

Justification, Redemption, and Propitiation

by Brian Brodersen

The sermon explores the biblical concepts of justification, redemption, and propitiation, emphasizing God's initiative and sacrifice in salvation.

Duration: 46:13

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Romans 3:24-26, Romans 3:28, Romans 4:5, Romans 5:1, Galatians 2:16, Ephesians 2:8-9

Topics: "Propitiation"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker focuses on Romans 3:24-26 and explores the doctrine of salvation by grace through faith. He emphasizes that justification is a key aspect of this doctrine. The speaker highlights the concept of God's grace turning away His wrath and the sacrifice of Jesus as the propitiation for our sins. He emphasizes that faith's only function is to receive what grace offers, and that salvation is not achieved through our own efforts or contributions. The speaker also shares a personal story of someone who came to faith and emphasizes the radical distinction between religion and the good news of salvation through Christ.

Transcript

So, let's open up to Romans once again, the third chapter. And as I mentioned previously, I wanted to come back to the verses that we looked at last week and I wanted to highlight really a few of the key words in these verses here. And I'm going to read once again from verse 24 tonight of chapter 3 and I'll read through verse 26.

So, Paul says, they're being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God set forth as a propitiation by his blood through faith to demonstrate his righteousness, because in his forbearance, God had passed over the sins that were previously committed to demonstrate at the present time, his righteousness, that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus. So, perhaps you remember in our last study, we saw that in these verses, Paul begins to expound the doctrine of salvation by grace through faith. It's here also that he begins to explain the doctrine of justification.

And this is such an important word. We're going to look in depth at this word tonight. Justification refers to our standing before God in the legal sense of God being the judge who either justifies or condemns us.

So, that's ultimately what we want to focus on tonight. But we'll come back to that first. I want to look at two other key words in these verses, and they are the words of propitiation and redemption.

And sometimes it's important when we're studying the scriptures, and especially when you get to a somewhat of a technical book like Romans, a very doctrinally oriented book, sometimes you have to stop and really analyze some of these words to really get an understanding of the significance of the words that are being used. So, this word propitiation, we talked about it a bit previously, but I want to go into a little bit more detail. The Greek word is *elastirion*.

Now, the word propitiation is a troubling word for some theologians. Some are embarrassed and even shocked by this word, because to propitiate somebody means to placate his or her anger. And it seems to them an unworthy concept of God to suppose that he gets angry and needs to be appeased.

So, as a result of this, some have suggested that the Greek word should not be translated propitiation, that it should be translated perhaps mercy seat, or perhaps it should be translated expiation. Now, obviously these, you know, propitiation, expiation are kind of technical terms that we'll explain in a moment. Mercy seat is a word that at least we're somewhat familiar with.

Now, why would they suggest to translate the word mercy seat, this Greek word *elastirion*? Because in the Septuagint, which is the Greek version of the Old Testament, that word is primarily translated mercy seat. Every time you find mercy seat in that translation, it's this particular word that is being translated. So, some suggest that, well, we ought to just follow suit with the Septuagint, and we ought to translate the word as mercy seat.

Plus, this word only occurs one other time in the New Testament, and it is translated that particular time as mercy seat. Now, just to refresh your memory, the mercy seat, of course, refers to the lid that covered the Ark of the Covenant, and since the sacrificial blood was sprinkled on the mercy seat on the Day of Atonement, it is suggested that Jesus is himself now the mercy seat where God and sinners are reconciled. Now, there's some truth to that.

That's not, you know, it's not by any means a heretical idea. There's some truth to what's being said there, but it doesn't really fit the context of what Paul is saying here. That's the problem with it.

Now, you might wonder, well, what's the big problem anyway? Why are people bothered by the use of the word propitiation? And I've already indicated, they're bothered by it because they don't like the idea, really, ultimately, they don't like the idea of God's wrath burning so hot against sin that he has to be placated. That's not a good picture in the mind of those that have been sort of affected by humanistic kind of thinking. But, you know, you read the Scripture, and that's definitely what the Bible teaches.

God is angry when it comes to sin, and he will pour out his wrath upon unrepentant sinners. But there's another word that they suggest, and that's the word expiation. And some translations even have put the word expiation in instead of propitiation.

Expiation means to annul guilt or to remove defilement. So again, you see what they're doing is they're trying to lessen the idea of God's wrath against sin. So let's say that we're talking here about the annulling of guilt or the removal of defilement.

So as he says here, whom God set forth as a, some would suggest, an expiation by his blood. It's just the idea of removing the guilt of sin, not the idea of appeasing the wrath of God. Now, the main reason these

options are not satisfactory, and a reference to propitiation seems necessary, is the context.

And this is so important. People make a mistake a lot of times of building a case around a word. And, you know, sometimes maybe you've even heard sometimes a person will say, oh, well, you know, the Greek word says this.

Well, okay, that's fine. But what is the context of the word? Because you can't just take a word and build necessarily a theological case on a word. You have to consider the word in its context.

You have to consider how it is used. And so in these verses, Paul is describing God's solution to the human predicament, which is not only sin. The human predicament is not merely sin, but it's also God's wrath upon sin.

So the word propitiation in the context fits better than either the word mercy seat or the word expiation. Now, not only is there the problem in the mind of some of these theologians that, you know, this whole idea of needing to appease the wrath of God and God's wrath burning hot against sin, that's not the only problem. The other problem is they see that as a pagan rather than a Christian idea, because this word was used in reference to appeasing the pagan gods.

And so that's another reason why they sort of want to run away from the word propitiation. But the Christian doctrine of propitiation is totally different from the pagan superstitions. There really can be no comparison.

Even though the same word is used, we're talking about two completely different things. It differs in its need, author, and nature. So let's look at those three things.

Its need, the need for propitiation, who is being propitiated, and the nature of propitiation. So let me quote to you from John Stott. First, regarding the need, he said, why is propitiation necessary? The pagan answer is because the gods are bad-tempered, subject to moods and fits, and capricious.

The Christian answer is because God's holy wrath rests on evil. There is nothing unprincipled, unpredictable, or uncontrolled about God's anger. It is aroused by evil alone.

So God is not like one of the pagan ideas of God, who just gets irritated about any little thing, and you constantly have to be appeasing the gods. That's the idea in paganism. And of course, the pagans had gods for all of the different natural phenomena that would go on.

So there was the god of the wind, and the god of the storms, and the god of fire, and all of these things. And when anything would happen, any sort of natural disaster type of a thing would happen, they would attribute that to the anger of the gods, or to the gods being offended, and then they would need to come with some sort of propitiation. But that's not the biblical picture.

God isn't like that. He's not just getting upset about anything and everything. There's one thing, and one thing alone, that brings about God's wrath, and that is evil.

So, the need. Secondly, the author. Who undertakes to do the propitiating? The pagan answer is that we do.

So, in paganism, the individual person is the one who has to do the propitiating. So, we have offended the gods, so we must appease them. The Christian answer, by contrast, is that we cannot placate the

righteous anger of God.

We have no means whatever by which to do so. But God, in his undeserved love, has done for us what we could never do by ourselves. God presented Christ as a sacrifice of atonement.

The love, the idea, the purpose, the initiative, the action, and the gift were all God's. So, you see, it's this whole thing of propitiation. In the end, God is the one who is doing the propitiation.

He's propitiating himself. That's what he did through Christ. So, it's not us bringing something to God going, oh, please, oh, have mercy on me.

Oh, don't strike me with that lightning bolt, dear God. Here, I'm offering, you know, this thing. Oh, please have mercy.

That's not what we're doing. God is the one who has provided the sacrifice. So, thirdly, Stott says the nature.

How has the propitiation been accomplished? What is the propitiatory sacrifice? The pagan answer is that we have to bribe the gods with sweets, vegetable offerings, animals, and even human sacrifices. Now, I don't know if you realize this or not, this stuff still happens today. There are parts of the world today where this is happening, where this is how people are thinking that they are freeing themselves from their, you know, guilt or their sin or however they look at it.

Paganism is alive and well on the planet today. And there are entire cultures that believe in a multiplicity of gods, and they have the idea that these gods need to be propitiated. And so, you can go into certain countries today, and you can find that people are offering sweets, vegetables, animals, and in some extreme cases, you can still find today that human sacrifices are taking place.

It's obviously much more rare than it was at one time, but it still happens. The Old Testament sacrificial system was entirely different since it was recognized that God himself had given the sacrifices to his people to make atonement. And this is clear beyond doubt in the Christian propitiation.

For God gave his own son to die in our place, and in giving his son, he gave himself. So, for the person who's afraid to use the word propitiation because they don't want that association with paganism, they don't have to worry about any association. There is no association.

The propitiation in the Bible is entirely different than propitiation was among the pagans. That's the point. Now, moving on to the second word.

The second word is the word redemption. And we'll just talk about this just for a quick second. Redemption is, the word is actually borrowed from the marketplace.

It's a commercial word. In the Old Testament, it was used of slaves who were purchased in order to be set free. They were said to be redeemed.

That was the way they were referred to. It was also used metaphorically of the people of Israel who were redeemed from captivity in Egypt and Babylon. And then, of course, what the New Testament teaches about redemption is that Jesus bought us out of captivity to sin in the devil, shedding his blood as the ransom price.

So, this is the meaning of the word redemption. It means to purchase. And the idea is to purchase with the objective of liberating someone from captivity.

And these words will come up again as we continue to study, especially looking at the grace of God. But the main word that we want to focus on tonight is the word justification. So, that was all just a preliminary to where we're really going to camp out here for a few minutes.

The word justification. This is such a great word in the biblical context. And when you understand justification, this is where radical liberty begins to really occur.

Liberty in the sense of relief from the bondage of thinking that I might not ultimately get to heaven because I'm just not as good as I know I should be. Until a person understands justification, they will go under that kind of oppression and bondage. It's inevitable because we all, at times, sense our failure, right? We all sometimes looking at ourselves realize, you know, I'm not good enough.

I don't think I'm ever going to make it. But when we understand justification, this is the most liberating thing in the world. This is what happened in what we call the Reformation.

There was a rediscovery of this wonderful doctrine of justification by faith, and this turned the world upside down. It brought real biblical Christianity back into the forefront after it had been buried for literally centuries under tradition and all kinds of false views. So justification is a legal or forensic term belonging to the law court.

So you see, Paul is taking these things from everyday life, and he's teaching through the things that people would know. They would know about redemption from the marketplace. They would know about justification from the legal process.

And it's important for us that we understand these things too. You know, we can get up here and throw around words like redemption and justification and propitiation and reconciliation and all of that. Those are great words, but you wonder, well, what do they mean? So it's very important that we know what they mean because when we know what they mean, then we can embrace that reality for ourselves and have the God-intended impact of these things on our lives.

So justification, let me tell you what it's not. Justification is not simply pardon or forgiveness. It's not just pardon or forgiveness.

Now, of course, we're forgiven. Our sins are forgiven. We've been pardoned.

But justification is more than that. Pardon is negative, the remission of a penalty or a debt. Justification is positive, the bestowal of a righteous status, the sinner's reinstatement into favor and fellowship with God.

So you see, when God justifies a man, he's not merely pardoning him. He's not merely saying, I forgive you. Go your way.

You're forgiven. Go. All right.

You're fine. Just go. He's not doing that.

When he's justifying us, he's not only forgiving us, but then he's inviting us to come and to enjoy his love and to participate in his blessing. So that's what's happening with justification. Now, the source of our

justification is God and his grace.

We are not the source of our justification. In other words, we don't justify ourselves. It's clear that salvation is it's God's gift to us, isn't it? So he's the source of this.

It originates with God. And at the end of the day, we have to understand that salvation is because God decided that there would be salvation. And there was nothing that influenced God to save man.

There was nothing that influenced him. This was born out of his own heart of love and compassion. It wasn't that he looked and saw that, well, you know, if I offer salvation, some people will accept it.

So I will offer it. He didn't do that. God's plan to save originated in himself alone.

Now, let's remember, God didn't have to save anybody. God was perfectly fine before he created the material universe. He was perfectly happy and complete and total before men or angels ever came into existence.

God lives in an eternal, perfected, harmonious, communal state as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. So in other words, it's not like God needed a universe. It's not like he needed angels because he was lonely or needed men because he didn't have anything to do and, you know, wanted a project.

So since he didn't need anything, when men sinned and rebelled against him, he could have easily just wiped the whole thing out and said, okay, that was that. And that's the end of that. And I'll just go back to being perfectly me.

So he didn't have to save anybody, but he chose to. He chose to save. And of course, the radical thing is how he would save and what it would entail and what it would cost him to save.

That's when it gets really, really radical. So the source of our justification is God and his grace. It's not in us.

And let me say this just for clarification. It wasn't even in Christ as the source in the sense that he did something that the Father was reluctant or unwilling to do. Now, there's not a whole lot of this thinking today, but you still find it occasionally in different places.

There was a time back, you know, in the previous century in theological circles, the idea was that Jesus loved us and he sort of had to talk the Father into this whole thing of redemption. And, you know, so the Father sort of went along just for the sake of Jesus because he loves Jesus. And there were those who tried to suggest that there was a sharp distinction between the Old Testament God and the God of the New Testament.

And they would say blasphemous things about the God of the Old Testament. They'd say, oh, the God of the Old Testament is a bloodthirsty tribal God. And they would actually blame Paul the apostle for importing that into the New Testament.

But they would say, but Jesus, you know, they try to make a distinction between Paul and Jesus as well. Some people still do this today. Some radical theologians today still, they say that, you know, Pauline Christianity is not real Christianity.

Just Jesus is the source of real Christianity. Forget Paul, forget everything he taught. He corrupted Christianity.

So we got to get back to Jesus. And what does that mean? Well, let's just get back to loving your neighbor. Let's just get back to turning the other cheek.

And those are the things Jesus said. They conveniently omit a lot of other things Jesus said. But so that was the mentality though, that the God of the Old Testament was, he was the angry God.

He was the wrathful God. He was the one that was going to punish sin, but not Jesus. So out of that came the idea that, well, Jesus sort of, you know, talked God the Father into saving mankind.

Not so. For God the Father, is the reference there, so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son. This originated with the Father.

And of course, the Son and the Spirit in agreement, but God the Father didn't need to be talked into saving the world. This whole plan originated with him. So he is the source of our justification.

The ground of our justification is Christ and his cross. Now we talked about this previously, but let me bring it up again because it's important. This question, how does God remain just and still justify the sinner? That is the dilemma.

How does he do that? Well, we understand through the passage here, Christ dies for sinners and pays the penalty so they can be freely justified. So you see the ground of our justification is Christ and his cross. As we pointed out, God doesn't just simply wink at sin.

He doesn't just close his eyes to sin. He doesn't just say, oh, okay, look, I know you just keep blowing. It's okay.

We won't tell anybody. Let's just try again. Again, of course, as human beings, we do that.

As I pointed out last time, we do that because we're sinners. We have no concept of absolute justice. We have an idea to some extent of what justice is, of course.

And we know what an injustice is. We know when something's unfair or somebody's being cheated, and that's all because we were created in God's image. And we have that sense.

But just in the pure, absolute sense as God is, that's something because of our own sinful condition, it's something that we can never really comprehend even. But this is what requires the payment for sin. So there has to be a ground for a justification, and that is Christ and his cross.

But then thirdly, the means of our justification is faith, and this is the real key. This is what, as I said, this is what was rediscovered at the time of the Reformation. Now, it wasn't like there wasn't anybody on the planet who didn't know this, but quite honestly, the numbers were few and far between because the pure gospel, which is, this is it, we're reading it right straight from the biblical text.

This, as I said, was lost for generations. But once in a while, an individual here or there would rise up and they would get an understanding. But because there was such power in the existing church at the time, the church had become this great political force in the world.

If you oppose the church's teaching, you were just simply crushed under its heel. So, you know, it was very difficult for things to change. They might change on a very small scale, but any serious development of going back to a pure biblical view of Christianity would immediately be dealt with by the ecclesiastical powers of the day.

But at this point in time, this point in history, God sees fit to just sort of blow the lid off of this whole thing and to bring the true gospel back out into the open. And like I've already hinted at, he used primarily Martin Luther to do that. Now, Martin Luther, sometimes I'm a little bit hesitant to talk too much about him because, you know, he had some weird ideas and problems.

But, you know, if you look real closely at him, he's, you know, he's, well, what was he? He was a man, just like all other men. We have a tendency sometimes to idolize people that God uses and to think more highly of them than we actually ought to think because, you know, we get some idea that they're extra holy or they're, you know, there's something extraordinary or unique about them, unlike other Christians. But the fact of the matter is, when you get close to anybody, you find that they're human beings.

They've got sins. So if you understand that about Luther, then it's okay. But people have taken and, you know, put him on a pedestal like they've done to other people historically.

But all of that to say, regardless of his foibles in a lot of different areas, this is the one thing that he absolutely got right. And this is the most important thing because this is the essence of the gospel. And the conflict that existed back then that really came out in Luther's contention with the Roman Catholic Church, of which he was part, he was a doctor, theological doctor of the church, that issue still exists to this very day.

Some people say, oh, well, you know, looking back with hindsight, there never needed to be a reformation, really. You know, they got all worked up over, you know, things that they shouldn't have gotten that worked up over. And to some extent, that's true.

I mean, they killed each other over some of these things, so they never should have done that, obviously. But what people fail to see who look back and with that attitude that, well, you know, we really didn't even need a reformation, they fail to see what the real issue is here. The real issue is between the true gospel and no gospel at all.

I hate to say this, and I know it'll offend some people, but Roman Catholicism to this day still does not have the true gospel. They never recovered it. They lost it, and it stayed lost.

And when one of their own found it and stood up and said, hey, look what I found, they said, shut up. We'll kill you. You know, they tried to destroy him.

And he was the only one that that happened to. But to this very day, now, I'm not saying that there aren't Roman Catholics who are genuinely Christians, there are. But as I say, they're Christians despite their system, not because of it.

Nobody is a Christian because of Roman Catholicism. You have got to disagree with their theological position, technically, to get saved. Because to this day, they do not believe that justification is by faith alone.

They believe that justification is by faith and works. If Paul's going to teach us anything in this portion of Scripture, he's going to teach us that justification is by faith, period. And let me just again summarize justification.

Justification is the declaration by God that you are righteous. See, this is where the Catholics had a real problem, the Catholic doctors, the theologians, the leadership. They didn't like the idea of this declaration of righteousness.

And they insisted that, no, God doesn't just declare you righteous. He infuses you with righteous. He makes you a righteous person.

But anybody who knows anything knows that that isn't true, right? Because the best Christian still isn't a righteous person in the total sense, in the perfect sense. They still have sin. So they could not get this, and they still can't get it to this very day, sadly.

Justification is a declaration of righteousness. God says as a judge, you are righteous. You are justified.

God declares us to be righteous, not because we are, but because Christ is. And that righteousness of Christ, God puts on our account. That's how he is able to declare us righteous.

But I must say, even though they erred in the idea of an infused righteousness, we need to be careful as well, not to think that you can just have a declaration of righteousness, but never actually have that work itself out into your life practically. And this is where, again, they have this mental block, it almost seems like. We're not infused with righteousness the moment we're justified.

We're declared righteous, but there is something else that happens to us simultaneous to justification, and that's called regeneration. And we are, at that moment, born of the Spirit of God. And in a little bit of a sense, there is a righteousness infused into us because the life of God is implanted in us.

But, of course, we're not righteous in the perfect sense. And we're going to grow, and we're going to learn, and we're going to stumble along the way, and we're going to, you know, make mistakes. But thank God, we're already declared righteous, so the stumbling, and the falling, and the mistakes, and the sins, they don't cast us back out into darkness.

They don't cast us back out of fellowship with God. Those are the things that God, by His grace, He forgives us as we repent, and then He just keeps moving us forward. But our position of righteousness remains intact always.

I'm not more righteous on the days that I do better than I am on the days that I don't do too well. And listen to this, you will never, in one sense, be any more righteous than the day you believed in Christ, in the sense of justification, in the sense of your position. As God sees you, He sees you in Christ, He sees you absolutely perfect.

How could you ever improve on that? You can't. And when did He see you that way? The moment you put your faith in Christ. So we talked about this before, but this is where it's so important to to make the distinction between our position, we have this position in Christ, but then we have the practical reality that is working itself out.

But there's a word for that too, and we'll get to that later as we go further into Romans, that's the word sanctification. And this is, to kind of put it in a nutshell, the Catholic problem is they confuse justification with sanctification. They can't make the distinction between those two things.

And if you fail to make the distinction between justification and sanctification, you'll never have security of salvation. You'll never have confidence that you're going to heaven, because you're always going to have in your mind the idea that you're somehow earning your way to heaven. And when you do good, you're going to feel like, okay, maybe I could die this week because I think I'd get there.

But if you're having a bad week, you're like, Lord, please don't let me get killed this week, because I don't think I'll I'll probably end up in hell. People live like that. No need.

Because these are two separate things. Justification is instantaneous. Sanctification is a lifelong process.

But it's connected back to regeneration, because when God puts His Spirit in us and He starts conforming us through this process into the image of Christ. So the means of our justification is faith. Having been justified by faith, Paul will say in the fifth chapter of the first verse, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

That's where he kind of gets to the end of his case on justification. We'll get there. But know this, faith is not meritorious.

It is not a work. Now, some people have taken even faith and tried to sort of say that it's a work. It's just another form of a work.

It's not. The Bible contrasts faith with works. It never confuses the two.

Faith is faith. Works are works. Now, faith, true biblical faith, works itself out.

And we'll see that as we go on. But so this is it. The means of our justification is faith.

And let me close with this one. One other quote from John Stott. This is a tremendous sort of just summing up all that we've said about these things tonight.

He said, there's no other system, ideology, or religion proclaims a free forgiveness and a new life to those who have done nothing to deserve it, but a lot to deserve judgment instead. On the contrary, all other systems teach some form of self-salvation through good works of religion. Righteousness or philanthropy, Christianity by contrast, is not in its essence a religion at all.

It is a gospel. The gospel, good news, listen, that God's grace has turned away his wrath, that God's son has died our death and born our judgment, that God has mercy on the deserving, and that there is nothing left for us to do or even contribute. Faith's only function is to receive what grace offers.

That is so beautiful. That's faith's only function. It's just to receive what grace offers.

I was talking today, I'll close with this, I was talking today to a man that I know, and I know his daughter very well, and we were talking about her conversion, and then he began to tell me his story because he got saved through her, when she came to the Lord, she influenced her family, and they finally received Christ after a couple of years. This is back in 1972, but he said, you know, his daughter left home on the east coast and came out to the west coast, and at a certain point she called home and said, I found Jesus,

and his response was, well, he's right here in Baltimore. Why did you have to, you know, go to Oregon to find him? You know, he's a Catholic, and that was, you know, that was fine.

Jesus was right there, and so he goes on, and he tells me the story. He says, you know, we watched, and we saw a transformation in her life, and she, you know, she would say things to us, and she would pray, and that impacted us, and he said, you know, a couple years later, he said, one night my wife and I were sitting there in front of the TV, and he said it was about midnight, and there were, it was a talk show kind of a thing. He said there were five men, evidently evangelical Christians, that were talking, and he said, one of the guys said this, said, you know, the problem with the Catholics is they're trying to work their way to heaven, and he said that statement just pierced his heart, and he realized that's true.

That's what I'm doing. I'm trying to work my way to heaven, and I'm not doing a very good job. I'm not, I'm not feeling all that good about making it, and he said right then, my wife and I got on our knees in front of the TV, and we prayed to receive Christ, and that was 1972, and you know, today he's older, and he's, but he's serving the Lord, but I just thought, you know, wow, amazing, but you see, it's that, it's that radical distinction, and I love what Stott says here.

He, and, and, you know, we say it often, in its essence, it's, it's not a religion at all, because a religion isn't good news. There's no good news in religion, because religion says you got to do this, this, that, and the other thing, and maybe if you do it well enough, you can spend a couple millennium in purgatory, and then you might eventually get out of there, if you got people praying for you. That's what religion says.

It never gives you any assurance, confidence, but the, this is good news, and the good news is basically that God's done it all through Christ, and our only function is to receive what grace offers. Lord, I receive that salvation, and when we let go of trying to make ourselves righteous, and we just say, Lord, I receive your righteousness, that's when all of the, that's all the difference in the world. That's the difference between life and death.

It's a difference between heaven and hell. Let's pray. Lord, we thank you for this great and glorious gospel, and this wonderful doctrine of justification, and Lord, that you have declared us righteous.

You, the judge of the universe, you have acquitted us, but not simply a pardon, but Lord, you've invited us, brought us in to be members of your family, made us your sons and daughters through regeneration, and Lord, you've done it all by your grace, and our only part is just to receive what grace offers. How we thank you for that. Lord, if there's a single person in this room or a single person listening through any sort of media that is yet to experience that assurance that comes through being justified, Lord, may they know tonight salvation.

May they know that they possess it. May they know that you have declared them righteous as they would simply put their trust in Christ. In his name we pray.

Amen.

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