

# THE224 Christian Narrative 2 Redemption

## Unit 3b Order of Salvation Part 2

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Welcome to Christian Narrative 2. This is Session 3B. In this session, we'll continue our discussion about the order of salvation. Our main teaching point today is that Jesus offers humanity new relationships. In our first session on the salvation order, we looked at how Jesus brings us new life. And by doing that, we looked at the first few steps of the salvation process. We looked at election, we looked at the gospel call, we looked at regeneration, and we looked at conversion. We reminded ourselves that the process of salvation, while it's a seemingly instantaneous thing, actually follows a very clear process much like the shooting of a gun where we see the end product, and the end product is produced very quickly. There are a number of important steps that are happening. So now we're going to pick up with our conversation by looking at the fourth part and the fifth part of the salvation process or the order of salvation. And these have to do with relationships. Jesus offers humanity new relationships.

So the fourth part of the order of salvation is called justification. Justification is defined as the instantaneous legal act of God in which (1) he thinks of our sins as forgiven and Christ's righteousness as belonging to us, and (2) declares us righteous in his sight. So Berkhof notes this. In Scripture, a man is called *dikaios* when in the judgment of God, his relation to the law is what it ought to be, or when his life is such as is required by his judicial relation to God. In other words, *dikaios* is the word "justified." Justification again is a willful act of God. You're going to hear me say this time and time again. We started in Session 1 of this unit by talking about the reality that salvation is an act of God, that even after Christ died on the cross, it still takes the act of God in order for salvation to occur. That is true for the whole, but it's also true for the parts. Regeneration is a gift of God. Election is a gift of God. Those are both willful acts of God. And so justification as well is a willful act of God. Romans 8:33-34, "Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us." This passage is so very clear to us that not only does God elect us, but it is also God who justifies us.

So let's take a look at both the negative aspects of justification as well as the positive aspects of justification. First, we'll deal with the negative. Justification happens because of the imputation of Christ's blood on our spiritual account. Romans 5:1, "Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Justification takes away the animosity that once existed between us and God because our legal standing before God has changed. This takes place because there is a once for all pardon of sin in the life of the individual, past, present, and future. And I want to look at each one of these passages because each really gives us a clear understanding of what is changing and how all of our sin has been taken care of. That passage in Romans 5:1, we have been justified by our faith. In this response, in our conversion process, in our acceptance of what Christ has done for us in the cross, we receive all the forgiveness we need so that our place before God can be changed. We are now justified. Our legal standing is changed because all of this sin has been dealt with.

So we read in Romans 5:21, a few verses later, "Sin reigned in death, yet grace also might reign through righteousness leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." So we've gone from having death reign in our life to now having righteousness reign in our life. Romans 8:32-34, "He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn?" And as we read earlier, "Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us." Hebrews 10:14. Listen to these powerful words. "By a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified." That is powerful. Psalm 103:12,

“As far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us.” Isaiah 44:22, “I have blotted out your transgressions like a cloud and your sins like mist; return to me, for I have redeemed you.”

There’s a beautiful understanding that justification removes the penalty, removes the stain, removes the shame of sin. It’s all gone, past, present, and future. Sins that I have yet to commit have been done away with in the salvation process because I am now justified. I am standing in right position. That’s the negative. It takes away these things. The positive is that the result of justification is that we’re no longer guilty now. We can stand in confidence before God. Romans 8:1, “There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.” This would not be true if our future sins or our present sins had not been dealt with. If they had not been taken care of, then we could not be fully justified and we could not say with confidence that we could stand before Christ without condemnation. But because of this passage, this is yet another reminder to us that all of our sin has been pardoned. Justification, act of being seen in right standing before God, allows us to say with confidence that the problem of sin has been dealt with. Romans 4:6-8, “Just as David also speaks of the blessing of the one to whom God counts righteousness apart from works: ‘Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, and whose sins are covered; blessed is the man against whom the Lord will not count his sin.’” The fourth part of the salvation order is justification. First, we are elected. Then we hear the gospel call. We are regenerated through the Holy Spirit. We are converted through our willing response to this gospel call. Then we are justified.

The fifth part of the salvation order is called adoption. Defined, this is the legal act whereby God places the sinner in the status of a child. And this process is not talking about what is occurring inwardly. Rather, it’s talking about what occurs outwardly. But we’ll talk about that here as we move into Session 3 talking about sanctification. But for now, let’s focus on adoption. What this point actually teaches us about humanity is that humanity is not inherently born as children of God. And in fact, because of original sin, because of the fall, our status has been changed and we are no longer children of God, but Ephesians 2:3 tells us, in fact, that we are children of wrath. It says you once lived among those who, in their passions, carried out the passions of the flesh. They carried out their “desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.” (Ephesians 2:3)

So just aside, I mean, we were talking about the order of salvation, but it’s important for us to recognize by the very fact that God adopts us in the process of salvation, we need to recognize that our original standing before God is not to be God’s children. So you may hear someone say, “We are all children of God. We are all creations of God. We are all in God’s image.” But we are not all children of God. In order to be a child of God, we must experience salvation. It is only then that we are adopted as children of God. So what are the implications of adoption? Well, we’re transferred from being the enemies of God to being the children of God. John 1:12-13, “But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but were born of God.” Galatians 4:4-7, “But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons (and daughters). And because you are sons (and daughters), God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, ‘Abba! Father!’ So you are no longer a slave, but a son (or a daughter, a child), and if a child, then an heir through God.” So we go from being the enemies of God, children of wrath, those who were opposed to God, those who were dead in their sins, those who did not want to have anything to do with God, to being children who have such a relationship with

our Father that they can say, “Daddy.” That intimate word of relationship between father and son, father and daughter.

Now, that’s the relational part. But it also brings an obligation that we are now to follow God’s family rules. 1 John 3:10, “By this it is evident who are the children of God, and who are the children of the devil: whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is the one who does not love his brother.” So while we can talk about this wonderful new relationship that we share with God, which is true because we’ve gone from being his enemies to being his children, we also recognize that adoption brings an obligation to follow the rules of God’s family because this is the proof, if you will, this is the evidence that we have indeed accepted the adoption that God offers us. And we’re then privileged to receive God’s family benefits. Romans 8:14-17, “All who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, ‘Abba! Father!’ The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.” So this adoption process is very important. It changes the status from enemy of God, child of wrath, to son or daughter of God, child of the king. It obliges us to follow God’s rules for the family, and yet we are also privileged to receive God’s family benefits. We really are grafted into God’s family. Justification, step four. Adoption, part five.

Now, perhaps you’re wondering at this point, “Well, why haven’t we heard the word ‘faith’?” Faith, strictly speaking, is not part of the salvation process per se, but it is definitely involved. So I wanted to point out how both faith is involved in justification and faith is involved in adoption. First, we are justified through faith. This is very clear in Romans 5:1. It says, “Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” As a result of our faith, God changes our legal status before God’s law, thus making us righteous. Our conversion happens because we place our faith, our trust in God. Therefore, it’s an absolute essential part of justification. We are justified because in faith we convert. And yet we’re also adopted through faith. Galatians 3:23-25, “Now before faith came, we were held captive under the law, imprisoned until the coming faith would be revealed. So then, the law was our guardian until Christ came, in order that we might be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian.” So we are brought through faith into adoption, into the family of God. We are justified. We are adopted through faith. Faith is an integral part of both of these steps in the order of salvation. But these two words, more than the rest, deal with new relationships. Justification puts us in right standing, in right relationship with God. Adoption changes us from being children of wrath to children of God. Thus, we remind ourselves that our main teaching point today is that Jesus offers humanity new relationships. So, so far, in the order of salvation, we’ve talked about election. We’ve talked about the gospel call. We’ve talked about regeneration. We’ve talked about conversion. We’ve talked about justification. And we’ve talked about adoption. New life in Jesus and new relationships in Jesus.