

Dr. David L. Mathewson, New Testament Theology, Session 26, Salvation, Part 1

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This is Dr. Dave Mathewson in his lecture series on New Testament Theology. This is session 26, Salvation, Part 1.

What I want to do now is spend the next two sessions and the next two lectures talking about the biblical-theological New Testament theme of salvation. In a sense, we could look at the entirety of the story of the Bible as God's redemptive historical intervention into history to save and rescue his people.

But so, at one level, everything we've been talking about so far could fall under the broader umbrella of God's redemptive story or God's salvation, the theme of salvation. So, to begin with, what I want to do is summarize the Old Testament story of God's salvation, which simply integrates features that we've already talked about in relationship to other themes. So, when we look at the Old Testament story, it begins with Adam and Eve as God's image bearers, God's vice regents who function as his representatives, and whose purpose is to spread God's rule and God's presence throughout all of creation.

Yet we saw that Adam and Eve failed at the task because of sin; because of their rebellion and disobedience, they failed, and they were exiled from the garden, the place of God's presence. So, the question then arises: How will God restore his intention for his people and creation from Genesis 1 and 2? And how will he restore that relationship? How will he once more dwell with his people, live in their midst, bring them into their land? The answer to that question begins to be worked out with God's choosing of Abraham and the nation of Israel as the means to accomplish what Adam and Eve failed to do. And so, Abraham and the nation of Israel are to be a blessing to all nations.

They are to be a light to all nations. They are to function as a kingdom of priests to mediate God's presence and God's rule and eventually spread it throughout the entire earth to do what Adam and Eve were supposed to do but failed to do in accomplishing God's original intention for his people and for creation. But they fail as Adam did, and Israel is also exiled from the land and from the place of blessing, from the place of God's presence.

So once again, we are confronted with the question, how is God going to accomplish the purposes that he intended through Adam and that were to be accomplished through Israel but that they also failed to do? In other words, when we think about the redemptive story, it's important to understand that God cannot just scrap his

previous plans. He cannot just say, well, Adam didn't work, and Israel didn't work. Let me try something else.

Let me try plan C. Instead, God must fulfill his promises, and God will fulfill his promises through Adam and Israel. So, God, in bringing salvation to the entire earth, in accomplishing his intention for all of creation through Adam and Eve, must also redeem Israel. He must also save his people, Israel, so that salvation can go out to the ends of the earth.

First, God must deal with Israel and forgive their sins so that then salvation can go to the ends of the earth in fulfillment of his promises and his intention through Adam and Eve and for his original creation. And the story of the redemptive story of the Old Testament, the salvation that God intends to bring to his people, God accomplishes by sending Jesus Christ to save his people through his death and his resurrection. So, Christ comes, first of all, to renew and restore and redeem Israel by himself, embodying Israel's destiny and providing for his death, providing for the sacrifice for the sins of his people, so that then blessing can go out to all the ends of the earth, the blessings of salvation then can extend to Gentiles.

And again, Christ does this through his death and resurrection and incorporates Jew and Gentile into the one true people of God through faith in Jesus Christ. He does that already in advance of the final culmination of that, the final manifestation of that, which we see in Revelation 21 and 22 with all of humanity in fulfillment of God's original intention for creation, in fulfillment of the salvation that he intends to bring to restore Israel and then to include Gentiles. We find God's people dwelling on a renewed earth in a renewed covenant relationship with God, Jew, and Gentile dwelling in a new creation with God living in their midst.

So the book of Revelation ends with the long, redemptive, salvific story of God's dealing with his people, finding its climax and its culmination in the new creation of Revelation 21 and 22. So, at one level, the term salvation could be seen as a broad term then, almost an umbrella term that refers to God's redemptive-historical dealings with his people to rescue them from the plight of sin, the plight of sin that is introduced in Genesis chapter 3, and then to restore his people and to restore his original intention for his people and for his creation. It's important also to realize at this point that when we think in terms of salvation when we talk about God's salvation that he brings to his people when we talk about salvation, it assumes a human plight, it assumes something that they are rescued from or saved from.

That is, it assumes human sinfulness. Part of Paul's argument in the book of Romans is to begin in chapters 1 and 3 by demonstrating the human plight of human sinfulness. In Romans chapters 1 through 3, Paul does not try to prove human sinfulness.

His purpose is not to show how sinful humans are; rather, his purpose is to demonstrate that God's wrath is justified, to condemn or pronounce condemnation, to pronounce judgment on humanity because of their sinfulness. That is the reason why God's righteousness is necessary and why the proclamation of God's righteousness comes about in chapter 3. But Romans chapter 1 through 3 demonstrates the condemnation of humanity. It shows that the pouring out of God's wrath, chapter 1, verse 18, is justified because of human sinfulness.

And so, Paul condemns; Paul actually demonstrates the condemnation of both Jew and Gentile, beginning with Gentiles in chapter 1 but also moving on to include Jews in chapters 2 and 3. So that when you get to the end of the chapter, into the middle of chapter 3, all of humanity stands condemned before God, both Jew and Gentile alike. So, Paul says the famous words that we often quote: There is no one who is righteous, not one person, verse 20. Therefore, no one will be declared righteous in God's sight by works of the law; rather, through the law, we become conscious of our sins. Paul says things like verse 10, as it is written: there is no one who is righteous, not even one, there is no one who understands, there is no one who seeks God, all have turned away.

And then again, no one will be declared righteous by works of the law because all humanity stands in bondage to sin. And then that climaxes in a sense with that well-known reference in verse 23 of chapter Romans 3: All have sinned, Jew and Gentile, all humanity have sinned and fall short of God's glory. And therefore, the situation can only be rectified by the righteousness that God provides through faith in Jesus Christ.

So, a discussion of salvation assumes the human plight; it assumes human sinfulness, to which human beings are in bondage and in need of rescue or saving. Later on in Romans chapter 6, starting with verse 15, notice how Paul compares and contrasts the situation of slavery. He says we once were slaves to sin, although we are now slaves to Jesus Christ.

Verse 12, he says, therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. That was our previous condition, sin reigning in our mortal bodies. We were enslaved to it and obeyed it. Verse 13: do not offer any part of yourself to sin as an instrument of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life.

And offer yourselves as instruments of righteousness, for sin shall no longer be your master because you are no longer under the law but under grace. Then, in verse 16, don't you know that when you offer yourselves to someone, to obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one you obey?

Whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which is righteousness, we look at Ephesians chapter 2. In Ephesians chapter 2, in the first few verses, Paul describes the situation from which we have been rescued. As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins.

Again, probably, ultimately reflecting Genesis chapter 3 and the following passages, where death is the result of human sin. So, you were dead in your transgressions and sin, in which you used to live, when you followed the ways of this world and the ruler of the kingdom of the air. The spirit is now at work in those who are sons of disobedience.

All of us lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of the flesh and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath, or children of wrath deserving of God's wrath. But then, as the text goes on, because of his love and his mercy, God made us alive in Christ when we were dead.

By grace, you have been saved through faith in Jesus Christ. And God raised us up and seated us. So, over and over again, the New Testament assumes a situation of human plight and human sinfulness, from which we must be rescued.

We find ourselves under God's wrath because of sinfulness. Deserving of God's wrath is judgment. His just punishment and judgment.

And God's act of saving us in salvation is in response to that. Now, what I want to look at then, in our next couple of sessions, is I want to begin to look at the New Testament teaching on salvation in terms of a number of images, different images that actually come from and are seen as fulfillments of the Old Testament. But also images that probably resonate, and many of them resonate, with Paul's and the New Testament author's own day and culture.

But I want to look at different images that refer to the reality of salvation that we now experience through Jesus Christ. And images that come right out of the New Testament, but again, ones that also have a connection with the Old Testament. The other thing to recognize is that all these images, consistent with other themes that we've looked at, and you'll get tired of hearing this, but it helps make sense of so much of what is going on in the New Testament, is all of these images share in that already-but-not-yet tension of inaugurated eschatology.

That is, salvation is something we already experience. That is, the end-time blessings of salvation promised in the Old Testament, which we already experience and participate in by virtue of the work of Christ in advance of the final manifestation of those blessings of salvation. What I want to do then is begin with the overarching theme, and that is the theme of salvation.

Salvation is a word that simply means a rescue or deliverance, at a very broad and general level, a rescue or deliverance from a danger. The New Testament then utilizes that terminology in terms of what God has done for us in rescuing or delivering us from sin and future judgment because of that sin. Perhaps a starting point, if we can, to start in the Gospels when it comes to salvation. The clearest reference, one that we've referred to on numerous occasions, is Matthew chapter 1 and verse 21 when Joseph is told what to name the baby that Mary is about to give birth to.

He is told to name him Jesus because he will save his people from their sins. Probably here, a reference to Israel primarily being saved from the sins that got them into exile. We said that at least some of the New Testament authors and many Jewish authors would have understood Israel to still be in exile.

And so now Jesus comes, the purpose of his coming is to save his people, to rescue them and save them from their sins that got them into exile, to rescue them and deliver them. Although at this point, Matthew does not tell us how that takes place and what that looks like, it becomes clear as the Gospel goes on that Jesus will save them from their sins by his death on the cross. His death on the cross will deal with the problem of sin, and that will be the means by which Jesus will save his people, especially Israel, from sins and rescue them from their situation in exile.

In the Gospel of Luke, we find that the most common designation of Jesus Christ is Savior. Jesus Christ is portrayed as the Savior of the world. We see Jesus, especially as the Savior of the social outcasts and sinners.

We see him saving tax collectors. We see him saving Samaritans and lepers, those with the disease of leprosy. We see Jesus reaching out to save people, especially those who are social outcasts and on the margins of society.

But Jesus is portrayed as the Savior of the world. In fact, the words salvation or Savior occur only in Luke or more often in Luke than anywhere else in the Gospel. Some would even designate Luke as the Gospel of salvation.

Salvation seems to be the predominant way that Christ is described. Over and over again, Jesus is seen as bringing salvation to his people. An older work that develops this is a little volume by I. Howard Marshall called *Luke a historian and Theologian*.

He over and over demonstrates the key theme of salvation in both Luke and Acts. So Jesus is the Savior of the world. Jesus is the one who brings salvation to his people.

This can be seen most clearly in the first chapter. We won't go through Luke as a whole and look at all the places where salvation occurs. Nor will we do that in Acts.

But in Luke chapter 1, already in the first chapter, we find salvation. We find God is now intervening. God is now acting to bring salvation to his people.

We see this in the different songs that were sung or the different speeches that are made in chapter 1 of Luke. For example, in Luke chapter 1 and verse 47, Mary's song is in response to the birth of John the Baptist and the birth of Jesus. Especially the child that she is about to bear.

In response to that, Mary says, My soul glorifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior. So, already, the hymn that Mary sings flags the main theme of God now acting to bring about salvation and redemption for his people. We see this also in Zechariah's song later on in verses 67-69 of chapter 1. His father, Zechariah, was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied. Praise the Lord, the God of Israel, because he comes to his people and has redeemed them.

He has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of David, his servant. Interestingly if you skip across to chapter 2 in the context of Jesus' birth, notice how salvation again plays a key role. In chapter 2, verse 11, when the angel appears to the shepherds to announce the birth of Jesus Christ, the good news of the birth of Christ, the angel says to them, verse 10, Do not be afraid I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all people.

Today, in the town of David, a Savior has been born to you, and he is the Messiah or Jesus Christ the Lord. Later on, when Jesus is brought to the temple to be dedicated, in verse 30, a man named Simeon comes to the temple and beholds the child. Simeon takes the child in his arms and now says, Sovereign Lord, as you promised, you may now dismiss your servant in peace, for my eyes have seen your salvation. So, already in chapter 1, Luke wants to make it clear that through Jesus Christ God's salvation, his salvation in terms of the blessings that he is now to bring to his people is now present and being fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ.

Obviously, as we said, the book of Acts, which is the second volume of Luke's two-volume work, the book of Acts also is filled with salvation or Savior language, Acts chapter 4 and verse 12. Again, I would like to give you a couple of examples of the role salvation plays in Acts, Acts chapter 4 and verse 12. In 4:12, we read, Salvation is found in no one else for there is no name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved.

Some would even say that that verse kind of summarizes the New Testament teaching or at least acts as a teaching on salvation. Since Jesus Christ is Lord of the universe in the previous verse, the crucified Messiah has been raised, and now salvation is found only in the person of Jesus Christ. Chapter 15, Acts chapter 15, and verse 11 as well.

In Acts chapter 15 and in verse 11, I'll read up and back up and read verse 12. Now then, why do you try to test God by putting on the necks of Gentiles a yoke that neither we nor our ancestors have been able to bear? No, we believe that it is through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ that we are saved just as they are. So now salvation, again God has graciously acted through Jesus Christ, not through keeping the law but now acted through Jesus Christ to bring about salvation for his people.

We find something similar in chapter 13. Chapter 13 and verse 38, Therefore, my friends, I want you to know that through Jesus, the forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you. Through him, everyone who believes is set free from sin, a justification you are not able to obtain under the Mosaic law or under the law of Moses.

Take care that what the prophets have said does not happen to you. So once more, redemption and salvation come in God's redemptive work with his people with the coming of Christ. Salvation comes solely through faith in Jesus Christ, not by the Mosaic law.

And over and over again, we see in Acts that it's a response of repentance and faith is necessary for salvation. Again, it is through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ that our salvation is accomplished in the book of Acts. When we move into Paul's letters, again, we find salvation playing a crucial role, and I'm kind of treating salvation as the overarching term, but we can treat it as a sort of separate theme as well.

In Paul's letters, we find clear references to God's actions in saving his people. In 1 Thessalonians, for example, we find Paul referring to God's salvation. At the very beginning of the book, chapter 1 in verse 10, I'll back up and read part of verse 9 because this is kind of in the middle of the sentence. They tell how you turned Paul reporting about what he's heard about the Thessalonians.

They tell how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God and to wait for his son from heaven whom he raised from the dead, Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath. And we see something similar in chapter 5 and verse 9. For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. So here, salvation is understood in terms of rescuing or delivering us from God's wrath; that is God's just judgment and punishment that we deserve because people deserve it because of sinfulness.

We find similar language in chapter 5 of Romans. If you turn to Romans, the author actually begins his book with a reference to the gospel, and in it, the power of God is found for salvation. But Romans chapter 5 and verses 9 and 10, that's Galatians, let me get to Romans.

Romans chapter 5 and verses 9 and 10, since we have been justified by his blood, which is what Paul has argued in the first four chapters, we have been justified based on faith in Jesus Christ. We'll talk about the theme of justification a little bit later. But since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him? For if while we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life? So once more, salvation is seen in terms of rescuing or delivering from God's wrath, that is, his judgment, the punishment that he will pour out upon those who rebel against him, who are sinful, and salvation is now being seen as a rescue from that end-time judgment, the pouring out of God's wrath.

This is the not-yet side of salvation; God is rescuing people from the end-time judgment. However, we also see in Paul's letters a dimension that is already present, that salvation is a present phenomenon as well. For example, in Colossians chapter 1 and verse 13, I think we see salvation as a present reality.

Colossians 1.13, for he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the son he loves in whom we have redemption. That is in the son, Jesus Christ, we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. So, salvation now, again, God has rescued us from being under the dominion of Satan, the dominion of this present age. He has delivered us and rescued us from that.

We've already looked at Ephesians chapter 2, but it seems to me that in Ephesians chapter 2, salvation is also a present reality. Ephesians chapter 2 and verse 5, but by his great love, although we were dead in our trespasses and sins, under the rulership of the authority of this heir, deserving of wrath because of our sinfulness, but because of his great love and mercy, God who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in our transgressions, it is by grace you have been saved. That is, in this context, saved from being dead in our trespasses and sins, saved from God's wrath.

And verse 8, for it is by grace, you have been saved through faith. And this is not of yourself, and it's a gift of God, not based on works so that no one could boast. And you could also add Titus 3:5, a text that we read earlier.

Most significantly, too, in Romans, the book of Romans begins in verse 16 of chapter 1. Paul says, for I am not ashamed of the gospel because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes. So, at the heart of the gospel's message, the central message of the gospel is that now God comes to rescue and save his people. God comes to bring the promised salvation to his people.

And it's God's power that is able to accomplish that. So, salvation, again, is a dominant theme throughout, especially in Paul's writings. The idea is that God has

now come to bring the promises of salvation, the promised blessings associated with the new era of salvation, and the promise in the Old Testament to his people.

He's come to deliver them from God's wrath, to deliver them from sin, and from the power of Satan and the power of evil, and to rescue them and bring them the blessings of forgiveness and redemption. To move on to another theme related to salvation is the election of God's people. God portrays his people as being chosen.

New Testament authors portray God's people as being chosen, as being elected. At this point, I'm not interested in entering into the more systematic theological debate between Calvinism and Arminianism, although I think it's valuable and important. Should we understand election more in an Arminian framework? Should we understand it more in a Reformed or Calvinistic framework? But instead, again, what I want to note is how it functions in Paul's letters, and that we find, and we've talked about this already in conjunction with the theme of people of God, but here we find with the choosing or election language in the Old Testament, we find Old Testament language now applied to the New Testament people of God or the new people of God.

Ephesians chapter 1 and verse 4, in a section where Paul calls on his people to praise God because of the blessings of salvation that he has poured out upon his people and accomplished through the person of Jesus Christ. Ephesians begins in verse 4, for God has chosen us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. We also find in Colossians chapter 3, verse 12, that as God's chosen people, we are holy and dearly loved.

So, this language of choosing, I think, comes out of the Old Testament. It was the nation of Israel that was chosen. They were God's beloved.

They were God's chosen people. They were chosen by God to be his possession. Now, we find that language applied to God's people whom God saves.

This choosing language demonstrates that they are truly God's people who have been created and called into existence by divine initiative. So, this choosing language is primarily to demonstrate God's gracious initiative in calling to himself a people, in choosing a people. God's people have been chosen by his grace, demonstrating they are the true people of God.

It also probably clearly indicates that God's people are clearly part of God's plan from eternity in choosing people. Again, we're not going to go further into our Arminian and Calvinistic debate as to how we formulate that and understand that in relationship to our choosing or to God's foreknowledge, etc., etc., but simply to recognize the function of that language in relationship to our salvation, the salvation that now God has accomplished for his people. But choosing an election plays a key

role in God saving his people, in God now taking the gracious initiative to call to himself a people, to bring a people into existence.

The other feature I don't want to go into a lot of detail on is whether election language applies to individuals or only corporations. In my opinion, it's probably both of those at the same time. Another image, another very important image in describing our salvation is the language of forgiveness of sins.

One of the promises of the new covenant in Jeremiah chapter 31 and also Ezekiel 36 is the promise of God dealing with our sins and the promise of forgiveness of sins. Let me read Jeremiah; I'll just read the text. Jeremiah chapter 31 and starting with verse 33.

This is the covenant I will make with the people of Israel after that time, declares the Lord. I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God and they will be my people.

No longer will they teach their neighbor or say to one another, know the Lord. Then to skip down to the end of verse 34, for I will forgive their wickedness, and I will remember their sins no more. So, forgiveness of sins, that is, God, forgiving Israel's sins that got them into exile in the first place, that brought about God's judgment upon them, will now be forgiven through the new covenant.

So, one of the promises of the new covenant in the Old Testament is forgiveness of sins. But also, what we find in the New Testament, what was associated with the Old Testament sacrificial system under the Old Covenant, is now accomplished through Jesus Christ's death on the cross because it is through Jesus' death that this New Covenant promised in Jeremiah and Ezekiel and elsewhere is finally inaugurated. We have already seen this most clearly in Hebrews 9 and 10, and I am not going to go back and read sections of that.

But in Hebrews 9 and 10, we find Jesus explicitly inaugurating through his death, Jesus inaugurating Jeremiah's new covenant. The author of Hebrews quotes at length from Jeremiah 31. So now forgiveness of sins is associated not with the Old Testament sacrificial system but now the Old Testament sacrificial system, which could not ultimately and finally and perfectly deal with sin, pointed to something greater, and that is the ultimate sacrifice that now Jesus Christ gives, that is himself, in dealing with the sins of the people and bringing about the promised forgiveness of sins under the new covenant.

And so, in my opinion, in my opinion, in the rest of the Pauline literature, in particular when you find references to forgiveness of sins, I think the author is assuming that Jesus' death has now inaugurated the new covenant of Jeremiah and Ezekiel where God promised that he would deal with sins of his people and now we

find that being fulfilled in Jesus' death, accomplishing the forgiveness of sins under the new covenant. So, for example, in Ephesians 1 and verse 6, actually Ephesians 1 and verse 7, again in that list of blessings that God now, the blessings of salvation that God brings to his people, verse 7, in him, in Jesus Christ, we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins. And notice how forgiveness of sins is now in conjunction with redemption.

We'll talk about that theme in a moment as well. But the redemption, the forgiveness of sins that we see here in Ephesians 1 verse 7, is associated with Jesus Christ, comes through Jesus Christ, namely his death, and is to be seen as the fulfillment of the new covenant salvation. Colossians chapter 1 and verse 14, in whom, that is in Christ, we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

Notice again the connection with redemption, but forgiveness of sins is something that comes through Jesus Christ. And again, I would argue even in Colossians, ultimately the connection is with the new covenant, blessings of new covenant salvation that Jesus Christ brings. Later on, in chapter 2 of Colossians in verse 13, when you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive with Christ.

He forgave all your sins. And then finally Romans chapter 3, in Romans chapter 3, in that section that some often consider the heart of Romans, at least thematically, you could make a good case for that perhaps. Romans chapter 3 and verse 25, God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement.

Let's see, let me back up. For all have sinned and fall short of God's glory, and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. Then God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement through the shedding of his blood to be received by faith.

He did this to demonstrate his righteousness because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished. So, the explicit language of forgiveness is not there. But the importance of this text is that in the context of Jesus Christ's death in Romans 3.25, is clearly Jesus Christ's death as a payment for sins.

Is the basis for God's gracious act of forgiveness of his people. Again, without using the word forgiveness, one text that perhaps best captures what it means that God forgives our sins is 2 Corinthians chapter 5 and verse 19, where the author says God was at work reconciling people to themselves, not counting people's sins against them. So, forgiveness of sins means that God does not count their sins against them, but instead, he has forgiven them in fulfillment of Jeremiah and Ezekiel's promise of a coming new covenant.

So once more, the effects of sin in Genesis chapter 3 have now been reversed by Christ's death and resurrection dealing with the problem of sin. This is not only Adam's sin but also Israel's sin, so the forgiveness of sins and the fulfillment of the new covenant are now fulfilled in Jesus Christ and extend to his people. Another very important theme in connection with that, and we've already seen forgiveness of sins connected with this theme, and that is the theme of redemption.

Redemption is one of those images that has both an Old Testament background and its background in the Greco-Roman world of Paul's day, and that is, it comes out of the marketplace. It's a commercial image that redemption refers to the freedom that comes with the payment of a price. And so, although some would dispute this latter part, that is the payment by a price, as always being or even predominantly being present in the New Testament, it seems to me that the association, as we're going to see, the association of redemption language throughout the New Testament with blood, that is with the blood of Jesus Christ, suggests that the Christ, or his death on the cross, is the price that is paid to free his people, that is those who respond in faith to Jesus Christ and the gospel.

So, for example, in 1 Corinthians chapter 6 verse 20, 1 Corinthians 6 and verse 20, I think is the text I want we to read this: Do you not know, as a basis for his command in verse 18 to flee immorality, flee sexual immorality, verse 19, Do you not know that your bodies are at temples of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you have been bought, or you have been purchased at a price. And so clearly here, Paul talks about being purchased at a price, though he does not tell us what the price is in 1 Corinthians 6 verse 20. But I think it's difficult within the context of the rest of Paul's letters and the emphasis on the death of Christ, the connection of redemption in the context of the blood of Christ, his death.

It's difficult not to think that the price that is paid is Jesus' death on the cross, and his blood is the price that redeems us or that sets us free. As I said, probably the starting point, even though this is a text that would have resonated in the ears of his Gentile readers, Paul's Gentile readers, in the context of the Greco-Roman world and commercial and marketplace language, the most prominent background for this is probably the Old Testament and particularly the Exodus. You can go back and recall our earlier discussion of the theme of Exodus.

The Exodus, where Israel was liberated from Egypt, where they are freed and liberated from bondage to Egypt, is often referred to as their redemption. Exodus chapter 15 and verse 11 refer to two Old Testament texts that clearly utilize redemption language in the context of Israel's freedom or liberation from Egypt. Chapter 15 in Moses' song after they crossed the Red Sea, chapter 15 and verse 11.

Let's see Exodus 15 and verse 11. Let's see, who among the gods is like you, Lord? Who is like you, majestic in holiness, awesome in glory, and working powers? Let's see that is not the verse I want. Let me back up.

I'll go on and read. Verse 12, you stretch out your right hand, and the earth swallows your enemies. In your unfailing love, you will lead your people who you have redeemed.

Verse 12 is the one I wanted. Verse 12 and 13 especially. You stretch out your right hand, and the earth swallows your enemies, the Egyptian army.

In your unfailing love, you will lead the people you have redeemed. That is, you have freed. The idea of redemption is freedom and release from bondage.

God did that by freeing his people from Egypt. Exodus 15, verse 11. We also find a reference to that in Psalm chapter 77.

We see, especially in the Psalms, but elsewhere in the Old Testament, often God or authors recalling God's mighty acts on behalf of his people. They often recall the Exodus where God delivers his people from bondage to the Egyptians: Psalm chapter 77 and verse 15.

With your mighty arm, you redeemed your people, the descendants of Jacob and Joseph. Redemption language in the New Testament probably goes back to God's redeeming his people from Egypt. He frees, he rescues from bondage, and he now liberates his people.

Now we find in the New Testament that this is accomplished through our salvation in Christ. We are now freed from slavery to sin. Mark chapter 10, verse 45 to give a gospel example.

Jesus says, I come not to be served but to serve and to give his life a ransom for many. The language of purchasing or buying back. Galatians chapter 1 and verse 4. Galatians refers to, in a number of places, God's redemption of his people.

Utilizing redemption language. Galatians chapter 4. Actually, starting with Galatians chapter 1 and verse 4. Back up to verse 3. Grace and peace to you from God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for our sins to rescue us from the present evil age according to the will of our God and Father. Now, this idea of rescuing us from bondage to the present evil age is also the language of salvation, rescuing, and delivering, but also the language of redemption.

But later on in chapter 3, verse 13, Christ redeemed us, liberated us, or freed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse himself. Later on, in the context of Exodus

language, Galatians chapters 4 and 4 and 5. But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those under the law that we might receive adoption as sons. In the context of a new Exodus, Jesus Christ now has come to redeem his people from bondage, now from bondage under the law.

We find redemption language elsewhere in Ephesians chapter 1 and verse 7. I won't take the time to read that one. Colossians chapter 1 and verse 14, both of those verses, redemption language, is in the context of forgiveness of sins. Then, Romans chapter 3 verse 24 also talks about redemption associated with God dealing with our sins.

But redemption also carries with it a not-yet dimension. We're already redeemed. That is, we're already freed from bondage to sin and death by the payment of a price that is Jesus' own death.

But there's also a not-yet dimension. We find that in the book of Ephesians, for example. Ephesians chapter 1 and verse 14.

We've received the seal of the Holy Spirit in verse 13. Ephesians 1.14, who is a deposit? The Holy Spirit is a deposit, guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession. So, our redemption, our freeing and liberation from this present age, from sin and death, has yet to be accomplished fully and completely.

Also, Ephesians chapter 4 and verse 30 are in the same book. Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Another eschatological reference.

And you could also add Romans 8 and verse 23 to that as well. In the context of Romans chapter 8 and verse 33, apparently, creation itself also awaits redemption. Romans 8.23 says, Not only so, but we ourselves, back up to 22, the whole creation groans as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time.

Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we eagerly await our adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies. So, again, redemption has a not yet or an eschatological aspect to it, too. So, redemption then, the theme of redemption, suggests liberation or freedom from sin from this present evil age by means of Christ's death on the cross.

Christ's death on the cross can be seen as the price that is paid, Jesus' blood, Jesus' death, the price that is paid that liberates us and frees us from bondage to sin. And that is realized now in the present. But that is also only a guarantee of our future redemption, which also includes our physical bodies.

Now, to move on to the next theme, to introduce the next theme, that is, justification or righteousness. The language of justification, particularly in Paul's letters, and we'll focus almost exclusively on Paul because he is the one for whom justification plays a key role. And at least we don't find the language of justification as much outside of Paul's letters at all, even though the concept might be there.

But justification is a word that means to declare righteous, to vindicate, to declare not guilty of sin. It's a word that comes out of the law courts. It's a legal word or a forensic term.

And again, its primary development is in Pauline texts. We find it, for example, in Romans chapter 3 and verse 31. By the way, Romans and Galatians are the two books where justification or justification by faith plays a crucial role.

And in chapter 3 and verse 21, but now apart from the law, the righteousness of God has been made known to which the law and the prophets testified. This righteousness is given through faith. So, this language of righteousness probably refers elsewhere to justification in the same terminology.

Paul uses the same terminology elsewhere that's often translated as justification in our English translation. So, in verse 24 of Romans 3, all our sins fall short of God's glory and are justified freely by his grace. Later on, in verse 26, Romans 3, he demonstrates his own righteousness at the present time so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus Christ.

And then in Paul's argument in Galatians, where justification language also plays a key role in chapter 2 and verse 16. I'll read 15. We who are Jews by birth and not Gentile sinners know that a person is not justified by works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ.

So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith. So that language of justification by faith, again, this is the language that, as I hope that will demonstrate, is primarily to be understood as the usage of legal or forensic language to describe what God has done to his people by declaring them righteous. That is, by vindicating them and declaring them innocent or not guilty of their sins.

Now, there's been a very significant debate over the meaning of Paul's justification language today in New Testament theology. Often, this is called the contrast between the old perspective on Paul and the new perspective on Paul. The old perspective on Paul basically understood justification primarily in legal terms.

That is God declaring us righteous. God is a forensic term dealing with our status and standing before God. The fact that we have been forgiven our sins.

We've been acquitted. We're declared not guilty. Whereas the newer perspective, N.T. Wright and James Dunn, some of you may recognize those names and see justification more in terms of declaring who the true people of God are.

In the context of the covenant, who are God's covenant people? So, justification has to do more with declaring who are God's true people. N.T. Wright thinks it's both. Forensic, declaring not guilty, a status of standing before God, of being innocent of sin, being declared righteous, being vindicated, but also being declared a member of the true people of God.

So, in our next section, in our next lecture, I want to talk then more about how should we understand Paul's language of justification and also demonstrate how it also fits clearly and is to be understood within the already but not yet framework.

This is Dr. Dave Mathewson and his lecture series on New Testament Theology. This is session 26, Salvation, Part 1.