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Volume XII
Issue 296

The Ultimate Freedom from Sin:

Justification!

by – Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

Many people labor under a heavy weight of guilt and shame. The answer is to be found *only* in the total provision that God Himself has *already* provided!



Forgiveness is at the core of religious teaching and activity, and at the root of forgiveness is *guilt*. The followers of religion seek to obtain forgiveness through some means – concerted effort, confessions, prayers, penance, resolutions, etc.

What the God of Scripture offers is *freedom from sins!*

*In Whom we have redemption through His blood, the **freedom** from sins, according to the riches of His grace* (Ephesians 1:7).

Ultimate freedom from sin is FAR MORE than forgiveness or pardon. What Paul taught went well beyond that. The revelation given to him involved **justification**, which, instead of being rooted in guilt, is rooted in righteousness.

*Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our **justification*** (Romans 4:25).

*The judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences to **justification*** (Romans 5:16).

Very few believers understand *justification*. Justifica-

tion is NOT simply being pronounced “forgiven,” “pardoned,” “remitted” or even “innocent”; rather, it is being pronounced “**RIGHTEOUS!**”

JUSTIFICATION'S DEFINITION

To set forth as righteous (Bullinger).¹

The act of pronouncing righteous (Vine).²

Constituted righteous (Knoch).³

William R. Newell says that *Paul's Gospel* included:

The plan of the actual conferring of the gift of righteousness ...

The change of a sinner's standing before God, from one of condemnation to one of righteousness.

Negatively, it is deliverance from guilt on account of Christ's shed blood, and deliverance out of the old creation, by identification in

1. E.W. Bullinger, *A Critical Lexicon and Concordance to the English and Greek New Testament*, page 429.
2. W.E. Vine, *Vine's Expository Dictionary*.
3. A.E. Knoch, *Concordant Keyword Concordance*.

(see **FREEDOM**, page 2719)

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This weekly publication (52 times a year) is dedicated to:

- the proclamation of the riches of God's abundant, exceeding grace (Romans 5:20; 11:6; Ephesians 1:7);
- the affirmation of God's purpose to save all mankind through the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ (I Timothy 2:3, 4; 4:10; Titus 2:11);
- the "preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began" (Romans 16:25);
- true freedom and liberty apart from law (Galatians 5:1);
- the organic nature of the church, the Body of Christ (I Corinthians 12);
- the distinct message and ministry of Paul, the apostle to the nations (Romans 11:13);
- the importance of receiving all whom Christ has received (Romans 14-15);
- the recovery of rich Biblical truth that has too long remained hidden under the veils of traditionalism, prejudice, misunderstanding, and fear (Mark 7:7, 13);
- the completeness of the believer in Christ (Colossians 2:10), with:
 - total forgiveness of sins (Colossians 1:14);
 - identity in His death, burial, and resurrection (Romans 6);
 - adult sonship position (Galatians 4).

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death with Christ.

Positively, it is a new standing in the risen Christ before God.⁴

The makeup of the English word *justification* looks like this:

Just – (root) adjective – meaning: *right, or righteous*.

fy – a suffix used to form a verb – meaning: *to make*.

tion – a suffix used to form a noun from a verb – meaning: *state or condition of being*.

Thus, justification is the *state or condition of having been made right or righteous*.

Paul shockingly proclaims that we have been “**made righteous**” (Romans 5:19). Even better than that, we have been “**made the righteousness of God in Him**” (II Corinthians 5:21)! The result of being made righteous is that we are *free* from the *entire* realm of sin and law.

Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man (I Timothy 1:9).

Having been made righteous, we can NEVER EVER have a judicial charge of offense filed against us.

There is therefore now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus ... Who will lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God Who justifies. Who is he who condemns? It is Christ Who died, or rather Who is risen again, Who is even at the right hand of God, Who also makes intercession for us (Romans 8:1, 33-34).

FORGIVEN? OR JUSTIFIED?

Justification is a judicial term of righteousness. Forgiveness is a term of guilt that is pardoned. Thus, it is **justification** and NOT **forgiveness** that gives us *ultimate* and *permanent* freedom from condemnation

and sin.

Notice in Romans 5 that the solution Paul presents to condemnation is **justification**, NOT forgiveness:

Judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offenses to justification. For if by one man's offense death reigned by one; much more they who receive abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life by One, Jesus Christ. Therefore, as by the offense of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation, even so by the righteousness of One the free gift came upon all men to justification of life (Romans 5:16-18).

Many believe that the real answer to sin is *forgiveness*. IT IS NOT! The ultimate answer to sin is JUSTIFICATION!

Forgiveness demands that one be *guilty*, while justification actually constitutes one *righteous*. Because forgiveness is rooted in guilt, it can actually be reversed, as seen in the message given to Israel by our Lord Jesus Christ in His *Kingdom of Heaven* teachings.

Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, "O you wicked servant, I forgave you all that debt, because you desired me to. Should not you also have had compassion on your fellow-servant, even as I had pity on you?" And his lord was angry, and delivered him to the tormentors, until he should pay all that was due to him. So likewise shall My heavenly Father do also to you, if you from your hearts forgive not everyone his brother their trespasses.

Wow, isn't forgiveness a wonderful thing? Certainly *not*! What we read here is Christ's pre-death teaching concerning forgiveness. However, God's *ultimate* solution to sin through the Calvary-work of Christ is *not* found in forgiveness, but in justification. This is a truth revealed clearly to us in the writings of Paul.

The simple fact is that you can't have it *both* ways. *You can't be forgiven if you are righteous, and you can't be righteous if you are forgiven.*

4. A tract excerpt taken from *Paul vs. Peter* (Bible Student's Press).

BUT – DIDN'T PAUL TEACH THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS?

No! That's what religion teaches. Paul taught *justification*.

Religion focuses on forgiveness because it does not truly understand the magnificent revelation of justification. Forgiveness keeps the one who is forgiven a guilty sinner; while justification gloriously and graciously exalts us to a righteous saint. This has nothing to do with our own acts, but the single act of our Savior at Golgotha.

Christians sadly embrace forgiveness and pardon *instead* of justification. They even do so when reading the teachings of Paul, because most of our English translations *insist* on it. The translators did so because they themselves did not understand the transcendent doctrine of justification.

Forgiveness is *not* Paul's teaching. One can't honestly translate "forgiveness" from his writings. Thus religious leaders of Christendom must *impose* the doctrine of forgiveness into them. As a result, *their* translators mistranslated the truth of justification right *out* of Paul's writings.

PAUL'S USAGE OF "FORGIVENESS" IN ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS

The word that ends up being translated "*forgiveness*" (e.g. *King James Version*) in Paul's letters is the Greek word *aphesis*.

Aphesis

Aphesis is defined as:

Freedom (Strong).⁵

Setting free (Bullinger).⁶

Release from bondage or imprisonment (Thayer).⁷

Interestingly, even the *King James Version* translates *aphesis* as "*liberty*" in Luke 4:18. Let us now note Paul's own usage of *aphesis*.

*Be it known to you therefore, men and brothers, that through this man is preached to you the **aphesis** [freedom] from sins* (Acts 13:38).

*To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive **aphesis** [freedom from] sins* (Acts 26:18).

*In Whom we have redemption through His blood, the **aphesis** [freedom from] sins, according to the riches of His grace* (Ephesians 1:7).

*In Whom we have redemption through His blood, even the **aphesis** [freedom from] sins* (Colossians 1:14).

Charizomai

Paul uses the Greek word *charizomai* that also ends up being translated "forgiveness" (e.g. *King James Version*).

Charizomai is defined as:

To grant as a favor, *i.e.*, gratuitously (Strong).⁸

To give graciously, give freely, bestow (Thayer).⁹

To do a person a favor, to be kind, to be gracious (Bullinger).¹⁰

To deal graciously (Knoch).¹¹

Interestingly, the root of the Greek word *charizomai* is *charis*, which is translated "*grace*." Note Paul's usage of *charizomai*.

He Who spared not His Own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him

5. James Strong, *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance*, Greek Lexicon, #859.

6. E.W. Bullinger, *A Critical Lexicon and Concordance to the English and Greek New Testament*, page 303.

7. Thayer.

8. James Strong, *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance*, Greek Lexicon #5483.

9. Thayer.

10. E.W. Bullinger, *A Critical Lexicon and Concordance to the English and Greek New Testament*, page 303.

11. A.E. Knoch, *Concordant Keyword Concordance*.

also **charizomai** [graciously give] us all things? (Romans 8:32).

Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know **charizomai** [the things graciously given] to us of God (I Corinthians 2:12).

So that contrariwise you ought rather to **charizomai** [be gracious to] him, and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow (II Corinthians 2:7).

To whom you are **charizomai** [gracious in] anything, I am also: for if I **charizomai** [be gracious in] anything, to whom I **charizomai** [am gracious], for your sakes I am, in the person of Christ (II Corinthians 2:10).

For what is it wherein you were inferior to other churches, except it be that I myself was not burdensome to you? **Charizomai** [be gracious to] me [for] this wrong (II Corinthians 12:13).

For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise: but God **charizomai** [graciously gave] it to Abraham by promise (Galatians 3:18).

Be kind to each another, tenderhearted, **charizomai** [gracious to] one another, even as God for Christ's sake has **charizomai** [been gracious to] you (Ephesians 4:32).

For unto you **charizomai** [it is graciously given] in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake (Philippians 1:29).

Wherefore God also has highly exalted Him, and **charizomai** [graciously given] Him a name which is above every name (Philippians 2:9).

You, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, has He quickened together with Him, having **charizomai** [been gracious to] you in all your trespasses (Colossians 2:13).

Forbearing each other, and **charizomai** [being gracious to] each other, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ **charizomai** [was gracious to] you, so also do you (Colossians 2:13).

But withal prepare me also a lodging: for I trust that through your prayers I **charizomai** [will be graciously given] to you (Philemon 1:22).

THE GRAND ANSWER TO SIN

Paul's writings are the *pinnacle* of divine revelation. Through him God reveals the *grand answer* to sin: *justification*. This is Father's gift of grace, through the redemptive work of Christ.

By Him all who believe are **justified** [declared righteous] from all things, from which you could not be **justified** [declared righteous] by the law of Moses (Acts 13:39).

Being **justified** [declared righteous] freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus (Romans 3:24).

Therefore we conclude that a man is **justified** [declared righteous] by faith without the deeds of the law (Romans 3:28).

Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our **justification** [declaration of righteousness] (Romans 4:25).

Therefore being **justified** [declared righteous] by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 5:1).

Being now **justified** [declared righteous] by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him (Romans 5:9).

Not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift: for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto **justification** [the declaration of righteousness] (Romans 5:16).

(see **FREEDOM**, page 2723)

The Bride and the Bridegroom

And Ephesians Chapter 5

by – E.W. Bullinger (1837-1913)

In Scripture the church of this dispensation is symbolized as “*the Body of Christ*,” never as “*the Bride*.”

— Sir Robert Anderson (1841-1918)
The Coming Prince (Chapter 15)

Christians, in their usual selfishness, attempt to rob others of their place as the Bride, and thus lose their own still better place as part of the Bridegroom.

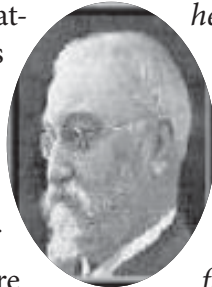
It is clear from all of the Scriptures which treat of the Mystery that the Church is the Body of Christ, and that the members of that Body are members of Christ, Who Himself is the Bridegroom.

It is also clear that the Bride is the subject of Old Testament prophecy, and therefore could not form part of the Mystery which was kept secret, and formed no part of Old Testament revelation or prophecy.

Isaiah 54:5-8; 62:4; Jeremiah 3:14; Hosea 2:16, 19; and other Scriptures, speak of the Bride as of Israel – perhaps an elect remnant – for all through there were those who walked by faith (Hebrews 11) and who were therefore “*partakers of a heavenly calling*” (Hebrews 3:1; 11:10, 13-16). If we compare Hebrews 11:10 with Revelation 21:9-27, are we not distinctly to infer that the “*city*” for which Abraham looked was “*the Bride, the Lamb’s wife*”?

True, the Apostle might address the saints concerning his desire to present them “*a chaste virgin to Christ*” (II Corinthians 11:2); but this no more declares that the Church *is* the Bride of Christ than that the Apostle himself was their father (I Corinthians 4:15), or their mother (Galatians 4:19). It is merely an illustration, to show his jealous care of them as a “*friend of the Bridegroom*,” as the others showed his painful anxiety as a “*mother*,” and his loving care as a “*father*.”

So in Ephesians 5:28-29, the argument is that “*husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies; for*



he that loveth his wife loveth himself; for no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the Church, for we are members of His Body,” i.e., AS Christ loves His own Body, the Church, so ought husbands to love their own selves, (i.e., their wives), because they and their wives are “one flesh.” Thus the great secret is employed as an argument as to the reciprocal duties of husbands and wives. In neither case is it said that the Church *is* the wife, or that Christ *is* the husband, but that **AS** Christ loves His Body (the Church), so husbands ought to love their own bodies (their wives).

What is clear and certain is that the Church is the Body of Christ Himself, and that the members of that Body being “*in Christ*” are PART OF THE BRIDE-GROOM and cannot possibly, therefore, be the Bride herself.

A remarkable example of the perversity of Expositors is this: while they hold that the Bride is the Church, they persist in interpreting the parable of the Ten Virgins as though the Bride’s attendant “*Virgins*” are also the Church. Though, whoever heard of an Eastern Bride going out “*to meet*” the Bridegroom? The Virgins, “*her companions*,” went, but not the Bride. So our expositors can hold whichever of these two positions they please; but, clearly, they are not entitled to hold them both. The “*Bride*” *must* be distinct from “*the virgins her companions that follow her*.” If we rightly divide the Word of Truth, we see that the Church is neither one nor the other, and that the subsequent revelation of the “*Mystery*” cannot be read into either Psalm 45 or Matthew 25; which are perfectly clear as they stand, and must have been capable of a plain interpretation to the first hearers or

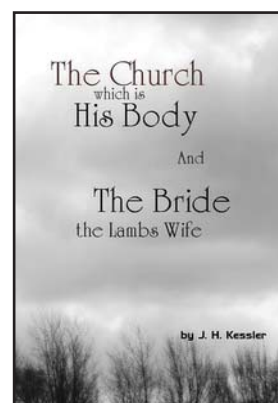
readers of those words, quite apart from the truth subsequently revealed.

The mystery was “*hid in God*.” It does not say that it was hidden in the Scriptures, but “*hid in God*” Himself. There can be therefore no *types* of it in the Old Testament, inasmuch as *types teach*, and were meant to teach, doctrines, which are elsewhere clearly revealed in the New Testament. ... The *illustration* or *application* of Old Testament Scripture to the Church is quite lawful and profitable, so long as it is kept distinct from *interpretation*. It is one thing to see an illustration of the Church in the Old Testament; but it is quite another thing to say that there is revealed that which God distinctly declares *was not revealed* or “*made known to the sons of men*.”

It will be observed that the scope of Ephesians 5 is practical: and therefore this reference to the Mystery in verse 32 is not for teaching, doctrinally, but only by way of illustration to enforce the practical precept.

The Church Epistles (1905), pp. 146-149
Bible Student's Press™ (reprinted), 2010

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FREEDOM (continued from page 2721)

*Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of One the free gift came upon all men to **justification** [the declaration of righteousness] of life (Romans 5:18).*

*Moreover whom He did predestinate, them He also called: and whom He called, them He also **justified** [declared righteous]: and whom He **justified** [declared righteous], them He also glorified (Romans 8:30).*

*Such were some of you: but you are washed, but you are sanctified, but you are **justified** [declared righteous] in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God (I Corinthians 6:11).*

*Knowing that a man is not **justified** [declared righteous] by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be **justified** [de-*

*clared righteous] by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be **justified** [declared righteous] (Galatians 2:16).*

*That no man is **justified** [declared righteous] by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, “The just shall live by faith” (Galatian 3:11).*

*Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be **justified** [declared righteous] by faith (Galatians 3:24).*

*That being **justified** [declared righteous] by His grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life (Titus 3:7).*

The ultimate answer to sin is justification – and you’ve got it!

*Being **justified** freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus (Romans 3:24).*

The Spirit of God Sabotages Our Intentions

by – Martin Zender

For the flesh is lusting against the spirit, yet the spirit against the flesh. Now these are opposing one another, lest you should be doing whatever you may want (Galatians 5:17).

We almost always make this verse say that the spirit keeps us from doing all the bad things we want to do. This is true; but it also keeps us from doing all the good things.

The key phrase of this passage is,

Lest you should be doing whatever you may want.

What do we want to do? Two things: fleshly things and good things. Yet, if we could make a wish, we would want to do good continually. Oh, wouldn't we be saintly and spectacular.

A desire to be perfect is also a lust of the flesh. It is in our best interests to be kept weak. II Corinthians 4:7 explains,

Now we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the transcendence of the power may be of God and not of us. God keeps us weak so that we might constantly acclaim His power and not our own.

Remarkably, the same spirit that incites us to good works also keeps us from becoming moral super-people.

Can you learn to thank God for this, even when you are yet again failing Him?

You cannot do everything you want to do. You would like to be a better parent, a better employee, a better friend. It would help if you could make more money. You want to pay your bills, but you can't find a job.

You wanted to get a good night's sleep last night, but worry kept you up. Money vexes your life. It seems to be a measure of your success and failure. You try to save it, but you can't. There is always another expense – always. Someone always needs something. What about *your* needs? They burn on the altar of sacrifice – *again*.

Still, there is more. Someone needed you yesterday, and



you failed them. Today, you yelled at your children. The debilitating fatigue and accompanying impatience hit you in the late afternoon, after your son and daughter arrived home from school. You love them more than life itself; you would die for them. The last thing you want is to lose your temper at them. At 4:50 p.m., in the kitchen, it is the first thing you do. My God, what comes over you?

Later, you cry.

Each day is a struggle. ... It is because we are bound. It is because God has limited us – horribly limited us. He has made it so that we cannot do what we want. He has sabotaged our vessels so that we cannot be the people we want to be. How we try. It is noble to try. We all try, and should. We pick up our burdens and try to budge them. Sometimes, we succeed. A miracle happens, and we are good people. Whenever this happens, we praise our Father. We ought to, because a dozen failures are coming down the pike.

I do not write from a place of depression or paranoia, but from reality and truth. I know so much about the love and sovereignty of God. He sustains the lilies of the field, and yet cares for me exceedingly more. What happens next? I promptly forget it. I forget about His care. Every day – at least sometime during the day – I doubt Him. Every day, I fail. Then comes an entire day when I lay utter confidence at His feet. His love remains constant throughout – but still.

Oh, that we could relax and even glory in our bonds, knowing that these limitations are of divine origin, and that they must precede liberation. We cannot know the sweet, coming release, apart from our writhing within these confines. There is meaning in sweet writhing. May we both strain and relax in our splendid disability.

Clanging Gong News
Volume 3, Issue 6

