

Compassionate Holiness

by Billy Strachan

God's holy compassion is available to us, but we must come to Him in humility, acknowledging our sinfulness and weakness, and receiving the gift of holiness through faith in Jesus Christ.

Duration: 43:51

Scripture: Psalm 14:1-3, Isaiah 55:6-7, Zechariah 2:13 - 3:2, Matthew 6:33, Luke 15:7, Romans 3:10-12

Topics: "Holiness"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the difficulty people have in accepting the truth of the word of God. He references Psalm 14, which describes the fool who denies the existence of God and engages in corrupt behavior. The preacher shares a personal experience of being asked to televise a sermon titled 'Can a holy God forgive bad people?' inside the KGB headquarters in Russia. Despite the seriousness of the location, the preacher presents the message of God's mercy and the need for sinners to accept Christ. The sermon concludes with a powerful story of an organist who had been indifferent to the Gospel for years, but finally found salvation while sitting at the organ.

Transcript

Well, I couldn't help but come in tonight and sit down and look up and notice the different flower arrangements. And I thought, how just typical of an illustration of the church. Beautiful to look at and made up of every conceivable kind under the sun.

They're not all the same. And the churches like that were made up of different people. You'll notice that the almost the tallest flower over in that one is a spindle of a daisy right up in the air.

But there's a saggy broken thing down at the bottom. Some are budding, some of them are just wispy, some of them are green. There's even one hiding at the back that's never noticed.

The church is like that. Some big people, some small people, some droopy people, some hidden people, some a bit green, some a bit wispy. But you know the one thing they all have in common in that beautiful collage of flowers there? They're all dead.

They used to be alive, but now they're dead. And the only way they're going to remain beautiful all day tomorrow is if someone beyond them gives them a supply. Of nourishment in the water of life.

They can't draw it from the ground, they're no longer attached. They're detached and they're totally dependent on others feeding them to stay alive. And over there, they're in the highest position, that lot.

But I think they're happier than this lot because that lot is dead and they've never known to be alive because they're phony. And you know there are people like that that can come to church. Phony, good-looking, nearest to the altar, but dead.

Yes, flowers teach you a lot. And yet the amazing thing is God's holy compassion is so deep that it stretches to the extension that it will be compassionate on the worst. I don't think I would ever have believed it just a few years ago if someone had ever said to me that I would make a television program in Russia, in Moscow, on can God forgive bad people? And especially if you told me that I would make that program inside the KGB headquarters.

The dreaded place of all of the Soviet states that once were under communism is that building. And yet standing there in Red Square with a television crew, we had just finished taking some shots against the Kremlin, and when the professor who was appointed by the government to make sure that we said things that were historically correct in the program, suddenly turned to me and said, and what's the title of your subject? And I said, can a holy God forgive bad people? And he said to me, who would you like to televise that? You know me, I'm a humorist. And I didn't realize that in Russia they never told a joke in 70 years.

There was nothing to be funny about in Russia. And so I glibly turned around and said to the professor, inside the KGB headquarters would be a good idea. And everybody looked at me, but in a serious face, he took out a cellular phone from his pocket, dialed the number, spoke in Russian, folded it up, put in his pocket and said, if we go right now, we may get in.

And the soldiers that were guarding us and the camera equipment, because the camera itself was 33,000 pounds worth, when they saw where we were going, they didn't want to go with us. Some of them had lost relatives in that building. And yet until that moment, they were tough men in uniform guarding us with automatic weapons.

And when we went down corridor after corridor inside the KGB headquarters, they were getting more and more worried. And I got inside this office and they let me sit on the desk under the picture of Jasinsky, whose huge statue they toppled in the square at the counter revolution, who was the father of the KGB. And I sat there and talked to Russia about, can God forgive bad people? Then they took me to a hole in the cemetery, away at the back.

It was a hole where you dumped the dead flowers, meters deep. But they now have the record in the KGB headquarters that this is where they put the ashes of everybody that went through the front door that never came out again. They cremated them and put the ashes there.

But the amazing thing is that in the same hole are the ashes of the politicians and KGB officers killed by politicians and KGB officers in a fight for power. So that you have in the same hole in that cemetery, the ashes of the innocent and the guilty. And I had to look into the camera and deal with the subject, can a holy God forgive bad people? And yet they're all looking over my shoulder at the one man they don't want to forgive.

Their memories are flooded with loved ones that ended up in that hole. And yet I was able to speak to the colonel that's at the present time in charge, and he's a Christian. God can reach to the uttermost in his

holy compassion to forgive.

Now the reason I've chosen that holy compassion as my third subject in the talk of holy God and holy people is because you'd be amazed at the number of people who have never yet participated in the mercy of God for two reasons. One, they either feel very, very bad, too bad to be forgiven, or two, they are still convinced that they're not that bad, and they have a capacity within themselves to be good enough to one day earn the mercy of God. And yet the word of God shows us so clearly that only those who are prepared to face up to the reality of their utter and total depravity can ever know God at his depths as a person with holy compassion.

There's a beautiful scene in Zechariah. At the end of the second chapter, we read these words, be silent all flesh. If you want that in modern day parlance, it is simply this, shut up everybody.

Yes, sometimes heaven has to tell everybody on the planet earth, just hush your mouth and be quiet for a while, and learn something instead of always using your voice to justify yourself before the living God. Just hush. Be silent, all flesh, before the Lord.

That's the God almighty himself. For he is raised up out of his holy habitation, and the first thing we are discovering is that he's not only the Lord God almighty, but he's holy, and his very throne room is a holy habitation. And yet we read this, and he showed me Joshua, the high priest, not some lay person, not some farmer, not some mere servant girl, street woman.

No, the high priest. And he was standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him. What a place to be in.

I'm sure that Joshua, the high priest, could have well done with a copy of mission praise, and stood up and sang the hymn that we sang tonight to open with, O love that will not let me go. I rest my weary soul in thee, and give thee back the life I owe, that in thine ocean depths its flow may richer, fuller be. Because the one place where that high priest could never pretend was in that august company.

He's standing before the Lord almighty, with the very angel of the Lord himself at one side, and Satan, the prince of this world, a royal person, who is awaiting his final and utter destruction for his rebellion against God, but still has access to the presence of God. We're told that in Job, that Satan came amongst the angels in the presence of God, and even Jesus referred to him as the prince of this world. And he's there, and the Lord's there, and the Almighty's there, and there's a high priest.

But we are told that Joshua, verse 3, was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel. He's standing there in his absolute rags. There's nowhere to hide.

He cannot put on pretense. He cannot argue. If he attempts at any way, in any conversation, to justify himself before the Almighty, I'm sure that Satan will dig him in the ribs and say, you dare, and I'll scream.

I know about you. I know your sins. I know the things you do that nobody else sees, knows.

And the Lord too would simply look with love. If he attempted to justify himself, and in that knowing look, expose him to the fact that, I know. I know your heart.

I know all that's going on in there. One look from him was enough to reduce Peter to tears and repentance, because the look not only told him, I love you, but the also told him, I told you so. I warned

you.

You were ready to die for me, Peter, but I told you you would deny me three times, so I'm not disappointed. You haven't shocked me by your sinfulness. I warned you it would happen.

You were the only one that was not convinced. But now you're going to discover the depths of the compassion of my holiness. So much so that when he rose from the dead, he said to the women, go tell my disciples I'm risen from the dead, and Peter, for he's the one that will feel there could never be a beginning for me.

There could never be a beginning for me, not now, not after what I've done. Well, listen, even here in the Old Testament, you have a high priest in rags, standing in the presence of God Almighty. And of course, to a certain extent, we're all like that.

Isaiah tells us in his words that all our righteousnesses are like filthy rags before the Lord. Look down from heaven, behold from the habitation of thy holiness. Yes, and when he did, he could see nothing there that was of any good in any man.

But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags. And we all do fade as a leaf, and our iniquities like the wind have taken us away. And there is none that calls upon thy name, that stirs up himself to take hold of thee.

For thou hast hid thy face from us, and thou consumest because of our iniquities. But now, O Lord, thou art our Father. We are the clay, thou art the potter.

We are all the work of thy hand. Be not very wroth and sore. O Lord, neither remember iniquity forever.

Behold, see we beseech thee. We are all thy people. Yes, we have spent our time being religious, said Israel.

We've never missed a service, never missed a sacrifice, never missed giving. But the one thing we never did was lay hold upon you. We were so satisfied with our own self-righteousness.

And it's amazing that even in Paul's day, in the epistle to the Romans, in the 10th chapter, he cried out, Oh, oh, I'd give anything to see one of Israel come to know God. Because they have a zeal, hard-working, self-energized zealotry to establish their righteousness. But they have failed to recognize the righteousness of God.

And in going about to establish their own, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness which is of faith. And self-righteousness is self-conscious. God's righteousness is God-conscious.

And whenever we are conscious of our righteousness, it's of self. But if we know what we are, and we submit ourselves to the great redemptive work of Christ on the cross, we find that his holy compassion imparts to us his righteousness. So that the big joke of being a Christian all your life is that what the community thinks is a good Christian.

You know, and I know, it's not true. It's what God has given to me. He's the one that gives me the appearance of goodness in front of people in the community.

But I know in myself when I kick the slippers off at night, throw the coat in the chair, flop down in the city, I am nothing more or less than a piece of weak human clay. Even Billy Strachan has had his wife at times turn to him and say, my, if the students could only see you now, Mr. Principal. Making me very much aware at that time of the humanity and the weakness of my humanity.

I wonder if you've ever come to that yet, within your very heart of hearts. Satan certainly didn't like Joshua being there. He's the one that doesn't like anyone being in God's company dirty.

And he raised an objection, because we read in the second verse of Zechariah 3, and the Lord said unto Satan, the Lord God rebuke thee, O Satan. Even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee. And then pointing to that high priest, he said, is not this a brand plucked out of the fire? And even here the Lord is confessing before Satan himself, that don't you realize that this high priest is so weak, so human, so sinful, he was already burning.

To be plucked from the fire means you were already in it. And to be plucked means that there was a danger of the one plucking out of being burned. But he had to snatch him from the very flames of the fire.

I don't think the English know what it's like to pluck anything from a fire compared to the Scots. Have you ever seen a Scottish person accidentally drop a five pound note in the fire? They're going to get that out of there. Even if they've blistered fingertips, they're going to snatch it from the flames and save the five pound.

It's a desperate act. And here you're finding that heaven is saying, let us tell you something about this dirty priest Satan. He's someone we've snatched from the very fires.

That's holy compassion. That's holy compassion, snatched from the very fire. And there's nowhere for him to hide, so he may as well stand before God just as he is.

And that's all God has ever asked us to do. But it's the hardest thing for people to have to confess in their heart of hearts that the Word of God is true. And it's amazing the number of people who do come to church regularly, although they will give lip service to it, still do not believe the words of this book.

Listen to what it says in Psalm 14. Psalm 14. The fool hath said in his heart there is no God.

They are corrupt. They have done abominable works. There is none that doeth good.

The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men to see if there were any that did understand, if there were any that did seek God. And what did he find? They are all gone aside, every one of them. They are all together become filthy.

There is none that doeth good, no, not one. Now, is that the Word of God, or is it not the Word of God? And if it's the Word of God, and God had said there is none good, no, not one, then that includes you and I. And so anyone that harbors a slight tinge of an idea that there's still got something good in them is not agreeing with that text. And you're in danger of missing, laying hold upon God, because you'll make that timeless mistake of thinking you can fan that one solitary spark of self-righteousness into a roaring flame of goodness and prove to God that his verdict was wrong, and that there is one in Flixton you can rely on.

But that is not true, and there is no need for anyone ever to behave like that, nor to attempt to hide under any cloak of self-righteousness. Even David was the one that tried ever so hard to run away from God,

and he was the one that shouted out aloud, O Lord, thou hast searched me and known me. Thou knowest my down-sitting and my uprising.

You understand my thoughts afar off. You compassed my path, and my lying down are acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether.

Thou hast beset me behind and before and laid your hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me. It is high.

I can't attain unto it. Where shall I go from thy spirit? Whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, you're there. If I make my bed in hell, behold, you're there.

If I take wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. If I shall say, surely the darkness shall cover me, even the night shall be light about me. The darkness and the light are both alike to thee." Oh, where can you go to get away from a holy, compassionate God? Nowhere.

It's better to run straight into his arms. Straight into his arms. And Joshua was clothed with filthy garments before the angel.

And he answered and spake unto those that stood before him. God Almighty uttered a word. Take away the filthy garments from him.

Now, nothing could have been more humiliating to Satan than that. He had to assist the Lord. That was the company that Joshua was standing before in his filthiness.

And the command went out from the Almighty God to the angel of the Lord and to Satan to strip him of his dirty clothing. That meant Satan had to help to do that, to humiliate himself, to take off the dirty, sin-ridden clothes of this high priest. And unto him he said, Behold, I, the Almighty God, have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with a change of raiment.

And I said, Let them set a fair mitre upon his head. So they set a fair mitre upon his head and clothed them with garments, and the angel of the Lord stood by. Yes, he received a new covering to cover up that body of sin.

And they said, And make sure you give him a decent hat, a fair mitre upon his head. You know, in Exodus, the twenty-eighth chapter, that hat is described. We read these words, And thou shalt make a plate of pure gold, and graven upon it like the engravings of a signet, Holiness to the Lord.

And you shall put this tablet with this writing on a blue lace, that it may be upon the mitre, the hat. Upon the forefront of this mitre, it's this hat, it shall be. And it shall be upon Aaron's forehead, that Aaron may bear the iniquity of the holy things, which the children of Israel shall hallow in their holy gifts.

And it shall be always upon his head, that he may be accepted, and that they may be accepted before the Lord. Now, just think of that. The high priest, a mere human sinful man like the rest of us, was allowed to wear this hat that was given to him, and on it, on his forehead, was holiness to the Lord.

Now, please remember this. He could never see it himself. Only those looking at him could read that tablet.

Holiness to the Lord. And I assure you, as you go out of this church tonight, if Jesus Christ is your robe of righteousness, if Jesus Christ is your covering, if Jesus Christ is your justification, if Jesus Christ is your saviour and your salvation, you have been a partaker of the compassionate holiness of God, you can go into the street and people will look and see upon your forehead what you cannot see. You are a holy person.

It's a gift. So why spend years trying to develop, when you can receive from him this goodness, this mitre, this hat, this wonderful message of holiness upon your head? You will always know you're weak, but it will never worry you. I'm always struck by the fact that the Holy Spirit, who inspires the written word of God, whenever he mentions Rahab in the New Testament, she's always referred to as Rahab, the prostitute.

It's out. It's no use hiding it. The whole nation knew what she was from the days of Joshua.

Heaven knows, she knows, the nation knows. And it has never bothered her, because she was justified by God through faith. She trusted him and was saved.

And the first mention of her in the New Testament is in that part of Matthew that you never read, the first 18 verses of chapter 1, the genealogy of Jesus Christ. And in there you'll find, tucked in there, that Rahab the harlot was one on the line from Adam to Christ. God can make a princess out of a prostitute.

Yes, but we might not let them through the door. You know, when I read Scripture, and I read it year in, year out, there's always a time when you've preached and spoken as much as I do, that you come to a conclusion, there can't be much more in there that I've got to learn. But I find this book magnificent in that every time I go through it, I see new things I never saw before.

And just this last week, in my way through the book of Kings for the umpteenth time, my mind races ahead of me. I can tell myself before I turn the next page what I'm going to read. And that day I was just about to flip the page and I said, oh yes, next chapter, Naming the Leper.

And I've preached on Naming the Leper for years. But this time I was captivated by that little vignette of a story tucked in at the end of that episode that I had read before. But it came home with such clarity this time.

Naaman said to Elisha, let me give you a reward for healing me. Let me give you gold and silver and garments. And he said, no, the Lord healed you.

I didn't. I don't need a reward. Let it be to yourself.

And he turned and walked into his house. And Elisha had a servant called Gehazi. And Gehazi watched Naaman go away with all that wealth.

And he looked at the door of the house and it was closed. And he ran after Naaman and said, excuse me, but Elisha's changed his mind. And he has sent me to collect these rewards.

And he received them, took them home and hid them. Then he went back to Elisha, knocked the door, walked in, and Elisha looked up and said, where have you been, Gehazi? Oh, he says, thy servant hasn't been anywhere. And Elisha said, did not my heart go with you when you went racing after that man? To take what I had refused.

And now for having done that and lied about it, the leprosy of Naaman shall cling to you. And Gehazi went out from the presence of Elisha, a leper, the rest of his life. And you know, I'd read that often enough and concluded, last verse of that chapter, story finished, that's the end of Gehazi.

But you know that just two chapters later, for the first time in my life, in 38 years of reading the Bible, I suddenly discovered Gehazi was prophesying to one of the kings and bringing him a message from God, empowered by the Spirit of God to give judgment on that king. And I thought, isn't that amazing? He was struck with leprosy and suffered the consequences of his chastisement, but God never threw him away. The holy compassion of the Almighty was such that he was still a prophet, still delivering messages for God, but everybody that looked at him knew he was suffering the consequences of his own sin, while he was still alive here on the earth.

That's what we were reading in our reading tonight. Despise not the chastening of the Lord. It makes you a greater partaker of his holiness.

The heavenly Father may have to spank and get you in line, but he's never going to discard you and throw you away. He's going to lift you up. He's going to show the community what he can do with the penitent that truly repents of their sin and is absolved from their sin.

They may suffer the consequences of it, and everyone will know they did sin, but they'll know they have the compassion of a holy compassionate God. How marvelous to know that a man like that could still be used. So was Samson.

So were the others. And it's amazing how God uses that word in the hearts of his people and uses all sorts of people to speak and to help. And we even read in the word of God in Romans 8 What shall we then say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us everything? Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? And the answer is, no one.

It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? And the answer is, no one. It is Christ that died.

Yea, rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us. And one of the things we have to remember about our risen Savior is that he is ever making intercession for us. There is a court case going on all day in heaven, as the enemy to this very day stands, we're told in the book of Revelation, as the accuser of the brethren day and night before God.

I don't doubt that, but even now he's picking on one of you. He's liable to be saying in the courtroom of heaven, excuse me, I want to accuse a person in Flixton that I know that's committing sin today, and you have their name in the Lamb's book of life, and I as the prosecuting counsel accuse that Christian in Flixton today of having committed a sin, and I believe they're guilty, and your word states the soul that sinneth it shall die. That's all I have to say.

And then your protector, your advocate, your solicitor, the risen Jesus Christ himself, the righteous one, steps forward and says, if your honor would allow me, I agree with the counsel for the prosecution that that person that's named in the dock from Flixton, who is a Christian and has been one for some time, sinned today. I agree they did. Satan thinks, well, why are we having a court case? Why don't we just mete out the punishment? If you're a just, holy, righteous God, just condemn them to death.

And your advocate says, excuse me, hush, may I draw the court's attention to my hands? Do you see those marks? May I draw the court's attention to my feet? Do you see those marks? May I draw the court's attention to the scar on my side? Do you see those marks? The punishment for the sin of the whole world was death, and I took the punishment personally, for that person's sin in Flixton that sinned today. And the father says, case dismissed, and Satan simply turns around and says, now who else can I try? And he'll look for somebody else in Flixton, somebody else in the world that's a saint of God, to just, he wastes his time, he spends his whole day with one court case after another in heaven, trying to get us guilty, condemned, and destroyed, and it cannot happen, because we have a holy, compassionate God who personally came and became sin for us, who knew no sin, and took that punishment. So who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? Nobody.

Who will condemn us? Nobody. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Nobody and nothing. Shall tribulation? No.

Distress? No. Persecution? No. Famine? No.

Nakedness? No. They can publish it in the Daily Mirror if they like. Some picture they may take with a telescope through a window, and think that that in itself is enough to condemn a person.

Not from God it isn't. Neither nakedness, or peril, or sword. For as it is written, for thy sake we are killed all the day long, we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. We have a holy, compassionate Father who has taken care of the entire issue, and his redemption is total and absolute and complete.

And how anybody can ever sit there and feel unsaved, I do not know. And sit there even knowing that they have willfully spent years trying to justify themselves before God, I can never understand that. Because I'll tell you this personally as a little bit of testimony.

There are times I just wished I could be perfect. There are times I go and make the silly mistake of trying for long enough to be good. And you begin to think that you're getting somewhere, and the next day you just blow the whole thing away.

And you know year after year passes, and you begin to learn to believe this book. I cannot be good. The book is true, and I am found guilty and false.

There is none good, not even Strachan. Therefore I just lay hold on the mercy and compassion of my holy Father, and allow him to present me to the world as one spotless, as though I had never sinned. That's what justified means.

Just as if I'd never sinned. Oh, people remember. They remember, they even tell me.

There are times in Scotland I wouldn't take you there, but I've gone there myself, where I have gone back and gone into the cafe where the show business people, the press people, and the football sporting people frequented. And I did it in my young day with the best of them having been in that entertainment world. And I've gone in there, and they have looked at me, seen me coming back.

And if ever I would say anything of a testimony about Christ, they say, come on Strachan, we remember. And they would spend their time reminding me of what I used to be like, but I used to say to them, fellas, I have not forgotten. It's because I remember, and you remember what I remember, that I needed to become a Christian, that I needed to become one.

Yes, I needed to become one. I was convinced. Are you? Do you really agree with this book, that you are not good? If you do, you'll see in a clearer way before, the need for having Christ as your personal saviour.

To turn to him with an open heart, and say, you know and I know the worst about me, but thank you for dying for me. Come into my life and be my personal saviour. I don't regret talking like that at the end of this evening.

I have seen in my time so many Christians, people who profess to be them. I've seen Bible school students who wrote a testimony to get into the school, who before the school has finished, have discovered they were never born again. They'd never had Christ come into their life.

Their whole life was wrapped around Christ and Christianity, but they'd never taken him inside their life. They were still justifying themselves, proving to everyone they were a good Christian. I've seen missionaries get converted, and you know it's always exciting when a missionary finds Christ.

At last they have something to talk about in the mission field. Yes, I can even remember years ago, being invited to a Brethren assembly up in North Humberland, in the hills, called the Glanton Brethren. Now that was a brand of Brethren that even the exclusives weren't allowed in there.

It was so exclusive it made the exclusives look open. And yet for some unknown freak of events, I was allowed in. And the news got around that I was going to preach there on a rally on a Saturday night, so much so that people came in from all over that district.

They couldn't believe they'd opened the door. Fifty-two people sat in a bus outside that couldn't get in, with a loudspeaker and a wire, threw into the bus, and they just sat there and listened to the message, and the service through a loudspeaker. There was about 200 people under the platform with a light bulb, hanging to a piece of wire and a loudspeaker that never got them to the meeting.

And we simply presented the mercy of God upon sinners, how that there's none good, no not one. And at the end, looking out into the audience and giving them a challenge to receive Christ as my Savior, I suddenly heard a movement at my side, and I looked. And the organist was leaving the organ stool, coming down the steps, and standing at the front.

And a gasp went out in the hall. He had played the organ in the Sunday services at the Methodist church at Seahouses for nigh on 30 years. But he'd always sat there at the organ stool, telling the vicar and the pastor or whoever it was, the minister, to suck it to them.

It was always for them out there. It's not for me. I'm up here at the organ.

And the whole of the gospel had missed him till that night, and Jesus found him sitting in an organ stool, and he gave his heart to Christ. And there was many that followed after that. They just figured, well, if the organist can be humble enough to go forward, so will I, because God is so holy and compassionate.

He's forever seeking those that he knows need to be saved. O friends, make absolutely certain tonight that your attendance in this place doesn't have the slightest tinge of a personal feeling of goodness about it, that you're in this place, in the presence of the Savior, through his holy compassion and his mercy and his grace. Let's have a word of prayer.

Heavenly Father, we thank you for showing us clearly from the word that you have a holy compassion even on a dirty Joshua. And I pray that each one would leave this place tonight with an absolute confidence that they are enjoying the mercy, grace, justification, and righteousness of an indwelling, holy, compassionate Savior. And for thy name's sake.

Amen.

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