

Dear special friends, the Gospel is the power of God for deliverance to everyone who has faith in Jesus! This is incredible, liberating truth! God says: “By My undeserved favor, you’ve been declared and made right/just.” Since all have sinned, if a person is to be saved, it must be by God’s grace. Because of Jesus’ death on the Cross and paying the penalty for our sins, when we place our faith in Him, FHIDLS takes place. Hand out. What love! What grace! It’s all **through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus (3:24).** While justification is a legal term, redemption is a commercial term, from the slave market. Redeemed = to set free by paying a price. It was the payment needed to purchase a slave. Jesus paid the ransom for us. He became sin for us. His death paid that price. God loves us, enough to give His Son to die for us (5:8). The whole intent of the work of the Lord Jesus Christ was to bring us to God as Father. How was the justice, the righteousness, of God revealed? Through Jesus! “His death proves the utter futility of man’s coming to God in his/her own way and power.” Jesus is our Justifier, our Redeemer, our Propitiator!

Read :9-31. THE JUSTICE/RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD HAS BEEN REVEALED. How did God do this? **:25a whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation (satisfaction) in His blood through faith.** Paul now takes us from the courtroom and the slave market to the temple. Propitiation is used in the OT of the animal sacrifices. Sinners would bring animals to be sacrificed, in their place, for their sins. God’s Lamb, Jesus, shed His blood to satisfy all the charges against us, whether sins, nature (sinners), or representative (in Adam). See **1 Pet. 1:18-19, Col. 2:11-14.** The blood of Jesus ‘satisfied’ all of God’s holy and just requirements. Jesus took the guilty sinners’ place and fully paid the penalty for sin. All as condemned criminals, doomed slaves, and guilty sinners can be set free because of the Person and work of Jesus on the cross. His body given, His blood shed—the penalty, ransom, and sacrifice were paid. Mankind’s guilt was fully dealt with. That’s what the Lord’s Supper indicates. God is free and just to save those who trust Jesus as Lord. For each individual, it now becomes a matter of faith in the One who satisfied the Father’s justice. Have you by faith received what God the Father and His Son Jesus have done on your behalf? When? Tell your story.

Consider these facts: The work is done! Jesus became sin for us. God’s justice has been fully satisfied by Jesus’ Person and work on our behalf. If you by faith receive Jesus as Lord, you are forgiven, made just, will share God’s glory. Your case is dismissed, and the Judge receives you (formerly guilty and a slave of sin) into His own family! “Case dismissed. Set the criminal and slave and sinner free! Welcome to My family!” Our (and every person’s) ideas of justification must be true to this passage and must be tested by it.

:25b-26 THE JUSTICE/RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD HAS BEEN DEMONSTRATED. God is just and the Justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus. **:25b “This was to demonstrate His righteousness, because in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed.”** At the Cross of Jesus, God demonstrated His justice. He did this because in His restraint and mercy, He had ‘passed over’ the sins previously committed before the Cross. Before the Cross, God

was patiently restraining His hand in order that the human race could continue and many could be saved. Back in the OT, the Jews brought a perfect little lamb. That lamb had to die in place of the sinner who brought it. Yet God was only passing over the sins previously committed. **Acts 17:30-31** “Having overlooked the times of ignorance, God...” “The justice of God seemed to be compromised by His self-restraint, but the cross settled that.” Sin couldn’t be forever passed over. On the Cross of Jesus, the real Lamb of God died, once for all, in the place of all, to deal with all sinners and sins. “Because of His justice, no sin will ever go unpunished; yet because of His grace, no sin is beyond forgiveness.” “His forbearance was therefore not a sign of injustice but of His patient and loving grace.” **2 Pet. 3:9.** “The last time in history that mankind got a clear idea of God’s holy justice was the time of the Flood.”

:26 for the demonstration, I say, of His righteousness at the present time, so that He would be just and the Justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus. Because of the work of Jesus on the cross, God can be both just (doing what the case demands, satisfying His justice) and the Justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus. The Cross says that God is just and that He takes sin very seriously. “Yet God’s love flows so deep that He chose to satisfy His own justice.” Jesus’ death both satisfied God the Father and delivered all who have faith in His Son. The end result is that both God and the former criminal, slave, and sinner by nature are righteous, just! Amazing truth!

God justifies, redeems, accepts, forgives, makes righteous the person of faith in the Lord Jesus! All based on what Jesus accomplished on the Cross. Faith in Jesus is God’s solution for our guilt, shame, sins, and natures. What will you do with Jesus, who died for you as a sinner and your sins on the Cross? If you have not believed and received this Good News of God, how can you choose to reject such love and deliverance? If you are a Christian, this Good News should cause us to fall on our knees before this loving, gracious God.

God’s wrath is poured out against ungodliness and unrighteousness/injustice, all sins against God &/or against others (**1:18**). Verdict? Guilty of suppressing God’s truth, *revealed by* idolatry, sexual immorality, degrading passions, depraved minds. Guilty of judging others while not dealing with our own sins, of stubbornness and unrepentant hearts, of selfish ambition and disobedience, of not living up to the light/truth we possess. Guilty of not being responsible with the privileges we have, of dishonoring God, of counting on outward practices or ancestry. Every person—pagan, moral, religious—is hopelessly, helplessly guilty before God. And, the Law is no help at all for deliverance! It only points out our need for a Deliverer. Mankind’s only hope is faith in the One who satisfied the Father’s justice by His death on the cross—His name is Jesus. Any person can be ‘justified’ by faith in Jesus as Lord and Savior.

:27 Where then is boasting? It is excluded. By what kind of law? Of works? No, but by a law of faith. Who can boast about that? No one! Boasting is once for all excluded. Is there anything we can ‘do’, any law we can follow, that will change us? “Surely my sins aren’t that serious! Surely I’m not utterly

indebted to Jesus and the Cross! Surely there must be something I can do or at least contribute in order to make amends. Can't I be justified by works?" NO!! God's solution is a gift of love which is offered apart from any works.

:28 For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from works of the Law. Why is boasting excluded? Why don't works have anything to do with my justification? Because a person is justified by faith in Jesus, apart from works of the Law. **Maintain** is a word we'll see a lot from now on; it means to count, calculate, a reasoned conclusion. It's only by faith in who Jesus is and what He did on the cross that one can be made right/just with God, freed from God's penalty on sin. Jesus and His death were what was needed. The Law had nothing to do with it. Faith in Jesus Christ :22, for all who believe :22, have faith in Jesus :26, justified by faith in Jesus :28,30! No works or law involved. I gave this verse to two missionaries of a cult. They correctly concluded that either the Scripture was right and they were wrong; or, they were right and the Scripture was wrong! I chose God's Word, not theirs! **Gal. 2:16 (read)** is also helpful. Base your conclusions on what God says!

:29-30 :29 Or is God the God of Jews only? Is He not the God of Gentiles also? Yes, of Gentiles also. This principle of faith in Jesus at once abolishes any wall of separation between the races (see **Gal. 3:28, Eph. 2:11-22**). If justification is by the Law or for a certain nationality, then God belongs to the Jews alone. If the Jews or a cult or a religion persist in the position that justification is by a law of works, then there must be two Gods—one for them, another one for the rest. But there aren't two Gods; there is only One (**1 Cor. 8:5-6**)! **:30 since indeed God who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith is one.** The apostle appeals to the OT teaching of the Jews—Yahweh is our God, Yahweh is one (**Dt. 6:4-5**)! But the conclusion Paul draws is not appealing to the Jews because they thought the Gentiles were on the outside looking in, but Paul says "The God of the Jews and the God of the Gentiles is one and the same God!" Everyone is included in this offer because all are sinners and all can have faith in Jesus. Through faith in Jesus and His work on the cross, the way to this one God is open to all. This one God will justify the circumcised by faith in Jesus, and, He'll justify the uncircumcised who have faith in Jesus. **1 Tim. 2:3-6:** there is one God, who desires all to be saved. **Rom. 1:16:** ... for everyone who believes.

:31 Do we then nullify the Law through faith? May it never be! On the contrary, we establish the Law. If salvation is by faith in Jesus alone, do we nullify (reduce to no value, make void, cancel, set aside, reject, undermine) the Law? May it never be, not at all! Here he simply says, "**On the contrary, rather, we establish the Law.** We put the Law in its proper place, we make it stand, we uphold it." The Law reflects the character of God. A more complete answer on the Law's proper place is in chapters **5-8**.

By the way, the Law's role has always been to establish guilt, reveal sin, cause sin to increase, and show the need of a Deliverer. The Law leads/drives us to Jesus. There aren't those who get right with God by what they've 'done'. Some don't get just with God 'by works of the Law'. Some don't get right

'because they belong to a certain race'. Some don't get just 'because of their religious advantages'. Pride, works, prejudice, religious advantages, the Law—they're all eliminated at the cross of Jesus. These truths in **Romans** rule out the mistaken idea that "all religions lead to God." Remember, these religions are not actions of people seeking God; they are actions of people rejecting God!! See Rom. 1:21-23. Jesus is the only way. "Thank You, Father and Jesus! We have nothing to fear before You because of Your justifying, redeeming, satisfying work."

Our ideas of justification must always be true to these verses of Scripture (**3:21-31**; also see **Gal. 2:16**) and be tested by them. Our thinking and our methods must be in line with this section of God's Word. When I admit my sin and guilt and by faith receive the Person and work of the Lord Jesus: All possibility for pride is ended. All possibility for works is gone. All possibility for prejudice is destroyed. The way to God is wide open, to all, even you and me, through the Lord Jesus Christ. What have you done with Jesus?

Reflecting on Romans 3:25-31: Faith in God and His words has always been His plan. What thoughts come to mind when you meditate on the Person of Jesus and His work on the Cross and what that means for you? From these verses, what has changed in your thinking concerning God? Mankind? God's plan of deliverance? God's way of justification for the Jews? The Gentiles? The Law? What are two essential lessons you learned as you think about these verses? What changes in your thinking, choices, words, and/or actions do these verses mean for you? If emailing or writing a letter to someone, what are the facts from this passage you would emphasize?

As we observe the Lord's Supper together, let us remember who our Lord Jesus is and what He accomplished by His death on the cross. He gave His body. He shed His blood. May the simple symbols of unleavened crackers and grape juice remind of us of the great cost of our salvation. Let's **read Lk. 22:14-20 and 23:33-46** before we partake. Also in **1 Cor. 11:23-26** we read, **For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus in the night in which He was betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "This is My body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of Me."** In the same way He took the cup also after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood; do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me." For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.

Keys to Discipleship #4

What 6 Things Happen When You Become a Christian? (FHIDLS)

The new covenant is built upon a direct, intimate relationship with God where sins are not an issue nor is the Law nor is our flesh. Review “New Covenant Ministry” sheet from our second time together. In terms of what happens when you become a Christian, let’s memorize six elements using an acrostic: FHIDLS. Based on Lk. 22:20, 1 Cor. 11:25, Ezek. 36:25-27, Jer. 31:31-34, Heb. 7:18-22, 8:6-12, 2 Cor. 3:4-18 (read these passages):

FORGIVENESS of sins - I will be merciful to your iniquities and remember your sins no more! Forgiveness = to send away from, release. The price has been paid, Jesus’ blood has been shed, our sins have been forgiven. Yes, it is undeserved, but it is done and complete. It’s tragic that some Christians still think & live as if God still holds their sins against them. We accept ourselves as forgiven because this is what God Himself states! Why are sinners lost today? Not because of sins, but because they haven’t by faith turned to the forgiving Jesus as Lord. (Heb. 8:12, Jer. 31:34, Ps. 32:1-5, Lk. 24:47, Acts 2:38, 5:31, 13:38-39, 26:18, Eph. 1:7, Col. 1:14, Heb. 10:17-18, 1 Jn. 1:9, 2:12)

HEART made new - I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you. A heart/spirit transplant! A new identity. God dealt with who we were IN Adam and made us His new creation IN Christ. We are now saints (holy ones) by nature. We no longer are who we used to be—sinners by nature. (Ezek. 36:26, Ezek. 11:19, Rom. 5:11-6:23, 2 Cor. 5:17, Eph. 2:10)

INTIMATE relationship with God - I will be your personal, intimate God, and you shall be My people. This has always been God’s plan, that we know Him as Father and He knows us as part of His family. As our Father, He has blessed us with every spiritual blessing. He chose us. He predestined us to adoption as sons. We have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, “Abba! Father!” We are His children and heirs. (Heb. 8:10, Jer. 31:33, Lk. 11:2, Jn. 17:3, 20:17, Rom. 8:15-17, Eph. 1:3-5)

DIRECT access to God - You won’t need a priest or teacher to get to know Me. You will have direct access to Me and knowledge of Me. You won’t need to go to a temple or offer a certain sacrifice. Jesus is the permanent, perfect high priest. We go directly to and through Him. The indwelling Holy Spirit will teach us. (Heb. 8:11, Jer. 31:34, Mk. 15:38, Rom. 8:26-28, 1 Jn. 2:27)

LAWS of God - My laws will be on your mind and heart, not on tablets of stone. He gives His own children hearts that long to obey. We delight to do His will. We don’t follow His laws because we ‘have to’ but because we ‘want to’! It’s not external motivation but internal. We’re not under the written Law anymore. We’ve been freed from that so we can serve in newness of the Spirit. (Heb. 8:10, Jer. 31:33, Rom. 7:4-6, 8:2-4, Gal. 5:18, 2 Cor. 3:2-8)

SPIRIT of God - I will place My Spirit within you. The Holy Spirit taking up permanent residence in our physical bodies so He can live the life of Jesus through us. (Ezek. 36:27, Jn. 14:16-17, Rom. 8:11, 1 Cor. 6:19, Eph. 3:16)

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INTIMATE relationship with God - I will be your personal, intimate God, and you shall be My people. This has always been God’s plan, that we know Him as Father and He knows us as part of His family. As our Father, He has blessed us with every spiritual blessing. He chose us. He predestined us to adoption as sons. We have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, “Abba! Father!” We are His children and heirs. (**Heb. 8:10, Jer. 31:33, Lk. 11:2, Jn. 17:3, 20:17, Rom. 8:15-17, Eph. 1:3-5**)

DIRECT access to God - You won’t need a priest or teacher to get to know Me. You will have direct access to Me and knowledge of Me. You won’t need to go to a temple or offer a certain sacrifice. Jesus is the permanent, perfect high priest. We go directly to and through Him. The indwelling Holy Spirit will teach us. (**Heb. 8:11, Jer. 31:34, Mk. 15:38, Rom. 8:26-28, 1 Jn. 2:27**)

LAWS of God - My laws will be on your mind and heart, not on tablets of stone. He gives His own children hearts that long to obey. We delight to do His will. We don’t follow His laws because we ‘have to’ but because we ‘want to’! It’s not external motivation but internal. We’re not under the written Law anymore. We’ve been freed from that so we can serve in newness of the Spirit. (**Heb. 8:10, Jer. 31:33, Rom. 7:4-6, 8:2-4, Gal. 5:18, 2 Cor. 3:2-8**)

SPIRIT of God - I will place My Spirit within you. The Holy Spirit taking up permanent residence in our physical bodies so He can live the life of Jesus through us. (**Ezek. 36:27, Jn. 14:16-17, Rom. 8:11, 1 Cor. 6:19, Eph. 3:16**)