

God's Plan of Redemption

Last week we looked into God's plan of redemption and saw that it was accomplished through the substitutionary sacrifice of Christ.

Peter writes,

¹⁸knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers,
¹⁹but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, *the blood* of Christ. (1 Peter 1:18-19)

The word "redeemed" means

to be "set free by the payment of a ransom."

redeemed (ἐλυτρώθητε). [Aorist, Passive]

It carries the idea of a ransom-price (λύτρον, from λύω, to *loose*).¹

Paul also writes,

"Looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus, who gave Himself for us to **redeem** us from every lawless deed; and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds." (Titus 2:14)

In Matt. 20:28 Jesus says of Himself,

"...just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."

Why was redemption necessary?

Because all mankind was trapped in sin.

Because of sin all mankind was in bondage,
 hopelessly and helplessly enslaved to death.

In dying Jesus bore sin's penalty in our place

Peter adds,

"...He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed." (1 Peter 2:24)

Today I want us to look closer at redemption.

¹ Vincent, M. R. (1887). [*Word studies in the New Testament*](#) (Vol. 1, p. 638). New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.

The Problem of Sin
 The Payment of Grace
 The Principle of Faith

In Romans 3 Paul writes,

²¹“But now apart from the Law **the righteousness of God**
 has been manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets,
²²even **the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ**
for all those who believe; for there is no distinction;
²³for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,
²⁴**being justified as a gift by His grace**
 through the **redemption** which is in Christ Jesus;
²⁵whom God displayed publicly
 as **a propitiation in His blood through faith**.
 This was to **demonstrate His righteousness**,
 because in the forbearance of God
 He passed over the sins previously committed;
²⁶for the demonstration, I say, of **His righteousness** at the present time,
 so that **He would be just and the justifier**
 of the one who has **faith in Jesus**.”

(Rom. 3:21-26).

Observations

Key phrases: *righteousness of God; faith; justify*

Key Question: **How can ungodly sinners be justified by a holy God?**

I. The Problem of Sin.

²³for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

All men are sinners, born in sin, and sin by nature. This condition is known as total depravity. In this realm of death, people are separated from God.

All have sinned –Gk. hamartia – to come short, miss the mark

Paul describes the ‘sin condition’ of all people:

“...as it is written, ‘There is none righteous, not even one;

There is none who understands, there is none who seeks for God;
 All have turned aside, together they have become useless;
 There is none who does good, there is not even one.
 Their throat is an open grave, with their tongues they keep deceiving,
 the poison of asps is under their lips’;
 Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness’;
 Their feet are swift to shed blood,
 Destruction and misery are in their paths,
 and the path of peace they have not known.
 There is no fear of God before their eyes.” (Rom. 3:10-18)

God introduced His Law through Moses.
 His law could not save, it could only reveal sin.
 A holy God does not tolerate sin.

God’s law is like a straight line –
 When men test themselves by it they see how crooked they are.

A thermometer will tell someone if they have a fever,
 but swallowing the thermometer will not cure the fever.

The law is good when it is used to produce conviction of sin,
 but it is worthless as a savior from sin.

Luther said, its ‘function is not to justify but to terrify.’

Verse 20 says,
 “...by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight;
 for through the Law comes the knowledge of sin.”

A summary of Paul’s teaching is that ***all have sinned***.

An additional summary statement of the consequences of sin is in Romans 6:33,
 “For the wages of sin is death,
 but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Sin’s entrance not only ruined man’s relationship with God,
 But cost us life, itself; here and for eternity.

Long before governments offered poverty assistance programs, a person could fall into debt, lose his or her land, and become completely destitute – hopelessly impoverished with no family to whom he or she could turn. The only possible

means of avoiding debtor's prison or starvation was to become indentured to someone wealthy; that is, ask someone with lots of money to pay off one's creditors in exchange for slavery. Normally, the years of service would be determined by the amount of the debt paid. However, a greedy or cruel master could keep a slave perpetually indebted and hopelessly indentured forever. He also had the right to sell his slaves at auction if he ever needed cash. The slave's only hope would be a benevolent redeemer, who would purchase him off the slave block and then set him free. Sin created in men an extreme debt, the wages, death. Forgiveness simply means "to cancel the debt."

The Problem of Sin...

II. The Payment of Grace

Connected to the summary of man's sinfulness is God's plan of redemption.

²³for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,
²⁴**being justified as a gift by His grace**
 through the **redemption** which is in Christ Jesus;

Though we stand guilty, completely devoid of righteousness before God, we are declared just by means of a transfer of righteousness to our account from that of Jesus Christ. A real illustration shows this to us:

On June 23, 2000, a deaf couple stood before judge Donald McDonough in a Fairfax, Virginia, court and offered no rebuttal to their landlord's complaint that they were behind on the rent. Their recent marriage unfortunately resulted in the loss of disability benefits, most of which kept a leased roof over their heads. Now they were \$250 behind and had no hope of making up the deficit.

Judge McDonough couldn't disagree. The landlord was due his rent, the couple was indeed guilty of nonpayment, and justice could not be set aside. Nevertheless, the judge's compassion would not allow him to drop the gavel. Not just yet. Once the attorney for the plaintiff had closed his case, the judge suddenly left the courtroom. A few moments later, he returned from his chambers with \$250 in cash, handed it to the landlord's attorney, and said, "Consider it paid." With a transfer of funds from the just to the unjust, the debt was paid and the case dismissed. The Law had been satisfied. The defendants were then "just" or "righteous" in the eyes of the court.

In a similar way, we have a transfer of righteousness from the account of another to cover our moral deficit so that we might stand justified before the court of heaven. How did this happen? "By His grace,"

A free gift given, not because we are good, but because He is good.²

The word, **justify**, means to reckon or declare someone to be righteous.

God pronounces a sinner righteous, when that sinner believes on Jesus. Sin caused a huge deficit in our soul. The Law revealed an overdrawn account. God's free gift of grace was then added to our account replacing the deficit with an uncountable amount to the black – to the point of overflowing – with the riches of His grace. When a man is justified, it is *'just as if he had never sinned.'*

William MacDonald writes,

“When God justifies the believing sinner, He not only acquits him from guilt but clothes him in His own righteousness and thus makes him absolutely fit for heaven. Justification goes beyond acquittal to approval; beyond pardon to promotion. Acquittal means only that a person is set from from a charge. Justification mans that positive righteousness is imputed.”³

As Paul writes to the Ephesians,

“For by grace we have been saved through faith, not of works...” (Eph. 2: 8)

Summary: “All of mankind has been enslaved to sin by virtue of our moral debt. The Law of God demands payment in order for us to be considered “righteous” or “just,” but we are hopelessly unable to pay enough out of our own goodness. We need a redeemer. We need someone to pay our debt for us. And according to the gospel, we have such a Redeemer in Jesus Christ, who paid it in full.”⁴

In God's plan of redemption Jesus Pays for sin.

The problem of sin; the payment of grace [gift]...

III. The Principle of Faith

²⁴**being justified as a gift by His grace**

through the **redemption** which is in Christ Jesus;

²⁵whom God displayed publicly

² Charles R. Swindoll, *Swindoll's New Testament Insights: Romans*, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010), p. 85.

³ William MacDonald, *Believer's Bible Commentary*, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1989), p. 1688.

⁴ Swindoll, op cit.

as a propitiation in His blood through faith.

Historically the Reformation revived the doctrine of “Justification by Faith.”
Salvation is in Christ alone, by grace alone, through faith alone.

Christ’s payment for sin, and faith in Christ, make God a justifier.

Redemption means buying back by payment of a ransom price.

Jesus bought us back from the slave market of sin.

His precious blood was the ransom price which paid sin’s price.

The payment was a settlement that provided a righteous basis by which God could save the ungodly... as **a propitiation in His blood**

Propitiation – NIV – “sacrifice of atonement; Gk. hilasterion – no Eng. Tr.

Heb. Kippur – as in the holiday Yom Kippur or “Day of Atonement”

The blood – sprinkled – on the mercy seat –

“cover of atonement; place of propitiation, satisfaction, appeasement”

“This sacrificial rite symbolized the satisfaction of God’s holy wrath against sin by means of death”⁵

...is a means in which justice is satisfied, God’s wrath is averted, and mercy can be shown on the basis of an acceptable sacrifice.

1 John 2:2 – Christ is described as the propitiation for our sins and for those of the whole world.

1 John 4:10 – God’s love was manifested in sending His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

In Luke 18:13 the publican prayed:

“God be propitious to me, the sinner.”

He was asking God to show mercy to him,
by not requiring him to pay the penalty of his aggravated guilt.

⁵ Swindoll, p. 86.

“Therefore, in all things He had to be made like His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.” (Heb. 2:17)

The Expression “*to make propitiation*” means to put away by paying the penalty.

Through faith in Christ His shed blood, the payment for our sins, is applied to us.

“²¹But now apart from the Law **the righteousness of God** has been manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets,
²²even **the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe**; for there is no distinction;
²⁶...so that **He would be just and the justifier** of the one who has **faith in Jesus.**”

It is very humbling to recognize that for us to be put in a right relationship with God we need to know only two vital truths:

First, that we are great sinners;
 and **second**, that Christ is a great Savior.

Isn't it time to lay your burdens down, to put your faith in Christ's?
 To believe that since God is satisfied with Christ's sacrifice for our sins that we can rest in what He has done?

Just as I am, without one plea,
 But that Thy blood was shed for me,
 And that thou bidd'st me come to Thee,
 O Lamb of God, I come! I come!