

I am NOT GUILTY

11-15-2020

INTRODUCTION

And I would love to see our church become fluent in the Gospel. I would love to see our marriages become fluent in the Gospel. I would love to see our parenting become fluent in the Gospel.

SO... let's learn some Gospel phrases shall we?

Five Gospel Declarations

In Christ...

- **I am NOT GUILTY.** God Himself has declared me “not guilty”. Therefore, I will reject every voice of shame, fear, or condemnation.
- **I am LOVED.** There is nothing I can do to make God love me more. And nothing I can do to make God love me less.
- **I am FREE.** I have been set free from the power of sin because He who conquered sin lives in me.
- **I am GIFTED and CALLED.** I have been given a special ability and assignment from God to advance His Kingdom.
- **I am COMPELLED.** In view of such a great salvation, I will be holy, love deeply, and witness boldly.

This week we're going to look at the FIRST Gospel Declaration:

- **I am NOT GUILTY.** God Himself has declared me “not guilty”. Therefore, I will reject every voice of shame, fear, or condemnation.

Romans 8:1

Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus...

In Romans Paul is laying out the case, almost like a lawyer, as to the great theological truths of the GOSPEL. 21 times in Romans, Paul says, “THEREFORE”. And over the next few weeks, including today, we are going to look at some of the Big Ones.

Hear me clearly... your assurance of salvation is NOT based on a single verse or two, where it *seems* like Jesus is saying, that you can't lose your salvation. No. It's not based on handful of verses. It is not based on your feelings. It is not based on how well you are living for God. It is not based on the fact that you go to a church that believes in eternal security. And you're really really hoping they're right.

The assurance that you may have for your salvation is based on the very nature of what salvation even is and the very clear message of the Gospel.

Therefore there is now NO CONDEMNATION for those who are in Christ Jesus.

Beautiful statement. But now how did he get there? Let's review in bullet-point fashion his argument as he lays out the case for the Gospel:

Paul's Case for The Gospel

- The Gospel or "good news" of God was promised by the prophets, proved by the resurrection, and preached by the apostles (1:1-6)
- The Gospel alone is the power of God for the salvation of people's souls (1:16)
- And that salvation is necessary, because the wrath of God is now being revealed against all the wickedness of mankind (1:18-32)
- ALL have sinned (Jews and Gentiles) and fallen short of God's standard of righteousness and are therefore under His wrath. No one can be righteous. Not even by obedience to the Law. Why? Because ALL have broken the Law. (2:1-3:19)
- The Jews who were given the actual Law of God by Moses have broken it. And the Gentiles who had the Law of God impressed on their hearts have broken it as well (2:12-16).

1st BIG "THEREFORE..."

²⁰ THEREFORE no one will be declared righteous in God's sight by the works of the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of our sin. Romans 3:20

So, let's think about this for a minute...

- IF it is required for mankind to be righteous in order to escape God's wrath
- IF it is impossible for mankind to be righteous by obedience to God's Law...
- THEN we are in big trouble!
- UNLESS... somehow there could be a salvation that is from God Himself. If somehow God could credit HIS righteousness (as He is the only One who is IS righteous) to us in a way that does not violate His justice.
- Hallelujah! There is!
 - *²¹ But now apart from the law the righteousness of God has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. ²² This righteousness is given through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference between Jew and Gentile, ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. ²⁵ God presented Christ as a sacrifice of atonement, through the shedding of his blood—to be received by faith. Romans 3:21-25a*
- Thus, the basic message of the Gospel is this:
 - NOT that God will simply ignore your sin because He loves you
 - NOT that God will give you a fresh start but now you must be really, really good
 - NOT that you must do more good works than bad works
 - RATHER, in Christ, you may freely receive the righteousness of God Himself credited to your account BY FAITH.
- This sounds too good to be true right?

- Paul then goes on to underscore to the skeptical Jew that this IS true, reminding them that Abraham was declared righteous because of his faith, NOT by his obedience to the Law for he was declared righteous BEFORE the Law was even given. Thus, he is the perfect example of someone who was saved by grace, through faith (chapter 4)
 - *What does Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness." Romans 4:3*

2nd BIG "THEREFORE..."

¹⁶ THEREFORE, the promise comes by faith, so that it may be by grace and may be guaranteed to all Abraham's offspring—not only to those who are of the law but also to those who have the faith of Abraham. He is the father of us all. Romans 4:16

I want you to catch a few words here with me:

- "By faith"—NOT by obedience to the Law
- "By grace"—unmerited favor

⁴ But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, ⁵ made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. ⁶ And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, ⁷ in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. ⁸ For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—⁹ not by works, so that no one can boast. Ephesians 2:4-9

- "May be guaranteed"

³⁷ All those the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away. ³⁸ For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me. ³⁹ And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all those he has given me, but raise them up at the last day. ⁴⁰ For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise them up at the last day." John 6:37-40

¹³ And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, ¹⁴ who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession—to the praise of his glory. Ephesians 1:13-14

3rd BIG “THEREFORE...”

THEREFORE, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, ² through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. Romans 5:1-2a

“Justified”

- This refers to our legal standing before God.
- “Just as if I’d” never sinned

“peace”

- i.e. No longer under His wrath
- Not only that, but we have become the children of God!

¹⁴ For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. ¹⁵ The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. ¹⁶ And by him we cry, “Abba, ¹⁷ Father.” ¹⁶ The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children. ¹⁷ Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory. Romans 8:14-17

See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! 1 John 3:1a

“grace in which we now stand”

³¹ What, then, shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? ³² He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? ³³ Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. ³⁴ Who then is the one who condemns? No one. Christ Jesus who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us. Romans 8:31-34

CONCLUSION

Church, your salvation has been proven in a heavenly court of Law. Your salvation is NOT based on how well you are living out a holy life. It is by grace, through faith.

What does that mean BEFORE the Cross?

You cannot EARN your salvation because of good works.

What does that mean AFTER the Cross?

You cannot LOSE your salvation because of bad works.