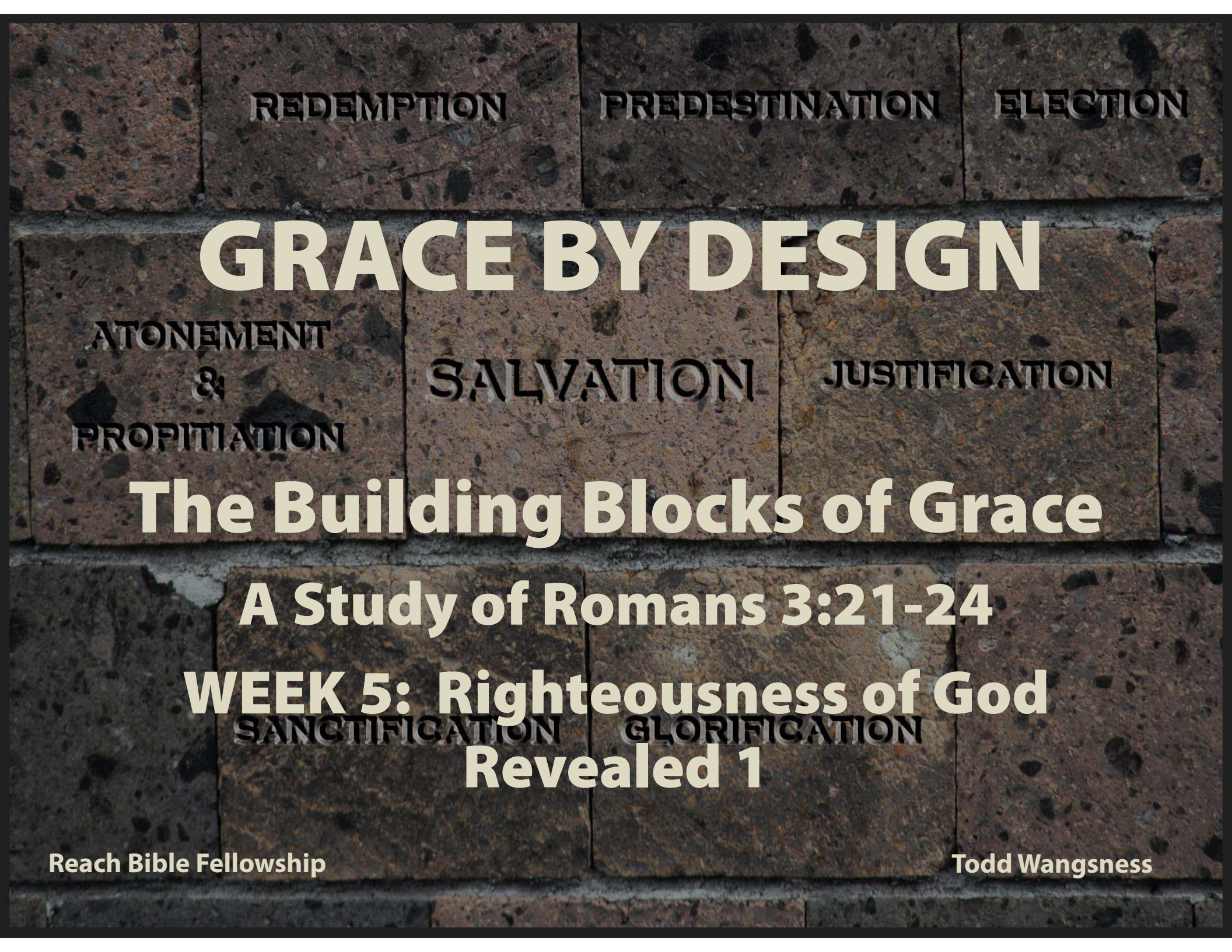


GRACE BY DESIGN

The Building Blocks of Grace

A Study of Romans 3:21-24

WEEK 5: Righteousness of God Revealed 1

Reach Bible Fellowship

Todd Wangsness

Grace By Design: Study Outline

Week 1:	Romans	Overview of Grace and Salvation
Week 2:	Rom 1:1 – 1:17	Introduction to Romans
Week 3:	Rom 1:18 – 2:16	Justification – Ignorance is not an Excuse
Week 4:	Rom 2:17 – 3:20	Justification – Knowledge isn't Good Enough
Week 5:	**Rom. 3:21 – 3:24**	**Justification – Righteousness of God Revealed 1**
Week 6:	Rom. 3:25 – 3:31	Justification – Righteousness of God Revealed 2
Week 7:	Rom. 4:1 – 4:25	Justification – Faith vs the Law
Week 8:	Rom. 5:1 – 5:11	Sanctification – Peace with God 1
Week 9:	Rom. 5:12 – 5:21	Sanctification – Peace with God 2
Week 10:	Rom. 6:1 – 6:14	Sanctification – The Christian's Struggle with Sin 1
Week 11:	Rom. 6:15 – 6:23	Sanctification – The Christian's Struggle with Sin 2
Week 12:	Rom. 7:1 – 7:25	Sanctification – The Law Can't Save (But the Spirit Can!)
Week 13:	Rom. 8:1 – 8:17	Sanctification – Life in the Spirit
Week 14:	Rom. 8:18 – 8:30	Glorification – From Suffering to Glory
Week 15:	Rom. 8:31 – 8:39	Glorification – God's Everlasting Love
Week 16:	Rom. 9:1 – 9:33	Israel's Rejection and God's Purpose
Week 17:	Rom. 10:1 – 10:13	Israel and the Mystery of the Church 1
Week 18:	Rom. 10:14 – 10:21	Israel and the Mystery of the Church 2
Week 19:	Rom. 11:1 – 11:36	The Salvation of the Jewish people
Week 20:	Rom. 12:1 – 12:2	Living the Transformed Life
Week 21:	Rom. 12:3– 12:8	Gifts of the Spirit
Week 22:	Rom. 12:9– 12:21	The Christian Walk
Week 23:	Rom. 13:1 – 13:14	Love Fulfills the Law
Week 24:	Rom. 14:1 – 14:21	Not Judging the Weak in Faith
Week 25:	Rom. 15:1 – 15:25	Bearing One Another's Burdens
Week 26:	Rom. 16:1 – 16:25	Conclusion and closing remarks

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- **The "Deeper Magic"!**
  - **Video Clip: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe by CS Lewis**

- **Romans 3:21-26 is generally considered to be the center of the book of Romans and the superlatives with which theologians have spoken of it are truly incredible.**

  "Romans 3:21-26 is the chief point, and the very central place of the Epistle, and of the whole Bible." --Martin Luther

  "Romans 3:21-26 is possibly the single most important single paragraph ever written" --Leon Morris (commentary on Romans, 173)

  "Romans 3:21-26 is the most central and important passage in the Bible."
  -- John Piper

- **It highlights the single-most important SEISMIC SHIFT in God's multi-stage historical plan to save people from their sins!**

Grace By Design: Righteousness of God Revealed

Romans 3

:21 <u>But now</u> the righteousness of God <u>apart from the law</u> is revealed, being <u>witnessed by the Law and the Prophets</u>

- **God had a dilemma. Two attributes of His Character were in conflict:**
  - **His Righteousness (justice) demanded that any/all sin needed to be paid in full by the death of the sinner**
  - **His Love demanded that He show mercy to the only part of His Creation that was created in His Image**
- ***"But now"* – In view of the crushing guilt on every single human that has ever lived, Paul illuminates there is HOPE! There is a way God has prepared to absolve us of our guilt.**
- **Theologians call this the biggest "but" in the bible!**
- ***"The righteousness of God apart from the Law is revealed"***
  - **'apart' (Grk: *choris*; at a space, i.e. separately or apart from, beside, by itself, without)**
  - **God is revealing His plan from the foundation of the earth to reconcile Man back to Himself, in spite of the chasm of guilt our sins have created**

Grace By Design: Righteousness of God Revealed

"witnessed by the Law and the Prophets"

- We've previously mentioned the crimson thread of the Gospel from Genesis to Revelation in Week 2 with a few references
  - Rom 16:20 / Gen 3:15
  - Gen 12:2-3 / Gal 3:16, 19
  - Gen 15
  - Jer 31:31
  - Psa 22
  - Isa 53
  - Rev 13:8
- God is a God of Covenants and Contracts
  - God's throne room is where he holds court
  - We have a Judge, an Advocate, an Accuser (prosecuting attorney), and Witnesses
  - Understanding the binding nature of the covenants and how they are administered in the bible gives us perspective in how God administers justice
- Let's take a brief look at three of the most prominent covenants (contracts) in the bible and their characteristics

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Abramic Covenant (Promises of Race and Grace)

- *Gen 12:1-3 "Get out of your country, From your family, And from your father's house, To a land that I will show you. 2 I will make you a great nation; I will bless you, And make your name great; And you shall be a blessing. 3 I will bless those who bless you, And I will curse him who curses you; And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."*

- *Gen 15:6 And he believed in the Lord, and He accounted it to him for righteousness.*
  - **Repeated in Romans 4 (to be discussed in a couple weeks)**

- **Covenant Characteristics (Gen 15:9-21 Blood covenant – the most sacred covenant)**
  - **Eternal (Immutable)**
  - **Unconditional**
  - **Unilateral (God alone walked through the carcasses, Abram was asleep on a rock)**
  - **Pen: Abram's belief or faith in God**
  - ***"And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed"***
    - **Foreshadowed the New Covenant mentioned in Jer 31:31**
  - **As Paul emphasizes in Romans 4, this covenant made when Abram was NOT circumcised (ceremonially not a Believer)**

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Mosaic Covenant (The Law: 613 laws including the 10 commandments)

- **Covenant Characteristics**
  - **Temporary**
    - ***Gal 3:19 … It was added because of transgressions, till the Seed should come***
      - **The "Law" had a start and an end – a parenthetical interval**
    - ***Gal 3:16 Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, "And to seeds," as of many, but as of one, "And to your Seed," who is Christ.***
    - ***Heb 8:13 In that He says, "A new covenant," He has made the first obsolete. Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away.***
  - **Conditional**
    - **Deu 28 Blessings and Cursings chapter**
      - **Described blessings for adherence and curses for disobedience**
    - ***Exo 19:8 Then all the people answered together and said, "All that the Lord has spoken we will do."***
  - **Bilateral – Entered into jointly between God and Israel**
  - **Recorded on stone tablets**
  - **Instrument: Blood of bulls and goats (blood covenant)**

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The New Covenant

- **The New Covenant is mentioned only one time in the Old Testament**
  - ***Jer 31:31, 33 "Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah … But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.***
    - **Repeated in Heb 8**

- **Deafening silence regarding the New Covenant for 600+ years!**
  - **Book of Jeremiah penned around 600 BC**
  - **Not mentioned again (during the Intertestamental period) until Jesus inaugurated it in the Upper Room with His disciples**
    - ***Luk 22:20 Likewise He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you.***

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New Covenant (continued)

- **Covenant Characteristics**
  - **Eternal (Immutable)**
  - **Unconditional**
  - **Unilateral**
  - **Recorded in the believer's heart and mind**
  - **Instrument: Blood of a Perfect Sacrifice – Jesus Christ (blood covenant)**
  - **Pen: Faith of the Believer in Jesus Christ**
  - **Guarantee: Holy Spirit in our heart**
    - ***2 Cor 1:22 who also has sealed us and given us the Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee.***
  - **It is the fulfillment of the promise made to Abraham foreshadowed in the Abramic Covenant**
    - ***"in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed"***

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New Covenant (continued)

- ***Heb 8:13 In that He says, "A new covenant," He has made the first obsolete. Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away.***
- **And – indeed – the Old Covenant was terminated a few short years later with the destruction of the temple by Titus Vespasian in 70 AD.**

- **The New Covenant is the DEEPER MAGIC!**
  - ***Col 1:26-27 The mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations, but now has been revealed to His saints. To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory!***
- **Grace is better than the most precious jewel in the universe!**
  - **Many facets**
  - **We should hold it in our hands and admire it from every angle, fall in love with it, treasure it!**
- **GRACE: "God's Riches At Christ's Expense"**

Grace By Design: Righteousness of God Revealed

Romans 3

:22a even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe.

- ***"Through faith in Jesus Christ":***
  - **"Believe", "Believe in", "have faith in", "through faith" are synonymous**
  - ***Heb 11:1 faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.***
  - **Faith means believing to the extent that you stake your life on it.**
    - **Many have. Many will.**
- ***"To all and on all who believe"***
  - **Many, many examples of how God extends the offer of salvation to the whole world**
  - **The disciples were amazed to learn that God was offering salvation to Gentiles**
    - ***Act 11:18 When they heard these things they became silent; and they glorified God, saying, "Then God has also granted to the Gentiles repentance to life."***
    - ***Eph 5:31-32 "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." 32 This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church.***
  - **The demons also believe, but it's the wrong kind of belief**
    - ***Jam 2:19 You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble!***

Grace By Design: Righteousness of God Revealed

Romans 3

:22b For there is no difference;

- **Refers back to Rom 1 and 2.**
- **No difference between "people with the Law" or "people without the Law"**

:23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God

- **Everyone is guilty (as we discussed in the last couple of sessions)**
  - ***Rom 6:23 "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."***
  - **Death is Eternal Separation from God**
  - **The bible clearly says death of the wicked is not simply a cessation of life**
    - **A never-ending conscience torment**
    - **Weeping and gnashing of teeth**
    - **Outer darkness**
    - **Bodies riddled with worms**
    - **Unquenchable fire**
    - **Screaming for mercy**
    - **Utterly alone**

Grace By Design: Righteousness of God Revealed

- **We are "under the wrath of God" until we believe (in Jesus' own words)**
  - ***Joh 3:36** He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.*
  - ***Joh 3:16-18** For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. 17 For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. 18 "He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.*
  - **The most well-known and repeated scripture ever, yet it is very limiting if we pay attention and properly parse it! It says WE MUST BELIEVE!**

- **We MUST be "born again (Grk "*gennaō anōthen*" born from above)"**
  - ***John 3:3** "… Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."*

Grace By Design: Righteousness of God Revealed

Romans 3

:24 being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus

- ***"Justified freely"***
  - **Justification…a moment in time**
  - **Just like a marriage…we walk into the marriage ceremony single and unwed. At a particular moment in time, the pastor pronounces us "husband and wife" and voila! We're married!**
  - **Similarly, before we accept and believe in Jesus Christ we are "under God's wrath". At the moment we do accept and believe, we become JUSTIFIED!**
    - **Just as if I'd never sinned!**
- ***"Through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus"***
  - **The book of Ruth…Boaz is a picture of Jesus Christ as a "kinsman/redeemer"**
    - **Married a gentile bride – Jesus' Bride is largely the Gentile Church!**
- **How are we saved?**
  - ***Rom 10:9-10 if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.***

Grace By Design: Righteousness of God Revealed

- **Upon receiving salvation, God JUDICIALLY identifies us with the death, burial and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ!**
  - **It has NOTHING to do with how we feel!**
  - **Salvation (justification) is an act of God!**
  - ***Rom 6:3-4 Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? 4 Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.***
- **Do we at times question our salvation?**
  - **"I don't <u>feel</u> any different! How do I know I'm saved?"**
  - ***1 Cor 1:30 But <u>of Him</u> you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God—and righteousness and sanctification and redemption***
  - **Once we "confess with our mouth" and "believe in our heart" … we are saved!**
  - **Regardless of how we "feel"!**
  - **It is a judicial ACT OF GOD!**
- **And HE WILL COMPLETE the work He began in us!**
  - ***Phil 1:6 being confident of this very thing, that <u>He who has begun a good work in you will complete it</u> until the day of Jesus Christ;***

Grace By Design: Righteousness of God Revealed

Questions to ponder…

- **Is the Gospel too good to be true? We give God all our garbage … He gives us Jesus' own righteousness and eternal life in return!**
  - **Is that 'fair' to God?**
- **Was Satan aware of this "Deeper Magic" that God was working out?**
  - **Or did it catch him by surprise?**
- **Are there any Old Testament references to the "Church" being established?**
- **Do you think God orchestrated the story of the Book of Ruth?**
  - **Is there a significance to Boaz marrying Ruth (a gentile Moabite woman)?**
- **In what ways does the indwelling of the Holy Spirit manifest in our lives?**
- ***Rom 6:13 "… do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God."***
  - **"instruments" is actually "weapons" in the Greek (*hoplon*)**
    - **weapon, instrument, armor**
  - **How do we (or should we) 'present' ourselves as "weapons of righteousness" to God after we receive salvation?**