

## The Progress of Pilgrims

“This hill, though high, I covet to ascend; the difficulty will not me offend. For I perceive the way to life lies here. Come, pluck up, heart; let's neither faint nor fear. Better, though difficult, the right way to go, than wrong, though easy, where the end is woe.” –Paul Bunyan, *Pilgrim's Progress*

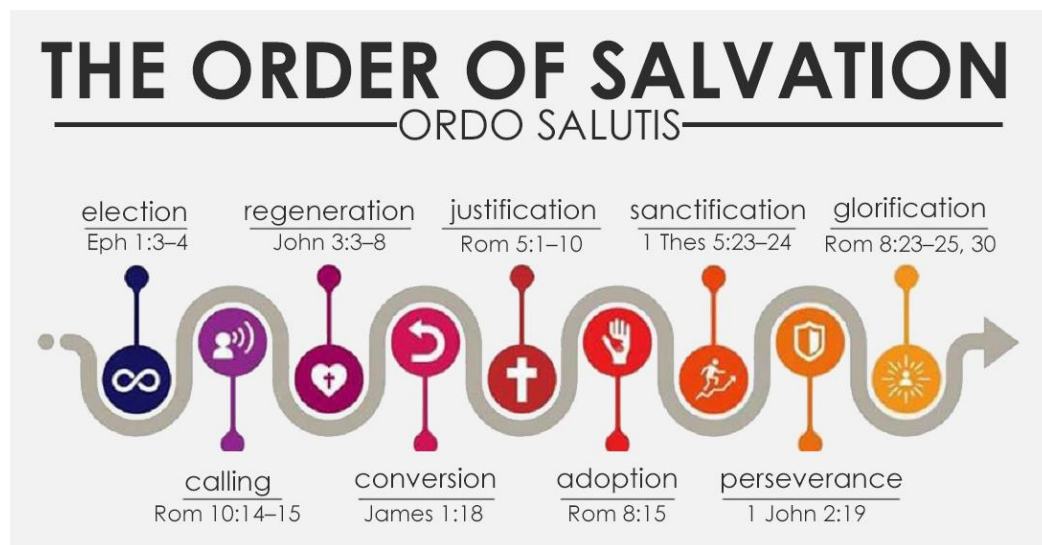
I. Paul rests his case: you are justified.

We know that we need justification, and we know the way of justification, now we'll learn the consequence of justification. (Moo)

“It will be counted to us who believe in Him who raised from the dead Jesus our Lord, who was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification.” [4:24b–25]

A. Justification is integral to your salvation.

1. The *ordo salutis*



- a) You were chosen before the foundation of the world.  
“For He chose us in Him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in His sight.” [Eph. 1:4]
- b) You were called by the preaching of the Word.  
“How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can anyone preach unless they are sent? As it is written: ‘How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!’” [Rom. 10:14–15]
- c) You are regenerated...  
“Jesus answered, ‘Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit.’” [John 3:5–6]

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converted...

“Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord.” [Acts 3:19]

justified...

“Therefore, since we have been justified by faith...” [v.1–10]

and adopted...

“The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship.” [Rom. 8:15a]

2. You are being sanctified.

“May God Himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and He will do it.” [1 Thess. 5:23–24]

3. You will not be lost.

“All those the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away. For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of Him who sent me. And this is the will of Him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all those He has given me, but raise them up at the last day. For my Father’s will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in Him shall have eternal life, and I will raise them up at the last day.” [John 6:37–40]

4. You will be glorified.

“For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what they already have? But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently...And those He predestined, He also called; those He called, He also justified; those He justified, He also glorified.” [Rom. 8:24–25, 30]

II. Justification has brought you peace with God.

“we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” [v. 1b]

“Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom His favor rests.” [Luke 2:14]

“Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. But now He has reconciled you by Christ’s physical body through death to present you holy in His sight, without blemish and free from accusation.” [Col. 1:21–22]

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“Paul proclaims that Christians are not only ‘justified’ —acquitted in a legal sense — but placed into an entirely new situation, both in the present (‘reconciliation’) and in the future (‘sharing the glory of God’). (Moo, 1996)

III. Justification allows you to stand in grace.

“Through Him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand” [v. 2a]

IV. Justification allows you to boast with jubilation and exultant rejoicing in hope where you once fell short (Hughes).

“and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God.” [v. 2b]

“for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” [Rom. 3:23]

V. We rejoice in our sufferings.

“Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame” [v. 3–5a]

A. Followers of the LORD have always been called to suffering.

1. True of the great saints of God.

“The great saints of God all agree. Ask Abraham and he will direct your attention to the sacrifice on Mount Moriah. Ask Jacob and he will point you to his stone pillow. Ask Joseph and he will tell you about the dungeon. Ask Moses and he will remind you of his trials with Pharaoh. David will tell you his songs came in the night. Peter will speak of his denial, John of Patmos, and Jesus of the cross. Blessings are poured out in bitter cups.” (Hughes)

“To you they cried and were rescued; in you they trusted and were not put to shame. [Psalm 22:5]

2. True of all saints of God.

Suffering was not just an inevitable feature of the Christian life, it was seen as a token of true Christianity (Bruce)

“Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.” [James 1:2–4]

“In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.” [1 Peter 1:6–7]

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B. Our suffering has meaning.

“because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.” [v. 5b]

“For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.” [2 Cor. 4:17–18]

So long as His people exist in mortal bodies, it's a hope, but it's sure and certain of fulfillment because we've already received the guarantee of its realization in receiving the Holy Spirit. (Bruce)

C. Our suffering unites us to Christ

“If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. Remember the word that I said to you: ‘A servant is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you.” [John 15:18–20a]

D. Our suffering will end.

“He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.” [Rev. 21:4]

VI. Christ suffered and died for us.

A. Though we were weak.

“For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly.” [v. 6]

“But as it is, He has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.” [Heb. 9:26]

B. Though we are unrighteous

“For one will scarcely die for a righteous person— though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die— but God shows His love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” [v. 7b–8]

VII. The *a fortiori* argument for salvation.

“Since, therefore, we have now been justified by His blood, much more shall we be saved by Him from the wrath of God. <sup>10</sup> For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by His life.” [v. 9–10]

A. Christ died to justify us.

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“In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.” [1 John 4:10]

B. Christ will save us.

“Consequently, He is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them. [Heb 7:25]

“I died, and behold I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades.” [Rev. 1:18]

VIII. Justification leads to communion with God.

“More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.” [v. 11]

“Looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.” [Heb. 12:2]

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