

## The Experience of Redemption

In the pneumatic Christ as the Redeemer, we experience judicial redemption, which includes at least seven matters—being redeemed by God, deliverance, forgiveness, cleansing and washing, justification, reconciliation, and positional sanctification. These matters have an initial, positional, and objective sense in the past; an ongoing, more intrinsic, and subjective sense in the present; and a consummate sense in the future, when we will be completely redeemed, freed, cleansed, justified, reconciled to God, and sanctified. Christ’s death on the cross and the shedding of His blood are the basis for judicial redemption, which, in turn, is the basis for and entrance into God’s organic salvation, which will consummate both our full redemption and our full salvation.

In this article we look at Greek words that carry these notions and consider their significance in terms of our experience. The different usages of the Greek words and even of some of the Greek word forms (especially their endings) indicate that *redemption* and its related words refer to not just an accomplished act based on the Lord’s death on the cross and experienced by us when we believe but a process that is a basis for God’s organic salvation and that introduces the way for Him to carry out this organic salvation.

### The Application of Redemption to Us

#### *Redemption*

There are two main roots for *redemption*, the root λυτρ- (“release”) and the root ἀγοραζ- (“purchase”). The root λυτρ- comes from λύω (“loose, release”) and has the sense of paying the price for what is necessary to loose or release from some kind of bondage or debt. The root λυτρ- is in the verb λυτρόω (“redeem,” “ransom,” “release on receipt of ransom”), which occurs three times in the New Testament; in λυτρωτής (“redeemer”), which occurs once; in λύτρον (“price for redeeming,” “ransom”), which occurs twice; and in the compound ἀντίλυτρον with the preposition ἀντί- (“instead of”). The verbal noun λύτρωσις (“a ransoming,” “redemption,” “deliverance”) occurs three times, and in compound with ἀπό- (“from”) as ἀπολύτρωσις (“redemption from”), it occurs ten times, indicating “deliverance effected through the death of Christ from the retributive wrath of a holy God and the merited penalty of sin” (Thayer 65). The Greek ending -σις on

these verbal nouns indicates a process. Redemption can be seen as a process, with an initial sense, of bringing those who believe into Christ back to God objectively; with an ongoing sense, in which we are being brought back to God subjectively and intrinsically; and with a consummate sense, where our whole being, including our body, is fully redeemed or brought back to God.

The root ἀγοράζω literally means “to frequent the marketplace” (*agora*) or “to buy or purchase” (properly, in the marketplace). It occurs at least eight times. In a compound with the preposition ἐκ (“out of”) as ἐξ-ἀγοράζω (“to redeem, i.e., by payment of a price to recover from the power of another,” “to ransom,” “to buy off,” “to buy up”), it occurs four times and stresses the price paid to purchase something back and out of the “marketplace” of the world. We can say that all human beings need to be redeemed out of the usurpation of Satan’s world system in order to participate in God’s purpose, which is to build up the church as the Body of Christ, consummating the New Jerusalem.

Redemption has an outward physical sense of redemption, or deliverance, from political oppression, based on one of its Old Testament senses (Psa. 77:15; 106:10; Micah 4:10). The disciples journeying to Emmaus after the Lord Jesus’ death hoped that He would redeem Israel (Luke 24:21), that is, deliver the Jewish nation from the subjugation of the Roman Empire, just like Moses was a redeemer who delivered the Israelites from the oppression of Egypt (Acts 7:35).<sup>1</sup> It was also the aspiration of Zachariah, Anna, and others at the time of the Lord’s birth that He would accomplish redemption for Israel and Jerusalem (Luke 1:68; 2:38).

Christ as the Son of Man gave His life (ψυχή, “soul,” “soul-life”) as a ransom (λύτρον) for many (Matt. 20:28). The giving up of His life was the price that needed to be paid to release humanity from the bondage of the fall. Christ gave Himself as a ransom (ἀντίλυτρον), as what was given in exchange for us, as the price for (ὕπέρ, “on behalf of”) the redemption of all through His substitutionary death on the cross (1 Tim. 2:6).

The Lord Jesus then entered into the Holy of Holies in the heavens with His own blood, obtaining an eternal redemption (λύτρωσις, Heb. 9:12). His redemption is a

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process (confirmed by the ending -σις), based on His death on the cross, that was first experienced by us when we initially believed and that will be consummated when we are completely brought back to God, eternally in union and communion with Him.

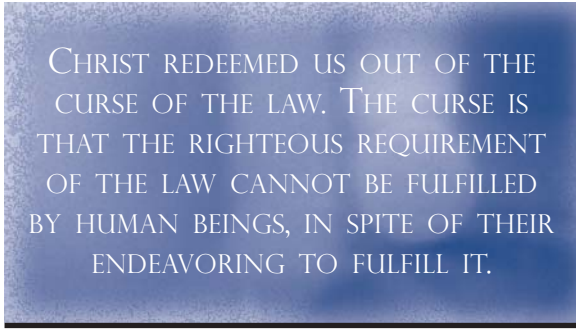
The compound form ἀπολύτρωσις also emphasizes the process of deliverance from (ἀπό) many negative things. In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of offenses and sins (Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:14). Christ's death took place for redemption from the penalty of the transgressions (Heb. 9:15). Jesus Christ also gave Himself for us that He might redeem us from all lawlessness and purify to Himself a particular people (Titus 2:13-14). We were redeemed from our old, vain manner of life handed down from our fathers, which had no meaning and no goal, not with corruptible things like silver or gold but with the precious blood of the Lamb (1 Pet. 1:18-19).

We are justified (approved by God) freely by His grace through the redemption (ἀπολύτρωσις) in Christ Jesus (Rom. 3:24). The noun ἀπολύτρωσις also refers to the consummate redemption of our body at the return of Christ from heaven (Luke 21:28). This will be the “consummate liberation...from the sin still lingering even in the regenerate, and from all the ills and troubles of this life,...[the] deliverance of the body from frailty and mortality” (Thayer 65). We are sealed in the Holy Spirit unto the day of redemption (Eph. 4:30), the Holy Spirit is the pledge of our inheritance unto the redemption of the acquired possession (1:14), and we have the firstfruits of the Spirit while groaning in ourselves, eagerly awaiting full sonship, the redemption of our body (Rom. 8:23), which is the transfiguration of our body of humiliation into a glorious body (Phil. 3:21). The same sense is to be taken in 1 Corinthians 1:30, where Christ is redemption to us for the future redemption of our body at the Lord's coming back.

The root ἀγοράζω refers to the purchase of the believers figuratively or directly. Christ (symbolized by a merchant going to the marketplace to buy a field with a treasure hidden in it) came into the world and in His joy went to the cross and sold all that He had in order to redeem the created and lost earth containing the treasure (Matt. 13:44), typifying the believers, who are redeemed, regenerated, and transformed to be precious materials for building the church and the New Jerusalem (1 Cor. 3:12; Rev. 21:18-20). He is also a merchant who came to purchase the church as the pearl of great value (Matt. 13:45-46). The believers are purchased as slaves of Christ, their Master

(2 Pet. 2:1), bought by the Lord with a price, the precious blood of Christ (Acts 20:28; 1 Pet. 1:18-19; Rev. 5:9). As a result of being bought with a price, the believers need to realize that their body is a temple of the Holy Spirit and that they are not their own; therefore, they should glorify, or express, the Lord in their body (1 Cor. 6:19-20) and not be slaves of men (7:23). Christ as the Lamb was slain to purchase human beings for God by His blood out of every tribe, tongue, people, and nation so that they may be a kingdom and priests to God and may reign on the earth (Rev. 5:9-10). He purchased from the earth one hundred and forty-four thousand overcoming believers as firstfruits to God and to the Lamb, who follow the Lamb wherever He may go. They are raptured to the throne of God in the heavens at the end of the church age (14:1, 3-4).

When Christ took away our sin on the cross, He also redeemed us (ἐξαγοράζω) out of the curse of the law (Gal. 3:13), which issued from the sin of man (Gen. 3:17). The curse of the law is that the righteous requirement of the law cannot be fulfilled by human beings, in spite of their endeavoring to fulfill it, and this results in condemnation (Rom. 7:1—8:4). Also the law is unable to give the life that fulfills the law and expresses God (Gal. 3:21). Christ redeemed us, those under law, that we might receive the sonship (4:5) according to God's goal of having many sons to express Him.



CHRIST REDEEMED US OUT OF THE CURSE OF THE LAW. THE CURSE IS THAT THE RIGHTEOUS REQUIREMENT OF THE LAW CANNOT BE FULFILLED BY HUMAN BEINGS, IN SPITE OF THEIR ENDEAVORING TO FULFILL IT.

The other two occurrences of ἐξαγοράζω refer to the believers' ongoing experience of redeeming the time (καιρός, “time,” “opportunity”) because the days are evil, full of pernicious things that cause our time to be used ineffectively (Eph. 5:16). We also should walk in wisdom toward those who are without (ἔξω, “outside”), i.e., those who are not redeemed, by redeeming the time (Col. 4:5). Redeeming the time means to pay the price to seize every favorable opportunity, to make our time on earth count for God's eternal purpose, and to be delivered from the vanity of human life (Rom. 8:20; 1 Pet. 1:18).

Those who have been redeemed and delivered from their sins and transgressions and purchased out of the world constitute the church, the assembly, or the gathering together of the called-out ones (ἐκ-κλησία). The church of God was obtained (περι-ποιοῦμαι, lit., “make something for oneself from what is around”) through His own blood (Acts 20:25). He gathers the believers into His name (Matt. 18:20), around His person, and makes them into His acquired possession, His personal treasure (1 Pet. 2:9; Exo. 19:5).

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## Deliverance

Another root related to redemption in the sense of God's delivering us from some negative condition or situation is *ῥούμαι* ("deliver," "rescue"). It is used in relation to (1) an accomplished fact, i.e., God has delivered us out of "the authority of darkness" (Col. 1:13) and "so great a death" (2 Cor. 1:10); (2) an assurance concerning the future that the Lord knows how to and will deliver us from trial (2 Pet. 2:9), every evil work (2 Tim. 4:18), and the wrath coming at the time of His return (1 Thes. 1:10); and (3) a prayerful wish for God to deliver us from the evil one (Matt. 6:13), unreasonable and evil men (2 Thes. 3:2), disobedient opposers (Rom. 15:31), the body of this death (7:24), and persecutions (cf. 2 Tim. 3:11; 4:17). Another usage is in *ὁ ῥυόμενος*, referring to the Lord as the Deliverer who will come out of Zion and turn away ungodliness (*ἀσεβεία*) from Jacob (Rom. 11:26; Isa. 59:20), especially at His second coming.

Related to and as a result of deliverance is freedom, indicated by the root *ἔλευθέρως* ("free"). Christ, as the truth realized as the law of the Spirit of life, sets us free from Satan, who dwells in our fallen nature as the law of sin and of death (John 8:32, 36; Rom. 6:18, 22; 8:2). This freedom in Christ Jesus as the Lord Spirit also releases us from bondage under the law and the obligation to keep the law (2 Cor. 3:17-18; Gal. 2:4; 5:1). The whole creation is enslaved under the law of decay and corruption, longing for the day when it will be released into the freedom of the glory of the children of God, the consummate freedom (Rom. 8:21).

## Forgiveness

Redemption includes forgiveness. Ephesians 1:7 says, "We have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of offenses." Here and in Colossians 1:14, the forgiveness of offenses is in apposition to redemption. The notion of forgiveness is indicated by two main Greek words, *ἀφίημι* ("send away, let go and, hence, forgive, pardon, cancel") and *χαρίζομαι* ("give freely," "be gracious," "graciously forgive"). Forgiveness can have an initial sense related to the time we repented and believed into Christ and a daily, or ongoing, sense when we are conscious of offending others.

The verb *ἀφίημι* and the corresponding noun *ἄφεσις* are by far the most common words for *forgiveness*. The notion of sending away reinforces the imagery in the Old Testament of the sending away of sins with the scapegoat into the wilderness to Azazel (Lev. 16:8-10). Forgiveness is based on the blood of the covenant, which Jesus poured out for the forgiveness of sins (Matt. 26:28). Indeed, without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness (Heb. 9:22). Shed blood is a sign (Exo. 12:13) that a life has been offered to pay the penalty, or wages, for sins, which is death (Rom. 6:23). With forgiveness (accompanied by God's no longer remembering our sins and lawlessnesses),

there is no longer a need for an offering for sin (Heb. 10:17-18). To receive forgiveness requires repentance, a change of mind (*μετάνοια*) regarding ourselves; repentance is unto the forgiveness of sins (Luke 24:47). Repentance along with forgiveness of sins is given by God (Acts 5:31; 11:18; 2 Tim. 2:25).<sup>2</sup> Repentance is often accompanied by baptism, recognizing that all we are good for in our fallen condition is death and burial. John the Baptist proclaimed a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins (Luke 3:3; Mark 1:4; Acts 2:38; 5:31). Forgiveness is granted to those who believe into Christ, the Redeemer (10:43), receiving Him and all that He has accomplished, obtained, and attained (26:18).

The verb *ἀφίημι* is used for God in Christ forgiving our sins both initially (1 John 2:12) and in an ongoing way (1:9; Matt. 9:2; 12:31). Forgiveness is also dependent on our forgiving the sins, offenses, or debts of others (6:12, 14-15; 18:35; Mark 11:25-26; Luke 11:4). The believers need to exercise forgiveness toward their brothers in the Lord, even up to four hundred ninety times (17:3-4; Matt. 18:21-22), and they have the authority to forgive or retain the sins of others (John 20:23). The unforgivable sin is blaspheming against the Holy Spirit. The reason this sin is so serious is that the Holy Spirit is the Agent who works on the human heart to lead it to repentance. To speak evil against the Holy Spirit's work is to reject the means to apply and make real the Lord's forgiveness; such rejection has serious and far-reaching consequences, even into the next age (Matt. 12:31-32).

The other word for forgiveness, *χαρίζομαι*, occurs about six times and has the sense of "forgive." God in Christ the Lord graciously forgave us all our offenses (Col. 2:13), so we also, being kind, tenderhearted, and bearing one another, should graciously forgive one another (Eph. 4:32; Col. 3:13). Paul exercised this kind of forgiveness toward the believers and hoped that they also would do the same toward one another (2 Cor. 2:7, 10; 12:13). *Χαρίζομαι* is related to the noun *χάρις* ("grace") and the noun *χαρά* ("joy"), perhaps indicating and reminding us that in forgiving others, grace, the enjoyment and experience of Christ as the life-giving Spirit and our forgiving element, is necessary (Gal. 2:21; 1 Cor. 15:10).

## Cleansing and Washing

Cleansing and washing have two senses. The first refers to the washing away of sins, and the second refers to the washing away of defilement from our natural life and contact with the world. Washing is connected to forgiveness of sins, which concerns our record of sins and offenses before God being sent away; cleansing concerns the removal of the stain of those sins and offenses left on our conscience. Both forgiveness and cleansing occur initially at the time we believe, but they are also needed on

an ongoing basis in our Christian life whenever we commit sins.

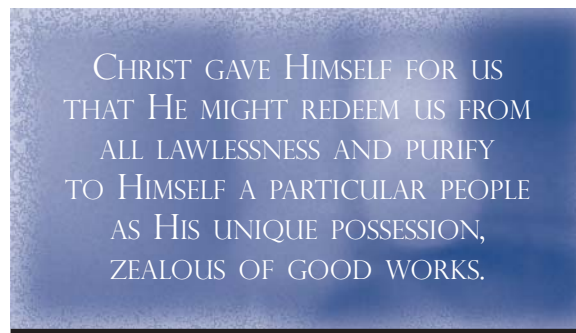
The main Greek root translated “cleansing” or “purification” is καθαρ-, which is perhaps related to the compound verb καθαίρω, a compound of κατά- (“down”) and αἶρω (“take up,” “take away,” “remove”). The root καθαρ- occurs as an adjective, καθαρός (“clean,” “pure,” “free from the admixture or adhesion of anything that soils, adulterates, corrupts”), about twenty-seven times in the New Testament; as a verb, καθαρίζω (“make clean,” “cleanse,” “purify”), about thirty-one times; and as a noun, καθαρισμός (“cleansing,” “purification”), seven times, mostly related to the Jewish rites of purification (e.g., Mark 1:44; John 2:6) but twice referring to the purification of the believers (Heb. 1:3; 2 Pet. 1:9). The ending -μός in καθαρισμός views the action of cleansing as a whole, not just of past sins but in a general way referring to purification.

Another root to indicate purification, or cleansing, is ἄγν-, which occurs three times as the verb ἄγνίζω (“purify”) and eight times as the adjective ἄγνός (“pure”). In addition, three Greek word roots are translated “washing.” Πλύνω is used for the washing of things, especially garments (Rev. 7:14; 22:14); νίπτω, for washing body parts, such as hands and feet (John 13:5ff); and λούω, for washing in a general way or for washing the whole body (v. 10; Heb. 10:22). Πλύνω, νίπτω, and λούω all occur in the same verse in the Septuagint, which preserves these three distinctions (Lev. 15:11). These three roots also have a figurative sense, especially in relation to our ongoing experience of being washed, both in the Lord’s blood and by the Lord’s life. Related to λούω are the compound verb ἀπολούω (“wash off or away”) and the noun λουτρόν (“washing”), both of which occur two times in the New Testament. Λουτρόν is closely connected to the word λουτήρ (“basin,” “washing tub”), which is used to translate the word for *laver* in the Old Testament; in such a laver the priests washed away their earthly defilement (Exo. 30:18-21).

The Lord Himself is pure and clean (ἄγνός), free from the defilement of sin and single in His heart, which is set on God the Father (1 John 3:3). Through His death Christ carried out the purification (καθαρισμός) of sins (Heb. 1:3; 2 Pet. 1:9). Purification is linked to redemption. Christ gave Himself for us that He might redeem us from all lawlessness and purify to Himself a particular people as His unique possession, zealous of good works (Titus 2:14).

In the same way that the tabernacle and all things pertaining to it were sprinkled with and purified by the blood of goats and bulls, the Lord’s blood purifies all things, including the heavens, which have been defiled by the rebellion of Satan and the fallen angels (Heb. 9:21-23). The cleansing of the tabernacle is a figure showing that the heavenly things needed to be purified by the blood of better sacrifices, which are the sacrifices of Christ (7:27; 9:14, 28; 10:10, 12, 14). Christ accomplished this purification with His own blood when He entered into heaven itself, the reality of the Holy of Holies in the Old Testament tabernacle and temple (9:24).

Purification affects our conscience. The blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, purifies our conscience, the leading part of our spirit, from dead works so that we can serve the living God (v. 14) and come forward with boldness to the Holy of Holies, having our hearts sprinkled (δρατίζω) from an evil conscience (10:19, 22).



The Holy of Holies today is in heaven, where the Lord Jesus is (9:12, 24). How, then, can we enter the Holy of Holies while we are still on earth? The secret is our spirit, referred to in 4:12. The very Christ who is in heaven is now also in our spirit (2 Tim. 4:22). As the heavenly ladder (Gen. 28:12; John 1:51), He joins our spirit to heaven and brings heaven

into our spirit. Hence, whenever we turn to our spirit, we enter into the Holy of Holies. There we meet with God, who is on the throne of grace. (Lee, Recovery Version, Heb. 10:19, note 1)

As mentioned above, the notion of sprinkling brings to mind the Old Testament type of the sprinkling of the blood of sacrifices on both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the service, including the priests (9:21; Lev. 8:30), but particularly upon the expiation cover in the Holy of Holies (16:14-15), the place where God and man could meet.

After our initial experience of cleansing, we still need further cleansing whenever we sin. According to 1 John 1:7, “if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses [καθαρίζω] us from every sin.” Living in the divine light exposes our sins, transgressions, iniquities, failures, and defects and gives us the sense in our conscience of the need of the cleansing of the redeeming blood of the Lord Jesus from all sins so that our fellowship with God and with one another may be restored and maintained. If we confess (ὁμολογέω, “agree with” or



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“speak the same thing” as the indwelling Christ as the Spirit in our conscience) our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness (v. 9).

“Those who wash [πλύνω] their robes” (Rev. 22:14), symbolizing the believers who keep their conduct clean through the washing of the blood of the Lamb (7:14; 1 John 1:7), are blessed, having the right to participate in the tree of life and to enter into the city, New Jerusalem.

The second sense of washing, a washing from the defilement of the world and the natural life, occurs initially at regeneration, which washes away the things of the old nature of our old man, whereas the renewing of the Holy Spirit imparts something new, the divine essence of the new man, into our being (Titus 3:5).

**A**nother initial and subjective experience of washing from the defilements of our past is mentioned by Paul: “These things [mentioned in 1 Cor. 6:9-10] were some of you; but you were washed [ἀπολούω], but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God” (v. 11).<sup>3</sup> This washing is deeper and subjective:

In contrast to the washing, sanctifying, and justifying in 1 John 1:7, Heb. 10:29, and Rom. 3:24-25, the washing, sanctifying, and justifying here are not by the blood in an objective way. They are the subjective washing of regeneration as in Titus 3:5, the subjective sanctifying by the Spirit as in Rom. 15:16, and the subjective justifying in the Spirit as in this verse. All these items of God's salvation were accomplished in us in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ (i.e., in the person of the Lord, in an organic union with the Lord through faith) and in the Spirit of God (i.e., in the power and realization of the Holy Spirit). First, we were washed from the sinful things; second, we were sanctified, separated unto God, transformed by God; and third, we were justified, accepted, by God. (Lee, Recovery Version, 1 Cor. 6:11, note 1)

As a result of the cleansing away of any mixture, we can be pure (καθαρός) in heart and see God (Matt. 5:8). We need to exercise to love out of a pure heart, which “is a single heart without mixture, a heart that seeks only the Lord and takes the Lord as the unique goal” (Lee, Recovery Version, 1 Tim. 1:5, note 3). The purifying of our soul causes our entire being to be concentrated on God so that we may love Him from our whole heart, from our whole soul, from our whole mind, and from our whole strength (Mark 12:30); as a result, “such purifying issues in unfeigned brotherly love, our loving from the heart fervently those whom God loves” (Lee, Recovery Version, 1 Pet. 1:22, note 4). We call on the Lord out of a pure heart, calling on Him to receive just Him, rather

than anything else (2 Tim. 2:22). Purification particularly affects our conscience. A deacon needs to hold the mystery of the faith (Christ and the church) in a pure conscience, purified from any mixture (1 Tim. 3:9). Paul served God in a pure conscience (2 Tim. 1:3).

James charges the double-souled, those who have a heart divided between two parties, God and the world, to have their hearts purified (ἀγνίζω) and their hands cleansed (καθαρίζω) so that they may draw near to God, and God may then draw near to them (James 4:8). Peter talks about having our soul purified by obedience to the truth, which is to have our mind, emotion, and will, as parts of our heart, purified from any kind of defilement or contamination (Acts 15:9), that is, “delivered from all things other than God and fixed on God as the sole object and unique goal” (Lee, Recovery Version, 1 Pet. 1:22, note 2). Everyone who has a hope set on the Lord (especially of being like Him) purifies himself (ἀγνίζω) to be without the stain of unrighteousness, even as He is pure (ἀγνός, 1 John 3:3).

**F**oot-washing symbolizes being washed from the defilement of the world. In John 13:10 Jesus said to Peter, “He who is bathed [λούω] has no need except to wash [νίπτω] his feet, but is wholly clean; and you are clean.” As Richard Chenevix Trench explains, “Peter had been already made partaker of the great washing, of that forgiveness which included the whole man..., and this great absolving act did not need to be repeated” (162). The disciples were already clean through the word spoken to them (John 15:3). Nonetheless, the Lord needed to cleanse Peter (and all the disciples) by washing his feet, cleansing him “from the defilements which even he, a justified and in part also a sanctified man, should gather as he moved through a sinful world” (Trench 162).

Finally, we can experience the subjective and ongoing washing (λουτρόν) of the water in the rhema word, referring to the water of life, which washes away the blemishes of the natural life of our old man, such as spots or wrinkles or any such things; this washing beautifies the church to be Christ's bride (Eph. 5:26-27).

### *Justification*

Justification is God's action of approving people according to His standard of righteousness, which He does based on the redemption of Christ (Rom. 3:24). Justification has two senses. Objective justification puts us in a position to receive God's life, and subjective justification changes our inward nature so that our living and being may be approved, or justified, by God.

The root δικαι- (“righteous”), coming from δίκη (“right,” “justice,” “penalty”), is also used for the notion of

justification. The adjective δίκαιος (“righteous, just”) occurs about seventy-nine times, and the adverb δίκαιως (“righteously,” “justly”) occurs five times. The verb δικαίω (“make righteous,” “justify”) occurs about thirty-six times in the New Testament. The noun δικαιοσύνη (“righteousness”) occurs about eighty-six times and refers to the quality of being righteous, to the state of one who is such as he ought to be, to the condition acceptable to or approved by God, and to correctness in thinking, feeling, and acting, as opposed to sin (Rom. 8:10), lawlessness (2 Cor. 6:14; Heb. 1:9), unrighteousness (Rev. 22:11), and uncleanness. The noun δικαίωμα (“righteous act”) occurs ten times, with the -μα ending indicating the result of the action of justifying. This noun refers either to what is deemed or declared right, a righteous requirement, judgment, or ordinance (Rom. 1:32; 8:4) or to a righteous act fulfilling that requirement (5:18, 16). The noun δικαίωσις (“justification”) occurs twice, with the suffix -σις indicating the process of justification. The noun δικαιοκρισία (“righteous judgment”) occurs only once, in Romans 2:5, which speaks of the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God at the time of the Lord’s coming (for the living and the dead believers) or at the great white throne (for the dead unbelievers, Rev. 20:11-12). The noun δίκη (“right,” “justice,” “penalty”) occurs three times. Twice it refers to the penalty of eternal destruction at the Lord’s coming to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Thes. 1:8-9) and once to the penalty of eternal fire measured to Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding cities (Jude 7).

God alone is righteous, being right. The Father is righteous (δίκαιος, John 17:25). Christ as a man is also righteous. His “way of thinking, feeling, and acting is wholly conformed to the will of God, and who therefore needs no rectification in heart or life; in this sense Christ alone can be called δίκαιος” (Thayer 148-149). Christ is the righteous One, the just One who died on behalf of the unjust, or unrighteous (Acts 7:52; 1 Pet. 3:18; 1 John 2:1). *The unjust* refers to all people, since among the rest of mankind there is no one δίκαιος (Rom. 3:10).<sup>4</sup> We are unable to obtain righteousness through our attempts to keep the law (Gal. 2:21; 3:21; Rom. 3:21; 10:4). Indeed, our righteousnesses are like a soiled garment (Isa. 64:6). Human beings either reject God’s righteous requirements (δικαίωμα, Rom. 1:32) or find themselves unable to fulfill them due to indwelling sin in their flesh (8:3).

Since God alone is righteous, He is the only one qualified

to exercise righteous judgment (κρίσις δικάια) and judge (κρίνω). God has given the authority to execute just, or righteous, judgment to the only righteous human being, the Lord Jesus, the Son of Man; He is qualified to execute judgment because He did not seek His own will but the will of Him who sent Him (John 5:27, 30; 2 Tim. 4:8). In His being reviled and in His suffering, the Lord Jesus recognized that He could keep committing Himself to God who judges (κρίνω) righteously (1 Pet. 2:23).

The Lord Jesus was baptized to fulfill all righteousness (δικαιοσύνη), recognizing that as a man in the flesh, He was good for nothing but death and burial (Matt. 3:15); He would, therefore, live on earth doing the Father’s will, living the human life by the divine life. God demonstrated His righteousness in setting Christ forth as the propitiation place; this was accomplished through Christ’s death as the propitiatory sacrifice whose blood was shed (Rom. 3:25). Righteousness is revealed in the gospel (1:16-17); “the righteous shall have life and live by faith” (v. 17), which indicates that life is the issue of righteousness. The Holy Spirit convicts us concerning sin, righteousness, and judgment (John 16:8, 10). He convicts us regarding the only way to be freed from sin, which is to believe into Christ, the Son of God (v. 9). If we believe into Him, He is righteousness to us, and we are justified in Him (Rom. 3:24; 4:25). If we do not repent of the sin that is in

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Adam and believe into Christ, the Son of God, we will remain in sin and share the judgment of Satan for eternity (Matt. 25:41). We can receive Christ as the gift of righteousness (Rom. 5:17) by faith in Christ (3:22; 4:11, 13; 9:30; 10:4, 6, 10).

God is the One who justifies (δικαίω, 8:33; 3:26) the circumcised Jews out of faith and the uncircumcised Gentiles through faith (v. 30; Gal. 3:8). He justifies them through faith in Christ’s blood (Rom. 3:24; 5:9). We, the believers, are justified not by works of law but through faith in Jesus Christ as the object of faith (Gal. 2:16) and through the faith of Jesus Christ, as the source and Author of faith, even the Christ within us as the believing element (Heb. 12:2). Having been justified out of faith, we have peace toward God (Rom. 5:1). Through our crucifixion with Christ, dying in Him, we are justified from sin (6:7), both from its nature with its power and its pain and from the sinful acts with their history and their judgment. We are also justified freely by His grace through the redemption (ἀπολύτρωσις) in Christ Jesus (3:24; Titus 3:7). According to Romans 5:16-17, receiving the gracious gift of righteousness at the time of our

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believing resulted in our justification (δικαίωμα, to be in a state of having been justified, indicated by the -μα ending) as opposed to our condemnation (κατάκριμα, to be in a state of having been condemned, as we were before we believed). The righteous One, the resurrected Christ as the Servant of Jehovah, will make righteous those who know Him as the righteous One (Isa. 53:11).

To make us righteous is not merely to justify us objectively but to make us righteous subjectively by Christ's living in us as the resurrection life and by our living Him. Christ was not only delivered for our offenses, but He was raised for our justification, that is, for the process of our justification (δικαίωσις). This process is not only the initial experience of being approved according to God's standard of righteousness; it is also continual and consummate (Rom. 4:25). Christ's one righteous act results in the process of justification of life to all men (5:18), indicating that through justification we have come up to the standard of God's righteousness so that He can now impart His life into us.

**I**f we fall into sin and confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness, based upon His redemptive death (1 John 1:9). Paul and the other apostles exercised to conduct themselves in a holy and righteous and blameless manner toward those who believed (1 Thes. 2:10). The grace of God has appeared and is training us to live soberly and righteously and godly in the present age (Titus 2:11-12). The righteous requirement (δικαίωμα) of the law can be fulfilled in those who walk according to the spirit (Rom. 8:4); the law of the Spirit of life frees such ones in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and of death (v. 2). Christ has become righteousness to us (1 Cor. 1:30), and we also become the righteousness of God in Him (2 Cor. 5:21). We become such by living to righteousness (1 Pet. 2:24), partaking of, or experiencing, the word of righteousness (Heb. 5:13), practicing righteousness (1 John 2:29; 3:7), pursuing righteousness (1 Tim. 6:11; 2 Tim. 2:22), which issues in the fruit of righteousness (Phil. 1:11; Heb. 12:11), giving us the hope of righteousness (Gal. 5:5) and the crown of righteousness as a reward (2 Tim. 4:8). Our righteousnesses, or righteous acts (δικαίωμα), are symbolized by the fine, bright, and clean linen robe of the bridal army (Rev. 19:8).

The righteousnesses (plural)...are not the righteousness (i.e., Christ) that we received for our salvation (1 Cor. 1:30). The righteousness we received for our salvation is objective and enables us to meet the requirement of the righteous God, whereas here the righteousnesses of the overcoming saints are subjective (Phil. 3:9) and enable them to meet the requirement of the overcoming Christ. In Psa. 45:13-14 the queen has two garments: one corresponds with the objective righteousness, which is for our salvation, and the other with the subjective righteousnesses, which

are for our victory. The second garment is equivalent to the wedding garment in Matt. 22:11-12. (Lee, Recovery Version, Rev. 19:8, note 2)

These actions and experiences of justification related to righteousness indicate that our experience of righteousness is not just initial, at the time we believe, but is ongoing throughout our Christian life.

### *Reconciliation*

Reconciliation deals with enmity between two parties. We were enemies of God because we became one with God's enemy, Satan, through the fall and therefore need reconciliation to God.

There are a number of Greek words that indicate reconciliation using the same root ἀλλάσσω ("change") but with different prepositional prefixes: κατά- ("according to" or "down"), occurring about ten times in the New Testament; ἀπό-κατά- ("from" and "according to" or "down"), occurring three times; and διά- ("through") and σύν- ("with") occurring once each. Καταλλάσσω indicates turning a person from enmity to friendship and being in accord with another party. The verb ἀπο-κατ-αλλάσσω has the sense of change from one condition (of enmity) to another condition (of peace). The corresponding noun, καταλλαγή ("adjustment of a difference," "reconciliation"), occurs four times.

There are two steps of reconciliation. The initial step of reconciliation occurred when Christ died for our sins that our sins might be forgiven by God (1 Cor. 15:3). His death also reconciled the world to Himself (Rom. 11:15; 2 Cor. 5:19). This is the objective aspect of Christ's death.

**W**e, being enemies, were reconciled (καταλλάσσω) to God through the death of His Son, and much more, having been reconciled, we will be saved in His life (Rom. 5:10). God has reconciled us to Himself through Christ, and God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself (2 Cor. 5:18-19). Through Christ the things on earth and in the heavens, which were all affected by the rebellion of Satan, were reconciled (ἀποκαταλλάσσω) to God, with Christ making peace through the blood of His cross (Col. 1:20). The believers, who were once alienated and enemies in their mind because of their evil works, He reconciled in the body of His flesh through death (vv. 1-22). The Jews and Gentiles were reconciled (ἀποκαταλλάσσω) to God and to one another in the one Body of Christ through the cross. The cross broke down and removed the middle wall of partition that separated the Jews and Gentiles, abolished the law of the commandments in ordinances that reinforced the differences between the different cultures, and slew the enmity that existed between the cultures (Eph. 2:14-16).



The second step of reconciliation is

to reconcile believers living in the natural life to God from the flesh. For this purpose Christ died for us—the persons—that we might live to Him in the resurrection life [2 Cor. 5:14-15]. This is the subjective aspect of Christ's death. (Lee, Recovery Version, 2 Cor. 5:20, note 2)

This death causes our outward man, our natural being, to be terminated. Paul and the apostles were commissioned with the ministry of reconciliation (καταλλαγή, v. 18), and the word of reconciliation had been put in them (v. 19); thus, they charged the believers to be reconciled to God (v. 20).

In the ongoing Christian life, parties who may need reconciliation are husband and wife, as well as fellow believers (brothers). If a wife is separated from her husband, she should remain unmarried or be reconciled (καταλλάσσω) to her husband (1 Cor. 7:11). If a brother remembers that another brother has something against him when he is offering a gift on the altar to God, he needs to leave his gift before the altar, and first go and be reconciled to the brother, and then come and offer his gift (Matt. 5:23-24).

We must first be reconciled to our brother so that our remembrance of the offense can be removed and our conscience can be void of offense. Then we can come and offer our gift to the Lord and fellowship with Him with a pure conscience. (Lee, Recovery Version, v. 24, note 1)

Perhaps the prefix διὰ- indicates the process that we need to go through to achieve reconciliation, that is, being enlightened by God, recognition that we are sinful, and being strengthened by the Lord to take care of the problem with the brother. The συν- prefix emphasizes bringing the two parties together as in Acts 7:26).

### Positional Sanctification

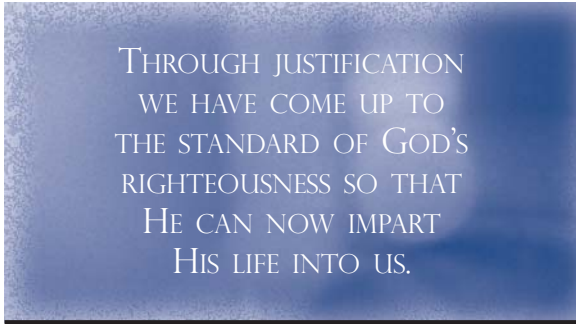
The final aspect of redemption is positional sanctification. There are three aspects of sanctification mentioned in the Bible. The first two aspects are related to the experience of judicial redemption. The first aspect, seeking sanctification, is the sanctification related to the Spirit's seeking us before we repented and believed into Christ (1 Pet. 1:2; John 16:8-11). The sanctification of the Spirit mentioned in 1 Peter 1:2 comes before obedience to Christ and faith in His redemption, i.e., before justification through Christ's redemption (1 Cor. 6:11), indicating that

the believers' obedience unto faith in Christ results from the Spirit's sanctifying work. Following this is the second aspect—positional and dispositional sanctification by the blood of Christ at the time of our believing (Heb. 13:12; 9:13-14; 10:29; 1 Cor. 6:11). Finally, there is the third aspect—the Spirit's dispositional sanctification throughout the course of our Christian life (Rom. 15:16; 6:19, 22; cf. 5:10; Rev. 22:14; 2 Pet. 1:4).

The Greek root containing the notion for *sanctification* is ἅγι- (“holy, separate, and distinct”). The adjective ἅγιος (“holy”) is its most common form. It refers to something holy, either positionally or dispositionally. God alone is holy (Rev. 4:8; 15:4). The Father is holy (John 17:11), the Spirit is the Holy Spirit (Matt. 1:18), and Christ was conceived of the Holy Spirit to be the holy thing in Mary's womb (Luke 1:35) and the Holy One of God (John 6:69; Rev. 3:7; 1 Pet. 1:15; 1 John 2:20). His name is holy (Luke 1:49). Places associated with His presence are holy, such as the temple, or sanctuary, with its Holy Place (Heb. 9:2) and the Holy of Holies, due to His presence there (v. 3). Jerusalem is the holy city due to God's presence in the temple (Matt. 4:5), and so is the New Jerusalem (Rev. 21:2). His covenant is holy (Luke 1:72), and the Scriptures are holy (Rom. 1:2). God's desire is to make His people holy as He is holy (1 Pet. 1:16). We were chosen to be holy (Eph. 1:4). Our calling is holy

(2 Tim. 1:9), our faith is holy (Jude 20), and we should have a holy manner of life (2 Pet. 3:11). We should present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy, well pleasing to God (Rom. 12:1), and the mature believers will be presented holy and without blemish at Christ's return for His bride (Eph. 5:27; Col. 1:22). The believers are frequently referred to as “saints,” using the plural form of the adjective ἅγιος, literally “the holy ones” (1 Cor. 1:2; Rom. 1:7; Jude 3). We are a holy temple due to the indwelling of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 3:17; 6:19; Eph. 2:21), a holy priesthood (1 Pet. 2:5), and a holy nation (v. 9).

The verb ἁγιάζω (“sanctify,” “cause something to be holy”) is the next most common form. It is used to denote the separation of things or persons from what is common so that they may be for God's use (e.g., the gold sanctified by the temple (Matt. 23:17), the gift sanctified by the altar (v. 19) and believers as vessels of honor separated from vessels of dishonor in the great house of Christendom (2 Tim. 2:21)). It is used also to indicate the positional sanctification of the believers, those who have been sanctified,<sup>5</sup> set apart to God, for His holy purpose (1 Cor. 1:2; 6:11; Heb. 10:10, 14, 29; 13:12; Acts 20:32;



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26:18). However, ἀγιάζω refers mostly to the process of dispositional sanctification (Heb. 2:11) through the impartation of God's holy nature into our entire tripartite being (1 Thes. 5:23), by the Holy Spirit (Rom. 15:16), through the washing of the water in the rhema word (Eph. 5:26), and in the truth (John 17:17, 19).

The noun ἀγιασμός (“sanctification”) occurs about ten times and refers to sanctification as a whole, including all three steps of sanctification—the Spirit's seeking and convicting us, His sanctifying us positionally and dispositionally at the time we were saved, and His sanctifying us dispositionally so that we may grow in life (1 Thes. 4:3, 7; 2 Thes. 2:13; 1 Cor. 1:30). The noun ἀγιότης (“holiness”) indicates the quality and characteristic of being holy and occurs one time, referring to God's holiness, of which we can partake (Heb. 12:10). The noun ἀγιοσύνη (“holiness”) occurs three times, including once in the expression *the Spirit of holiness* (Rom. 1:4). As Thayer points out, the Spirit of holiness is not equivalent to the Holy Spirit, but it indicates “the divine [?] spiritual nature in Christ as contrasted with his σάρξ [flesh]” (7); it was according to this Spirit of Holiness that Christ's human nature was sanctified, uplifted, and transformed through His resurrection from the dead. The other two occurrences indicate the process and consummation of our sanctification, of perfecting holiness (2 Cor. 7:1); such a process needs to take place so that our hearts may be established in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints (1 Thes. 3:13).

### Redemption Making Us Correspond to God in His Attributes

Many of the actions experienced as part of our judicial redemption are based upon certain attributes of God, and He desires to make us the same as He is in these attributes. For example, justification is based on God's righteousness, purification is based on God's purity, reconciliation is related to God's peace, and sanctification is based on God's holiness. God's full salvation makes us the same as God in these attributes. Through our experience of judicial redemption and God's organic salvation, we become the righteousness of God (2 Cor. 5:21), pure as He is pure (1 John 3:3), and holy as He is holy (1 Pet. 1:16). Having been reconciled to the God of peace (Eph. 2:15-16; Rom. 16:20), we also become peacemakers (Matt. 5:9; James 3:18), with the indwelling Christ as the arbitrating peace within us (Col. 3:15).

### Conclusion

The price for judicial redemption has been paid by our God-man Redeemer on the cross through the shedding of His blood; now this judicial redemption needs to be applied to us. His redemption brings us to God, and we

can receive deliverance, forgiveness, cleansing, justification, reconciliation, and positional sanctification. These aspects of judicial redemption have an initial, objective sense, but they are also part of a process with an ongoing, subjective sense and a consummate sense, which need to be worked out as part of the experience of God's organic salvation. Judicial redemption and its associated actions lead into the subjective experience of God's organic salvation, comprising regeneration, dispositional sanctification, transformation, and, ultimately, glorification—the full expression of God in humanity, having become the same as He is in righteousness, purity, holiness, and glory.

by Roger Good

### Notes

<sup>1</sup>Redemption in its sense of deliverance from domination by a foreign power is linked in the Old Testament to the sins, iniquities, and transgressions of the people. For example, Judges contains cycles of Israel committing evil, worshipping idols, and forsaking or forgetting Jehovah, then being sold into the hand of foreign rulers, then crying out to Him, and His raising up a deliverer (2:11-14; 3:7-8; 4:1-2; 10:6-7; 1 Sam. 12:9-11; cf. 1 Kings 8:46-47, 50).

<sup>2</sup>Repentance is also unto life (Acts 11:18) and unto the full knowledge of the truth (2 Tim. 2:25).

<sup>3</sup>Some consider *washed* to be an “indirect allusion to baptism”; however, “Paul is not here concerned with the Christian initiatory rite, but with the spiritual transformation made possible through Christ and effected by the Spirit” (Fee 267).

<sup>4</sup>Some, however, were considered righteous in their conduct by their “walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord (Luke 1:6), i.e., [by their] living according to the law of God with the expiation made by the offerings” (Lee, Recovery Version, Matt. 1:19, note 1).

<sup>5</sup>The positional aspect of sanctification at the initiation of our regeneration is also reinforced by the use of the Greek perfect tense, which indicates the resultant state of an action having taken place, i.e., “have been sanctified” (Acts 20:32; 26:18; 1 Cor. 1:2; Heb. 10:10).

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