

### Introduction:

All too often, I have a sad tendency to oversimplify things. Wanting to make them easy to understand, I shave off some of the complexity to provide a nice neat little package. In some cases that may be good, and may be a decent step to having better understanding. However, in some cases that causes part of the picture to be lost. In our previous lesson, we learned that we can easily do that with our victory. If we are not careful, “saved” becomes just a term that we throw around without fully knowing what God has done for us in Christ. So, we started looking at the terms God has used to describe our victory. We looked at “Saved”—a medical term that pictures being rescued from death due to danger or disease. We noted “Justified”—a legal term that pictures being rescued from execution for the crimes we have committed. We discussed “Redeemed”—a financial term that pictures being purchased from the slavery of sin and ransomed from the death we deserve for those sins. Finally, we considered “Forgiven”—a directional term that pictured our sins being sent so far away from us that when God looks at us, He doesn’t see our sins. But there are more terms we need to see to get a better picture of our victory.

### Discussion:

#### I. Sanctified—A Ceremonial Term

- A. When Paul was converted, according to **Acts 26:18**, God explained that those who receive forgiveness are placed among the sanctified. When Paul wrote to the church in Corinth, he called them “those sanctified in Christ Jesus” (**I Corinthians 1:2**). When Paul said the Corinthians had been justified, he declared they had also been sanctified (**I Corinthians 6:11**). Sanctified is a ceremonial term. It means to set something apart for holy, spiritual, and religious purposes. It means to devote something to God.
- B. The first picture of this in the Bible is in **Genesis 2:3**, when “God blessed the seventh day and made it holy...” (ESV). Then again in **Exodus 20:8**, when the people were reminded by the 10 Commandments to “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy” (ESV). In **Exodus 29:1ff**, we see the picture of Aaron and the priests being “consecrated” or sanctified for God’s service. This was accomplished by sacrificing a bull and two rams along with meal and grain sacrifices, anointing them with oil, and dressing them in sanctified clothes. It was a seven day process to sanctify them, offering a bull as a sin offering every day (**Exodus 29:36**). Further, we see the picture of the altar being sanctified and consecrated in **Exodus 29:36-37**, which took two sacrifices per day as a perpetual statute. We see the tabernacle, all its furniture, and all its utensils being sanctified and consecrated in **Exodus 40:9-11**. Finally, **II Chronicles 7:16** describes God consecrating, or sanctifying, the temple Solomon built for Him where His name could be forever.
- C. In Jesus Christ, God is not only saving us, He is sanctifying us. That is, He has set us apart as holy vessels for His special service. Like the priests, the tabernacle, and then the temple, we are workers for the Lord, we are the dwelling place of the Lord. His name dwells on us forever. Paul describes this in **II Timothy 2:20-21**. We are gold and silver vessels, set apart for honorable use. Of course, this passage demonstrates that we have a responsibility in this sanctifying. We are not simply allowed to say, “I’m sanctified, so I can live how I want.” Rather, we must put away what is dishonorable. As the passage goes on to say in **vs. 22**, we must put away youthful passions and pursue righteousness. When we do, we become useful to the Master.
- D. At the same time, we can have faith in God and His grace, because for all of our work, He is working in us to sanctify us. We are not alone in this process. As **I Thessalonians 5:23** explains, God can completely sanctify us. As we work, He works. When we mess up, we can trust that He is working in us and on us. And so, as **I Corinthians 6:11** demonstrates, despite what we’ve done in the past, we can be not only justified, but also sanctified. And this passage also provides our next term.

#### II. Washed/Cleansed—A Laundering Term

- A. In **I Corinthians 6:11**, Paul says the Corinthian Christians had not only been justified and sanctified, but also washed. In **Acts 22:16**, Paul said he was told to “Rise and be baptized and wash away your sins...” (ESV). This is reminiscent of David’s request in **Psalms 51:2, 7** that God wash him so he can be whiter than snow. Washed is a laundering term, which I know sounds odd in the midst of all the other terms we used. But it pictures taking something that is unclean and making it clean. Our sins have defiled us, made us dirty. Think of the picture Jesus used in **Matthew 23:25-26**. Sin is defiling and we need to be cleansed/ washed inside and out.

- B. The Old Testament is full of pictures of uncleanness and then washing. One example can be found in **Leviticus 15:1-12**. If someone had a discharge, they were unclean, everything they touched was unclean, everyone who touched them was unclean. Part of the cleaning process was washing and bathing. Sin makes us unclean, not just ceremonially, but spiritually. The only way we can be free of this uncleanness is to be washed.
- C. The New Testament pictures our washing in various ways. In **Hebrews 10:22**, he mentions our hearts sprinkled clean, while our bodies are washed with pure water. That is a picture of baptism and the work God does when we are baptized. **Ephesians 5:26-27** speaks of the sanctification of the church, which is then described as being cleansed “by the washing of water with the word.” This is done so we might be presented “in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing” and that we would be “holy and without blemish.” Again, this refers to the baptism that those who enter Christ’s church experience. Finally, there is the ongoing washing that happens as we grow as Christians that is accomplished by the Holy Spirit according to **Titus 3:5**. In some way, the Holy Spirit regenerates us, renews us, by washing us. So, while we certainly long to clean ourselves up and strive to be clean, we can rely on the Holy Spirit to accomplish His work in us, cleansing us, washing us, regenerating us, renewing us. We are not defiled, we are washed.

### III. Adopted—A Familial Term

- A. In **Ephesians 1:4-5**, just as we are holy and blameless in Jesus Christ, which happens by His washing us, he has also “predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ” (ESV). In **Romans 8:15**, Paul wrote that we have received a spirit of adoption. In **Galatians 4:5**, he says that we might receive adoption as sons. Adoption is a familial term that describes one of the greatest of relationships—parenthood.
- B. In **John 1:12-13**, John described the work of Jesus. He came to His own, the Jews, but they rejected Him. However, if anyone believes in Him, He grants them the “right to become children of God.” However, this is not by birth, but by God’s will. And this is what defines the glory of adoption. No doubt, most adults want children. And most adults love the children born to them very much. But let’s face it. We didn’t choose the children that were born to us. They were simply the product of genetics and natural processes. However, when someone adopts a child, they handpick them. They often search them out, study them, observe them, and choose them to be their child. That is the amazing thing about our adoption. God chooses to let us be His children. We aren’t somehow born to Him against His will. We aren’t forced off on Him by genetics and natural processes. We are chosen.
- C. Further, God paid the adoption price even knowing every sin, flaw, mistake, and error we would ever commit. In **Galatians 4:4-7**, we see that the price of our adoption as sons was the death of God’s one and only son, Jesus Christ (see also **John 3:16**). I’ve known plenty of people to have natural born children and then to adopt, but I’ve never known anyone willing to adopt a child when the price was their natural born child. That is exactly the price God paid to choose us and adopt us.
- D. Finally, this adoption grants us an inheritance. As **Galatians 4:7**, we are heirs. **Romans 8:17** makes the same point. We are fellow heirs with Christ. **1 Peter 1:3-5** explains that our inheritance is reserved in heaven. It is imperishable, undefiled, and waiting for us. We can look forward to it because God has adopted us in Jesus Christ.

### IV. Reconciled—A Relational Term

- A. **Romans 5:10** says we have been reconciled to God. **II Corinthians 5:18** says Christ reconciled us to Himself. **Ephesians 2:16** says God has reconciled both Jews and Gentiles in Christ to Himself. **Colossians 1:21-22** says even though we were alienated from Jesus, we have now been reconciled to Him. Reconciled is a relational term. It presents a picture of estranged and alienated friends or relatives who have brought peace back into their relationship. The picture this term presents is a contrast with our last term in the previous lesson—“forgiven.” Forgiveness presented a picture of our sins being sent away. Reconciliation presents a picture of us being drawn closer to God through Jesus Christ.
- B. **Isaiah 59:1-2** explains that our sins have separated us from God. They have brought enmity between us and Him. We have all followed in the footsteps of the first couple. They walked in the garden with God, but when they ate from the tree of knowledge of good and evil, they were banished from the Garden, and separated from God. As **Romans 5:12** says, this same spiritual death of separation from God has come to all of us because, like Adam, we have all sinned.
- C. **Ephesians 2:1-3** explains that we were all once following the “prince of the power of the air.” We lived in the passions of our flesh, and like the rest of mankind were children of wrath. Notice, we weren’t children of God, but children of wrath. **Ephesians 2:11-12** describes us Gentiles, explaining that we were separated from Christ, strangers to the covenants, and without God. We’ve already read in **Colossians 1:21** that we

were alienated and hostile in mind. **Titus 3:3** explains we were once “foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures...” We were separated from God, alienated. Since we were in the world and friends with the world, we were at enmity with God (**James 4:4**). Remember the picture of the Prodigal Son in **Luke 15:11-13**. He asked for his part of the inheritance up front and then wandered off into his own life. He put the separation there; the father didn't. He moved; the father didn't.

- D. Sadly, the enmity was completely our fault. We did the separating, not God. We walked away, not God. But once we walked away, we crossed a point of no return. That is, we crossed a point where nothing we could do could remove the enmity. Our sins stood in the way of peace with God. What is amazing is that He did the work that would produce reconciliation. He sent His Son Jesus Christ. As **Romans 5:10** said, it was the death of Jesus that reconciled us. As **Colossians 1:19-20** explains it is Jesus, by the blood of His cross, that reconciles us to God. Picture again that Prodigal Son, this time in **Luke 15:17-19**. When he was hungry, he decided to go back to his father and ask to be a servant. There was no thought of reconciling and returning as a son. He simply hoped he could get a job. But what did the father do in **Luke 15:20-24**? He didn't even allow the son to finish his job request. He offered reconciliation. He brought the best robe and put it on him, put a ring on his finger, and then threw a party. That is reconciliation and it is our Father who pays the price and offers reconciliation.
- E. But of course, like the Prodigal Son, the separation is because we walked away. God is offering reconciliation. He is waiting for us to turn back to Him and seek His grace. That is why Paul instructs the Corinthians in **II Corinthians 5:20** that they be reconciled to God. God will let us walk away. He won't run after us and try to force us into a relationship with Him. But He is there waiting on the front porch, looking for us to come home, waiting to garb us in His best robe, put a ring on our finger, and throw a party for us. Are you reconciled to God?

#### Conclusion:

In Jesus Christ, God has saved us. But not only that, He has justified us, redeemed us, forgiven us, sanctified us, washed us, adopted us, and reconciled us. Let us never think of this in some simplistic way. Rather, let us recognize the full picture of our victory. Have you been reconciled? Have you been sanctified? Have you been adopted? Have you been washed? Are you walking in victory? If not, why not do so now?