you'll never notice this. You'd never understand this. Only the Greek can tell us this. That's why you must have a pastor-teacher who tells you what is in the original language.

1. **Christ Bought us out of the Slave Market of Sin**

"Exagorazo" has this little Greek prefix "ek." It means "to buy out of." It's not only to go into a market and make a purchase. It is to go in there and to take those slaves out of it. So, another word for redemption tells us a little more of what God has done. He has taken you out of Satan's slave market so that you cannot be sold again. That's the great thing. Once you have been bought, you belong to a new master. He's the new owner. When you buy a slave, they can't take that slave back again. Now you have bought him out of that slave market.

**Eternal Security**

So, God has purchased us to be the children of God (Galatians 4:4-5). And I guarantee you that God is not going to sell His children back into slavery. That's what's so ignorant about talking about being lost again. That means that God is willing to sell His children back into slavery after He purchased them once. Redemption of Jesus Christ is the final purchase. It's a final purchase. There are no returns exercised. So, we need never fear to be lost again.

Now, that's great. God came into the slave market, and He bought us. He came into the slave market, and He led us out of it. That's "exagorazo."

1. **Christ Frees Us**

But that's not all. The beautiful Greek language has a third word that is used for "redemption." In English, it's all the same. But here is the third one: "lutroo." You have this used in Luke 1:68; Titus 2:14; and, 1 Peter 1:18, and it means "to set free from the slave market of sin." After God walks in, He buys you; He leads you out of it; and, then He says, "Now you're free? You can go." Free from what? "I don't ever have to sin again. I don't ever have to listen to Satan again. I don't ever have to be under control to Satan again. I don't ever have to be the slave of all the evil of my old sin nature, and all the human good that it's cranking out. I am no longer subject to that old life. I am free. And I can go right on up to the pinnacle of the super grace life through the intake of doctrine and my positive response to it. It stresses the fact that believers are set at liberty from sin and Satan forever by Jesus Christ.

Now, that is the basic core meaning of redemption. What does redeem mean? How I love to proclaim it? That God paid the price to deliver me from the slave market of sin. That's what redemption means. It means that God has bought you. It means that God has led you out of it. It means that God has set you free from all control of Satan. So, anytime you sin, it's because you choose to do it. It's only because we were negative, or because we were ignorant of doctrinal viewpoint information so that our thinking was straight. This is the heart of the message of redemption.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1975

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