

Logizomai (Count)

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Preacher: Rev. Thomas Davis

[0 : 00] So we are going tonight to turn back to Romans chapter four, and as we do so, we are continuing our evening series on, which is entitled, Five Cool Greek Words.

And the aim of this series is to learn five very cool Greek words. And of course, the reason we're doing that is because Greek is the original language that the New Testament was written in. And I'm hoping that as we do this, that as we learn these funny sounding words, I hope that it's going to give us a deeper understanding of the gospel, a deeper understanding of what each particular word is talking about.

And that deeper understanding, I hope, will help us to grow in our faith and to apply the gospel to our lives more and more. Our five words are, homologhia, affiemi, logizomai, patia, and macrothumia.

Now, we started by looking at this one, homologhia. Homologhia. And that's the word translated, confess, but it literally means to say the same thing.

[1 : 07] And it's reminding us that as we confess our sins to God, we're never surprising Him. We're simply saying to Him what He's always been saying, and He's ready to forgive us.

And as we confess our faith together, we're striving to say the same thing, to be united around the unchanging truths of the gospel. Our second word was affiemi, which is the word often translated forgive.

But as we saw a couple of weeks ago, it has a very broad range of meanings. It can mean to leave behind. It can mean to let go. It can even mean to grant permission.

And it's helping us to see and understand more of the fact that when God forgives you your sin, He leaves it behind. He lets it go.

And we have this freedom and this permission to know Him and to serve Him and to follow Him. And it's also teaching us that as we are to then forgive others who wrong us, we need to be willing to let go.

[2 : 12] We need to be willing to leave things behind, to forgive others as God in Christ has forgiven us. Tonight we are on our third word, the word logizomai.

So that's the L sound in Greek, and then this is the G sound, gamma. If you do physics in school, you'll know all of these letters. That's the Z sound there. It looks just like a funny looking Z.

It gets confusing because that's M. It looks like an I U with a tail, but it's actually the M sound in Greek. So it's logizomai. Logizomai is the word that we're learning tonight.

And it appears lots and lots of times in Romans chapter 4. And so I'm going to read 3 to 8 as a word that's going to keep on coming up again and again and again.

For what does the scripture say? Abraham believed God and it was counted to him as righteousness. Now to the one who works, his wages are not counted as a gift, but as is due. And to the one who does not work, but believes in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness.

[3 : 17] Just as David also speaks of the blessing of the one to whom God counts righteousness apart from works. Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, whose sins are covered.

Blessed is the man against whom the Lord will not count his sins. Which word is logizomai? Good guess. Good guess, but no.

Count. Yes, count. Righteousness does appear loads in Romans. Grant said it. Count. There we go. Counted.

Counted. Counted. Count. Count. I forgot them all. There's loads again and again and again. This word comes up.

But like Athyemi that we learned a couple of weeks ago, and logizomai has a fairly broad range of uses as well. And so I'm going to show you some other words when it appears. Luke 22, 37.
[4 : 13] He was numbered with the transgressors. John 11, Caiaphas, the high priest says to them, you know nothing at all, nor do you understand that it's better for you that one man should die for the people and the whole nation perish.

That's the same word there. 1 Corinthians 13. When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. Romans 6, 11. So you must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ.

And Philippians 4, 8. Finally, brothers, whatever is true, honorable, just, pure, lovely, commendable. If there's any accent or there's anything worthy of praise, think about these things. That's all the word logizomai.

So it's a word that speaks of counting, calculating, reasoning, thinking, understanding. And it's actually from the same word family where we get the English word logic.

And in fact, one definition that I was reading about this word said that it basically means to think according to logical rules. And you can see why that would be associated with numbers and counting and calculating.

[5 : 26] It's all about thinking logically. And this is why I think this is a very cool Greek word because it's helping us to see how everything in the Gospel fits together. And that is one of the things I absolutely love about the Gospel, how everything fits together so beautifully.

And this is particularly relevant for me because I've discovered in recent years that Thomas Davis Bingo is an emerging game in free church circles. Because apparently I am prone to using the same words and the same phrases again and again and again.

And people who listen to me listen out for these phrases and words. Top of the list is brilliant, closely followed by amazing. And that does come up probably in every sermon.

But another phrase that I am known to often use is this. It makes perfect sense. This makes perfect sense. And that's what logismi is pointing us towards.

The fact that in the Gospel everything makes perfect sense. There's a beautiful logic to the Gospel. It all fits together beautifully.

[6 : 41] So I want us to think about that a little bit more tonight. And we're going to do so under two headings. And our headings are this. First that without Jesus nothing adds up.

With Jesus everything adds up. So first of all thinking about how without Jesus nothing adds up. One of the biggest challenges for the church today is really simply this.

Is to get people to think about the big questions of life and death. That's what we want to talk about. And this has come to address what the Gospel is concerned with.

But it's very difficult to get people engaged. And so our challenge is not so much that people are hostile to Christianity. It's more that it's just hard to get people to even think about these things. So it's not that people are enemies. It's just that people are indifferent. People don't want to think or talk about the big questions of life.

[7 : 46] There's a very interesting example of that just now in current political discussions. Because as you know there's some discussions and I think voting approaching about the whole question of assisted dying.

And I'm not talking about that in any particular detail just now. I'm just going to say that in all of those discussions nobody says anything about what happens when you die.

Nobody says anything or seems to want to discuss anything about what lies beyond. And I guess that's a symptom of our age.

We live in the age of distraction. And we don't really like having to think about the big complicated eternal questions. And I think part of the reasons for that is because these questions can make us feel uncomfortable.

And one of the biggest dangers we face is that today we will so easily and so quickly choose comfort over truth. And I read a really interesting quote a couple of weeks ago from a Scottish theologian who lived 200 years ago.

[8 : 52] And he said something that I thought was quite striking. He said, whatever the subject of inquiry, men or people are always desirous to discover the truth. Unless it happened that error will be more soothing.

And I think that that's very striking for us today because actually people don't want to have to think about life and death and time and eternity. Because they can be soothed by scrolling through social media or watching something on telly or buying something on Amazon.

But the key point I want us to always come back to every week is that we've got to think about the big questions of life and death. And doing so is going to make us uncomfortable.

Because without Jesus, the big questions of life don't add up. One example of that is the question of origins.

So maybe there are times when people think about where the universe and humanity has come from. And without a doctrine of a creator, where do we come from?

[10:05] What is the ultimate explanation for reality? Where did the world come from? Now when I ask that question, not asking about the process is different. Christians have different views as to how old the universe is and things like that.

And that's all okay. But what I'm talking about here is ultimate origin. Why is there something and not nothing? Why is there something and not nothing?

Without Jesus, we don't have an answer to that question. Another example is the question of morality. Every single one of us has a sense of right and wrong. Every one of us cares about justice.

Every one of us knows that there's a difference between joy and suffering. Every one of us knows that there are so many things in life that are good and beautiful. There are so many things in life that are evil and wrong.

But without ultimate origins, without an overarching moral structure, without a good God to define what is right and wrong, we don't actually have moral foundations at all.

[11:07] And we quickly end up with everybody just doing what's right in their own eyes. And then most importantly of all, the question of being right with God. And that's the question that Paul addresses in Romans chapter 1-4.

He's trying to present all the way through these chapters. He's building up a big argument that ultimately nobody can make themselves right with God on their own.

And so in many ways Romans 1-4 is a big argument against legalism, against the idea that we can make ourselves good enough. And in the context of Romans and in much of the New Testament, there was the whole question of obeying the law, the whole question of being circumcised, and the idea, well if you do this and do that and do the next thing, then you'll be good enough for God.

And Paul is saying it does not work like that. And he says it's actually never worked like that. Even Abraham was not saved like that. He was saved through faith.

And so Paul is speaking to them about truth and about the law and about righteousness. A holy and conclusive case that if we compare ourselves to a God that is holy and righteous and perfect, none of us match up because all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

[12:30] And that truth is central to the Gospel and it's so important for us to recognise that on our own, our works, our efforts, our attempts to be good enough for God are not going to make it.

They're not going to add up. They're not going to reach the standard. Now we're only going to see that. And so many people don't see that. So many people think that, well yes, I'm not that bad a person and I'm sure it'll be fine in the end.

And we can't come to that conclusion. And the only way that we are going to understand this properly is if we have an accurate view of God and an accurate view of sin.

And all too often our view of God is tame and our view of sin is casual. So we kind of think of God as nice and helpful and convenient and maybe a little bit outdated and irrelevant.

But overall he's kind of like a nice grandfather. And we think of sin as though it's kind of naughty, silly, maybe inappropriate, maybe offensive to some.

[13:35] But it's kind of inevitable and it's not really that serious in the grand scheme of things. So often we think that sin is not that bad and God is not that awesome.

And to think either of these things is to make the biggest mistakes that we can ever make. And we think that sin is colossal.

He dwells in uncompromising absolute perfection. His holiness is like a burning fire. His righteousness is impeccable.

His strength and power is actually terrifying. His glory is unapproachable. We think that approaching God is a wee bit like putting your finger in a candle.

When you were wee, maybe you still do this. I actually still do this. When you've got a candle, you stick your finger in it and in the flame and you run it through. And sometimes we think that approaching God is a wee bit like that. Well, it's a wee bit dangerous but it's fine. Approaching God is not like putting your finger in a candle.

[14 : 41] Approaching God is like kind of touch the sun. In fact, even the sun is minuscule compared to God.

So God is colossal and sin is brutal. Sin has one desire. Sin wants to destroy you and it wants to destroy your family and it wants to destroy our community and to destroy the world.

Sin wrecks friendships, torments our minds, it hurts our bodies and most of all sins aim is to separate us from God and to leave us alienated from him as our Creator.

That's the human condition. God is as majestic and as high and as glorious as he has always been and as he always will be. And our sin has caused us to fall away from him.

It's left him out of reach and it's left us out of our depth. And any attempts for us to fix that ourselves, any attempts for us to work our way back up to God are not going to work.

[15 : 45] They are never going to add up. But legalism will tell you that you can try. Legalism will say, oh yes, you must do this, but if you do that, you'll be good enough.

And if you work hard enough, well, that'll be acceptable. And you can get to that standard by your own efforts. But it's not true. Legalism is totally illogical.

God is infinite in his holiness, his justice, his righteousness. And our sin has left our relationship with him in tatters. We are cut off from him.

And if we are cut off from him, it means that two things have happened. It means that we've got no access to him and yet he's the only one who could actually help us.

He's the only one who could give us the resources that we need to reach him. And yet we're separated from him. I was trying to think of how to illustrate this. And I think this is, I don't know if this is going to be the best or the worst illustration that I've ever done, but I'll try it anyway.

[16 : 54] When you think about, if you imagine, sin has left us down here and God is up there. I know that that's simplistic, but it's just an illustration. And so you think, well, how could I get up?

What could I climb up to get to God? And you think, well, the idea that we can do our own efforts is a bit like me saying, I can climb up to that ceiling by standing on my hands.

And so I think, okay, well, there's a hand there and a hand there. And if I step on that hand and on that hand and keep working my way up, I'll be able to climb to the roof. And so if I try to step on my hand, well, I'm not going to do it because I'll injure myself because I'll just come crashing down.

And that's exactly what legalism is doing. It's this idea that, you know, we can work ourselves up to God, but actually all it's going to do is bring us crashing down. Because the only way that we could get up to God's level on our own is to make ourselves God's.

The minute we do that, we sin. That's exactly what Adam and Eve tried to do in the first place. Our own efforts, our own work, our self-made renovation doesn't add up.

[17 : 54] And if we approach God in our own terms, it's not going to add up. And it's so crucial that we recognize this. If we don't realize it now, we'll discover it on the day of judgment.

And that's why Paul is so adamant in Romans, in Galatians, in all of his writings. He is so adamant that legalism does not work. And in this chapter, he is saying Abraham was not saved through legalism.

He was not saved by his own works. He was saved in a different way. And it's all revealing the fact that with Jesus, everything adds up.

So what is Paul saying in Romans 4? Well, Paul is using the experience of Abraham to show that we are not saved by our works. Instead, we are justified by faith as a gift from God.

And Paul's great point in Romans 3 is that we're not righteous, we're justified by faith. And then in chapter 4, he's saying, and that's how Abraham, the one that you look up to, that's how he was saved as well.

[18 : 59] And at the heart of that salvation is grace. And Paul has explained that in the end of Romans 3. He says, there's no distinction, all of sin and fall short of the glory of God and are justified by his grace as a gift through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood to be received by faith.

Grace is what lies at the heart of the gospel. Grace is that incredible kindness and generosity where God does not teach us as we deserve. And he lavishes us and pours out upon us blessings that we

could never earn.

Now, grace is what makes the gospel so beautiful because we come to God as those who have sinned and those who are unworthy and he pours out his eternal love upon you.

And he adopts you into his family and he holds you and loves you forever. You never have to earn it and it will never be taken away from you. It's just a magnificent, abundant, indescribable gift from God.

Grace is what makes the gospel so beautiful. But it's also what makes the gospel logical.

[20 : 19] God's grace is revealed in the fact that God has come for us. He acts for us. He provides for us. He does all of that through his son.

And in doing so, he fills in every gap that our sin has left. And the way we describe that is to say that Jesus has come as our substitute.

He dies on the cross in our place and in doing so, he takes our sin on his shoulders. He gifts us his righteousness in its place. And that means that our sin is not counted to us because all of it was counted to him.

Look at the comparison we have between these verses. In Luke 22, 37, it says that he was numbered with the transgressors. And that's quoting from Isaiah 53.

And then Romans 4 talks about the Lord not counting our sin against us. That's quoting from Psalm 32. It's the same word in both.

[21 : 24] Our sin is not logisamied against us because all of it was logisamied against him.

And the result is that everything that is wrong gets fixed. Everything that is wrong gets fixed.

So there's loads that we could say here and I'm running out of time as always. Here's our list.

Here's a picture, like a diagram of, I was going to say, all the stuff that's wrong with us.

Some of the stuff that's wrong with us. Many of the things that sin has caused. Sin has left us guilty before God. God's perfect and anything less than perfect is guilty. We are way less than perfect.

We are definitely guilty.

We are spiritually dead. Sin has separated us from our life giving God. We lack righteousness. So we were made to bear God's image. We don't do that.

[22 : 25] All of that's been marred and broken and we lack righteousness. We fall short of God's standard of His glory. That leaves us condemned. You can see that in the middle there.

Our guilt exposes us to a righteous condemnation. At the same time we're slaves to sin because we gravitate towards it. It's like a magnet. We can't help doing it.

We say and think and do stupid things and it's like we're not free from that. We're alienated from God. Our relationship with Him is broken. That alienation leaves us lost. We go wandering in all sorts of stupid directions.

We are damaged whereby the image of God that we were created to bear is now marred. We're isolated. Relationship with others, with ourselves, with God is broken.

And we are stumbling along as life bruises us and batters us. The Gospel fixes every single one of these.

[23 : 30] So our guilt is atoned for. Jesus dies in the cross and He takes every single ounce of my guilt and your guilt upon His shoulder.

We are spiritually dead. The Holy Spirit comes and regenerates us and makes us alive again. We lack righteousness. We're so far short of what we should be.

But Jesus' righteousness is imputed to us, counted to us, credited to us. It's made ours from Him.

Our condemnation is taken away. Instead we are justified, declared righteous before God, never to ever be condemned. Our slavery to sin is broken.

Instead we are brought back out, bought back out of slavery redeemed, free. Instead of being alienated from God, we are reconciled to Him.

[24 : 39] Relationship restored. Instead of being lost, we are adopted into His family as His precious, beloved children. The damage that sin has caused in us, bit by bit, is being healed as the Holy Spirit sanctifies us and makes us more like Jesus.

Instead of being isolated, God the Holy Spirit comes to dwell in our hearts forever so that He says, I'll never leave you nor forsake you. And even though we feel like we are stumbling along, the truth is we are actually sealed by the Holy Spirit as His and nothing can snatch you out of the Father's hand.

Everything gets fixed. Jesus accomplishes it all and He gives it to you as a gift.

That's what grace is all about. And there's a magnificent logic to all of that. You think about everything. God can look at me and He can look at you and He can see so much damage that sin has caused and He sees all the different elements.

He's like, I'm fixing that, I'm fixing that, I'm fixing that, I'm fixing that. He's counting up every single piece of damage that sin has caused and He's fixing it so that everything can be put right.

[26 : 14] And there are logical consequences to all of this. The whole Gospel rests on grace. God giving us something, Jesus acting on our behalf, doing something for us. And so there's logical consequences to that.

And Paul outlines them at the end of the chapter. I won't go through it in all the details because time's going away too quickly. But Paul says here, this is why it depends on faith, that God's done something for us.

We're relying on Him. Grace means that He's done it all. So the thing that we need to do is just trust Him, lean on Him, believe in Him. That's why faith is what lies at the heart of the Gospel.

This is why the Gospel is a message, a promise. Abraham did not waver concerning the promise of God. And every single one of us comes to Him relying on what He has promised.

That's why we've got a book, that's why we've got words, that's why we've got a message. He's done something for us. He wants you to know about it and we respond to His promise in faith. And that salvation is a collective offer to every individual.

[27 : 20] That's why Paul says at the end of the chapter, he says, the words that was counted to Him were not written for His sake alone, but for ours as well. Because it will be logisamide to us who believe in Him, who raised Jesus from the dead.

That's why in the Gospel we have this beautiful call to every single individual to come to Jesus. And then we are united together in this amazing family, this amazing church that Jesus is building.

It all fits together magnificently. It all makes perfect sense. And maybe the key lesson in all of this is that if you're a Christian or if you become a Christian or if you are not sure if I'm a Christian and there are lots of people in Carlyway who are not sure if I'm a Christian and they're just uncertain, this is maybe one of the most important things that I will ever say to you.

This whole concept of logisamide is where you will find assurance. Because thinking about the logic of the Gospel, thinking about how Jesus has done everything and thinking about how all of it fits together perfectly is teaching you that if you are trusting in Jesus even if your faith feels like just a really fragile faith.

Think of it like this. I don't know how many of you are good at maths. But if you think about the Psalm 1 plus 2 plus 3 plus 4 plus 5 plus 6 plus 7 plus 8 plus 9 plus 10. So what is the answer to that? 1 plus 2 is 3, 1 plus 2 plus 3 is 6, 10, 15, 21, 28.

[29 : 07] What am I now, 28, 36, 45. So the answer is 55. Now you might be thinking, oh is it 55? I'm not sure. To any degree you are at mental maths.

So if you're standing here thinking, I think it's 55. But my maths isn't that great. I'm not that confident. So what you're here is the unchanging eternal immutable reality that that's what that Psalm adds up to.

And whether you're not sure or doubting or uncertain makes no difference whatsoever to the fact that that's what that Psalm adds up to. And you might be sitting here thinking, I think I believe in Jesus. But I don't know. That is more than enough because it doesn't matter how much faith you have and it changes the fact that he has died for your atonement, for your reconciliation, for your redemption, for your justification, for your adoption.

He has done it all. And you can just rest and lean and rely on him. This is where you find assurance. Because if you are trusting in Jesus, you being lost becomes theologically and logically impossible.

His salvation is perfect and that makes your security unbreakable. His love for you is eternal. That makes the joy of knowing him unspeakable.

[30 : 32] The generosity and grace is boundless. Therefore, the thanksgiving is unending. And we find ourselves thinking, why would God do all that for us?

Why would he be so incredibly kind to people who are so completely undeserving? And the answer to that is that at the root of all this grace that lies at the heart of the Gospel is the love of the God who is love.

And the fact that God is love is where we discover both logic and mystery. We discover logic in that the perfect God is only ever going to love you with a perfect love.

But at the same time, we find mystery that that's what he wants to do. He chooses to pour his love out on you even though it came at the cost of handing over his one and only son.

In a legalistic approach to religion, we're trying to stand on our own hands and we fall flat on our face. But in the Gospel, instead of trying to climb up our hands, we just hold out our hands.

[31 : 46] Empty hands that he takes that he'll never let go. He brings us to him, meets us, heals us, forgives us, restores us and loves us as his precious children forever.

And for all of us here, and especially to anybody who's not yet a Christian or not, he's holding out his hands again to you. Holding back from that is so illogical.

But responding to that is the best thing that you can ever do. If you are trusting in Jesus, if you put your trust in Jesus, then the fullness of the logic of the Gospel is huge forever.

He's done everything. He's holding you forever. He'll never let you go. There is a magnificent logisomization of your salvation.

There's a new word for Thomas Davis Bingo. Let's pray together.