

Why We Need to Be Saved: The Blessings

by

Grayson Stewart Gilbert

1. Introduction

2. The Many Blessings We Have in Christ

- a. We are declared righteous by faith in Jesus Christ and not by works (Rom. 3:21-25a).
 - i. “But now apart from the Law the righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe; for there is no distinction; for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God...” (Rom. 3:21-23).
 1. Just prior to this section, Paul has shown the problem of all mankind.
 2. But at this point, Paul makes a shift to show that God provided the solution through the person and work of Jesus Christ.
 - a. He draws a contrast in verse 21 to show that it is not through the Law that the righteousness of God has been manifested, or made known.
 - b. Rather, the righteousness of God has been demonstrated through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe.
 - ii. “...being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith” (Rom. 3:24-25a).
 1. This is really where the message of the gospel comes to the forefront to show it is all God’s grace.

- a. Justification is a legal term that speaks to a declaration God has made: we are righteous, and therefore free from the “guilty” verdict.
 - b. This declaration of righteousness is given to us by grace through the death of Jesus Christ on the cross.
2. The point that Paul makes here is quite simple, though it is incredibly profound. Only Jesus could cover us with His righteousness, so that we might be forgiven.
- a. The idea goes well beyond just forgiveness; the very righteousness of Christ is counted for you through faith.
 - b. It is not a righteousness of your own, or one you can attain to—but Christ’s own righteousness which covers you.
 - c. This is a once-for-all declaration, meaning you will never be deemed “unrighteous,” so long as you have genuine faith in Jesus Christ.
- b. We have peace with God through Jesus Christ (Rom. 5:1-2).
- i. “Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God” (Rom. 5:1-2).
 1. Previously, we were counted as enemies of God, but now we have peace with God through being justified, or declared righteousness.
 2. You can rest assured that God credits the righteousness of Christ to you because Jesus’s life, death, and resurrection accomplished this reality.
 - a. This is not some internal sense of peace that depends on how you feel each day. This is an objective reality.
 - b. The sin that separated you from God—the hostility that you had with God, has been resolved because you now stand in grace.

- ii. Jesus Christ has restored your relationship with God, and that relationship with Him can never be undone if you have genuine faith.
 - 1. The barrier between you and God due to sin has been utterly demolished because God has declared you righteous, once and for all, through faith in Jesus Christ.
 - 2. This doesn't change from day to day, because one day you screwed up and sinned a lot, and the next day, you did somewhat better. That's not how this works.
 - a. Think of this as two different realms of existence: the realm of wrath and the realm of grace.
 - b. The reality that Paul is speaking towards here is bound up in the fact that Christ died and rose again to resolve your sin. Because of this, we can have confidence.
- c. We are dead to sin, and alive in Jesus Christ (Rom. 6:4-7).
 - i. "Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall also be in the likeness of His resurrection, knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin; for he who has died is freed from sin" (Rom. 6:4-7).
 - 1. Again, this is an objective reality that doesn't depend on you and I. This is the result of the work Jesus has done that is granted to you through genuine faith.

- a. Notice that Paul begins by speaking of the fact that we have been united with Christ in His death and resurrection.
 - b. The point that he makes here is that when Christ was killed on the cross, you also died with him—but you have also risen with Him.
2. Remember the two different realms of existence I just spoke of. There was the realm of judgment and wrath and the realm of grace.
 - a. That realm of judgment and wrath was also the realm under the power of sin. As an unbeliever, everything you do is tainted by this reality.
 - b. But because you are united with Christ in His death and resurrection, you have been moved into a new realm, free from the dominion of sin.
- ii. The reason for this is simple, as Paul says in verses 5-6: the old self has been crucified with Christ, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin because we have also been raised with him.
 1. As Paul also says in Galatians 2:20, “I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.”
 2. The incredible blessing that God gives us through faith in Christ is that whatever you were prior to being saved is no longer the case.
 - a. You are not merely declared righteous and at peace with God.
 - b. Your past life, filled and defined by regret, sin, folly, and everything else—is no longer what defines you.
- d. We were slaves to sin, but are now slaves to righteousness (Rom. 6:17-18).

- i. “But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed, and having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness” (Rom. 6:17-18).
 1. Notice the point that Paul makes here, where he defines how this newness of life plays out.
 - a. The unbeliever believes that by coming to embrace the gospel, they will miss out on freedom.
 - b. The reality that Paul speaks to here is that either way you stretch it, you’re a slave. You are either a slave to sin, or a slave to righteousness.
 2. This reality of who your master is, Paul says, is changed through union with Jesus Christ.
 - a. Your fundamental nature as a sinner has been radically changed so that the disposition of your heart is now bent toward righteousness rather than sin.
 - b. If you remember, part of the problem we have is that in our natural state, our hearts are desperately wicked. Every intent of the thoughts of our hearts are only evil continually.
- ii. In Jesus Christ though, this is no longer the case.
 1. Having been buried with Jesus in His death and raised in His life, the believer has been transferred from one master to another.
 2. That transfer has ultimately changed your heart. Your heart is no longer sold in bondage to sin, but you have been freed from that master by Jesus Christ.
 - a. Christ being your Master instead of sin, means that from the very core of who you are, your heart, you have embraced the truth of God’s Word.

- b. You have believed the message, being the gospel, and you are now committed to the teaching attached to that gospel.
- e. We were doomed to eternal death, but now we have eternal life in Jesus Christ (Rom. 6:23).
 - i. “For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom. 6:23).
 - 1. Through Adam’s sin came death, and this is a reality that the living knows well.
 - a. No matter what you and I may try to do, we cannot overcome death.
 - b. Not a single soul has the day or the hour marked on their calendar for when they die.
 - 2. Yet the sin of Adam did not merely bring about our inevitable physical death, it brought on eternal death.
 - ii. But the free gift of God is eternal life in Jesus Christ our Lord. What you could not thwart and what you cannot earn, has been given to you freely, purely by grace, if we are found in Jesus Christ.
 - 1. What this means is quite simple: through genuine faith in Jesus Christ, you no longer stand to face eternal death—but even physical death has lost its power over you.
 - a. When the Christian dies, he does not merely go down into the grave to rot and fade into nothingness.
 - b. Yet he also does not go to Hell like the unbeliever, but is immediately ushered into the presence of God, who is life.
 - 2. Thus, you need not be afraid of death in any sense, because Jesus defeated death in His resurrection.

- a. Jesus paid the debt your sin earned you through His death, but through His life, He has given you access to God.
 - b. It is not merely a life without end; it speaks to a quality of life that is directly attached to God who is life itself.
- f. We were once condemned to wrath, but now there is no condemnation (Rom. 8:1).
- i. “Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus” (Rom. 8:1).
 - 1. The point Paul makes here is an incredibly simple one, but it is a world-tilting reality if you can come to understand it: you are fully and freely forgiven.
 - 2. The penalty that sin brought upon us was not merely physical death, but eternal death—and that eternal death is under the active wrath of God for all who stand condemned, or judged guilty, in their sins.
 - ii. But in Jesus Christ, there is now no condemnation.
 - 1. The guilty verdict has been removed; the sinner has been declared righteous because of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.
 - 2. In every single way, your sin is no longer held against you.
 - a. The wrath of God has been removed, and this is not a reality that depends on how you feel.
 - b. These are things that are simply declared to be true for you if you believe in Jesus Christ.
- g. We have been adopted into the family of God (Rom. 8:14-17).
- i. This passage highlights the work of the Spirit, which is yet another gift given to the Christian.

1. Just prior to this, Paul describes the life of one who is ruled by the Spirit of God, which is just another way of saying one who is a genuine Christian by faith in Jesus Christ.
 2. He talks about a reality that has taken place in being saved: the Spirit now indwells the believer, giving them life, uniting them with God, and empowering them to live in a way that pleases God.
- ii. But notice how Paul frames this whole section in terms of adoption into the family of God.
1. In verse 14: those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.
 2. In verse 15 he says we no longer have a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but rather, we have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out to our heavenly Father.
 3. In verses 16-17: the Spirit Himself testifies that we are children of God, and if we are His children, we are also heirs with Christ.
 - a. So, we are not merely adopted into the family, we stand to inherit the blessings the Father has promised to Christ.
 - b. Throughout the remainder of this chapter, Paul then tells us exactly what lengths God has gone to, to assure us that we are indeed His children.
- h. We have a sure Helper in the Spirit.
- i. He gives life to our mortal bodies (Rom. 8:11).
 1. “But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you” (Rom. 8:11).

2. Here the idea that Paul speaks to is the guarantee of the resurrection from the dead.
 - a. In verse 10 he talks about the fact that the spirit of man has been given life because of the righteousness now granted to us by faith.
 - b. This same Spirit that lives in us now serves as a pledge of the life to come.
- ii. The Spirit also assures us of our salvation (Rom. 8:16).
 1. “The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God” (Rom. 8:16).
 2. The reality accomplished through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ is that we have a guarantee that we are children of God.
 - a. The Spirit Himself testifies to the fact that we belong to God, and that He will indeed not cast us away.
 - b. Think of all the times your heart and mind wander, and all the times you grieve over your sin, wondering whether or not you’re truly a Christian.
- iii. He assures us of our inheritance to come (Rom. 8:17ff).
 1. In light of this same reality, the Spirit confirms that because of the work of Jesus Christ, you have a guarantee that you will not see wrath and eternal death, but that God grants you a hope in what is to come.
 2. Not only will you see redemption and life, but all of creation itself will be redeemed, and there will be a New Heavens and a New Earth—and God will carry you safely from this life to the next.
- iv. The Spirit prays on our behalf (Rom. 8:26-27).
 1. Even as you don’t know what to pray, the Spirit takes your prayers and shapes them into good prayers that the Father is pleased to answer.

2. Little by little, the Spirit deepens your affections and trust in your God.
- i. God works all things for our good (Rom. 8:28-30).
 - i. He called us according to His purpose (Rom. 8:28).
 1. That purpose is bound up in our inheritance as His children, which is that we will one day be raised with Christ and see God face to face.
 2. Thus, as you live through trials, you can know that even in spite of this, God is working all things toward redemption and glorification.
 - ii. He predestined us to be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ (Rom. 8:29).
 1. Little by little, day by day, your heart, mind, affections, and everything else are being brought to reflect more of Jesus.
 2. So, though God saves you in your miserable state of sin and rebellion, He is not content to leave you there.
 - iii. He secures our salvation from start to finish (Rom. 8:30).
 1. None of it is a work you have done, are doing, or will do.
 2. It is all a declared reality that is given to you as a gift through faith in Jesus Christ.
 - j. Truly, there is nothing that can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus (Rom. 8:31-39).
 - i. If God is for us, who can possibly be against us? If God is the justifier of the unrighteous, who can possibly stand to condemn us?
 1. Your inheritance is so secure because of what Jesus has done that tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, and even the sword cannot come between you and Jesus.
 2. He is the One who secures us through all of life and death because He has adopted us as His children in love.

ii. Thus, when it comes to anything, we are deemed more than conquerors through Him who loved us and gave Himself up for us.

1. The point in all of this is that salvation, from start to finish, is a work of God by grace through faith.
2. At that moment that you were forgiven of your sins and declared righteous by God, it was a once and for all moment.
 - a. When you speak to the reality of what salvation is, you cannot divorce it from all of the glorious blessings we inherit through Jesus Christ.
 - b. The point I am making here is simple: through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, we bring nothing to the table. Instead, we find that all of it is the free gift of God's grace.

3. Conclusion

Small Group Questions:

1. Who is one person you can commit to giving the gospel to that you haven't already?
2. Why is it important that we speak of the blessings given to us through salvation with unbelievers?
3. If every bit of the Christian life is one of grace, why do you and I so often return to the faulty thinking that our standing before God depends on us? How do you counteract this?
4. One of the results that comes with sharing the gospel regularly is that we grow in joy and assurance, as we are reminded of what God has done for us. Why do you believe God has built this into the fabric of evangelizing?