

## From Justification to Salvation

In the previous video, titled "Can a Christian Lose Their Salvation", we saw that in this mortal life we may enter justification . . . made right with God, and be in His grace or goodness. While in justification we have "the hope of salvation" as Paul wrote in 1 Thessalonians 5:8,9. We will not *have* salvation until we actually receive the promised gift of eternal life at Jesus' return. Paul wrote:

● "Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him." (Romans 5:9)

So, how do we enter justification or grace? It is *through* faith as stated in Ephesians 2:8 . . . *not* just because we *have* faith. Here's Ephesians 2:8:

● For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God" (Ephesians 2:8)

We come to grace by or through faith. We come to salvation by or through grace.

So, what is faith? Ultimately, it is trust or confidence that something is true. In the original Greek "faith" was a noun, something you have: trust, or confidence. "Believe" was a different word, a verb, meaning to commit to your faith, to act on it.

Hebrews 11:6 shows us that *without* faith - trust or confidence that God *exists* and *rewards* - we *could not* choose to "come to God":

● "But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." (Hebrews 11:6)

It's the decision - to "come to God" on His terms - that matters. Without faith, we *could not* make that choice. Having faith does not mean we *would* make that choice. There *is* such a thing as dead faith: we could choose to remain in our old lives, apart from God, rather than come to Him on His terms. Unfortunately, that's what many do; they may have faith, but their faith is dead. They are not believers.

Faith is given to us to call us; question is, will we answer the call?

True believing goes beyond faith alone. James cited Abraham's example to show that Abraham was deemed a believer and was justified to God by his "works," his obedience: through faith he then chose to obey God, heading to the promised land (Hebrews 11:8) and later offering Isaac:

● "Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only." (James 2:24)

Abraham's "works" had nothing to do with "good works" done for others (Eph 2:9,10) and nothing to do with "the works of the law." "Works" refers to different things in different contexts.

Like Abraham, we must choose to obey God. Jesus is

● "the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him" (Hebrews 5:9)

So, *how* do we "come to God" so that we can enter justification and be in His grace? Well, here's where the rubber hits the road. Here's the apostle Paul, explaining what God tells us to do:

● "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent" (Acts 17:30)

Repent here means to change your mind about continuing in sin, turning from a life lived apart from God. Throughout the Bible, that's what repent is usually referring to.

If we'll obey, we're promised His mercy and grace:

● "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth *and forsaketh them* shall have mercy." (Proverbs 28:13)

● "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him . . ." (Isaiah 55:7)

So, what is the mercy promised in Proverbs 28:13? Our past sins will be blotted out:

● "Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord" (Acts 3:19, NKJV).

That's right: our sins were *not* blotted out *when Jesus died on the cross*. Our sins remain, *not* blotted out, until we come to repentance!

A believer - a person who through faith has come to God, confessing and forsaking sin - has been "purged from his old sins" as Peter wrote in 2 Peter 1:9.

Believers have "remission of sins that are past" as Paul wrote in Romans 3:25.

Those who come to God in repentance also receive mercy in the form of *redemption* - by grace - from the death penalty they had earned for past sins. That redemption was made possible "by his blood" as we saw back in Romans 5:9:

● "Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him."

Jesus died for our sins, as stated in 1 Corinthians 15:3; Jesus made His death *available*, as a ransom - the noun - to cover our death penalty. Now, with that ransom, we can have coverage, *redemption*, IF we'll obey and come to God on His terms, in repentance.

Outside of repentance, we do NOT receive mercy. We will perish, un-redeemed - paying our death penalty ourselves. That's why Jesus warned

● "except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." (Luke 13:5)

That's right: our sins were *not* "paid for, past present and future" *when Jesus died on the cross*. *We'll pay for our sins ourselves unless we come to repentance*. Jesus made a payment - His death, His blood - *available* for us when He died on the cross.

Here's Jesus, explaining His mission in Matthew 20:28:

● "Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." (Matthew 20:28)

"Ransom" in that verse is from the Greek word λύτρον "lutron." It is a noun, not a verb. Jesus made a payment, a ransom, - the noun - available on the cross. He made His death, His blood available to cover our death penalty for sin. We were not ransomed - the verb - *when He died on the cross*. He made a ransom payment - the noun - available.

Jesus did not die to save us IN our sins. He died so that we might have redemption from sin's penalty, if we'll turn from sin. He lives to help us overcome slavery to sin. But that only works if we are willing. As we abide in Jesus, in repentance, He is our mediator with the Father. His blood is available to cover our sins as they occur:

- "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." (1 John 1:7)

"Cleanses" us, present tense: as we remain in justification . . .

**Not** 'finished' when Jesus died on the cross!

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Okay, time for a little rant here. The idea that our sins were "all paid for, past, present and future" *when Jesus died* leads to one gross error after another. The reasoning goes like this: well now, since all our sins have been paid for, sin is no longer a salvation issue. And repentance - turning from sin - is no longer a requirement because - after all - our sins - past present and future - have already been "paid for." Now, they reason, all we need to do is just trust - "faith alone" - that Jesus took away our sins on the cross, and we'll be instantly "saved." We'll even have "eternal security." Why? because it's impossible for us to undue what has already been done for us on the cross.

That sort of reasoning is common among the "faith alone, instantly saved with eternal security" crowd. All rooted in a gross misunderstanding of what Jesus finished on the cross. They insist that "repent" has nothing to do with turning from sin, turning from a life lived apart from God. They re-define repent to mean just change your mind, and trust that Jesus has already paid for all your sin, including future sin. And they'll boldly, brazenly tell you that sin will never interfere with your salvation. After you've been instantly saved, you might choose to turn from sin, but hey, since you're already "saved" it really isn't necessary. Saved first, repent later. Maybe. And pay no attention to Jesus' statement about enduring to the end to be saved.

Compare that to Jesus' warning:

- "except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." (Luke 13:5)

I'll call out "faith alone" for what it really is: it's a sly, sneaky way of saying neither repentance nor obedience are necessary. "Faith alone" is a seductive, heinous lie, made for itching ears.

Jesus told His disciples to preach repentance and remission of sins. Not "faith alone." Not "faith + nothing = salvation":

- "Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures,

And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day:

And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." (Luke 24:45-47)

Peter makes it clear: we either come to repentance, or we perish:

- "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9).

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Okay. Back to justification. We see in Isaiah 59:1,2 that our sins separate us from God. But believers - we who through faith have come to God, confessing and forsaking sin - have received mercy. Our past sins have been blotted out; we are no longer separated from God. We are no longer under condemnation, having been redeemed from the death penalty earned for past sins. No longer separated and no longer under condemnation, we enter **justification**: we are reconciled or made right with God.

Now we can begin a new life, "times of refreshing" in "the presence of the Lord" as we saw in Acts 3:19:

- "Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord" (Acts 3:19, NKJV).

And how are we in "the presence of the Lord"? Through the gift of the holy spirit, given to those who obey and come to God in repentance:

- "And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him." (Acts 5:32)

- "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." (Acts 2:38)

Through the holy spirit Jesus guides us and helps us overcome slavery to sin. He leads us into His righteousness. This is how we are made ready to receive the gift of eternal life and to inherit the Kingdom of God. Creation is not finished: sons and daughters for the Father's eternal family are being created, right now, through Jesus. He is the potter, we are the clay. Jesus says:

- "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent." (Revelation 3:19)

A relationship with Him

- ". . . yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby" (Hebrews 12:11).

Jesus says:

- "He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son." (Revelation 21:7)

We can not make the journey along the "narrow way" (Matthew 7:14) that leads to eternal life without His help. And that journey can neither begin nor continue without our repentance, abiding in Him. He **knows** we need His help; He **is** ready to help us.

True believers **have been** "saved" in this limited, probational sense: they have been saved, redeemed, from having to perish as the "wages" of their past sin. They have been saved from hopelessness. That's what the "saved" in Ephesians 2:8 and some other verses is referring to. Now they have "the hope of salvation" - eternal life - to be received at Jesus' return:

- "But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation.

For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ" (Paul, in 1 Thessalonians 5:8,9).

While in justification they **are being** saved in yet another sense: they are being saved from slavery to sin, as they abide in Him and overcome slavery to sin.

● "He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son."  
(Revelation 21:7)

It is very possible and easy for us to return to a life of sin, no longer in repentance and no longer abiding in Him. *Even after knowing Jesus* it is possible for us to revert back to a life of sin, living apart from God:

● "For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning.

For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them.

But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire." (2 Peter 2:20-22)

We *can* "fall away" from justification; we *can* "fail of the grace of God" as stated in Hebrews 12:15. No longer in justification, we are no longer on the "narrow way" that leads to eternal life. We are once again hopelessly bound to perish.

● For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?" (1 Peter 4:7)

That's why Jesus and the apostles gave so many warnings to "abide" in Him, to "give diligence to make your calling and election sure" and to "continue in his goodness, otherwise thou also shalt be cut off."

Here are those verses, and more:

● "If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned." (Jesus, in John 15:6)

● "Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall:

For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." (2 Peter 1:10,11)

● "For if God spared not the natural branches [the Israelites], take heed lest he also spare not thee.

Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off." (Romans 11:21,22)

● "Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it." (Hebrews 4:1)