

# Lesson 5 --- January 18, 2018

1. Ponder December's study and share a truth for which you are particularly thankful.
  
2. Take a deeper look at redemption by considering:
  - a. its general meaning.(see notes)
  
  - b. what these words meant to the author and original readers.(see notes)
  
  - c. Old and New Testament examples.(see notes)
  
  - d. application to our lives.(see notes)
  
3. Grow in your understanding of propitiation by answering the following.
  - a. Give the backdrop that will help us understand propitiation.(see notes)
  
  - b. Summarize the pastor's thinking who opposes modern theologians.(see notes)
  
  - c. Discuss the fresh insight Luke 18:10-14 gives to propitiation.(see notes)
  
4. Reply to a-c concerning imputation(credited) based on the notes.
  - a. What words do other translations use for imputation? What type of terms are these?
  
  - b. What must we be clear on, and how is Abraham an example of this?

c. What imagery does Paul use to further explain imputation?

5. Review the doctrines of salvation taught to this point in Romans by briefly defining:

justification -

redemption -

propitiation -

imputation -

# Notes for Lesson 5

**Question 2** (“*Grace & Redemption*”, 10/1/17, pp. 9-11).

**Take a deeper look at redemption by considering:**

**a. its general meaning.**

This is the first mention of redemption in the book of Romans. Paul uses this term in a number of his letters. This term “redemption” answers the question, “How can God be gracious and just at the same time?” If He is perfectly just, then He must judge sin. He cannot just “let people off the hook,” so to speak. God would cease to be just if He did not judge sin. Paul will declare in verse 26 that God is “just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.” The explanation of how God can be just and the justifier of sinful man is by redemption and propitiation, which are in Christ Jesus.

The words “redeemer,” “redeem,” and “redemption” have everything to do with Christ on the cross. The wages and consequences of ungodly man breaking the law had to be paid. The wrath of God is the expression of His justice. The just desserts of man's depravity is God's righteous wrath. If justice is to be satisfied, God's wrath has to be propitiated or satisfied: paid in full. This is the redemption that the Redeemer paid on the cross. We will learn that redemption is related to propitiation which means “to satisfy.” God's wrath and justice were satisfied by Christ's death on the cross.

This doctrine of redemption, paying the price of God's wrath against sin, is much neglected in the free-grace thinking of our day. The ability of God to extend grace is not free. Someone had to pay. 1 Corinthians 7:23 says, “*You were bought with a price.*”

*Acts 20:28 Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.*

**b. what these words meant to the author and original readers.**

These words “redemption,” “redeem,” and “redeemer” were not religious words in Paul's times. When we hear them today, our thoughts turn towards spiritual matters. But when men in the first century heard them, their thoughts turned toward financial matters.

It is important to understand what these words meant to the author and original readers. These words were derived from a word with the basic meaning “to loose.” It was used of all kinds of loosening; for instance, the loosening of clothing, the loosening of armor or of tied up animals, and so on. At times, it was used of men who had been loosed from captivity, particularly to the loosening of prisoners of war when a ransom had been paid.

In time, this word acquired the meaning of “payment for loosing something or someone” or “ransom price.” It also carried the meaning “to redeem.” It is important to keep in mind that these words were specific in application to payment as the basis of release. There were other words available that meant a “simple release of someone or something.” So here we are dealing with a release by payment. In fact, this term can also be translated as “ransom.” 1 Timothy 2:6 says that Christ “*gave Himself as a ransom.*” Jesus said in Mark 10:45, “*For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.*”

These words are not confined to just a release of prisoners of war. For example, it may refer to a slave who bought his own freedom. A slave might save his meager earnings over decades until he had the necessary amount to pay for his freedom.

Interestingly, it is important to note that the Jews used this word group “redeem,” “redeemer,” and “redemption” as they translated the Old Testament into Greek in the Septuagint. For example, the word group for redeem is translated ransom in Exodus 30:12 *“When you take a census of the sons of Israel to number them, then each one of them shall give a ransom for himself to the LORD, when you number them, so that there will be no plague among them when you number them.”*

This is not the release of a prisoner of war or a slave. It is a death sentence that is in question. The man's life is on the line. But his payment of the half shekel releases him from this sentence and enables him to walk out a free man. This is the typical and consistent use of these words.

### **c. Old and New Testament examples.**

One example that we find in the Old Testament that helps us to understand redemption is found in the Law. Suppose a person in Old Testament times owned an ox that had gored somebody to death. Under certain circumstances, the owner of the ox would be fined. But suppose there had been negligence. Suppose the ox was known to be dangerous and the owner had failed to keep the ox contained. In this case, the owner of the ox could be killed. He would have to forfeit his life for the one whose life had been taken.

In this case, the Old Testament provided a way by which the owner could come to an agreement with the relatives of the dead man. It would be possible for him to pay a ransom price instead of dying. This carries the idea of redemption: paying the price of a person who is guilty and who would otherwise die.

When we come over into the New Testament usage of this word group, “redeem,” “redemption,” and “redeemer” are used in reference to paying the price for the wages of sin. Redemption points to the fact that justice has been satisfied. Ephesians 1:7 *In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace.*

Colossians 1:13-14 *For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, 14in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.*

1 Timothy 2:5-6 *For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, 6who gave Himself as a ransom for all, the testimony given at the proper time.*

Titus 2:11-14 *For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, 12instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, 13looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus, 14who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds.*

### **d. application to our lives.**

This terminology of purchasing, buying, paying the price for freedom is very important when we begin to consider application to our lives. We must understand that Jesus became a curse for us. He bought us out of being cursed by the Law. Galatians 3:13 *Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us—for it is written, “CURSED IS EVERYONE WHO HANGS ON A TREE.”*

We understand how valuable Jesus' death was on our behalf. He was the only One who could pay

the price for us. I told you before the often repeated truth, "He had to be man so that He could suffer. He had to be God so that He could suffer enough."

**Question 3** ("Propitiation" 10/29/17, p.10-12)

**Grow in your understanding of propitiation by answering the following.**

**a. Give the backdrop that will help us understand propitiation.**

Propitiation is satisfying the just wrath of God. It has to do with absorbing the full penalty of sin. Wrath must be quenched. It is only within this context and with this backdrop that we can speak of God's love and grace and other subjects like this.

1 John 4:8-10 *God is love. 9By this the love of God was manifested in us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him. 10In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.*

**b. Summarize the pastor's thinking who opposes modern theologians.**

As I said, some modern theologians have reacted against using the term "propitiation" in reference to the God of the Bible. They do not see God as one who can be bribed to be favorable, like the Greco-Roman gods, so they reject the whole idea. When they come to the term in the Greek New Testament, they translate it with "expiation" in the sense of "absolve" or "pardon" or some equivalent term which lacks any reference to anger.

In opposition to this way of thinking, one pastor states it this way, "His anger is the settled opposition of His holy nature to everything that is evil. Such opposition to sin cannot be dismissed with a wave of the hand. It requires something much more substantial. And the Bible states that it was only the cross that did this. This is not the only way of looking at the cross, but it is an important way. If God's anger is real, then it must be taken into account in the way that sin, which caused that wrath, is dealt with. When the NT says 'propitiation,' then, it means that Jesus' death on the cross for the sins of mankind put away God's wrath against his people once and for all."

We have considered that Paul's argument up to this point is that all men, Jew and Gentile alike, are under the condemnation of God. Romans 1:18 *The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men.* Christ delivers believers from the very real danger of God's wrath. The sentence of judgment had been passed against them. The wrath of God hung over them. Paul has strongly emphasized the wrath of God throughout these opening chapters, and so Christ's saving work must include deliverance from this wrath. This deliverance is described by the word "propitiation."

When we talk about satisfying God's wrath, or propitiating God's wrath, we must include in that discussion the role of blood. I have already read for you that without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness of sin. "Blood" is a word pointing to the violent death inflicted in the animal sacrifices in the Old Covenant. Leviticus 17:11 *For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you on the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood by reason of the life that makes atonement.*

Moses was giving instruction in Leviticus 17:11 concerning offerings for sin. The animal that was to be offered for sin was first symbolically established as a representative by the sinner laying his hand on its head and so identifying himself with the sacrifice; then it was killed as a substitute. The blood was sprinkled before the Lord as a sign of turning away wrath and restoring fellowship. 1 Peter 1:2 refers to being sprinkled with the blood of Christ.

Ephesians 1:7 *In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses,*

according to the riches of His grace.

Ephesians 2:13 *But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.*

Packer writes, "The wrath of God is as personal and as potent, as His love. Just as the blood shedding of the Lord Jesus was the direct manifesting of His Father's love towards us, so it was the direct averting of His Father's wrath against us."

### **c. Discuss the fresh insight Luke 18:10-14 gives to propitiation.**

I want to conclude with a fresh insight into a well-known story that Jesus told as we consider propitiation. Luke 18:10-14 *"Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. 11The Pharisee stood and was praying this to himself: 'God, I thank You that I am not like other people: swindlers, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. 12I fast twice a week; I pay tithes of all that I get.' 13But the tax collector, standing some distance away, was even unwilling to lift up his eyes to heaven, but was beating his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me, the sinner!' 14I tell you, this man went to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but he who humbles himself will be exalted."*

That phrase the tax collector uses "be merciful to me" is really our word for propitiation. What he actually says is, "God, be propitiated in relation to me." This tax collector understood Leviticus 17:11 *"For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you on the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood by reason of the life that makes atonement."* The tax collector was asking that God's wrath which was due him be satisfied by virtue of a bloody sacrifice.

**Question 4** (The Economics of Salvation, 12/10/17, p.4-6)

**Reply to a-c concerning imputation (credited) from the notes.**

**a. What words do other translations use for imputation? What type of terms are these?**

Before we consider this section, we need to be clear on the meaning of the word "credited." I mentioned last week that this is the term λογίζομαι which is translated "counted, reckoned, imputed and credited" among other ways. It is used forty-one times in the New Testament, thirty-five times by Paul and nineteen times in the book of Romans. In fact, it is used eleven times in this one chapter alone. So, it is vital that we understand its fuller meaning and implications if we are to understand what Paul is saying.

λογίζομαι communicates in terms of accounting. Paul declares that God has made a precise, spiritual accounting calculation in which, on one hand, He has written off, as gone forever, all the sin of the one who trusts in Christ as the substitutionary atonement for sin. On the other hand, God has deposited His own perfect and holy righteousness to the believer's credit so that, although he was declared bankrupt, now he is full owner of all that God could ever require of him.

**b. What must we be clear on, and how is Abraham an example of this?**

We must be clear that the imputation or the crediting of righteousness to the believer is not a reward for faith. When God counted Abraham as justified, when He counted Abraham's sin as being on Christ, when God credited Abraham's account with the very righteousness of God, it was not because God saw Abraham as possessing something that no one else had, like faith, and then decided to

reward him. It was God's proactive, gracious, initiation of crediting righteousness to Abraham that brought him justification.

Abraham's life is a prime example of how justification is a result of God's provision, not man's reward. One pastor put together a number of verses that reveal God's work in justification and the results of justification ---

- Romans 8:33 *Who will bring a charge against God's elect? God is the one who justifies... God is sovereign in justification.*
- Romans 3:24 *...being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus... God gives justification as a gift, not a wage.*
- Romans 5:9 *Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him. God justifies us through the blood of Christ.*
- Romans 4:25 *He who was delivered over because of our transgressions, and was raised because of our justification. God justifies us through Christ's resurrection.*
- Galatians 2:16 *...knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, so that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the Law; since by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified. God justifies us through faith.*

### **c. What imagery does Paul use to further explain imputation?**

So God's crediting Abraham with righteousness was not a reward for Abraham's faith. Paul uses the imagery of the difference between a wage and a gift to further explain this, "Now to the one who works, his wage is not credited as a favor, but as what is due." There is a vast difference between being paid for what you earned and being given a gift. Salvation is by grace. It is a gift. A person's character or person's actions has nothing to do with the matter. If a person can produce a character or nature or a quality and quantity of works that can meet God's demands, then that person can go to the gates of heaven, like a person lined up on Friday to receive his check for a hard week's labor.

A laborer has punched the time clock and has put his hours in and knows that he has the right to line up and receive his pay. In America, back when the laws were good and just, the power of the government would force this man to receive his just payment (now days, lawyers have made it possible to declare bankruptcy and not pay). This worker does not line up to ask for a favor on payday. He comes as one who has a claim. He must receive his pay.

In similar fashion, if a man can produce works that are worthy of God, then God would have no right to keep him out of heaven. Such a man would not need to say, "Lord, have mercy on me," but instead would say, "I have come to receive what is owed me." This is why it was so important for us to spend so much time in the first three chapters of this book. Romans 1-3 clearly demonstrate that man is incapable of producing anything worthy of God . . . *all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.*