

# The New Covenant Life - Part 3

by Sandeep Poonen

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of understanding the New Covenant, justification, and living a life of humility and grace to reflect Christ's character.*

**Duration:** 26:18

**Scripture:** Romans 3:23

**Topics:** "Justification By Faith", "Christian Sanctification"

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## Description

This sermon delves into the profound truths of the New Covenant, emphasizing the call for believers to reflect the purity of Jesus' character and the significance of being justified by faith. It explores the concepts of propitiation, being made righteous just as if one has always obeyed, and the essential need for humility in the Christian walk. The message underscores the foundational starting point of embracing God's grace and justification to run the race of becoming more like Jesus, free from sin and filled with His righteousness.

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## Transcript

One of the things that we've been doing the last few weeks, at least the time I've been taking, is to review some of the truths of the New Covenant. We call ourselves New Covenant Christian Fellowship and unfortunately very few people are able to, people who know what the New Covenant is, small minority of people who know it, are able to even explain it to other people. So, the New Covenant is the new agreement between God and man.

And the new agreement is that we must be like Jesus, in the purity of His character, just like Jesus, who never sinned, never sinned even once for 10,000 days, never sinned for 290,000 hours. And the agreement we make with Jesus is, I must be like Him, I will be like Him. How is that possible? It's as impossible as Mary having a baby as a virgin and the angel says, the Holy Spirit will come upon you, He will help you, He will do it, He will write His laws in our hearts.

What we need is faith, belief that God will increasingly make us like Jesus, who never sinned. And one of the key aspects we talked about was grace. Grace is that word which is God's riches at Christ's expense, that I can increasingly live as if I am the richest man in the universe.

I'm the richest woman in the universe because of what God did for me in Christ. And there's a word relating, related to that, that I want to speak about today, related to grace. They go hand in hand and it's

spoken about in Romans chapter 3 and Romans chapter 4 called justified.

Justification or justified is an extremely important word that I believe that nobody in this church has really grabbed a hold of it. I'm not saying we don't understand it, I'm not saying we don't believe it, but we are all in need of grabbing hold of the truth that God has justified us. I want to use three simple words or three simple things relating to justify that can help us understand what that means.

The first is in Romans chapter 3 verse 25 and it's a big word but it's relating to justification. But it's the first word that we need to, I think about, when I think about what does it mean that God justified us? And that's a word in Romans chapter 3 verses 23 to 25. It says all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.

All of us have sinned, nobody is excluded, but it doesn't end with a period there. A lot of us tend to think we are all sinners and then we put a period there, but there's a comma there, at least in my translation, and he says we've been justified. So the first thought I must think about after I fully embrace that I am a sinner, is I must think that I am justified as a gift by his grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in his blood through faith.

That word propitiation, it's in your Bible, it's in my Bible, but very few of us understand it. Somebody, whether if a Muslim or a Hindu would ask you, hey what's the meaning of that word propitiation in your Bible? It's in your Bible. How many years have you been a Christian? We should know the meaning of that word.

And so that's why the Lord gives us teachers, that's why God gives us helps to do that, but we should find these words and say I don't know what this means, but I won't find it if I don't read it. If I don't read his word, I won't stumble on these words that I have no idea what it means. Propitiation means taking away the anger of God.

Jesus was a propitiation which means he took away God's anger and God's wrath. Wrath taker, anger taker. Jesus was the anger taker, the wrath taker.

Now what was God's anger directed at? It was directed at us because of our sins, not because of us, because of who we are. God created us wonderfully, beautifully. He breathes in us and he's created us in his image, but because all of us have sinned, now the anger of God and the wrath of God is directed at us.

It's like a spear that is directed at me. It's like a bullet, to use our language of this day, it's like a bullet that was directed at me and the moment I was born and I'm a sinner, that wrath is directed at me. What does the wrath of God mean? It doesn't mean he's going to beat us 500 lashes.

It means a separation from God, an eternal separation from God. That is the consequence of every one of our sins. That is what is headed towards us.

Every single human in the universe has the eternal wrath of God coming at them. Every single person, including our beautiful cute little children, the anger of God because of sin that is in them is coming at us and the message here is that all have sinned in Romans chapter 3 verse 23, but that Jesus came in the way. The wrath was meant for me.

Not Jesus died for the sins of the whole world, Jesus died for me because the wrath of God was coming towards me and Jesus came in the way. That is the beginning of our relationship with Jesus as we heard. When we see that Jesus came in the way for the bullet and the spear that was meant for me, what a fool

am I not to recognize all that Jesus has done.

When I see, so what do I need to see? First thing I need to see is that there is a spear or a bullet directed right at me because of my sin. If I don't see the seriousness of that clear, guaranteed predicament for me, I wouldn't see the gift of what Jesus did. I have to be absolutely convinced that every single person, no matter how good they appear, how bad they appear, no matter how cute they look, no matter how sweet they smile, there is the anger and the wrath of God that is due them because of their sin.

And unless I personally, individually accept, receive, recognize what Jesus did when he came in the way, all of my virtue of even gratitude is nothing more than New Age. You know that the New Age will tell you more than anybody else, hey have an attitude of gratitude. Always have gratitude.

What is the difference between the New Age definition of gratitude and the Christian's definition of gratitude? The Christian's definition of gratitude is founded in what Jesus did for me when he took away the wrath. That you won't find any New Age blog talking about. Jesus came in the way of that bullet that was headed for me.

It was that spear that was headed for me. We lose sight of that so easily. Take me back dear Lord to the time when I first believed.

What did I believe? When I first believed, now we may have been innocent, we may have been much younger, we didn't recognize it, but Lord Jesus take me back because now I'm older and I understand what happened. There was a bullet headed in my way and you stepped in. You didn't have to.

You were up in heaven and you were perfect but you didn't take pity on me. You loved me. You loved me and you said let me come down and take the bullet that was meant for me.

That is so simple and so significant but that is what propitiation means. Propitiation means that God took the wrath that was destined for me. The other thing, that's the first word, wrath taker.

Dear brothers and sisters, gratitude will come easy to you. Gratitude will be natural if you recognize what happened that there was the wrath of God that was destined for you and that Jesus stood in the way and took it. He took the fall.

He took the hit. He was crushed. He experienced what? The physical lashes? Not at all.

That's not what he experienced. That was nothing. Disciples of him have experienced much worse.

Torture for years. What Jesus experienced was not the physical but the eternal separation from God. That's what he experienced while on the cross.

That is what is the hit he took for us. That is the propitiation that God took for us. The second word is, this word justified means just as if I've always obeyed.

That's the second word. First is, Jesus took the hit. But it's not that Jesus just took the hit.

He then turned with me to Romans chapter 4. The end of Romans chapter 4. Romans chapter 4 tells us that the way we can accept this truth about justification is the same way Abraham accepted the word from God that came from God that said you will have a son and God told him that when he was 75 years old and he ended up having a son when he was 100 years old. The son of promise, Isaac, happened when he

was 100 years old. For 25 years Abraham had to wait but it says he believed the promise.

That says in Romans chapter 4 verse 22. The whole chapter of Romans chapter 4 which comes right after Romans chapter 3 talks about let me explain this justification by faith. That's how we embrace the fact that we are justified.

It's by faith and he uses the example of Abraham who took 25 years to see the promise fulfilled but he never wavered in unbelief is what it says there. That's verse 20. He never wavered in unbelief.

He grew strong in faith. And now it says in verse 22 it says it was credit to him as righteous and now not for his sake only was it written that it was credited to him but for our sake also so for me too it will be credited those who believe in him who, listen to this carefully, who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead. So justification is not just that Jesus died it's also have a component in that he was raised.

I talked about propitiation that Jesus took the hit and that he died but part of our justification is also in the component that he was raised and the next verse tells me that in verse 25. Justification of faith is verse 24 is available to us too who believe that Jesus raised him from the dead and verse 25 tells me the two parts of it that he died he was delivered over because of our sins it's one part but he was raised because of our justification and because of the justification we have Jesus's righteousness. This is where I am convinced that none of us grab a hold of the meaning of justification like we should.

We have to really see how God took all of the wrath that was meant for us in his son Jesus that's what happened to our sins but now we are sinless that doesn't mean we are full of righteousness. Taking away the sin is like cleaning a cup and making it empty it's clean but it's empty that's just not that's not the gospel God doesn't say clean the cup and make it empty well what is the glass used for to hold eternal life to hold the water of eternal life now you put the water of eternal life in it now it's useful.

Jesus doesn't just clean the inside of our cup with our righteousness without sorry with our sins by taking the hit but then he fills it up with the righteousness of Jesus and I have to ask myself every single time I stand before God do I stand in the full utter righteousness of Jesus I think we all believe it in our heads but I want to ask you this how is that how we always approach Jesus let's approach God the father two components of it thoroughly sobered that Jesus took the hit for my sins and completely thoroughly overflowing with gratitude that I am complete standing with the righteousness of Jesus because I honestly believe that all of us subtly given to the notion that Jesus stands but Jesus stood before God with a certain amount of access to God and we stand before God with a

little bit less access do we believe and we are clothed with the righteousness of Jesus and that we stand before God just as if we have always obeyed when have you come to God flattened because of what God did for you when he took the hit but standing complete in him this is not for advanced Christians this is the starting line you are at the starting line and if you're gonna stand and say I'm gonna be a Christian and I'm gonna sign the agreement the new agreement the new covenant I must take the goal on that you must be like Jesus and the purity of his character and that is going to be shown through all the temptations that you're going to face today and tomorrow but when you come to the starting line I'm going to tell you something about all of your past including the sins you did five

seconds ago it sounds unbelievable but that is why Jesus said that's why Paul said think about Abraham who was 75 when he was told and his wife was 65 you're gonna have a child and Abraham believed it and we will never be able to recognize how to deal with temptation how to fight sin how to embark on the

journey to be like Jesus if we don't repeatedly and continuously and constantly embrace the fact that we are justified and that we have grace if we don't stand at the starting line completely flattened because of what God did for us when he took the hit and also not fully thinking that we are the richest person in the universe because we stand complete in Christ we're off to the wrong start we are at the wrong starting line and it takes a repeated a constant reminder to say Lord Jesus I'm

waking up I'm just about to start my day let me get to the starting line and I must come to the starting line with being justified and with grace the race is much harder than you can imagine because the race before you is be like Jesus who never sinned for 290 000 hours that's the race to be very clear about it the race is not to have a retirement the race not to have grace godly children the race is not to have a ministry nothing except that to run like Jesus who never sinned for 290 000 hours so it starts with today the race before me today is that you and I don't sin for 24 hours that's the race and if we don't start with the what's given to us as a starting line we'll go astray and we have to be flattened and so overflowing with gratitude by these what I would call unbelievable truths

only believable because it's in God's holy word and then the third word that I think about so there's propitiation just as if I've always obeyed and the third word I would say is in Romans chapter 3 verse 27 the third word that you absolutely must have with you when you think about justification is humility if you do not have humility you are excluded from the race where then is any pride where then is any boasting it is excluded there is no such thing as a proud Christian because a Christian is someone who's running the race to be like Jesus and pride is excluded this is why we must hate all pride my dad says that pride is like dust that is how easily pride comes into ourselves because of our accomplishments because of something of our children's accomplishments because of our good works

because of our victory over sin because of our ministry for many different reasons pride can come in and we are excluding ourselves from the race let me use those three words again propitiation just as if you've always obeyed utter humility if I don't see this in myself let me tell myself I've not even come to the starting line of the Christian life I may know a lot of things I may have done a lot of good things but I've not even begun and I must come back I must reset my relationship with the Lord and say Lord this now my eyes have been opened to the starting line this is where we can sing songs like I will glory only in the cross lest his sufferings all be in vain I will not only weep for the sins that he bore but I will glory in the cross my sin-stained crowns and my sin-stained

trophies and my sin-stained robes were all I could bring to lay at his feet unworthy to sit and eat at the table of life until God made provision for me I had this picture as I was singing that song when I heard that song for the first time I had this picture of a table of three the Father the Son and the Holy Spirit and I knocked at the table and God says and the response was you're unworthy to sit at the table of life and I was excluded from this concept of joy of peace of rest and then I was told to leave but then one of the three stood up and said no no no I'll make provision let's make a fourth chair for him so that he can sit with us he too can partake of the divine nature 2nd Peter chapter 1 verse 4 let's make provision for Sandeep to come and sit with whom with the Godhead doesn't

make us gods but he made us provision to partake the fellowship the Father Son and the Holy Spirit that's who our fellowship is with with the Father and the Son how does it feel if you look through the window and you see eight of the sweetest people sitting and having dinner and you knock on the door and say can I come sit with you and they say no you can't you're not worthy how embarrassed how ashamed I'd feel until one of the eight comes in and says we'll make provision for you come come be part of us that is what

Jesus did that is what it means to be justified I had to get rid of my robes all I could offer was my sin-stained robes all I could offer was my sin-stained crowns things that I thought were crowns full of sin filthy that's all I could give him God said it's not going to get

you in your righteousness your ministry your blog posts your sermons your mission trips to Africa and India and Asia and that's going to get you in no the fellowship with the Godhead impossible I have to make provision for you that's what Jesus had to do Jesus had to make provision for us he had to take the hit propitiation and he had to make us sit at the table saying you're fully righteous just like us in Christ but then he says God forbid don't sit here thinking you're somebody you have a smell of pride you're out you think you deserve this this moment that spirit comes in you kick it out how dare we sit at the table of life with even the smallest speck of pride but we have to recognize that pride is like dust it comes into this room even though we've just vacuumed it it creeps in

that's how deep it sits within us and we have to hate it because it's excluding us from the starting line dear brothers dear sisters there is no such thing as a proud Christian I'm absolutely convinced of it we must hate it we must sit in the church so hating the desire for any glory to come to us and we must grow in that hatred

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