

# Completely Done 2 – Justified

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[ 0 : 00 ] So yes, we've entitled this Completely Done, just this idea that redemption is accomplished fully and finally through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

! But it's applied subsequently to us through saving faith, the union with Christ.! So it's redemption accomplished and applied. So we're looking at the applied aspects, what happens to us. And in many ways, redemption, and the way we're looking at it here, redemption applied, is a series of divine acts. So a series of acts of God upon ourselves that unite us to Jesus Christ, secure us and keep us throughout the Christian life.

And so in many ways, it helps us reinterpret all that has happened to us. By way of introduction, author James Cannellan provides this moving and insightful remembrance of his conversion. He writes, first impressions are lasting impressions. So the old saying goes. And I suspect in most cases it is true. My first impression of God is with me to this day.

[ 1 : 12 ] It happened at a musty old church camp in central Saskatchewan, Canada. I was five years old. Back in those days, we were into tabernacles.

Not only were most of our churches called tabernacles, some of us would remember that, but our camp meeting buildings were often given this Old Testament name for tent. On one especially hot day, my parents were in the adult tabernacle, and I, with my fellow junior campers, were in the children's tabernacle.

The teacher was taking us through John Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress. As she taught, something sparked within me. After the lesson, the children exploded into the sunshine, and I lingered. Miss Brown seemed to know why. Can I help you, Jimmy? She asked gently. I nodded dumbly, biting my suddenly trembling lower lip, tears welling up in my eyes.

Let's go to the back room and pray, she said. I can't explain what happened, he writes, but I will say this. At the age of five, I suddenly felt as though I were the worst sinner who had ever lived.

[ 2 : 23 ] My sense of sin nearly crushed my little heart. The prayer, however, had not ended. It began with remorse, and then it grew into joy. I felt this newly discovered burden lift from my fragile soul.

The presence of God overwhelmed me. Without looking for Him, or my asking for Him, indeed, without any knowledge of my need for Him, God came looking for me.

Asking for me, a five-year-old kid. I wonder if that's the way we think about our conversion. God came looking for us. Is that our recollection?

Well, hopefully by the end of this class, that will be the way we interpret what has happened to us. God came looking. John Calvin famously says, No one anticipates God.

No one thinks ahead of Him. No one's out in front of Him. And He comes to us with this undefeatable plan, rooted in Jesus Christ and applied to us, that leads us from predestination all the way to glorification.

[ 3 : 28 ] William Perkins called this the golden chain. This idea that God has bound Himself to Christians through a golden chain. Committed Himself, committed with His character, undergirding it to bring us completely to God.

And so the eternal degree of God burst into human experience in a series of divine acts and calling, regeneration as we looked at last week, justification, adoption, sanctification, and glorification.

We have that verse down there for you, which is what William Perkins based that golden chain idea from. Romans 8.30, Those whom He predestined, He also called. Those whom He called, He also justified.

Those whom He justified, He also glorified. So you see, these are all these things built on one another. The idea is no one gets lost. All those God predestined.

In eternity path, He glorifies. And one of my favorite authors, John Murray, says, The present pilgrimage, and you know, he is a little dense. Present pilgrimage, our journey, of the people of God falls into its place in the determinate and undefeatable plan of God that is bound by two foci.

[ 4 : 45 ] So two points. The sovereign love of God and His eternal counsel and glorification with Christ in the age to come. So the sovereign love of God and eternal counsel before the world began and glorification with Christ in the age to come.

So we're going to look at these justification first and then adoption. So justification answers the burning question, How can sinful men and women be accepted by God and counted righteous before Him?

I think it's a question that's, you know, intuitively asked by us. You know, there is this sense that because of the law of God written on our heart that we know that we have done something wrong and we have sinned against God.

Whether we're willing to admit it, we all know that there is a God and we know that we have not obeyed Him perfectly from our hearts. And so how can sinful men and women be justified before God?

Obviously, this question burst onto the pages of Scripture right after Adam and Eve fall into sin. You know, they eat the apple and suddenly their eyes are open, they see that they're naked and they're hiding, they're running away.

[ 6 : 00 ] And I think that actually aligns with the way we often respond when we've done something wrong. So we run away, we hide. Why?

Because we know justice and judgment is what we deserve. So how can we escape judgment and have a relationship with God and be counted righteous before Him?

So this is our statement of faith and I have that there for you. We'll reference it as we go, but there's a chunk on the statement of faith. In their union with Christ, believers freely receive all the benefits of the Gospel.

Those whom God effectually calls to Himself, as we studied last week, He justifies in Christ, forgiving all their sins, declaring them righteous and acceptable in His sight.

This declaration is judicial, addressing not our nature but our status with regard to God's law. It's definitive, being neither gradually gained nor able to be lost. It's gracious, a free gift of God's righteousness based on nothing worked in us or by us but received freely by faith.

[ 7 : 04 ] The sole ground for justification is righteousness of Christ, whose life of perfect obedience is imputed to us and whose substitutionary death on our behalf completely satisfies the demands of God's justice towards our sins.

So I know there's a lot of concepts in there. We're going to break them out. So what is the meaning of justification? And this is really important that we establish this up front because justification is that question.

But what's the meaning? What's the meaning of this word, to justify? So the context for justification is the courtroom. The word justify is used 39 times in the New Testament, 29 times by the Apostle Paul.

So it's clearly a word that meant something to him. It's very important. He is the apostle of justification. If you could say it like that. It's used repeatedly to refer to the act of declaring someone righteous, not making them righteous in and of their nature.

That's what we're going to talk about in a few minutes, but that's what it's getting at here. It's an act whereby a judge pronounces someone who is guilty to be free from any penalty for breaking the law and entitled for all the blessings and protections of those who keep the law.

[ 8 : 16 ] And this word, this use of justification, being declared righteous, is consistent with how it's used in the New Testament. So a few examples. Justification is not earned, but given.

We see that in the Pharisee and the tax collector. Every parable is meant to bring a shock. There's kind of a gut punch in every parable.

And so we see the parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector. And the Pharisee comes before the Lord and says, you know, I fast twice a week. I do all these things. I'm always here serving you and doing my things.

I'm not like that tax collector. Now, tax collectors in those days, they obviously worked for Rome, but they were also famous for taking more than what they should take.

And so they were hated men. So you might say, I'm not like that Florida gator, you know, to relate it to this area. You know, or that Alabama Tide, Crimson Tide guy.

[ 9 : 16 ] You know, and so there can be that type of thing. And what's the tax collector say? He knows that he has nothing to bring to the table. And he says, have mercy on me, a sinner.

And God, and Jesus said, I tell you on this day, that man, the tax collector, went home righteous, went home justified in the sight of God.

So it's making something very clear, shockingly clear in that audience, that justification, this status of relationship with God being declared righteous is not earned, but given.

We see that consistent also, Titus 2, or 3, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, being justified by his grace.

So it's not earned, not because of works. Romans 3, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God and are justified by his grace as a gift.

[ 10 : 15 ] So it's not something earned by us, but it's something, a gift given to us. And we know, Galatians 2, that a person is not justified by works of the law, but through faith.

So justification is not earned or given, nor is it gradually gained or lost. I think a Catholic understanding of justification, they would say, it's by grace.

But they would say, it's gradually gained through the infusion of grace. You know, God does His work, but the infusion of grace enables you to perform the works that justify you before God.

But that's not, there's no gradual nature to justification in the New Testament. Romans 4 says, Now to the one who works, his wages are not counted as a gift, but as his due. And to the one who does not work, but believes in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness.

So that, you know, it's not a wage that you gradually earn or gradually gain or could potentially loss, but receive. Justification is not a perfectly righteous character, but a righteous status as well.

[ 11 : 29 ] You know, so the idea is that the justified person is not the perfect person. So there can be a, you know, I think a delusion in what, a disillusion or something between the relation of what God does and justification and sanctification when we assume that someone is justified as someone who's kind of perfect.

I think it's striking in this gospel, or in the book of Galatians where the Apostle Paul is, that is his message in many ways in Galatians more than any other book.

And he says, but in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision count for anything but only faith working for love. So this idea that in the, you know, uncircumcision and circumcision stood for obedience for God, obedience to the law.

He's saying those things don't matter, but faith working out through love, this idea that what God has done and doesn't finish the work of faith.

Faith must continue to be worked out through love in our lives. And so sinful men and women can be accepted by God and counted righteous before God through justification.

[ 12 : 42 ] The ground of justification, B, is the substitutionary sacrifice of Jesus Christ. So how can God accept and count righteous sinful men and women without being unjust?

That's the burning, that's actually the real burning question. You know, our burning question is how can sinful men and women be accepted before God? But how, the real burning question is how can God forgive sinful men and women without being unjust?

To answer this question, we come to the most important paragraph in the Bible. John Piper has said Romans 8 is the most important chapter. Romans 3, 21 through 26 is the most important paragraph.

And so we're going to, we're going to kind of look at that as we go. I put the whole chunk there for you. But, firstly, this paragraph introduces us to this idea, or it doesn't introduce us, it includes this idea of substitutionary sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

Our sins are imputed or credited to Christ and we are forgiven. Look in verse 23, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God and are justified by His grace as a gift through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus whom God put forward as a propitiation by His blood to be received by faith.

[ 14 : 00 ] Now there is just lots of big words in there, right? You know, they're justified by His grace. We said they're declared righteous through His grace. Then there's redemption.

Redemption is this idea of rescue from slavery, being bought from being slaves of someone else. So this justification comes first by grace, by a gift, that comes through this redemption that's in Christ whom God put forward as a propitiation.

So all of it hangs on this word propitiation. Now you might, I don't, well, probably all have the ESV so it's translated propitiation. Some translate atoning sacrifice or something like that and other things.

But the idea is that, or expiation sometimes is translated that way in the history of translating this word in the New Testament. But the idea behind propitiation is that the wrath of God is stored up because of sin.

And so, God, you know, we know that. Romans 2 says, you know, you're storing up the wrath of God. So God must punish sin in order to be just, in order to be righteous.

[15:21] And so the wrath of God being stored up because of sin, it needs to be satisfied in order for us to relate to God. And so Christ is the propitiation.

He's the wrath-absorbing, sin-bearing sacrifice. The idea is that not merely does He forgive us of sin, He pays the penalty for sin, enduring the punishment for sin, once and for all, the wrath of God. So He becomes, Christ becomes this propitiation sacrifice. And we see that in Galatians 3, Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us.

For it is written, cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree. Or 1 Peter 3, for Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that He might bring us to God.

The idea is that Christ bore all the wrath we deserve. Such that when He's crying out on the cross, My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?

[16:36] Or crying out, It is finished. He's not merely saying He's driven sin away, but He's satisfied forever the penalty for sin against those who trust in Him by faith.

R.C. Sproul says, the cry on the cross, and I don't know if we have that for you, but the cry, He says, this cry represents the most agonizing protest ever uttered on this planet. It bursts forth in a moment of unparalleled pain, and it is the scream of the damned for us.

So the idea is that, you know, Jesus Christ endures the full punishment for all who trust in Him by faith. You know, that's where, like, the passion, and I know it's been years, like 20 years or something, when the passion came out, maybe.

I watched it once. I'll never, yeah, I don't want to watch it again, and sort of regret watching it. But, you know, but fine if you watch it. But, and my, the biggest issue was it doesn't, it has no ability to capture what is the real agony of the cross.

The real agony of the cross was not all the physical pain and torment. The real agony of the cross was bearing the wrath of God for sinners. It's quite a mysterious thing.

[17:53] How does God the Son bear the wrath of God the Father? That needs separation between God the Father, Son, and the Spirit and die in His humanity for us.

Such that, so, on that, on that, you know, the idea is all our sins are imputed to Him. So, behind this is this idea of double exchange. So, all of our sins are imputed to Jesus Christ and He is treated as if He's the vilest sinner on the earth and bearing that wrath.

And we, in turn, are treated as if we never sin. Point two, though, the righteousness of God is imputed or credited to us. And we are accepted before God.

So, the idea is, just like Luther said, there's a double exchange. You know, our sin is imputed to Christ and Christ's righteousness is imputed to us.

The idea is that would we be okay if we just had a clean slate? Biblically, no, right? I mean, the seraphim and the cherubim cover their eyes, cover their feet in the presence of God.

[19:04] This is the God who's too holy to look on Him, who dwells in unapproachable light. No, we would not be okay unless we are perfectly righteous. That's why the angels long to look at the things that we understand by faith, because they don't get this.

And so, I think this is where that text comes together. He says, look at verse 25, he says at the end of that, so, God put forth Christ as a propitiation by His blood to be received by faith.

This was to show God's righteousness, because in His divine forbearance He had passed over former sins. It was to show His righteousness at the present time so that He might be just, and the justifier, the one who has faith in God.

Now, if we're laying out the whole book of Romans right now, and you're reading it, and Romans 1 and 2, and the beginning of 3, He's just laying out the total emptiness of human righteousness.

The utter, completely holy, I mean, I guess I mean H-O-L-E-Y, completely impartial, imperfect, and incomplete righteousness.

[ 20 : 13 ] And yet, in this text, in verse 21, you have it right there, but now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law. I mean, that just jumps out off the pages. All of humanity's mouth is shut before this one because of how unrighteous we are, and our inability to find righteousness anywhere else.

We didn't obey the law, and it was published by God, the top ten commandments, and all these things, but we didn't obey the law in our hearts either. We have disobeyed God, and all are under sin, it said, but there's a righteousness that has appeared apart from the law, although the law and prophets bear witness to it, the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ.

So apart from obedience to the law, apart from perfect obedience, this righteousness is made available through faith. And so you see there on there in 25 and 26, this is the way God remains just, so he satisfies the wrath, satisfies his wrath by putting forward a sacrifice, and we saw that type of satisfaction in the Old Testament.

He does it fully and finally in Jesus Christ. There's one sacrifice offered, and Jesus Christ sat down, so he satisfies the wrath of God such that God is just, but also said he becomes the justifier of the one who has faith.

So not only is God, his justice preserved, but his people who trust in him by faith are made, are declared righteous before him.

[ 21 : 50 ] And so it's vital, I mean it solves the critical riddle, how can God forgive sinful human beings and yet remain just?

God put forward Christ as a propitiation and imputed all of his righteousness to those who trust in him. So that's the mystery of the gospel, or the wonder of the gospel in so many ways.

In it, the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, the righteous shall live by faith. So we see that again and again. So the idea is this idea that it's just as if we never sinned, that's the imputing of our sin to Christ and his suffering of that, the record of debt that stood against us being nailed to the cross, just as if we never sinned.

And now, because of Jesus Christ, it's just as if we always obeyed. So our righteous status before God, we'll talk about our nature next week, but our righteous status before God is justified.

It's just so critical. biblical. It means we're accepted before God and there's nothing we can do to make us more acceptable or less acceptable to God.

[ 23 : 18 ] I remember this old song called Grace by Stuart Town. I don't know if y'all, you know, but it said, Grace, there's nothing I can do to make you love me more, to make you love me less than you do.

And if you think about that, that's kind of a shocking thing. What are you talking about? How in the world can you say there's nothing I can do to make you love me less?

Better yet, how can you say there's nothing I can do to make you love me more? Well, the reality is this perfect righteousness and what we receive by justification, there's nothing you can add to it.

And by grace, there's nothing you can take away. It's unbelievable. Donald Gray Barnhouse, a great preacher at 10th Pres in Philadelphia, just a wonderfully famous church, historic church, and Donald Gray Barnhouse was there, James Montgomery Boyce was there, Philip Ryken, a number of guys.

He said one time he was preaching somewhere and he said the Offertory Hymn, which we don't do an Offertory Hymn, but what would be common in the old school liturgy would be when the offering comes down, they collect the offering, and the choir often sings a hymn.

[ 24 : 35 ] And he said that the chorus of the hymn was, Is my Master satisfied? Is He satisfied with me? I am satisfied with Jesus.

Is Jesus satisfied with me? And the story goes, Donald Gray Barnhouse got up on the pulpit and said, Yes! Yes!

Yes! That's what this means. Yes! You know, so often we think, does He love me? You know, kind of like what we used to do on the playground, you know, you're holding a can.

Does He love me? Does He love me not? Does He love me? Does He love me not? Does He love me? Does He love me not? And that's the way we live our lives. Well, this is meant to rescue us from that up and down.

You know, Martin Lloyd-Jones, he would say, one of the most important keys to joy in the Christian life is justification. And so, in terms of the means of justification, you notice I could just keep going.

[ 25 : 42 ] I put that Packard quote in there because it's a very good quote in a very good essay. If you want the essay, write me and I'll send it to you. But, a fabulous essay on substitutionary to them.

But, the means of justification, faith. So, now the question is, how do we receive the benefits of justification by faith? Faith is not the ground. Faith is the means.

So, faith is, you know, we can't misunderstand faith. I mean, sometimes we articulate faith like the response to faith, like it's, you know, there's a big pat on the back for us. Really, faith is, faith's a gift. Well, all of salvation's a gift. I think that's a reference there in Ephesians 2, 8, 9, but, faith is, is just the empty hands of receiving. Faith is not the grabbing hold, so to speak, you know.

It's the empty hand of receiving all His benefits that come to us through Jesus Christ, through faith. So, the key of faith is not, you know, how strong it is, how zealous it is, how passionate it is, or anything like that.

[ 26 : 42 ] The key to faith is faith links us to Jesus Christ. So, it's not strong faith that saves, or perfect faith that saves, or zealous faith, or passionate faith.

It is faith alone that saves. And so, I do think sometimes we can smuggle in character there. The glorious significance of justification is that we are completely accepted by God for all time on the basis of His work, you know.

We live in this culture right now. In many ways, I think justification is the doctrine our culture needs, you know. We live, you know, and back in the day when I was growing up, not that I'm like super old, but, you know, there was no social media.

I didn't get a phone until I was in college, you know. And, at that, you know, it was like this little Nokia thing, you know, that barely texts. It hurts your fingers to text, you know. And, no social media.

So, we would say, you know, someone's trying to keep up with the Joneses or something like that. So, there was this idea that you mainly compare yourself to your neighbor, you know, he might cut the grass, immediately when it needs to be cut, and then you notice, you know, there's that little separation between you and him, so you want to cut the grass and stay up with him, or he might get a car, you want to get a car that aligns with him, or whatever it is, maybe a few people in the church, a few people at school, the idea is like that.

[ 27 : 57 ] In many ways, you know, that was a way of trying to prove yourself. Well, social media just opens us up to a whole world, and everybody is trying to prove themselves. Everybody's trying to say, I belong.

I'm good enough. I fit. Well, justification is the doctrine we need. Because it's, it's just, it's by faith in Jesus Christ that we receive these benefits, and ultimately God says, I am, you are accepted by me.

I am satisfied with you. I love you with an everlasting love. All that comes to us, and it never changes. It never changes. So, all right.

I gotta just keep moving. all right, so point two, adoption. So, adoption. Yeah, yeah. when you talk about faith, I think the only related way to understand it is when you incorporate the order of salvation.

You know, the idea that you actually become a Christian first, you're, you know, regenerated. Yes. then God gives you the ability to have that faith. Because otherwise, you're dead, and you're in your, you know, you cannot, you cannot get there.

[ 29 : 01 ] You cannot have the faith. Right. So, I think that's essential to understanding where your faith came from. You know, as it says, it's irresistible, it's, and it's a gift, as it says in Ephesians.

Yeah. So, we're, I'll be made alive, and then faith is given to you. Yeah. So we, you know, we don't even do less than what we think we do. Right?

Because it's all a gift. Yeah, yeah, yeah. Yeah, I think that's very well said. And last week, he hit some of that, but, you know, and we've said that four, so, this idea that faith and repentance are ultimately a fruit of regeneration, and an outworking of regeneration, which is not the way we tend to think, and that's why I say faith and repentance, not repentance and faith, but this idea that that's the way it flows to us, right, because we're dead in sins, and could not respond.

You going to say something, too? Are you just pulling out of there? Oh, well, I was thinking. Yeah, okay. What do you think of the statement that salvation, or justification, is monogistic, and sanctification is synergistic?

Let me table that for next week, because I am tackling that. You know, I mean, I agree with it on the justification side immediately.

[ 30 : 30 ] I think sanctification, but it's sanctification both as well, and we'll talk about that next week. I think sometimes, yeah, obviously it involves our effort, but it's a work of God, too.

So that's what we'll unpack. All right, let's look at adoption. Now, adoption is not in the golden chain, so to speak, but it is a vital part of what God does for us.

And so adoption answers the question, what does it mean that believers are accepted by God?

How does God feel about and relate to those whom He justifies? I think, while justification is very prominent in the evangelical world, I think adoption as a doctrine can be neglected, and we can fail to appreciate all that it means.

So, those whom God justifies, this is our statement of faith, He adopts into His family, granting them the full status, rights, and privileges of beloved sons. As God's children, we receive His name, enjoy access into His presence, experience His care and discipline, and eagerly await the glorious inheritance He promises His own.

So, the meaning of adoption is we're welcomed in the family of God. So, believers are adopted. So, whereas justification, the context is a courtroom, adoption, the context is the family.

[ 31 : 48 ] And so, we see that all throughout Scripture where God, so the ground of justification, we're sons through Jesus Christ, but we see this all throughout Scripture, God does not merely refer to us as His people, but refers to us as His children.

And so, what is behind that? God calls Israel His son. You know, He says that to Pharaoh, I believe. You know, Israel, my beloved son.

You know, beneath the name is deep affection and love, you know. Isaiah 1 talks about children I have reared, I have brought up. So, this idea, what's meant to be implied under that is the deep affection of God and loving this people.

He calls them His own vineyard and that's also Isaiah 5, this idea of His affection, His love. He calls Ephraim, another name for Israel, my dear child.

He calls them the precious sons of Zion. And later, He calls His son, David's son, His son. You know, if you remember the promise to David, He says, I will be to this one, a king that comes after you, the one who reigns forever.

[ 33 : 00 ] I will be to him a father and He will be to me a son. So, we see this sonship language emerge. On the one hand, we see it for Israel, then we see it reserved for the Lord's anointed.

We see it reserved for David, His son. And then, God begins to talk about another son, a Messiah, who would come. You know, we think about the different passages.

For unto us, a child is given, or unto us, a son is given, a child is born, and He shall be the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. You can tell, I don't know those verses by heart, but this idea that this son would be more than a son of David.

This son would be a unique son. This son would be the Messiah, the Son of God. We see that in Psalm 2, 8, Daniel 7, where He says, this son, son of man, will be the ancient of days.

And then, the Messiah comes, and we see that He is the beloved Son of God. As the Lord said at His baptism, He said, a voice from heaven said, this is my beloved Son with whom I am well pleased.

[ 34 : 14 ] But, after salvation, God then calls believers sons. Now look down there in Galatians 3, we have that for you. For in Christ Jesus, you are all sons of God through faith.

Now the NIV completely misses it here, in my opinion. What are we to make of that? You know, the NIV translated, we are all children of God by faith.

And I understand what they are doing, but, you know, we are all sons of God by faith. What does that mean? What about the daughters? Where do they belong? Is it some chauvinistic statement? But I don't think so at all.

I think the Bible is trying to make as clear as possible that all Christians are given the status of the Son Himself. In that culture, only a son would be an heir.

And yet, all are called sons of God by faith. So that all might come to Him and receive the full status of relationship with God.

[ 35 : 18 ] And we see this language continue all the way to Revelation 21 when the Lord says that, you know, heavens and earth will pass away and there will be a place, the new heavens, new earth, where no sorrow, no sin, no sickness are welcome.

the Lord appeals, the one who conquers will have this heritage and I will be His God and He will be to me, He will be my Son. So this idea is that God, I love that sonship language, there's tons of books on it, but there's sonship language that threads through the Bible such that we see what we receive by faith.

in Jesus, He's the promised seed of Abraham, He's the promised son and we all receive sonship by faith, the full inheritance. I just got done reading *Until We Have Faces* a couple weeks ago and it's about a king longing to have a son.

He has three daughters. It's based on an old fable but an old story and he has three daughters and he's furious. He keeps having daughters. He keeps marrying different queens, having them in, none of them bring a son.

He's angry. Well, God can make children of Abraham out of stones and God calls us. We had a stony heart. He brings us to new life and He calls us sons by faith.

[ 36 : 41 ] J.I. Packer says that I think is so helpful. He says, Adoption is a family idea conceived in terms of love and viewing God as Father.

In adoption, God takes us into His family and fellowship. He establishes us as His children and heirs. Closeness, affection, and generosity are at the heart of the relationship.

And I love this phrase. To be right with God, the judge, is a great thing. But to be loved and cared for by God, the Father, is a greater thing.

Do you see that? To be right with God, the judge, that's what justification is. It's a great thing, but to be loved and cared for by God, the Father, is a greater thing.

It's so powerful and important. It tells us, you know, and I love this. Sinclair Ferguson said this many places.

[ 37 : 40 ] I think it's so helpful for summarizing what this means. What it means, that in love, He predestined us for adoption. That's what Ephesians 1 tells us. So love.

He foreloved us before the foundation of the world. And Ferguson says, God does not love us because Christ died for us. Christ died for us because God loved us.

You know, that captures these things together. You know, because so often, I think we can read our Bibles and you'll hear people say, well, the God in the Old Testament is this big, bad, mean guy.

And the God in the New Testament is Jesus and He's great.

You know, and so Jesus had to come to rescue us from the big, bad, mean guy. Well, that's not the way Scripture, that's not the way Scripture is put together. Rather, God loved us before the foundation of the world.

God sent Christ. God put Him forward. You hear the language in Romans 3. God put Him forward for us so that we might receive justification and adoption.

[ 38 : 48 ] And so the blessings of adoption are many as well. You know, I think in some ways, I think it's, this language is, you think about adoption, what is it saying that ultimately God wanted you?

You weren't like second. You know, you weren't like the third pick. You know, or something like that. God, and that's the way we can often think. You know, I can understand that God, you know, I've heard people say, you know, it's easy to say that God loved you.

It's a lot harder to say God loved me. It's a lot harder for me to say that to myself. And yet, I can't say that and believe the doctrine of adoption. We're meant to be able to say with confidence that I am loved and cared for by God the Father because of what Christ has done for me.

It's a precious thing. You know, we receive God's name, so He seals us, puts His name on us, we receive access into His presence. We experience His loving care and discipline.

I think that is so vital. I was talking with somebody last week and going through a very difficult time and Hebrews 12 tells us that what God does with those who rebel against Him, the wicked, God gives them over to sin and rebellion.

[ 40 : 04 ] God does not restrain them at some point or doesn't restrain them in all the ways He could. But with those He loves, He disciplines us for our good.

Hebrews 12 is a precious text. God is not a cruel Father that just lets us make a misery of our life. God disciplines us and rescues us. I don't know how many times I've been rescued by God and His discipline. And also, we await a glorious inheritance through Jesus Christ because of our sonship. So that's what we receive. So you see these, you know, these, you know, if the work of salvation is like a bit of a prism, you know, it passes, the prism is union with Christ and it passes through, we

see all these glorious things coming out.

You know, we're not studying redemption today, but redemption and that marketplace idea of being rescued from slavery, justification, that courtroom idea of being rescued from the penalty that we deserve, adoption, being rescued, you know, that orphan idea, the family idea.

[ 41 : 13 ] What is more desperate than an orphan child? That's the way we were. God came and sought us and found us. Sanctification brings another idea that we'll talk about, the idea of ritualistic, sacrifices and offering and how can we be cleansed of these things before God.

So it all flows to us through union with Christ. So, I think I have that, yeah, this is one of my favorite John Murray quotes, so you just have to indulge me, so enjoy it for me, I guess.

But, we see, we thus see that union with Christ has its source in the election of God the Father before the foundation of the world and its fruition in the glorification of the sons of God.

The perspective of God's people is too narrow. It is broad and long, union with Christ is. It's not confined to space and time, it has the expanse of eternity.

Its orbit is two foci, one, the electing love of God the Father, which we read the beginning, and the other, glorification with Christ and the manifestation of His glory. The former has no beginning, the latter, our glorification, has no end.

[ 42 : 30 ] Glorification with Christ at His coming will be but the beginning of a consummation that will encompass the ages of the ages. What is it then that binds past and present and future together in the life of faith and the hope of glory?

Why does the believer entertain the thoughts of God's determined counsel with such joy? Why can He have patience in the perplexities and adversities of the present?

Why can He have confident assurance with reference to the future and rejoice in hope of the glory of God? It is because He cannot think of past, present, or future apart from union with Christ.

So, by, you know, virtue of this, we're united with Christ. Christ is our past. Christ is our present, meaning He supplies all the power we need for whatever, come what may.

Christ is the future. Sufficient of the day are its own trouble. You know, leave it to the Lord. Christ is our future. All of this, you know, is this golden chain that holds us, sustain.

[ 43 : 37 ] It's the ballast of our life, union with Christ and the work that He has completely done. Thank you, Lord.