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An Anatomy of Salvation, Part 4

Like most of you, I have vivid memories of childhood:

- Fishing trips.
- Amusement parks.
- Saturday afternoon bridge games.
- Organized sports: football, basketball, swimming.
- School.

Yet never did I consider the sacrifice that these activities meant to my parents- not until I myself reached adulthood. Looking back now, I realize that every activity in which I involved myself required some sort of provision on the part of my folks:

- Time.
- Transportation.
- Money.
- Encouragement.
- Support.

Without these provisions; unseen by me, yet at times quite costly, some of the most enjoyable and fruitful memories that I have of my youth would not have occurred. Indeed, childhood is a time of innocence and

ignorance. It's

- Enjoying life
- Learning.
- Playing.
- Growing.
- Developing.

It is all these things without the burden of knowing the cost. And yet, childhood is also a time of maturing in which the child eventually learns and so appreciates the provisions that must be supplied if something is going to take place.

Brothers and sisters when we were baby Christians, few of us considered the provisions which God supplied in order to effect our salvation- though they were numerous:

- Providence.
- Spiritual discernment.
- Health.
- Time.
- An inclination.
- A preacher.
- A safe environment in which to hear the word of God.

And yet, as we develop into adulthood in our walks with God, it is imperative that we come to know and understand these provisions. To neglect them is to potentially stunt our growth, and to risk cultivating an ungrateful attitude.

Our Calling

The passage at which we are looking describes three provisions when it comes to salvation: Calling, Justification, Glorification. As we learn to recognize these provisions and to live in light of them we will grow in our walk with God. We will become useful and fruitful “in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 1:8), to borrow a phrase from Peter. In fact, 1 John 2:13 describe the spiritually mature as ones who “know” the Father, a knowledge that would include these benefits.

So that we might grow in our “knowledge of our Father” let us examine the provision of our salvation as described in this text. We will begin by looking at our calling.

Romans 8:30, “**Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called:** and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.”

Rooted in the predetermined plan of God to save us from our sin, salvation is made effectual by God's calling of us. Now from the perspective of Scripture, this “call” includes two elements: An External Call and An Internal Call.

The External Call

The external call is synonymous with the preaching of the Gospel according to Romans 10:14.

Romans 10:14, “How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall

they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?"

Christ also describes this external call this way:

Matthew 22:14, "For many are called, but few are chosen."

This is what most of us think of when we think of the provision of "Calling" yet, this is but a fraction of it. The call of God as it relates to salvation primarily refers to the "Internal Call."

The Internal Call

The internal call is that which is synonymous with salvation.

2 Thessalonians 2:14, "Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ."

1 Corinthians 7:18, "Is any man called being circumcised? let him not become uncircumcised. Is any called in uncircumcision? let him not be circumcised."

Galatians 1:6, "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel."

1 Thessalonians 4:7, "For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness."

Romans 8:30, "Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified."

Because the call of God is united to His predetermined plan, we must conclude that this call is effectual. Indeed the internal call is that call of God which brings a spiritually dead individual into a saving relationship with God. One man described this relationship between the external and internal call of God:

"Quite often as the sinner listens to the voice of the preacher, something suddenly happens. Mysteriously, he no longer hears simply the voice of the preacher; instead, what he now hears is the voice of God summoning him into fellowship with His Son, and he responds to Christ in faith. What happened? The Scriptures would affirm that God had 'effectually called' an elect sinner to Himself."¹

It is this saving relationship with God that is in view when Paul writes, "And whom He predestined, these He also called..." - these He also saved or regenerated! Now from this we conclude that the "Call" of God is wholly a grace of God for which the child of God is not responsible. Thus we believe because God called us into His kingdom and thus gave us the will and ability to believe we are saved not because of our choice of God but His choice of us!

John 15:16, "**Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you**, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you."

Josiah Conder put it this way:

¹ Dr. Robert Reymond, Covenant Theological Seminary class, Christ and Salvation.

“Tis not that I did choose thee, for, Lord, that could not be; this heart would still refuse thee, hadst thou not chosen me. Thou from the sin that stained me hast cleansed and set me free; of old thou hast ordained me, that I should live to thee.

'Twas sov'reign mercy called me and taught my op'ning mind; the world had else enthralled me, to heav'nly glories blind. My heart owns none before thee, for Thy rich grace I thirst; this knowing, if I love thee, thou must have loved me first.”² (Hymn #96 in old *Trinity Hymnal*)

This ought to make every child of God reverently giddy! Think of being a lottery winner³...

- In the typical state lottery, the odds of winning are 18 million to 1.
- In a multi-state lottery, the odds of winning are 120 million to 1.

In other words, the chance of you or me winning one of these lotteries is astronomically thin! Consider...

² Trinity Hymnal, 1961, Hymn 96

³ The stats quoted in this section came from *Probability Of Winning The Lottery - Don't Waste Your Money* (taken from <http://www.savingadvice.com/forums/other/5559-probability-winning-lottery-dont-waste-your-money.html>).

The article reads as follows:

“Everyone knows that the probability of winning the lottery is a pretty big long shot. How long, however, you probably never really thought about. Your actual odds of winning the lottery depend on where you play, but single state lotteries usually have odds of about 18 million to 1 while multiple state lotteries have odds as high as 120 million to 1.

“If you have ever thought you'd win the lottery, you're not alone. About one out of every three people in the United States think that winning the lottery is the only way to become financially secure in their life. This is a frightening statistic when you sit down and consider what the above odds really mean.

“It's time to take a long hard look at the chances of you winning the lottery. While winning the lottery may be something that you want, to show you your chances we'll take a look at a number of remote occurrences that you probably wouldn't like to have happen to you - and probably don't think will ever happen to you - but are still much more likely to happen to you than winning the lottery.

“How about the classic odds of being struck by lightning? The actual probability of this happening varies from year to year, but as a good estimate, the National Safety Council says between 70 and 120 people a year die in the US by lightning - so let's take 100 as our base. With the US population being approximately 265 million people, that means that the chances of being killed by lightning are roughly 2,650,000 to 1. Not very likely. However you are still 6 to 45 times more likely to die from a lightning strike than you would be to win the lottery.

“Now nobody really wants to die from flesh eating bacteria, and with odds at about 1 million to 1, the chances that you will die that way are pretty slim. Then again, you are 18 to 120 times more likely to die this way than to win the lottery.

“What are the chances that if you're playing with a group of four that two of you will get a hole-in-one on the exact same hole? At 17 million to 1, they're better than the chances of you winning the lottery.

“What about dieing from a snake bite or bee sting? It probably isn't a way that you have imagined that you would leave the earth. You're a whopping 180 to 1,200 times more likely to die from one of these incidents than win the lottery. That's because the probability of dieing from a snake bite or bee sting is about 100,000 to 1.

“Now I know that you are not a bad person and you don't imagine finding yourself on death row for a crime you committed anytime soon. Still, it's a lot more likely that you will be legally executed than win the lottery. In fact, you are 30,000% to 200,000% more likely to die in a legal execution than to win the lottery.

“Or If I told you that you were 450,000 to 3,000,000 times more likely to die in an asteroid collision in the year 2029 than to win the lottery, what would you think? Well, these are in fact the odds according to this report at space.com.

“If none of the above has convinced you to stop playing the lottery, then I'll bring out my favorite lottery fact. If you drive 10 miles to purchase your lottery ticket, it's three to twenty times more likely for you to be killed in a car accident along the way than to win the jackpot.”

- The odds of getting hit by lightning. You are 6 to 45 times more likely to get struck by lightning this year than you are of winning a lottery.
- You are 18 to 120 times more likely to die of bacteria poisoning than you are of winning a lottery.
- You are 180 to 1,200 times more likely to get bit by a snake this year than you are of winning lottery.
- You are 450,000 to 3,000,000 times more likely to get struck by an asteroid in the 2029 than you are of winning a lottery.

What's the point?

God is as sovereign over those who win the lottery as He is over those who are saved. From the perspective of God, there is no probability. Lottery winnings as well as salvation are according to His will. Yet from man's perspective, there is a place for probability and so we quote the aforementioned statistics. In light of this, when you take all the peoples of the world who have ever lived and calculate the probability that any one person will be saved, it makes winning a lottery look like a sure thing.

Oh Christian, as one who has been called, do you understand how blessed you really are?

The world looks at a lottery winner with envy and says, "How lucky!" How much more ought we to look at the child of God with envy and say, "How blessed!" If you have been called by God this morning, truly you must consider yourself the most blessed man or woman in the world!

Justification

That is the first Provision that God grants to ensure our salvation: His Effectual Call! Notice the second provision: Justification.

Romans 8:30, "Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: **and whom he called, them he also justified:** and whom he justified, them he also glorified."

Justification is the act of God declaring the called ones righteous. Or we could say that these He also gave a right standing in reference to the law.

Justification is not a new term to us. Paul uses this concept over forty-three times in our study of the first seven chapters of Romans. It is a forensic or legal term which was used when a defendant was declared by a judge that he was righteous, not guilty, or innocent of the charge in question. From this perspective we note that justification is an objective forensic judgment regarding the innocence of someone. Deuteronomy 25:1 speaks of a judge who "justifies" someone. Here the judge did not make the person righteous; he simply declared that to be the case.

Job 32:2 speaks of Job "justifying himself before God." Again this does not mean that Job made himself righteous. Rather, it simply means that he declared his innocence before God.

In Luke 7:29: we read of the people "justifying God." Now, this does not mean that the people changed something about God. Rather, it simply means that the people said, "God is right or just."

The provision of justification is the provision of the sentence of "Not Guilty" when it comes to violating God's law. Now, for a guilty person to receive the declaration of "Not guilty" in the Bible, the innocent would be required to go in the place or suffer the punishment of the guilty.

This is what the Old Testament sacrificial system was all about. In the course of the offering, the sin of the guilty was symbolically transferred to the innocent animal whereupon the animal bore the punishment of the guilty, which was death. Leviticus 4:24 (NASB) speaks of the sin offering “And he [the one guilty of sin] shall lay his hand on the head of the male goat, and slay it... before the Lord; it is a sin offering.” In this context, listen to the words of one such Old Testament worshipper who had been forgiven for his sin via sacrifice:

Psalm 32:1-2, “Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile.”

This is what the provision of “justification” is all about. In reference to salvation, justification refers to the declaration of God, *based on the sacrifice/death of Christ*, that the sinner is not guilty of transgressing the law.

Hebrews 9:6-7, “Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God. But into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people:”

Hebrews 9:11-14, “But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?”

The provision of justification is based upon the sacrifice of Christ! And thus we read these passages:

Romans 5:9, “Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.”

2 Corinthians 5:21, “For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”

On account of Christ's innocent life freely sacrificed for us, we the guilty, the enemy of God, obtain the verdict that in relation to the stipulations of the law we are “NOT GUILTY of transgression!”

Now brothers and sisters, this raises the question, “What then is the ground of our justification?” Or better, “Upon what basis is the sinner saved?”

The sinner is NOT saved because of his “faith” or because he says the words “I believe.” In Scripture, faith is never represented as the ground or the cause of our righteousness. If this were so, faith would become a meritorious work; an idea everywhere opposed in Scripture.

The basis or ground of God's declaration of our right standing before Him, as we have said, is CHRIST'S RIGHTEOUSNESS.⁴ So not only are we the most blessed people in the world, but in Christ today we are

4. The Scriptures teach that we are justified “In Christ” (Isaiah 45:24-25; Acts 13:39; Romans 8:1; 1

not guilty of violating the law of God and so stand before the Lord as most beautiful in His eyes.

And if this was not enough, notice that as justification also is not based upon our profession of Christ, but God's sovereign will, there is nothing we could ever do that could make us "ugly" before God. Having been justified, we will always remain the apple of God's eye! Pause... and wonder!

And so the second provision that God grants to ensure our salvation is the declaration of our sinlessness based upon the sacrifice of Christ; justification.

Glorification

Finally notice the third provision of God for our salvation: Glorification.

Romans 8:30, "Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: **and whom he justified, them he also glorified.**"

Throughout the Bible, salvation is spoken about in three tenses.

- Salvation Past in which the Christian is saved from the guilt and condemnation of sin- Justification, Luke 19:9; Ephesians 2:8; 2 Timothy 1:9; Titus 3:5.
- Salvation Present in which the Christian is being saved from the presence of sin- Sanctification, 1 Corinthians 1:18; 15:2; 2 Corinthians 2:15.
- Salvation Future in which the Christian is given the promise that one day he will be completely saved from the presence of sin, Romans 5:9, 10; 13:11; 1 Corinthians 3:15; 1 Thessalonians 5:18; 1 Peter 1:5. Peter 1:5: speaking of the Christian, Peter said that they are, "...protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."

It is this last description of salvation that Paul has in mind in our text: glorification. Glorification is a work of God in which the Christian is

- Raised up in glory.
- Openly acknowledged and acquitted in the Day of Judgment.
- Made perfectly blessed in the full enjoying of God to all eternity!

Murray, speaking of this glory, said this:

"This is the highest end conceivable for created beings, the highest end conceivable not only by men but also by God himself. God himself could not contemplate or determine a higher destiny for his creatures"⁵

Now brothers and sisters, there are many passages that describe this promised glory. However, we do not need to go far to catch a glimpse of this "Glory." Notice that Paul has already described part of it in Romans 8:18-25. Here we saw that it includes these things:

Corinthians 6:11; Galatians 2:17; Philippians 3:9), "by Christ's death work" (Romans 3:24-25; 5:9; 8:33-34), "not by our own but by the righteousness of God" (Isaiah 61:10; Romans 1:17; 3:21-22; 10:3; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Philippians 3:9), and "by the righteousness and obedience of Christ," (Romans 5:17-19).

⁵ John Murray, *Collected Writings of John Murray: Lectures in Systematic Theology, Banner of Truth (December 1978)*, ISBN-10: 0851512429, volume 2 page 316

1. The Revealing of the Sons of God, Romans 8:18b-19. The glory that is to be revealed (or unveiled) to us (literally “in us”): if you recall my exegesis of this text, you know that this means that on the Last Day, the child of God will be on display as the people of God! Everyone who has ever lived on this earth will be the audience of an unveiling in which God's love for us and the blessings planned for us will become a matter of public knowledge! Matthew 13:43 speaking of the Final Day, “Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father...”
2. The Adoption as Sons, Romans 8:23b. We wait eagerly for our adoption as sons: At the time of salvation we are adopted by God with the understanding that there is more to our adoption than we now experience. “Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we shall be...” (1 John 3:2). And thus as children of God, we anticipate a future bestowment which will bring to the fullest realization our status as sons of God. And what is that “future bestowment”? *An Inheritance.*

Romans 8:17, “And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint–heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.”

Galatians 4:7, “Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.”

In Scripture, sonship includes the idea of inheritance. If we are God's sons then we are heirs of God! And thus though we are children of God in the fullest possible sense in this age it will not be until the age to come that we experience the *fullness of the benefits* that sonship brings- which includes

- Final cleansing from all sin, Revelation 21:3-4.
 - Full conformity to the image of Christ, Philippians 3:20.
 - Unhindered fellowship with God, Revelation 21:3-4.
 - Participation in the judging of this world, 1 Corinthians 6:2-3.
 - Immortality, 1 Thessalonians 4:17.
3. Thirdly we have the redemption of our body, Romans 8:23c. The redemption of our body: though we have been redeemed by the cross and thus have received new life in Christ, our BODIES still await their final redemption in which they once-for-all will be purged of sin. The Provision of Glory includes this final cleansing- what is known in theology as “The Final Redemption of our Bodies!” Now, if these were not enough, Scripture also informs us that the provision of God's glory also includes our being conformed to the image or likeness of Christ in His resurrected state!
 - Philippians 3:21: when Christ returns, He will, “...transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory...”
 - 1 John. 3:2: “...We know that, when He appears, we shall be like Him...”

And thus, as Christ is in His glory; exalted, holy, awesome, so also will be our appearance! Wordsworth wrote these words, speaking of Christ:

Thou has raised our human nature
 On the clouds to God's right hand;
 There we sit in heavenly places,
 There with thee in glory stand.
 Jesus reigns, adored by angels,
 Man with God is on the throne,

Mighty Lord in thine ascension
We by faith behold our own.⁶

What an incredible Provision! And yet, having said all of this, our understanding of this verse is partial until we observe one important truth: Paul describes this future provision in the past tense! In this regard, Denney wrote:

“The tense in the last word is amazing. It is the most daring anticipation of faith that... the N.T. contains.”⁷

Listen! All that we have talked about and more in regard to the provision of God's glory was so certain in Paul's mind that he could speak of it as if it already were a reality! The final provision that God grants to ensure our salvation is glorification which is nothing less than conformity to our glorified Savior, Jesus Christ!

What an incredible salvation we have in Christ. It not only includes the beginning, but the end. It not only provides a right standing before God (justification), but conformity to Him (glorification)!

The Helmet of Salvation

Now Brothers and Sisters, we need to hear this message. In Ephesians 6, Paul details the believer's armor in Christ. Now in his list of defense weapons, Paul says, “And take the helmet of salvation” (Ephesians 6:17). Paul relates the helmet of a warrior's dress to salvation. This suggests that one of Satan's targets in his attack against the body of Christ is the Christian's salvation: Its Security! If you have been a Christian long you know the questions that can sometimes plague the child of God:

- If you were a Christian you wouldn't do that!
- After that sin, God surely couldn't love you!

One of the weapons Paul describes as a defense against the “schemes of the devil” is assurance. Now, there is no better passage with which to be familiar in order to dawn the “Helmet of Salvation” than our text. In view of God's calling, justification, glorification, how could we ever doubt

- God's love for us?
- The certainty of our salvation?

Indeed, based upon the provision of our Salvation we say with Paul

Philippians 1:6, “Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.”

1 Thessalonians 5:24, “Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.”

And with this, we must close this passage, each of us asking ourselves, “Has God called me to salvation?”

You ask, “How can I know?”

⁶ Quoted in Hendriksen's commentary on Romans, pages 285-286

⁷ Quoted by Leon Morris, *The Epistle to the Romans*, page 334

Let me ask you, do you understand that there is nothing you can do for your salvation; you are spiritually bankrupt? Christ is the only sacrifice for your sins? The basis upon which a man only can stand before God is the Merits of Christ?

An answer of “Yes” to these questions is a good indication that God is calling you to salvation! And if that is the case, I exhort you turn from your commitment to your own way of living and your sin and place your confidence not in your works, but in the work of Christ on the cross as the only satisfaction for you sin. Follow Christ and the process of salvation which begins with God's Call and ends with Glorification will begin in your life!

About Bethel Presbyterian Church

The Bethel Presbyterian Church Ministry of the Word is published regularly.

VISIT US WHEN IN Broomfield, COLORADO

Feel free to visit Bethel Presbyterian Church when in Broomfield, Colorado. Bethel Presbyterian Church meets at Broomfield High School, Eagle (10th Street) and Main, Broomfield, Colorado. The telephone number of the church is 303-469-6912. The worship services are at 9:30 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. each Sunday. Bethel Presbyterian Church is a member of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

All our sermons can be accessed via the World Wide Web. The recording for this sermon and these notes can be found at [Calling, Justification, Glorification](#). The web address for all sermons at Bethel Presbyterian Church can be found out as follows: <http://bethelpresbyterian.sermonaudio.com>

About the Preacher

Greg Thurston preached this sermon on November 22, 2008. Greg is the preacher at Bethel Presbyterian Church