

CHAPTER 4 – GOD’S PLAN FOR OUR GROWTH

SCRIPTURE MEMORY VERSE

To the church of God in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to be his holy people, together with all those everywhere who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Corinthians 1:2, NIV)

BIBLE STUDY QUESTIONS

Romans 3:21-31; 8:1-17

Karl Menninger, a renowned psychiatrist, published a book in the 70’s titled *Whatever Became of Sin?* From a theologian’s perspective, it was not a great book. But the title was right on! Sin is no longer a word we use to describe wrongful behavior. However, God takes sin very seriously. The classic term to describe his initial work of deliverance is *justification*. The classic term to describe the subsequent, resulting freedom and growth is *sanctification*. Please read Romans 3:21–31.

1. Jews tried to follow the Old Testament Law as a means for overcoming sin. What hope does God offer those who know they have failed to become righteous by law?

2. These verses are packed with key phrases that describe God's liberating work. First, we are *justified freely* (v. 24), which means to be legally acquitted of all wrongdoing. What is free and what is costly about our justification?

3. The word *redemption* (v. 24) comes from the slave market and means to be bought from slavery to sin into fellowship with God. How have you experienced deliverance from the slavery of avoiding and disobeying God?

4. The words *sacrifice of atonement* (v. 25) come from the temple sacrifices. How do you respond to the fact that Christ died the horrible death you deserved.

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5. Once God has broken the power of sin through justification, he leads into the battle to stay free from sin. What resounding good news does Paul declare to those who struggle with sin (Rom. 8:1–17)?

6. After looking through all these verses, describe how the entire Trinity—Father, Son, and Spirit—is involved in our deliverance?

7. Paul states that Christians do not live according to the sinful nature (v. 4) and are not controlled by the sinful nature (v. 9). How does that fit with your experience? Explain.

8. What role does the mind play in a life of sin or a life of righteousness (vv. 5–8)?

9. In living in true spiritual freedom that created a life pleasing to God, we have an obligation (v. 12). What is our part and what is the Spirit's part in fulfilling that obligation (vv. 12–17)?

10. Considering both passages in this study (Rom. 3:21–31 and Rom. 8:1–17), how do both justification and sanctification, unleashed by faith, bring about the blessing of salvation?
