**The Language of Salvation**
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In 1 John 2:2 one encounters the technical term *propitiation* (Greek: ἰλασμός [hilasmos]) relating to the work of Christ on the cross. Propitiation is one among many terms the Bible uses to teach us the full scope of what happened on the cross. Here is a discussion about some of them.

**Atonement**

- The word 'atonement' is one of the most used terms as a title for the work of Christ.
- Technically speaking, the word does not accurately describe what Jesus did for us on the cross.
- The term occurs neither in the NKJV nor in the KJV (except for the inaccurate translation in Romans 5:11 of καταλλάγην [katallagēn] (from καταλλαγή [katallagē] elsewhere translated 'reconciliation')).
- The basic meaning of the word is "to cover". (Leviticus 17:11)
- The blood of the Old Testament sacrifices atoned for (i.e., covered) sin. But it is evident that the blood only covered the sins. They did not wash the sins away. (Hebrews 10:4)
- The sins that were covered by the sacrifices were dealt with once and for all, not merely covered, by the blood of Jesus Christ.
- The cross was the reality of which the atonements of the Old Testament were mere shadows. (Hebrews 10:1)

**Saved**

- "Being saved" or "getting saved" is probably the most common phrase attached to the experience of having eternal life.
- This is clearly the idea conveyed in Acts 16:31.
- However, it is important to note that the term does not always have eternal life in view as Acts 27:31 illustrates.
  - Remaining in the ship was necessary for the men to be saved.
  - But clearly the being saved here refers to physical deliverance and not eternal life.
  - How might keeping this distinction in mind help us with such verses as Mt. 24:13 and James 5:20?
Regeneration

- The basic meaning of 'regeneration' is "to make alive again".
- Though the word itself occurs only twice in the King James Version (Matthew 19:28 and Titus 3:5) the idea is evident throughout the New Testament. John 3:3; Ephesians 2:5
- A look at the terms 'saved' and 'regeneration' highlight the weakness of the "word study" approach to Bible study.
  - The term same term (e.g., saved) might be used for different concepts (e.g., eternal life in Acts 16:31 and physical deliverance in Acts 27:31).
  - A given concept (e.g., being made alive again) can occur in the Bible without the text using a particular term (e.g., regeneration).

Forgiveness

- As with many of the words used in connection with the work of Christ, forgiveness is sometimes used as a general term for the entire work of Christ.
- The Greek word (ἀφεσίς, aphesis) is more often translated 'remission.' (Matthew 26:28; Mark 1:4; Luke 1:77; 3:3; 24:47; Acts 2:38; 10:43; Hebrews 9:22; 10:18). It is also translated 'deliverance' and 'liberty' (Luke 4:18, 19).
- The word means "a taking away; as with guilt of sins."
- This notion of "taking away" of guilt is complimented by another aspect of God's work wherein righteousness is given in its place (see "justification" below).
- The forgiveness from God is always in righteousness. God does not merely forgive sin and guilt without regard to the justice that needs to be met out.
- God forgives only in righteousness; only when His just wrath against sin is satisfied.
- The manner of this satisfaction is what our next term is about.

Propitiation

- Propitiation translates the Greek word ἱλασμός [hilasmos].
- This word involves the idea that God's wrath against sin was satisfied by the sacrifice of Christ.
- The Bible is clear that God hates sin. Sin merits the wrath of God. Ephesians 5:6
- Having your sins dealt with in the work of Christ is the only way to escape the wrath of God. John 3:36
This is possible only because Jesus is the propitiation for our sins.

In this way God is able to justify sinners and at the same time remain just Himself. Romans 3:25-26

**Justification**

You may have heard a clever Bible study that tried to define what it means to be justified as "just-as-if-I'd" never sinned.

This falls short of the real import of the term since, if it was the case that one had never sinned, then this would amount to mere innocence rather than justification.

To lack sin is to be innocent. To possess righteousness is to be justified.

The term justification means "imputed righteousness."

The Greek word is δικαιοίω [dikaiōō]

God can declare a sinner righteous because God imputes (λογίζομαι, logizomai) His righteousness (δικαιοσύνη, dikaiosunē) to the sinner when the sinner believes on Jesus. (Romans 4:4-5)

Notice the relationship between the noun 'righteousness' and the verb 'justify' or 'declare righteous.'

In addition to 'impute', the King James Version uses the terms 'count' and 'reckon'.

All three translate the same Greek word. (λογίζομαι, logizomai)

It means "to put to one's account."

When God justifies a believer, God declares him righteous.

This righteousness that is credited to him is the righteousness of God. (2 Corinthians 5:21)

God is able to regard us as righteous because He gives righteousness to us, being earned for us by the work of Jesus Christ.

We cannot earn it ourselves. (Romans 4:5-6)

It is clear that justification in this sense is by faith alone.

However, James clearly teaches that justification is not by faith alone. (James 2:24)

The reconciliation of this seeming contradiction will have to wait on a study of the book of James.
Redemption

- Redemption means "to buy back."
- It and its cognates translate the Greek words λύτρον [lutron; price of release, ransom]; λυτρόω [lutroō; free by paying a ransom, redeem]; λύτρωσις [lutrōsis; ransoming, releasing, redemption].
- In the New Testament the use is that of "securing release by the payment of a ransom..
- The price that was paid was the death of Jesus Christ.
- By His work He bought believers out of the bondage, guilt, and defilement of sin.
- Christ bought us out of the marketplace and has set us free to belong to Him.
- The ransom was not paid to Satan, as was held at times in church history. (1 Peter 1:18-19)

Reconciliation

- The idea involved here is that of the reestablishing of relationship and the dissolving of alienation.
- It translates the Greek words καταλλαγή [katallagē, the noun] and καταλλάσσω [katallassō, the verb]
- Because of our sin nature we are at enmity against God.
- It is necessary that our hearts are changed so we are not God's enemies any longer.
- In addition, whereas outside the Son God regards us with wrath and judgment, in the Son He accepts us. (2 Corinthians 5:18-19)
- Clearly, reconciliation takes place when one believes the gospel.
- However, some have suggested that there is a sense in which, but virtue of the cross, the entire world has been reconciled to God.
  - By this they mean that this ultimate issue between God and man is no longer sin as such (since that has been taken care of in the cross) but rather belief.
  - Because God has already done everything for us to secure our salvation, all that is needed is to accept by faith what God has done.
  - There is nothing else needed to be done to put a person right with God beyond what has already been done for him by Christ.
Adoption

- 'Adoption' means "placing as a child".
- It translates the Greek word ὑιοθεσία [huiotesia].
- There are several ideas involved in the term as it is used in reference to the believer.
  - Because of our adoption we enter into all the rights and privileges as children of God.
  - But a strong emphasis in the term involves something which is yet future.
    - Adoption is something unto which we have been predestined. (Ephesians 1:5)
    - Though it is true that we are presently the children of God it remains that some day we will arrive into a full maturity of our sonship.
    - This will happen when we are resurrected from the dead. (Romans 8:15, 23)

Sanctification

- To sanctify means "to set apart, to make holy."
- Three aspects of sanctification can be noted in the New Testament:
  - Immediate / present: We are sanctified.
    = By virtue of being saved we are set apart as children of God. (Hebrews 10:10)
  - Gradual / continuous: We are being sanctified.
    = This is the most common use of the term. From the point of salvation we begin a process of increasing holiness in our lives. Though this process may be thwarted, it remains the design for our Christian walk. (2 Corinthians 4:16; Romans 8:3-4)
  - Eventual / future: We will be sanctified.
    = The day is coming when we will be completely freed from sin. (1 John 3:2-3)

Glorification

- This is the destiny of every saved person.
- At the resurrection of the just we shall receive the new physical bodies which we will possess throughout eternity. (1 Corinthians 15:51-53; Romans 8:17; 2 Thessalonians 1:10)
Bibliography


One of the central themes of the New Testament, if not the central theme, is the way to obtain salvation. To be on the right road is, in New Testament terminology, to be justified. The corollary is that unless we are justified we are unrighteous and are on the road to final perdition. In other words, justification, as a right relationship with God, is a matter of eternal life or death. If it is not important, nothing is. Then the Joint Declaration takes up seven more specific issues. To simplify somewhat the language of the Declaration, one could list these issues as questions: 1) Do the justified cooperate in the preparation for, and reception of, justification? 2) Is justification a divine decree of forgiveness or interior renewal?

Salvation (from Latin: salvatio, from salva, 'safe, saved') is the state of being saved or protected from harm or a dire situation. In religion and theology, salvation generally refers to the deliverance of the soul from sin and its consequences. The academic study of salvation is called soteriology. In religion and theology, salvation is the saving of the soul from sin and its consequences. It may also be called deliverance or redemption from sin and its effects. Depending on the religion or even in his book The Language of Salvation (Weaver Book Company), Victor Kuligin explores the meaning of various biblical terms to offer answers to that question. Among the terms analyzed are regeneration, justification, adoption, redemption, atonement and several more. Readers will find helpful biblical content, and preachers may find this book to offer a spark for a sermon series exploring terms dealing with salvation. Share This On: About The Author. Preaching.com. Preaching Magazine brings you insightful interviews with today's top ministers, quality sermon ideas and sermon illustrations, revie