

Attributes of God (Series 2): God's Perfect Justice

by A.W. Tozer

God's justice is not based on an external principle, but on His own nature, and He is just because He is just.

Duration: 46:28

Scripture: Psalm 19:9, Psalm 92:15, Psalm 97:1-2, Isaiah 28:17, Revelation 16:7

Topics: "Attributes of God"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of atonement for our sins. He explains that every moral inequity will be judged unless covered by sufficient atonement. He highlights that inequity can be in the form of actions, words, or thoughts, and that our sins create a black record before God. However, the preacher emphasizes that Jesus Christ is the only one who can provide sufficient atonement for our sins. He urges the listeners to take this seriously and ensure that they are covered by the precious blood of Jesus.

Transcript

I want to read a few verses from Selections, Genesis, Shall not the judge of all the earth do right? Abraham asked that question, Genesis 18. Deuteronomy 10, For the Lord your God is a God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, a mighty and a terrible, which regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward. Psalm 19, 9. The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous all together.

Psalm 92, 15. To show that the Lord is upright is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in him. Psalm 97, 1 and 2. The Lord reigneth.

Righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne. Isaiah 28, 17. Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet.

Revelation 15, And I heard the angel of the waters say, Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and dost and shalt be, because thou hast judged us. And I heard another out of the altar say, Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous, are thy judgments. Let us offer a prayer.

Lord Jesus, we bless thee that thou hast conquered. We bless thee that death has no dominion over thee. We bless thee that thou art at the Father's right hand, and all authority is given unto thee, and all power.

We pray thee exercise both tonight. We pray not only for our church here and this company met here, but we pray for thy work in the city, all of thy work, O Lord. Bless every man who declares the truth unselfishly tonight, with a good motive.

And bless every church where the truth is declared. Help, Lord, give us ears that can hear truth, minds that can grasp it, souls that can take it in, help in the giving of it. Thou, Lord, who didst use a dumb ass to speak with man's voice, use thy servant tonight.

Thou, who didst rebuke a backslidden prophet by the crowing of a cock, O Lord, if thou canst go to the barnyard and make servants out of lowly beasts, then we pray thee be pleased to speak through an unworthy channel to unworthy hearers. For, O Lord, we are not worthy, but we believe in thy goodness and thy grace, and so we pray thee that both tonight, both, may operate toward us. Through Christ our Lord, amen.

Now, I think I have said before about a dozen times that it is tremendously important that we know what God is like. It is tremendously important that we know what kind of being we are serving. Ter Stegen said, O God, thou art far other than men have dreamed and taught, unspoken in all language, unpictured in all thought.

And Isaac Watts said, Earth from afar hath heard thy fame, and worms have learned to lisp thy name. But, O, the glories of thy mind leave all our soaring thoughts behind. And one thing that we can know about God is that he is a just God.

This is not so pleasant to contemplate, but it is here that God is a just God. And we can put this down as one of God's attributes, that is, something you can attribute to God and say, this is the way God is. Now, it will be necessary to define justice, to find out what we mean when we say God is a just God.

And I begin that definition by telling you that justice is indistinguishable from righteousness. If you read some versions, particularly the Catholic versions, and there are some good Catholic versions, incidentally, and I could recommend Knox's translation without qualification, translated by Monsignor Knox, the late Monsignor Knox. And often where the word righteousness occurs, the word justice is in its place because the two words are indistinguishable.

And the word means uprightness and moral rectitude. And they are the same, maybe not quite the same, but so near to being the same, that translators habitually use one instead of the other interchangeably. In Psalm 89, verse 14, it says, Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne.

And in Psalm 97, verse 2, it says, Righteousness and judgment are the habitation of thy throne. So if justice and judgment and righteousness and judgment are said to be the habitation of God's throne, then justice and righteousness are seen to be the same. Now, what is it to be just? Well, to be just is to be equitable, that is, it's to be morally equal.

Over in the book of Ezekiel, in the 18th chapter, it says, God speaking, Yet you say the way of the Lord is not equal. Hear now, O house of Israel, is not my way equal? Are not your ways unequal? They blamed God for unequal ways. They blamed him for inequality and inequity in his doings.

Have you ever noticed that the word inequity and the word inequity are very much alike in common language? As we use them, they're very much alike. And it was, I think, Ruskin that first called my attention to the fact that they are alike in reality. Inequity is inequity.

And whatever is not equal is iniquitous. Whatever is not morally equal is iniquitous. Inequity, inequity.

Now, judgment is the application of justice, that is, moral equity, to a moral situation. I wonder how dry that sounds. I'd just like to get it up out of, you know, you heard about the man, the people that are talking about the new preacher, one commented he could go down deeper than any man they'd had in a good long while.

Another one said, stay down longer, too. And the other one said, he hasn't come up dry. And I don't want to go down and stay under a long time and come up dry.

If I go down and stay under, I want to come up at least showing that I've been there and have a little moisture on what's left of my hair. So I want to toss this around a little bit so that we'll get it and we won't go home saying it was nice if we'd known what he was talking about. Well, judgment is the application of justice to a moral situation.

Not all situations are moral situations, but there are some situations that are moral situations. And whenever justice is applied to a moral situation, then you have a judgment. When a man goes into a courtroom, he's called into the courtroom as what is called a defendant.

Then there is another man there who's the plaintiff. He is accused the defendant of something. You have those two men in there, and there is a legally moral, at least a legal situation there before them.

And now justice has to decide on who's right. And when the judge pronounces the judgment, he is pronouncing on a moral situation if it is a criminal offense, and a legal situation if it is simply a common judicial affair, so that it may be either favorable or unfavorable. Every time we use the word judgment, we imagine that it's unfavorable judgment.

But it's not always so. Sometimes a court will bring in a favorable judgment. The verdict is not guilty.

And sometimes they bring in an opposite one, depending upon what justice says about the moral situation. If the one judged has been inequitable in his conduct, then he is judged guilty. If he has been equitable, he is judged not guilty, and thus it is.

Guilty or not guilty, depending upon whether before the law you have been equal or unequal, depending upon whether there is inequity there or righteousness. Now, that's what justice is. It's moral equality.

It's the balance, the scales balanced evenly, so that there isn't too much here and too little there and too little here and too much there, but just right. Now, justice is something God is. The Bible says God is righteous and just.

And just and righteous being about the same, I say. Justice is something God is, not something that God has. I wish we could get a hold of this, and I wish we could see that these attributes that I've been preaching about, they're not something that God has and might be able to lose, but they're something that God is.

God is just. Not only that God has justice as an attribute, but that God is just. We sometimes talk very foolishly.

I think that we ought to watch what we say because the scripture says that we shall give an account in the last day for even our idle words. But we sometimes say, even we preachers say, justice requires God. You

accept Jesus and justice requires God to save you.

Justice requires God to take you to heaven. This is a great error of thinking as well as speaking. Justice doesn't require God to do anything.

I'd like to have you remember that. For if we say justice requires God to do this or that, we postulate a principle of justice somewhere to which God has to conform. And we say there is there that pillar of justice, and even God has to bow to it.

And we put justice out there as a great up and down perpendicular pillar, and we say there it is, that tall, shining pillar of justice, of moral equity, and even God is compelled to obey it. And we put it outside of God and we say God has to bow to it. Now, my brother, there isn't any such a principle of justice.

God is just, and because God is just, then all things must bow to justice, must bow to God. But God bows to nobody and no thing. If there were such a principle in existence somewhere, who created it, I want to ask you? Where did that principle of justice come from to which God must bow? And who enforces it? If God should refuse to bow to a principle of justice, who would enforce it? Who would arrest God and bring him before the bar of judgment? Who would put handcuffs on the Almighty and lead him in before a court of inquiry to see whether he had been just or not, whether he had conformed to that external principle we call justice? Now, that kind of business is completely foolish, because if there was anybody superior to God, then that person would be God, and God wouldn't be God at all, for only a superior can compel obedience from an inferior, and God is inferior to none.

God, my friend, acts justly because he is just. And the justice of God doesn't compel him to do anything, because that's just God being just because he is just. And there is nothing outside of God which can make him do anything.

Now, I said this before when speaking about other attributes, and I would repeat it now, here a little, there a little, line upon line, and precept upon precept until you get hold of it, that there isn't anything outside of God which can move him. There are things outside of you that can move you all right, and there are things outside of me and all created beings that can force us, but there's nothing outside of God that can move him at all. Nothing has been added to God from eternity, and nothing has been taken away.

God is imperfect and therefore is incapable of gain or loss. God acts justly from within, not in obedience to an abstract principle of justice, but he acts like himself toward all creation. So when God is just, he is not putting on an act, he is acting like himself.

When God is just, he is not bowing to a pillar of justice somewhere, a judge that sits in a court on the bench, he is bowing to justice. But when God acts justly, he is just acting like God acts, that's all. He is acting the way God acts.

And God will yet balance the scales. Now, I believe this with everything inside of me, that God will yet balance the scales and condemn the unequal, condemn that which is unequal and vindicate the just. For remember, that judgment not only condemns the unequal and the iniquitous, but vindicates the just as well.

Now, somebody asks, is there an old Anselm mass? Anselm is a man you don't hear much about. I have a lot of friends that nobody scarcely ever talks about. I don't think anybody ever quoted this man but me in recent years.

And yet he used to be known as one of the great theologians, the second Augustine, one of the greatest minds that ever lived, one of the greatest Christians. And he asked this question, he is talking to God, he said, How dost thou spare the wicked, O God, if thou art just and supremely just? Then he comforts himself a little bit and he says, We see where the river flows, but the spring, whence it arises, we see not. We see the river of God's mercy flowing down the centuries, but where it arises, he says, we know not.

Now to the question, How can a just God who out of his own nature gives approval to that which is just and disapproval to that which is unjust, how can a God who out of his own nature condemns the wrong and approves the right, how can God then justify sin? Sinner has been iniquitous, we've all been iniquitous, our lives have been unequal. Remember when the scripture, when the old man of God Elijah said, Why hop ye between two opinions? And they tell me that that means, Why hop ye along on two unequal legs? He was kind of a Luther before his time and had a salty sense of humor, and he saw Israel walking on one good leg and one pegged leg, and the pegged leg was a bit short. And there they were, hop, hop, hop, hop.

One day it was God, and the next day it was Baal, and the next day it was Jehovah, and the next day it was Baal. And he said, Why is it lame? Why are you lame? He said, you're iniquitous, you're unequal, your legs aren't the same length. Why hop ye along on two unequal legs? If Jehovah is God serving me, if Baal is God serving, get both legs the same length.

Well now, if God demands that we live like that, and that we be equal, and the scripture says, none of us has been equal, that our lives have been iniquitous, then how does God turn around and pronounce us just? How can this just God pronounce us just, not righteous, when we're neither just nor righteous? Well, to that question there are two happy answers, and I am very pleased to bring them to you. One is a reason from when we reason from the being of God as being unitary. See, God's being isn't composed of numbers of parts working harmoniously.

I have a watch here, it's quite a watch really, given to me in the 25th anniversary of my stay in Chicago, and I don't know how much it cost, I never inquired, but it must have been quite a pile of money really. I don't think I ever deserved anything as nice as that. I don't like wrist watches because I feel I'm bound, so they gave me this thing, and now I don't know what to do with it, they don't make watch pockets anymore, so I just have to throw it around.

But there it is, and it gets along, it gets along, by all of its parts working harmoniously. They all work harmoniously, and it is up until recently, and somehow it always stops, it always stops at five minutes to seven, no matter what time of day it is, I always know the time on my watch, five minutes to seven. But the parts weren't working harmoniously there, to be a simple matter, take it down to Eaton's and have them bend it a bit here, but as it is now, it isn't equal.

Now, we think of God as being composed of an infinite number of precise parts, attributes, character traits, all working harmoniously together, and as long as God can get all the parts of his nature working together, everything is all right. Well, once more, we're going to the watch factory, or we're going to the automobile factory, to get our illustration. God has no parts that hum together harmoniously, there are no wheels in the infinite being of God that mesh into each other with perfect precision, because that would mean that God was composed of parts, and if God had parts, somebody had to put him together.

And if somebody put God together, then that wouldn't be God, because God couldn't be put together, God is the uncreated, he's the one who has life in himself, and he looks no place for anybody to help him or to

put him together. He was before the world was, and he would be unimpaired, the same God if the world should cease to be by a flick of God's thumb tomorrow morning. It won't, but if it should be, God would still be God, no less, no more, and God hasn't got any parts.

Now, God not having any parts, then God is one. When I say that God is one, I mean more than there's only one God. When the scripture says, Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God is one, O God, it doesn't mean that there's only one God and not two.

Certainly that's true, too, but that isn't what Moses or God had in mind when he said that through Moses. What he meant was, the Lord thy God is one, he's one clear through and not made up of parts, and so nothing that the justice of God does forbids him to exercise his mercy, because it's the same God. God is merciful and God is also just.

We think of God, and if the average preacher thought carefully, he'd be silent until he'd gotten some ideas in his head. He'd be silent. I think we'd all have to take a time off, Brother Gray, because we just talk, we just open our mouths, and then something comes out.

We tell sinners, we picture God sitting, presiding over a court of law and administering laws that he dislikes and disagrees with, sentencing a man with tears and apologies to a hell he doesn't believe in. We picture the Father angry and full of justice and the Son tender and full of mercy, and the two don't agree. The Father rushes forward with an upraised club to smite humanity, and the Son leaps in between and takes the blow and dies on the cross.

And so God, repentant because his Son died, forgives us for his Son's sake. I tell you, you can't get further wrong than that, brothers and sisters, you just can't get any further wrong. And yet, if you took that illustration away, I think some evangelists would just have to sit down and think it all out again.

The fact is, the Father and the Son have never disagreed and can never disagree because they are one. And the Father and the Son together believe the same thing, they have the same will. Christ laid down his life because he wanted to, but he laid it down because the Father wanted him to.

And the Father and the Holy Ghost work harmoniously because they are of one nature. They have one thought, one will, one desire, one everything. And therefore, never think that Jesus Christ is rushing in to shield you from the wrath of God.

Remember, the Son has just as much wrath as the Father. And remember, the Son is just as the Father is just. And remember, the Spirit of God is just also.

It's impossible that the persons of the Trinity should be opposed to each other, one just and one merciful and another kind and another unkind. God is love, and the whole of God is love. And God is just, and all of God is just.

Now, as many a judge sits on a bench and sentences people under the law that he doesn't want to, but he didn't make the law. He is a servant of the law, and God is a servant of none. All of God acts in everything that God does.

If God has to abrogate justice to take you to heaven, then God will not take you to heaven. If God has to abrogate his holiness to save a man, he'll never save that man. How then, how then can it be that God can be just and yet spare the wicked? Because the attributes of God do not clash with each other.

Anselm's argument is that compassion flows from goodness, and goodness without justice is not goodness. When God punishes the wicked, that is just because it consists with the wicked man's deserts. But when God spares the wicked, that also is just because it consists with God's goodness, so that God never is unjust to save a man.

God's unitary being, being himself one God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, co-equal and co-eternal, this permits God to exercise his attributes as he chooses, as he wills. So when God wills to show mercy to a man, he doesn't contradict justice. Then the second argument, and this is the one we're familiar with.

If you didn't follow me on the other one, you just don't pay attention to it, because it's all right anyhow. This one I want you to get, for this is the biblical New Testament argument. The other one was Anselm's argument, and a perfectly good one, and a sound one, but this one a child can get.

Ah, it's because of Christ's passion. Because of, how dost thou spare the wicked, O God, if thou art just, supremely just? Because of Christ's passion. Christ's priestly offering of his own blood for us is infinite and almighty and perfect.

That's why I can believe in my salvation, not because I think that I deserve it, but because I believe that the passion of Christ, the death of Christ, the sufferings of Christ for me were infinite. That is, they overflowed into infinity, and if every corpuscle in my body was a sin, a gross sin, there still would have been enough in infinite atonement to make up for all my sins and cancel them out. And if every human being that has ever lived in the world or does now live or ever shall live, if that person should breathe in sin and breathe out sin continually from the moment of his birth to the moment of his death, and all should live a thousand years, never a white and never a red corpuscle in the bloodstream of all the three billion people in the world, were sins, acts of inequity, deeds of inequity, still they would be finite.

They could be counted if you had time to count them. But the passion of Christ, the suffering and dying of Jesus and his rising again were infinite, and you couldn't count them. The merits and virtues of his passion are so great that they could never be counted for the simple reason that he is infinite.

Therefore the infinite blood of the Lamb, the infinite dying of Jesus, the infinite virtue of his rising again, the infinite merit of his place at the right hand of God the Father, completely covers the sin of the lost man. How canst thou spare the wicked, O God, if thou art completely just? The answer is because of the efficacy of the dying and rising of Jesus. It cancels out our sins and abrogates our sentence.

How did we get our sentence? We got our sentence when justice confronted a moral situation. Justice looked upon us and saw us crooked, hopping along on two unequal legs. They weren't balancing the scales, but they were out of balance.

Then we blamed God and said, O God, thou art out of balance. And God said, You tell me that my ways are not equal. I say, Your ways are not equal, O Israel.

That's how we got our sentence. We got it when justice of God was applied to our spiritual and moral state. And the whole being of God concurred in that sentence.

So don't think of God as a schizophrenic with one part of him wanting to save me and one part of him wanting to damn me. Think of the mystery of atonement. God being good and God being love, wanted to save me.

And so, because God is also just, he incarnated himself, the second person of the Trinity, in the form of a man and went out to the Calvary. And in the mystery of atonement, he made it possible for God to pardon and not violate his own justice. For, as the man of God said, when God spares the wicked, it is just because it consists with the goodness of God.

And when he sentences the wicked, it is just because it concurs with the sinner's desserts. You read the book of Revelation, you may be a bit astonished. You know, we're living in a Pollyanna day, a day of brutality and Pollyannaism.

Pollyannaism is in the pulpits. Brutality is everywhere else. Brutality and violence and sadism is everywhere.

So because we have Pollyannaism in the pulpits so much of the time, we think of God as being a highly perfumed and beautiful and rather sad, smiling being who would like to be good to us and doesn't know how. That kind of God and that kind of a Savior, that kind of Christ, the Christ of the pale, weak face, is not the Christ of the Bible. For I read in the book of Revelation that when God sentences and hurls Babylon down, down, down, the justice of God confronting the iniquity of Babylon and hurling her down, I read that the creatures in heaven above cry out and say, True and righteous are thy judgments, O God.

And remember that the song of the angels in heaven is the song of God's justice and judgment and righteousness, and the song of the redeemed is the song of God's mercy and love and grace. The angels know not how to sing of the grace of God because they've never needed it, but we poor sinners know how to sing of the grace of God because we've needed it desperately bad. And yet I preach that while we think them apart, they're one, and there's no confusion in the heart of God about it.

Somebody asked me, How is it that the dying of Jesus, how is it that the death of Jesus can make a mantle for me and covering for me and can undo my moral state and can change it? I don't know that, but I know it does. And I know that that iniquitous man who has all his lifetime hopped along on two immorally unequal legs and has lived before the bar of God's justice, as we say, with all the counts against him and all the evidence against him and with a verdict, a verdict of foregone conclusion, guilty. We know that somewhere in the darkness there in those hours of suffering and pain and grief, Jesus Christ did something to change that moral situation.

He did it. So now when God looks at me, he can look at me and see a moral situation that's the way he wanted it. We call that justification.

Somebody has said, though it's not etymologically correct, somebody has said that justify means that God acts toward me just as if I had never sinned. And that's true, though. Etymologies are often crooked, but that happens to be right.

God, when he justifies me, acts toward me just as if I had never sinned. And all that because of the wonder of Christ's atonement. I don't claim to know what that is.

I've read stories, of course, and theological books on atonement. Men don't always agree about atonement. There is a Swedish church I've preached for their college.

I know them. I've mingled with them. They're godly people, and they don't hold on, they don't hold to the theory of atonement that most Christians hold to.

And I wonder whether we'll ever know the theory of atonement properly. I wonder if we ought not to repent before God for our across-the-counter theology. I owed a debt.

Jesus Christ came and slapped down some money and said, here, I paid it all. And so I slip that that Jesus gives me across the counter, and God unwillingly gives me verdict of not guilty. So I sing about it, and it's all sort of silly.

Simple truth is that when the atonement of Jesus' blood did its work upon me, justice was on my side, not against me. As I said, I think last week, we confess our sins. He's faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

He didn't say he's merciful and gracious to forgive us our sins. He said faithful and just. Because always remember that justice has to be satisfied.

And God never raised his hand and said, here, slide under there. Here, I'll sweep you under the rug until the judgment day is over. We hope nobody will see you.

Never, never does God treat anybody like that. Heaven would be completely empty and hell crammed full if in order to get anybody to heaven and save them from hell, God had to violate justice. The justice of his own heart? Never.

But he doesn't have to. He can be just and the justifier, then the deliever. Oh, I don't know.

I think we ought to sing more about the blood of the Lamb than we do. Less about Calvary and more about the blood. Less about the place where they're putting him and more about the wonder of what happened there in the darkness.

No wonder the sun became dark. He hung there for several hours in the darkness, God doing a work that man can't explain and never can know. That wonderful, lawful work of atonement.

And God, the holy God, without violating his holiness, God the just God, without violating his justice, God arranged it so he could look upon our moral situation and smile and say, you're justified. My dear friend, if you ever go to heaven, that's the way you'll go. I was reading a sermon by Luther here lately, just this yesterday.

And Luther was preaching on that text that says that nobody can come unto me except the Father draw him. And he said, now some people think that they can get to heaven by their works. He said, one tries it this way, another tries it that way, but you'll never get there.

He said the Pope, for instance, he thinks that if he says Mass and becomes a Carthusian and does good deeds, he'll go to heaven. He said, yes, he will, when a cow can crawl into a mouse hole. I thought that was pretty good for the old German.

When a cow can crawl into the little hole where the mouse goes, he said, that's when the Pope can get to heaven on his good works. Well, he can't, neither can you, brother. Neither can you, neither can anybody.

Let's not be too hard on Papa. He's just a man, you know, just a man. And if he got the covering of the blood, God would see a moral situation that was just, and he could go to heaven, too.

I mean, Father John, you know. Let's remember that we're all sinners and that we're inequity, inequity, the both. Our lives have been wrong, all wrong.

Now, I'll close by saying this to you, that every moral inequity will be judged without mercy, will be judged unless covered by sufficient atonement. And every act of iniquity may be an act that we call commission. It may be no act that we call omission.

It may be a word, or it may be a thought. The iniquitous thoughts that go through our heads, and the iniquitous words that come out of people's mouths, and the acts that they should do and don't do, and the acts they do and should not do, this is our awful black record. This is the record.

No one can make sufficient atonement except Jesus Christ our Lord. I say that God, every moral being, must face up to his sins, every moral being. And in the day of the great judgment, the great white throne judgment, when God raises us from men from the dead, human race from the dead, they will be dealt with by all the attributes of God.

All of God will concur in everything God does. But because justice is part of the nature of God, and because justice, when it confronts injustice, must condemn it, God will condemn it. He will send off to his terrible hell those who have not taken the covering of atonement.

I must, I must have the covering of atonement. I must have a sufficient atonement of some sort. Because my sins have been so many, I can never undo them, and neither can anybody ever undo them.

No one can make sufficient atonement but one, and he made it. He doesn't repeat it, he made it once. Our poor blind friends think that every Sunday, when they pronounce certain Latin words, saying, this is my body, that Christ dies again, and they boast about the fact in a humble way that Christ dies every time the Mass is offered.

Oh, no. They call that perpetual sacrifice. No, no.

That's not what the Bible teaches. The Bible teaches one sacrifice with perpetual efficacy. Jesus died only once, not a dozen times, not a hundred times.

Think how many times Christ would have to die every day, every Sunday, round the world. Every time the Mass was held and the bread was blessed and became the body of Christ, he died again. And every time the wine became the blood of Christ, he bled again.

No, no. He is not dying in heaven, he's living in heaven, alive forevermore, and he's our Lord. And because he's our Lord, he can dispense mercy, mercy that satisfies justice and righteousness.

And he can save us because he is God. So your soul tonight, your soul pleads, hides you in the blood, your soul pleads it. You don't dare take things for granted.

There's a casualness about your Christianity here that bothers me, a casualness. You smile and joke and it's casual. My brother and sister, you ought not to be casual about anything that Satan isn't casual about, neither is God.

I want to see seriousness here. I want to see gravity. I don't mind humor, as you well know, but when I'm talking about my soul and my soul's relation to God, I don't want anything but gravity and seriousness.

I can't be around long. Heard a 39-year-old man pray tonight. He said, Lord, you know we don't have much time.

If he doesn't have much time, what about some of you? None of us has much time. Time is a relative thing and passing swift away and not coming back. Your soul pleads, hide you in the blood, hide you under atonement.

I must have atonement. I must. Isn't it a question of my pleasing the Lord and coming forward with a big smile and saying, I'll vote on Jesus' side.

I'll be a Christian. No, no. He doesn't need you, but oh, how you need him.

How you need him. For when the holy eyes of God look upon your life, those eyes see iniquity and God pronounces iniquity. But when you cover yourself with atoning blood by faith, you believe on the Lord who has risen in those same righteous, just eyes of God.

See you justified because somebody cared enough to interpose, so to speak, and you're covered by precious blood. We must take this seriously, my brother and sister, we must. Time is rolling along.

Men are dying of heart attacks. Women are dying of cancer. Children are dropping over and tragedies and troubles are everywhere.

And we can't take things for granted. Where are you tonight? How is it with you tonight? Do you know tonight that the Lord Christ is your Lord and Savior now? You know it. You know that if you should, as the poet said, all that live must die passing through nature to eternity.

And if you should be one to pass tonight, you know that the eyes of God looking upon you would see equity there by the blood of the Lamb or iniquity without the blood of the Lamb. Which is it? You ought to know. It's most important that you do know.

I pray that you might, if you're here and you're not covered by that precious blood. When there's an accident out there on the highway, one of the first questions asked is, are you covered? One of the questions I want to ask you tonight is, are you covered? By the mercy of God, I am. Are you? If you're not, then you're in a place where everybody wishes you were.

You're in a place where you have only friends. You're in a church where everybody believes in this. And we together hope and trust that you will come and that you will trust in Christ the Lord and believe by the mystery and wonder of his atonement.

God can look upon your moral situation and pronounce you justified. Oh God, we pray this hour that I will speak thy words. Be merciful to us, oh God, according to thy lovingkindness, according to the multitude of thy tender mercies brought out our iniquities.

For against thee, the only have we sinned and done these evils in my sight. Thou mightest be justified when thou speakest and clear when thou judgest. Lord God, thou knowest we were conceived in sin and born in iniquity, but we thank thee.

Thou didst remember us made in thine image. Thou didst remember the tattered, broken, polluted fragments of what once had been and send thy son to die and rise and live and plead for us. We're glad tonight.

We have hope and faith tonight. If we're not trembling tonight, we're satisfied. Because he died and because his dying was so infinitely efficacious, whoever will may come and drink of the water of life freely.

And whoever comes, thou will in no wise cast out. Christ our Lord. We're going to sing while we stand.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/1/SID1978.mp3>

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