

3) How Can God Forgive Sin and Declare One Righteous?

Through Jesus' life, death, and resurrection He provides salvation that...

- Removes the Guilt of Sin

Isa 53:10 "the LORD was pleased to crush Him, putting Him to grief; if He would render Himself as **a guilt offering**"

John 1:29 "The next day he [John the Baptist] saw Jesus coming to him and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God who **takes away the sin of the world!**"

Eph 5:2 "walk in love, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us, an **offering** and a **sacrifice** to God as **a fragrant aroma**"

Heb 9:26 "but now **once** at the consummation of the ages He has been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself"

Heb 10:26 "He...offered **one** sacrifice for **sins** for **all time**"

Christ's death is a sacrifice—a sacrifice involves the shedding of **blood**, the yielding of **life** in the place of the guilty.

Remember, guilt means one legally deserves punishment. Sin "disqualifies" the sinner from living. There must be a perfect, sinless life given up in death in order for sinners to have any hope of eternal life.

In order for the substitutionary, sacrificial death to **effectively** take care of our guilt, the life offered as a sacrifice had to be infinitely **perfect**. This is why Jesus had to be the God-man—to provide atonement that fully **satisfied** the demands of God's broken Law.

- Breaks the Power of Sin

Matt 20:28 "just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a **ransom** for many"

1 Cor 6:19-20 " ¹⁹Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? ²⁰For you have been **bought with a price**: therefore glorify God in your body"

Titus 2:14 "who gave Himself for us to **redeem** us from every lawless deed"

1 Pet 1:18-19 "¹⁸knowing that you were not **redeemed** with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, ¹⁹but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ"

See also: Mark 10:45; Acts 20:28; Rom 3:24; 1 Cor 1:30; 6:20; 7:23; Gal 3:13; 4:5; Eph 1:7; Col 1:14; 1 Tim 2:6; Heb 9:12; 2 Pet 2:1; Rev 5:9

Remember, sinners are hopelessly enslaved to sin. No sinner can free himself from the power of sin. His only hope is if God frees him from his bondage by “buying him out” from slavery.

Jesus’ death on the cross “paid the price” to redeem (**buy out**) sinners from the bondage of sin.

God accepts Christ’s offering/sacrifice for our sin because it is infinitely perfect. Christ’s sacrifice provides release and freedom to those whose lives had been lost, forfeited, in bondage to sin. **Jesus’ death breaks the power of sin.**

- Pays the Penalty of Sin

Rom 3:25 “whom God displayed publicly as a **propitiation** in His blood”

Heb 2:17 “Therefore, He had to be made like His brethren in all things, so that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make **propitiation** for the sins of the people.”

1 John 2:2 “He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world.”

1 John 4:10 “In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the **propitiation** for our sins.”

Remember, our sin is committed against an infinitely holy God who responds to sin with infinite wrath. God can’t ignore sin, pretend it doesn’t exist, or just “forgive” the sinner. To do so would be to deny Who He is—a holy God. How can God’s wrath toward our sin be satisfied so we can be saved?

The blood of Christ—His atoning death on the cross—**satisfied** God’s holy wrath against sin. By Christ’s death God is justified in saving sinners as His holiness is upheld.

The term “propitiation” describes one result of Christ’s death on the cross—**God’s holy wrath toward my sin has been turned away by Christ’s sacrifice.** Jesus bore the full measure of God’s justice that sinners deserved.

- Provides Reconciliation to God

Rom 5:10 “For if while we were enemies we were **reconciled** to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been **reconciled**, we shall be saved by His life.”

2 Cor 5:18-19 ¹⁸“Now all these things are from God, who **reconciled** us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, ¹⁹namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation.”

Remember, our sin produces a state of hostility between us and God. If we are left to ourselves, we cannot be reconciled to God. How can we be saved then?

As Christ's death on the cross removed the guilt of sin and satisfied God's wrath by paying the penalty of sin, sin is removed and the sinner can be reconciled to God.

Reconciliation requires and involves two things: the **removal** of hostility that exists between us and God, and **restoration** to peace, harmony, and favor with God. Jesus' death on the cross (blood atonement) meets these needs so God and sinner can be reconciled!

- Provides the Righteousness We Need to be Accepted by God

Through Jesus Christ sin can be forgiven – wiped away. However, sinners must also have a legal standing of being right (not merely “neutral”) before God, and that “rightness” or *righteousness* must be the exact same as God's character and quality.

How can forgiven sinners also have a righteous standing before God?

Rom 3:20-24 ²⁰“because by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight; for through the Law comes the knowledge of sin. ²¹But now apart from the Law the righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, ²²even **the righteousness of God** through faith **in Jesus Christ** for all those who believe; for there is no distinction; ²³for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴**being justified** as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus”

Rom 4:5 “to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who **justifies** the ungodly, his faith is **credited** as righteousness”

Rom 5:1 “Therefore, having been **justified** by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ”

Rom 5:18-19 ¹⁸“So then as through one transgression there resulted condemnation to all men, even so through one act of righteousness there resulted justification of life to all men. ¹⁹For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the One the many will be made righteous”

Rom 8:33-34 ³³“Who will bring a charge against God's elect? God is the one who justifies; ³⁴who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us”

During Jesus' life on earth He perfectly **obeyed** God. The God-man had God's kind of *righteousness*.

Jesus' death on the cross completely fulfilled all the **punishment** that the Law demanded of those who break it. The righteous (Christ) died for the unrighteous (mankind).

Through Christ sinners not only can have their sins forgiven, they can be justified (**declared** righteous) as Christ's righteousness is **imputed**—credited—to their account. Thus, when a justified sinner stands before a holy, righteous God, he stands forgiven of all sin and declared righteous before God.

The sinner's standing as guilty and condemned is changed to that of forgiven and righteous.

This righteousness was not gained through the sinner's character (Rom 3:10), works (Rom 4:5), observance of the Law (Rom 3:20), or observing religious rituals (Rom 4:9-11).

Rather, sinners can have a righteous standing before God through the imputation (crediting) of Christ's righteousness to their account.

How can God forgive sin and declare one righteous?

Statement: *Sinners can have their sin forgiven and be declared righteous by God on the basis of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection.*

6. Repentance and Faith—How Can I Receive Christ's Salvation?

Our only hope of salvation is through Jesus Christ. But how does one receive the benefits of Christ's life, death, and resurrection?

Mark 1:15 "repent and believe in the gospel"

Acts 16:30-31 "'Sirs, what must I do to be saved?' They said, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household'"

Acts 20:21 "solemnly testifying to both Jews and Greeks of repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ"

Remember, no amount of good works can remove guilt because they are not commensurate with the required penalty. Good works have no place in receiving God's salvation. Yet sinners can be saved through the Lord Jesus Christ! The responses that a sinner must genuinely express to receive the salvation in Christ are **repentance** and **faith**.

1) What is Repentance?

Ps 51:3 "I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me."

Acts 14:15 "We...preach the gospel to you that you should turn from these vain things to a living God, 'who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and all that is in them.'"

Acts 26:20 Paul "kept declaring both to those of Damascus first, and also at Jerusalem and then throughout all the region of Judea, and even to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, performing deeds appropriate to repentance."

1 Thess 1:9 "For they themselves report about us what kind of a reception we had with you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God"

Heb 6:1 "Therefore leaving the elementary teaching about the Christ, let us press on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God"

- There are three basic elements of repentance—involving the intellect (mind), emotions, and will

(1) A Knowledge of Sin—the Intellectual (mind)—a Change of **View**

This is a recognition and apprehension of what sin really is and what it means (Ps 51:3)

(2) A Genuine Regret or Sorrow for Sin—the Emotional Aspect—a Change of **Feeling**

There is a difference between feeling bad about something and genuine sorrow for offending a holy God. Repentance includes a genuine regret for sin (2 Cor 7:9-10).

(3) A Desire to Seek Pardon—the Will—A Change of **Purpose**

This is a determination to abandon sin and surrender to the will of Christ. Sin is forsaken and righteousness is pursued (Acts 26:20)

Remember, sin is a total rejection of God, and in order to be right with Him you must totally reject sin. You must have ***a complete change of mind and attitude about your sin***—you see it as God sees it, for what it really is—rebellion against God, trying to be Lord of your own life.

Repentance also means you no longer want anything to do with sin. If you truly have a change of mind and attitude about your sin, you will also have ***a desire and willingness to stop sinning***.

Repentance involves a change of attitude about sin which shows up in ***a complete change of life*** so that people will see that change and say that “you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God” (1 Thess 1:9).

Repentance also involves ***turning from depending on one’s own self-righteousness*** and instead ***depending on Jesus Christ*** (cf. Phil 3:7-11).

What is Repentance?

Statement: Repentance is a change of **mind** away from **sin** (Heb 6:1) and toward **God** (Acts 20:21). It involves a change of view, feeling, and purpose concerning God, sin, and the sinner himself.

Repentance involves a **recognition** of sin, a **regret** for sin, and a **forsaking** of sin.