

October 25, 2026 (Lesson 8)

GOD SAVES, JUSTIFIES, AND RECONCILES

1. **Salvation Through Faith** (Romans 3:21-31)
2. **Benefits of Justification** (Romans 5:1-5)
3. **God's Reconciling Love** (Romans 5:6-11)

Central Truth: God saves and justifies those who put their faith in Christ.

Focus: Affirm Christ's work of salvation and yield to Him as Savior and Lord.

Evangelism Emphasis: God saves and justifies those who put their faith in Christ.

Golden Text: "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled by God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life" (Romans 5:10).

Few would say they do not want salvation, but many seek it where it cannot be found. Some think they can be saved by doing good works. They carefully keep the rules. They try to be good. By giving, doing, and striving, they think they can be saved. Others believe their character will determine their entrance into Heaven. If they think good thoughts and have good morals, and treat other people right, they believe Heaven awaits them.

Good works, good character, and good thoughts are important, but the Bible announces there is only one way to God. Jesus Christ is the Door; the key that unlocks the door is faith. Human efforts to earn salvation are not acceptable to God.

In our sinful state, we are confronted with two problems—death and guilt. By nature, all humanity is dead in trespasses and sins. This problem can be solved only through the impartation or implantation of divine life. This is known in theology as regeneration. It is the spiritual life from above. Our conduct is sinful by nature. We have broken the law of God and stand condemned before Him. The solution to this problem is justification by faith.

Regeneration and justification are related doctrines. *Regeneration* refers to the change which takes place in the believer's heart. *Justification* refers to the change in one's standing before God. Regeneration is concerned with the impartation of life; justification has to do with a person's being

accepted as righteous in God's eyes. Regeneration is the divine answer to the problem of spiritual death; justification is the divine answer to the problem of spiritual guilt.

1. SALVATION THROUGH FAITH

A. Righteousness Comes From God (Romans 3:21-26)

²¹ But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; ²² Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: ²³ For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; ²⁴ Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: ²⁵ Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; ²⁶ To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.

Even though the Law exposed sin and pronounced judgment for disobedience, the Old Testament provides ample witness to the “righteousness of God” that was made available to His people (v. 21). God's righteousness was prophesied by the prophets and other writers of the Old Testament in such passages as Isaiah 53; Psalms 2:7; 45:6-7; 118:22-26; Genesis 3:15; 49:10. This righteousness only comes through faith in Jesus Christ. It is available to all people through His vicarious death on the cross, but it is received only by those who “believe” in Jesus Christ (Rom. 3:22). In the Greek, *believe* connotes the idea of trust and faith and indicates that one must truly trust Jesus completely for salvation. It is an abandonment of all attempts to save oneself and a declaration that our salvation is a work of His grace, because all people are under the curse of sin and “come short” of God's glory (v. 23).

The expression “come short” emphatically declares we have no glory that can compare to God's glory. In every aspect, we fall short qualitatively and quantitatively. This language emphasizes Paul's contention that, without Christ, all people are without any hope of salvation or justification. Our only hope resides in the One who embodies the glory of God (John 1:14) and who gave Himself as

a ransom for our sin (Mark 10:45). This would be reason for despair if the apostle's words ended here. However, Paul quickly progresses to the good news.

The next three verses of our text proclaim the wonderful news of the Gospel. We have been “justified freely”! The word *freely*, so closely connected with *grace*, should remove any doubt as to the reason for our justification as sinners. Jesus Christ died for our sins and justified us before God, redeeming us from the horrific consequences of sin (Rom. 3:24). Jesus' vicarious death was the “propitiation” (appeasement) that resulted in the “remission” (forgiveness) of our sin when we accepted Christ as Lord and Savior (v. 25). Then, Paul declares Jesus is “just,” meaning He is righteous and has no sin. Jesus does not need for anyone to justify Him, because He is just by nature, which qualifies Him to justify those who believe in Him (v. 26).

§ *What is available “unto all,” and how (vv. 21-22)?*

§ *How is God both “just” and “the justifier” (v. 26)?*

B. Justification Comes Through Faith (Romans 3:27-31)

²⁷ Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay; but by the law of faith. ²⁸ Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law. ²⁹ Is he the God of the Jews only? is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also: ³⁰ Seeing it is one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith. ³¹ Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.

Our justification is not based on the Law, which would require us to fully obey all aspects of the Law. If we could perfectly obey all of God's commands, we would have grounds for boasting due to our self-merit. However, our justification comes through “the law of faith,” which is based on the grace of Jesus Christ and removes all grounds for boasting or pride (v. 27). This justification by faith is not dependent on any works we can do (v. 28). Also, it is available to both Jews and Gentiles, to the circumcised and uncircumcised (vv. 29-30).

So the question is asked: What happens to the Law because of this faith—is it nullified or canceled out? Paul strongly responds, “Not at all! Rather, we uphold the law” (3:31 NIV). But how is the Law upheld? The word *uphold* (“establish”) means “support” or “confirm.” Believers are to support the Law or confirm it as the will of God. This is done through living a holy life that is pleasing to God. The motivation for service and good works is the love for God and His people. The love of God is shed abroad in the lives of God’s people. The Holy Spirit is the power by which we can live out the will of God in word and deed.

More Than “Not Guilty”

To be *justified* means more than to be declared “not guilty.” It actually means to be declared righteous before God. It means God has imputed or charged the guilt of our sin to His Son, Jesus Christ, and has imputed or credited Christ’s righteousness to us.—Jerry Bridges

2. BENEFITS OF JUSTIFICATION

A. Peace With God (Romans 5:1-2)

¹ Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: ² By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

These verses assume the context of a courtroom scene. The terms used in chapters 3-5 are legal terms. They describe relationships of judgment, guilt sentencing, and innocence. These concepts involve defendants, the presentation of cases before a judge, and the requirements for justice.

In Romans 5:1-2, Paul declares believers are “justified” through Jesus Christ in a glorious way. Not only do we receive the remission of sins, but we are also invited into a special relationship with the Judge. This relationship is pictured in the phrase “peace with God” (v. 1)—a divinely given serenity. It is the abiding confidence that the One who at one time required punishment for sin now ministers peace.

The relationship of the believer with God, the Judge, is expanded in verse 2. Not only is there *peace*, but there is also “access.” The metaphor can be illustrated by a person being able to come into the private chambers of a judge. Such access brings joy and hope.

We have access into the grace of God by faith in Christ. To stand in this grace is to be able to pass into the presence of God without being afraid. Through Christ, we know we will be welcome. We not only have firm ground on which to stand, but we have strength imparted by Christ to enable us to keep a firm foothold.

Justification brings to us “hope of the glory of God”; in this we can “rejoice” (v. 2). And we are given assurance of spiritual safety and protection. Dangers may come, but we can stand firm and unshaken.

Pervasive Peace With God

Peace does not mean to be in a place where there is no noise, trouble, or hard work. Peace means to be in the midst of those things and still be calm in your heart.—Catherine Marshall

B. Hope in God (Romans 5:3-5)

³ And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; ⁴ And patience, experience; and experience, hope: ⁵ And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

The joy that accompanies access to God should grow as we continue our Christian walk. We “glory in tribulations” (v. 3). *Glory* comes from a term meaning “to rejoice triumphantly.” We can have a confidence in God’s help even though we may be circumstantially in the midst of difficulties.

Tribulations refer to the severe pressures of life. These times produce the ability to be patient. *Patience* means “to be able to bear up under the load.” Going through these times by the power of faith in the Lord provides a record and testimony for us as believers.

“Experience” (v. 4) comes from a Greek term used in the literature of Paul’s time in legal contexts. The term referred to evidence presented in a case. The experiences of tribulation and patience offer proof that our faith is genuine.

As a result of the living proof of our life of faith, greater hope for the future is produced. We have nothing to be “ashamed” of in this hope (v. 5). We can boldly stand in the love of God that has been “shed abroad” in us by the Holy Spirit. The term translated “shed abroad” (“poured out,” NKJV) is found in Acts 2:17 describing the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost.

§ *Why can we hope in the promises God makes to us in His Word?*

3. GOD’S RECONCILING LOVE

A. The Plan (Romans 5:6-8)

⁶ For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. ⁷ For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. ⁸ But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

God provided salvation through Jesus Christ because humanity was weak. “Without strength” (Rom. 5:6) suggests a moral sickness that makes us incapable of working out a righteousness of our own because we are not strong enough to break the power of sin or to achieve a righteousness that would commend us to God.

The apostle was emphasizing that people were powerless to deliver themselves from sin and judgment. The contrast between our inability and God’s might as the deliverer is great. God intervened “in due time” (v. 6). Christ came at the time appointed by the Father—when humanity most desperately needed the advent of a Savior.

It was for the “ungodly” that Christ came to die. Being ungodly is more than being irreligious. It is a deep-seated antagonism against God. Not only are we unable to attain a righteousness of our own, but by our sinful nature we follow evil aggressively.

In verse 7, Paul called it “an extraordinary thing for one to willingly give his life even for an upright man” (Amp.). While sometimes one is willing to sacrifice his or her life on the altar of a great cause, it rarely happens. However, Paul said, “God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us” (v. 8).

Our ungodliness and the fact we were at enmity with God resulted in a prevailing condition of constantly “missing the mark,” which is the literal meaning of *sinning*. It was while we were in this desperate plight of sinning—of being weak, morally sick, ungodly, as enemies and sinners—that Christ died for us, thus demonstrating His love for us.

§ *What does Galatians 4:4-5 say about the timing of God sending His Son to redeem lost humanity?*

B. The Pardon and Power (Romans 5:9-11)

⁹ Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. ¹⁰ For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. ¹¹ And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.

The ground of our acceptance with God is the “blood” of Jesus Christ (Rom. 5:9). The word *wrath* refers to the manifestation of divine displeasure against sin. Because we are justified, we will be saved from God’s wrath. The blood of Christ will give protection to believers in the hour of the coming wrath. The righteousness of God, received on the principle of faith and based on Christ’s blood, is our assurance of ultimate salvation.

Being saved from God’s wrath refers to the status bestowed on us through justification. We are no longer under the destructive power of wrath. We now live where the peace and righteousness of God reign. This gives us hope that on the Day of Judgment, we shall, through Christ, be freed from wrath in its last and conclusive manifestation. Salvation will be full and final when we are delivered from the wrath to come.

Since God was willing to initiate the process of salvation while we were still sinners, how much more is He willing to further the process of salvation and save us practically as well as positionally. In the past, we were reconciled by the death of His Son; in the present and future, we are and shall be “saved by his life” (v. 10). The death of Christ provides for us reconciliation with God, while the resurrection of Christ enables us to live in conformity to God’s righteousness. Thus, we express outwardly the change that has taken place in the inner person.

In verse 11, “atonement” implies redemption and reconciliation. The English word *redemption* is derived from a Latin word which also means “a buying back.” It is a word that was in common use in the marketplace. For example, a person, perhaps originally belonging to the purchaser, is under the control of someone else. In other words, he has become a slave. As such, he is in a position, or condition, which requires the payment of a price if ownership is to be transferred. His position is changed only when the price is paid. The act of payment is known as *redemption*.

The word “joy” (v. 11), or *rejoice*, can also mean “boast.” It is the same Greek word translated “rejoice” in verse 2 and “glory” in verse 3. Not only do we boast in present tribulations and in hope of future glory, but we boast in God himself, through Jesus Christ, by whom we receive the atonement (reconciliation).

Perfection

The atonement in Jesus Christ’s blood is perfect; there isn’t anything that can be added to it. It is spotless, impeccable, flawless. It is perfect as God is perfect.—A. W. Tozer

THE MINISTRY OF RECONCILIATION

Reconciliation with God is accomplished only through Christ. Grace makes it possible for sinners to be forgiven and reconciled to God. When we testify to others of how we have

experienced God's grace, we should pray that they will want to receive His love and come into a reconciled relationship with Him for eternity.