

Introduction:

What does victory mean to us? When we think victory, don't most of us think being saved? If in the end, I'm saved, then I won the victory. So we ask questions like: "Are you saved?" "Is he saved?" "Is she saved?" We want to know if someone is in Christ, if they are going to heaven. Unfortunately, we drop this word "saved" around so much, I fear we may have lost its meaning. If we are not careful, it can become a technical term that kind of means something to us but does not encompass all God has in mind. Interestingly, it is not the only term God uses in Scripture to describe what has happened to us in Jesus Christ. I'd like to share with you eight terms God uses to describe our victory. I am hopeful we can see that our victory is more than just getting saved.

Discussion:

I. Saved—A Medical Term

- A. According to **Luke 19:10**, Jesus came to seek and save the lost. **John 3:17** says God sent His Son into the world that the world might be saved. In **Acts 2:47**, those who were saved were added to the church. There is no other name but the name of Jesus by which we can be saved according to **Acts 4:12**. According to **Romans 10:13**, everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.
- B. Obviously, salvation is an important part of our victory. I hope by saying our victory is more than being saved, I am not leaving you with the impression that being saved is unimportant. That is not true. It is very important. I want to be saved. I want you to be saved. I hope you want to be saved. But what exactly is salvation?
- C. The Greek term translated "saved" means "to save, keep safe and sound, to rescue from danger or destruction...to save a suffering one (from perishing), i.e. one suffering from disease, to make well, heal, restore to health...to preserve one who is in danger of destruction, to save or rescue."¹
- D. It is the word Peter used when he was sinking in the sea as he cried out to Jesus, "Lord, save me" (**Matthew 14:30**, ESV). And when Jesus grabbed him by the hand and lifted him up, Peter was saved. But what I really hope we'll notice is that this was a medical term. When Jairus asked Jesus on behalf of his daughter to "Come and lay your hands on her, so that she may be made well and live" (**Mark 5:23**, ESV), "made well" is our term. When Jesus healed the woman with the issue of blood in **Mark 5:28, 34**, she wanted to be "made well" and Jesus said she was "made well." That is the same term we are discussing. In **Mark 6:56**, when it says that the sick touched His garment and were "made well," it is the same word.
- E. What then is salvation? It is not merely a technical term to say that our name has now been recorded in God's book. It implies that we were in danger, and not just a minor danger. We weren't in danger of possibly being hurt. We were in danger of death and destruction. We were drowning in the sea of our sins. We were diseased with the mortal illness of sin. Our sins were destroying us like cancer, but God, in Jesus Christ, has saved us from our danger. He has pulled us out of death's grasp and given us life (**Romans 6:23**). The ravages of sin in our life are being healed. We are being fixed, restored, strengthened (**1 Peter 5:10**). We are saved.

II. Justified—A Legal Term

- A. **Romans 5:1** says we have been justified by faith. **Romans 5:9** says we have been justified by Jesus' blood. **Romans 8:30** says God justifies us. **1 Corinthians 6:11** says that even some heinous sinners had been justified. **Titus 3:7** says that because we have been justified by God's grace we are heirs of eternal life. We are more than saved, we are justified. But what does that mean.
- B. Justified is a legal term. It comes from the court of law. **Matthew 12:37** demonstrates the meaning by contrast, saying, "for by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned" (ESV). Condemnation is a declaration of guilt. Justification is a declaration of innocence.
- C. Saved was a medical term with a picture of being rescued from a death by disease or tragedy. Justified is a legal term with a different picture. We are standing on trial, the evidence is being presented. At the end of the trial, judgment will be rendered. None of us will miss the judgment (**Hebrews 9:27**). The law will be laid out and lives laid out beside it. If we have lived by the law, then we will be justified. But here is the kicker; to be justified by law, we have to have kept every bit of it (**James 2:10**). None of us have done that.

¹ <http://www.blueletterbible.org/lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strongs=G4982&t=ESV>

- D. Therefore, we have only one possible outcome—condemnation, the eternal death penalty. We have failed at keeping God’s law; we stand condemned. But, God has provided another option in His Son Jesus Christ. According to **Romans 8:1**, there is no condemnation in Jesus Christ. Rather, by the grace of His blood shed on our behalf we can be justified, declared innocent if we have faith in Jesus Christ (**Romans 3:23-26**). When God says we are saved, He pictures rescue from death by disease or tragedy. When He says justified, He pictures rescue from execution for crimes we have committed. As **Romans 3:24** says, we are justified by His grace through the redemption found in Jesus Christ, which brings us to our next term.

III. Redeemed—A Financial Term

- A. **Romans 3:24** says we are justified by the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. **Galatians 3:13** says Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law. **Titus 2:14** says He redeemed us from all lawlessness. We find another picture of what God has done for us in Jesus Christ—redemption, redeemed. Redeemed, how I love to proclaim it, the song says. Redeemed is a financial term like ransomed. It means God, through Jesus Christ, has paid the price necessary to purchase us.
- B. There are two different Old Testament pictures that come into play when we talk about redemption.
1. Redeeming a slave: In **Leviticus 25:47-52**, Moses wrote about a man who became poor and sold himself as a slave. A relative could redeem him, that is, purchase his freedom based on how many years of service he had left until the Year of Jubilee. If he were able to become prosperous, he might even redeem himself. No doubt, the picture is of a brother, cousin, or relative who loved his relative so much, he was willing to pay the price. God loves us so much, He was willing to pay the price to redeem us from our slavery to sin.
 2. Redeeming the firstborn: When God delivered Israel from Egypt, He did so by a plague of death on the firstborn of every household. However, the Israelites had surrendered to God’s grace by painting the blood of the lamb upon their doorposts. Their firstborn were spared. However, God demonstrated that their firstborn also deserved to die. Therefore, he required a redemption, a purchase of those firstborn. In **Numbers 3:40-51**, God required the tribe of Levi become His tribe as a redemption price for the sparing of the firstborn. However, there were more firstborn in Israel than there were Levites. For the remaining Levites they had to pay 5 shekels per head to Aaron and his sons, presumably to use in the service of the Lord in the sanctuary. In this scenario, the people had to pay the redemption price to God. In our redemption, God has paid the price for us.
- C. We are slaves redeemed from our slavery to sin. We deserved to die, but God has bought us and paid for us so that we might live. But what was the price? **Ephesians 1:7** says, “In him we have redemption through his blood...” (ESV). **1 Peter 1:17-19** explains we were not ransomed, purchased, redeemed by perishable things like silver and gold. Rather, we were purchased with the precious blood of Jesus Christ, “like that of a lamb without blemish or spot” (ESV). How amazing! God was willing to redeem us even when the price was the blood of His own Son. He bought us. He paid for us. He redeemed us. And so Paul says of Jesus in **Colossians 1:14**, “in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins,” which leads us to our next term.

IV. Forgiven—A Directional Term

- A. **Ephesians 1:7** and **Colossians 1:14** both explain that the redemption we have in Jesus Christ is the forgiveness of our sins. **Colossians 2:13** says God made us alive with Christ by forgiving us our trespasses. In **1 John 2:12**, John says our sins are forgiven for Christ’s name’s sake. As odd as it may sound, forgiven is a directional term. It actually means “to send away.”² The same term is used in **Matthew 4:20, 22** to say that Peter and Andrew “left” their nets and James and John “left” their boat and their father. Forgiveness means our sins have left, or rather, they have been taken away.
- B. God provided an annual picture of this forgiveness on the Day of Atonement. In **Leviticus 16:20-23**, God said they were to have one goat on which Aaron laid his hands and confessed the sins of the people. The sins would be on that goat and then sent off in the wilderness. The sins would be sent away, forgiven. The meaning of this is perhaps nowhere so eloquently described as **Psalms 103:3, 10, 11-12**. God forgives our iniquities; He does not deal with us according to our sins; rather, He removes our transgressions from us as far as the east is from the west. Forgiveness means when God looks at us, He doesn’t see our sins because He has removed them from us. They are as far from us as they possibly can be.
- C. But please do not misunderstand forgiveness. Forgiveness is not God’s prerogative to ignore our sins; it is God’s power to face and deal with our sins. Too many have the idea that forgiveness is God just deciding to look away from our sins, ignoring that they happened. God did not ignore our sins. God looked directly at our sinfulness and decided to do something about them. He decided to send Jesus to atone for them. When Jesus

² <http://www.blueletterbible.org/lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?strongs=G863&t=ESV&page=1>

established the Lord's Supper in **Matthew 26:28**, He explained that the juice represents His blood poured out for the forgiveness of sins. God didn't ignore our sins; He dealt with them by shedding the blood of His Son. **Hebrews 9:22** explains that without the shedding of blood there can be no forgiveness of sins. Jesus shed His blood not to ignore our sins, but to forgive them.

- D. Sadly, many people, even many Christians don't really want forgiveness. They don't know that. They use that word. But they don't understand it. Rather than asking God to pay for their sins in Jesus Christ, they are actually asking God to be patient with them while they try to pay for their sins through religious service. They say, "Please forgive me," but what they really mean is, "Please be patient with me. I'll fix it." They are like the indebted servant in **Matthew 18:26** asking the king, "Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything" (ESV). And then they go about trying to prove how good they really can be in hopes that God will take that into account and decide to ignore all the sins they committed. The problem is that just doesn't work. God doesn't ignore sins. He either punishes them or pays for them with Jesus' blood.
- E. Sadly, some others misunderstand even worse. Because they view forgiveness as ignoring sin, they treat forgiveness like permission to sin. It is as if they are saying, "Well Jesus died for that, so it's okay. He'll ignore it." Some act like because they have provided some religious service, they can get away with some sins. They cheapen Jesus' death on the cross, taking it for granted. **Hebrews 10:26-29** settles that question. If we spurn the Son of God and profane the blood of the covenant, we will outrage the Spirit of grace.
- F. What is forgiveness? It is not God overlooking or ignoring our sins. It is not God giving us permission to sin. It is God setting us free so we no longer have to be defined by our sins. Like the adulterous woman of **John 8:3-11** we don't have to see ourselves through the lens of our sins. Rather, we can be free to go and sin no more. Sadly, some Christians have a love/hate relationship with forgiveness. They want forgiveness because they know they have sinned, but they fear talking about it too much because they think people will decide to abuse it, living their lives in sin and iniquity. But consider the forgiven sinful woman of **Luke 7:36-50**. She did not pursue a life of profligacy. She pursued Jesus. And that is exactly what people do who truly grasp forgiveness.

Conclusion:

We have more to learn about the terms of our victory. He has saved us, justified us, redeemed us, and forgiven us. We'll learn even more in our next lesson. But all of these things are done by God for those in Jesus Christ. How do we get in Jesus Christ? **Galatians 3:27** says we are baptized into Christ. **Romans 6:3** says we are baptized into Christ and into His death. Salvation, justification, redemption, and forgiveness are in Christ and in Christ alone. Are you in Christ?