

(Romans) Justification by Faith

by Brian Brodersen

The sermon explains that the righteousness of God is revealed apart from the law, and it is witnessed by the law and the prophets, leading to the doctrine of salvation by grace through faith.

Duration: 42:10

Scripture: Romans 1:18, Romans 3:21, 2 Peter 3:18

Topics: "Justification By Faith", "Gods Grace"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker focuses on the book of Romans, specifically chapter 3, verse 21. The speaker explains that Paul, speaking on behalf of God, lays out his arguments for the condemnation of the entire human race. He emphasizes that even those who may not be involved in outwardly wicked actions are still condemned because of the desires of their hearts. The speaker also highlights the pressure faced by church leaders and the opposition they receive when they take a stand on the word of God instead of following current theological trends. The core message of the sermon is the grace of God, which the devil hates and fights against. The speaker encourages Christians to understand and embrace God's grace in order to experience the fullness of the Christian life.

Transcript

We're going to pick up tonight in the third chapter, the 21st verse of the third chapter of Romans. And if you remember, back in chapter 1 verse 18, Paul began to lay out his arguments for the condemnation of the entire human race. Paul, of course, he's speaking on behalf of God and in a sense he's, you know, somewhat like a prosecuting attorney.

He's laying out the case and we saw how he showed that the obviously wicked are condemned and hopeless. He went on then to deal with those who might give a hearty amen to the condemnation of the obviously wicked, but he showed them that really they're not in any better of a position at all, because even though they might not be involved in all these outwardly wicked kinds of things, yet just their desires, their heart, that puts them in the same state of condemnation. And then he moved on to that final category.

He moved on to the religious man and using the Jew, of course, Paul being a Jew, coming out of that background, and the Jews being God's people and the, you know, participants in the true religion. So he shows that they, far from being above everybody else and more righteous than everybody else, they're again in the exact same predicament, because although they had the law of God, they didn't do it, they

didn't keep it, and that brought them into that same condition, a of condemnation. So he's just concluded his argument that all men, both Jews and Gentiles, are condemned and under God's wrath with no possibility of altering their position.

Now, in the verses before us, Paul introduces man's only hope. You know, sometimes people will say in response to finding out you're a Christian, they'll say, well, you know, that's really good for you. I'm glad for you.

I'm happy, you know, I'm happy that you found something that fulfills you, that something that makes you feel good, or and, you know, there's this idea that Christianity is okay for some people if you feel like you need that sort of thing. Well, of course, the Bible paints an entirely different picture. The Bible makes it clear that everyone needs Christ, because apart from Jesus, you don't have a prayer, you don't have any hope, there isn't even the remotest possibility that anybody's going to get to heaven unless they come through Jesus Christ, and that's really what Paul is establishing here.

After showing the the predicament that man's in, he now moves into showing the solution that God has provided, and that is the righteousness that comes through faith in Jesus Christ. Now, Paul is anxious to show his readers, and especially the Jewish segment, that although this righteousness is apart from the law, it is not something new or foreign to the law, but that it was actually witnessed by the law and the prophets. In other words, Paul is, he's anxious to show them what I'm presenting to you isn't my own opinion, it isn't something that I've invented, it isn't something that you ought to be shocked by or surprised by, it isn't something that you shouldn't be aware of, because your own law and your prophets, they witness to this salvation that I'm telling you about.

And so that's Paul's desire here, is to really communicate to them that this message was contained within the law and the prophets. Now it's brought right out in to the open. Now, one of the problems that the Jews had was that in their zeal to understand every detail of the law, they missed the big picture.

You see, these guys were so meticulous. Did you know that to this day in certain rabbinical schools, one of the things that they will do in order to complete their studies and, you know, sort of their final exam, one of the things that they will do in certain rabbinical schools is they will take a copy of the scriptures and they will take a nail and they will drive that nail, you know, just say, you know, close your Bible, you're going to take a nail and you're going to, you're going to drive it through your Bible. Then you're going to pull the nail out and you're going to open up the text.

And of course, there are going to be words and letters that are missing because the nail has, you know, driven them out. The student has to go over each page and tell you the letter or the word that was removed by the nail. And they can do it.

That's the amazing thing. And they spent their time doing things like that, counting every letter, every jot, every tittle, and coming up with the most elaborate interpretation. You know, the simple command, you shall do no labor on the Sabbath day, pretty simple, straightforward command.

The rabbis extrapolated on that command and came up with 66 volumes, 66 volumes. So they were meticulous beyond belief. And in that, they missed the big picture.

You know, it's the proverbial, they couldn't see the forest because of the trees. They spent their whole time studying the bark on one particular tree and, you know, didn't realize there was a whole forest out there.

And Jesus said that about them.

He said to them, he said, you do search the scriptures because in them you think you have eternal life, but these are they which testify of me and you won't come to me. So they were students of the Bible. They knew the scriptures better than anybody.

You know, that in and of itself is a bit of a warning to us, isn't it? Because sometimes we can rest in our knowledge. We can fool ourselves into thinking that because we know the Bible so well or we know so much about the Lord that everything's okay. And quite honestly, there have been many that have done that.

I've seen many a pastor fall into sin and be living a life that is completely inconsistent with what it is to be a Christian and yet sort of resting in the fact that, hey, you know, I teach the Bible. I give Bible studies and I preach sermons and all of that, you know, sort of resting in that. And, you know, it's kind of like Samson.

Samson, he was full of compromise in his life. You remember he just was pretty much ignoring everything God said and just going about doing his own thing. And no doubt he was thinking, hey, well, I'm Samson.

I'm the guy who slays the Philistines. I'm the guy who has supernatural power. I'm the guy that God has blessed.

Sometimes we can fall into that trap. So that's where these people were. They were in that place and Paul is wanting them to see again that this isn't his invention.

This is something that their own scriptures had foretold. Somebody asked me the other day, you know, well, how come the Jews don't believe in Jesus? I mean, they have the same Old Testament we do. And how come when they're reading it, they don't see these things? And I said to him, I said, you know, it's not what you would think.

Because of course, as Christians and Christians who have a strong emphasis on Bible study, we believe wholeheartedly that the Holy Spirit is the ultimate instructor. And we encourage everybody, you read the word and God will speak to you and you can read the text and see what it means. But you can't do that as a Jew.

Even to this day, the average Orthodox Jew isn't free to just simply open their Bible and interpret for themselves what it's saying. They have to go back to the rabbinical sources. They have to go back.

I mean, they, you know, for example, they might read Isaiah 53 and think, my goodness, this has got to be Jesus. There's no way around it. I remember talking to a guy in Israel one time and we, you know, I was sharing the Lord when we were going back and forth.

He was very knowledgeable. A lot of these guides over there, you know, they've been with Christians for so long, they know Christianity better than most of the Christians. And they know the history and they know the geography, they know all this stuff.

So, you know, we were talking and I was sharing back and forth with him and I got to a point where I said to him, I said, hey, I want to read you a passage of scripture and I want you to tell me, you know, tell me what you think about it. So I opened up to Isaiah, didn't tell him where I was going to read from, I just opened up to Isaiah 53 and I read a portion of the 53rd chapter to him. And I said, who do you think that's

talking about? He said, oh, it's obvious, of course, it's talking about Jesus.

I said, really, you think so? He said, well, of course, of course it's talking about Jesus. It's plain and, you know, there's no doubt about it. I said, where do you think I'm reading from? He says, oh, I don't know, Matthew, Luke.

I said, you know, actually, I'm reading from your prophet Isaiah, 700 years before Matthew or Luke wrote. He was stunned. He couldn't believe it.

No, no way, he said. And I said, hey, look, it's right here. You know, but what happens is, you know, you'll have a person, they'll read Isaiah 53, oh my, it's talking about Jesus.

They'll go to the rabbi. Rabbi, what do you think? It just seems that this, you know, this is talking about Jesus. Oh, no, no, no, that's not Jesus.

No, that's Israel. Israel's the suffering servant. It's the persecution of the Jewish people that's being talked about here.

So the rabbinical interpretation will override the plain, obvious meaning of the text. That's why when a Jew comes to the scriptures, it's the rabbinical system itself that's become the veil that keeps the truth hidden from them. But, you know, this isn't a Jewish problem exclusively.

When I was growing up as a Catholic, you couldn't read the Bible for yourself and draw your own conclusion about what it said. You had to make sure that the priest, you know, put his stamp of approval on your interpretation. And if you came up with an interpretation that was inconsistent with the church's view, then, you know, you were just told, hey, you can't hold that view or, you know, there was a reprimand that would come.

But, of course, God, he's written it out. He's laid it out pretty plainly because he wants us all to see it. And in the law and the prophets, this whole gospel that Paul is presenting, the salvation by grace through faith, Paul says, this is in your own scriptures.

And he's going to go on as we move along to show that in several ways. But let's pick up here in verse 21. He says, but now, well, go back to verse 20 for a second.

Therefore, by the deeds of the law, no flesh will be justified in his sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin. But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed. You see, Paul says plainly, look, the law can't save you.

The law reveals your sin. That's what the law does. The law only brings to your understanding that you are a sinner.

No flesh is ever going to be justified before God through the law. The law does the exact opposite. The law condemns you.

It doesn't justify you. But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed. So you see, Paul's introducing there's a righteousness of God that's separate from the law.

But, he says, it is witnessed by the law and the prophets. Even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ to all and on all who believe, for there is no difference for all have sinned and fall short of the

glory of God. So, Paul says it's witnessed to by the law and the prophets.

On Saturday night, I've been doing a series, and I'll finish it up this Saturday. In preparation for Christmas, I've been doing a series entitled Christ in the Old Testament. And the first night we took and we looked at all of the places in the law where Christ is revealed.

And then last week, or whenever it was that we did it, we looked at all of the places in the Psalms where Christ is prophesied. And then this week we're going to take a final look at Christ in the prophets. But as you go through the law and the prophets, as Jesus said, the scriptures testify of me.

Remember in Hebrews, the quote from Psalm 40, lo I come in the volume of the book it is written of me. See, the Old Testament is, it's all about Jesus. It's all pointing to him in some way or another.

Sometimes it's a prophecy, a prediction about his coming, very specific. Other times it's veiled a bit in the life of one of the Old Testament characters, one of the Old Testament saints. Sometimes it's seen in a type.

You know, for example, in Genesis 3:15, we have there the declaration from God that he's going to send a redeemer into the world. The seed of the woman is going to crush the head of the serpent. And that's the first messianic promise that's given.

Now, we come many centuries down the road, we come to Abraham. And remember the story of God calling Abraham to offer up his son, his only son Isaac, whom you love. Abraham takes Isaac to Mount Moriah.

He journeys for three days, and he goes through this process of sacrifice. And then, of course, the Lord stops him from doing it. Now, the interesting thing is, when you look at that, you have a prophecy right there.

Abraham is acting out what God would do centuries later. Abraham is in the role of God, the father. Isaac is in the role of God, the son.

And it's amazing when you look at it, because he says, take now your son, your only son. Now, remember, Abraham had two sons, didn't he? But God says, your only son. Reminds us of John 3, 16.

But then he says, your only son whom you love. For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son. You know, to me, it's fascinating that the first time love is mentioned in the Bible is in Genesis 22, in that story.

Isn't that? You would think, I mean, in the early chapters of Genesis, you have Adam and Eve, you have the husband and wife, you have the children, and of course, you have God in a relationship with Noah and his family, all of that. You would think that at some point there, the word love would come up. But it doesn't come up until it's used in the context of the love between a father and a son.

And you look at that, you think, wow, there's one of those places where the law. And then, of course, you can just keep going all the way through, and we obviously don't have the time to do that. Joseph, what an amazing type of Christ Joseph was.

How he is rejected by his brothers, how he's cast out, how he's made the ruler of the known world, how they come, and the second time they come to visit, he's revealed to them for who he is, and he saves

them. And, you know, all of this typology there with Joseph. You get into Exodus, and of course, you've got the Passover, you've got the lamb being slain, and the New Testament is full of reminders.

Jesus is the lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. Any Jew would immediately think of the Passover lamb, and of course, that's what the Passover lamb was symbolic of. The whole sacrificial system, in some way or another, was pointing to Christ, and right on through the law, right on through the prophets, and we've already mentioned Isaiah 53, and many other passages.

So Paul is saying to them, this message that I'm giving you, it's separate from the law, but it was contained in the law. It was witnessed by the law and the prophets, and it's the righteousness of God that comes through faith in Jesus Christ, not a righteousness that is obtained through your effort, through your ability to live up to the standard of the law. He says in verse 24, being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

Now, here we are introduced to the doctrine of salvation by grace through faith. This is the introduction to the doctrine of salvation by grace through faith. Although the word grace has appeared 17 times in the New Testament up until this point, it's here in Romans 3.24 that the doctrine, the in-depth teaching on the subject of salvation by grace through faith begins to be expounded.

Now, from this point forward, from Romans 3.24 all the way through the rest of the book, the rest of the New Testament, the word grace now appears 97 times. So 17 times prior to this point and 97 times after this. And it's here, as I said, that Paul really begins to develop the doctrine.

He will talk about it extensively here in Romans. He'll come back to it in Galatians in a major way. He'll deal with it in Ephesians hugely.

He will allude to it in all of his other epistles. And if he wrote Hebrews, of course, then Hebrews extensively speaks on the subject as well. The grace of God in Christ is really the great theme of the New Testament.

That's really the theme. Remember Peter at the end of his epistle, he says, grow in the grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. Grow in grace.

Pastor Chuck, you remember he wrote the book, Why Grace Changes Everything. And that book is pretty much Chuck's testimony. You know, having been a Christian for many years, having been a pastor for several years, but never really understanding the grace of God.

Living as a Christian, but in a very legalistic fashion, living in constant frustration, living with a sense on the one hand of failure, and sometimes if he seemed successful, then being lifted up in pride. Those are, that's kind of where you're at. With any kind of a legal system, you're either in the pit of despair because you are failing all the time, or you're at the pinnacle of pride because you think you're better than everybody else.

And there really hardly is anywhere in between that. But the theme of the New Testament is the grace of God, and it's only when a Christian begins to understand the grace of God that they really begin to enter into the fullness of the Christian life. Now Satan, he is very much opposed to the teaching of the grace of God, and he will do everything in his power to oppose it.

The grace of God, this doctrine of salvation by grace through faith, do you know that this was, to a large degree, it was lost shortly after the apostolic era? I mean, it is unbelievable how lost this got. To the point that by the time you came to the Reformation period, so 1500s, 300, you know, for probably a good 1200

years, a good 1200 years, grace was lost. And in that 1200 year period, say from 300 AD to 1500 AD, you could hardly find anybody who understood the grace of God.

Occasionally you'd find a little pocket of people here or there, people that would cling to the Bible and, you know, faithfully teach it. But the vast majority of what was looked at as the Christian world, they completely lost the understanding of salvation by grace through faith. So by the time Martin Luther comes on the scene and attempts to reintroduce it into the church, he is deemed an absolute heretic and worthy of being burned at the stake.

And anybody that they could get their hands on that was promoting this idea, that's exactly what they did to him. They never succeeded with Luther, but they certainly did with many others. The opposition to the doctrine of salvation by grace through faith has been unbelievable historically, and it hasn't changed.

There's still a huge opposition to it today. It's just manifested in different ways. But when you survey the church world in this country today, quite honestly, you rarely can find a ministry that's really, genuinely, faithfully proclaiming this doctrine of grace.

Sometimes, ironically, even the churches that claim to be champions of grace are bastions of legalism. It's a weird thing, but it does happen sometimes. So we can expect opposition from the enemy when we start to move in the direction of grace, because grace brings about maturity.

And as I begin to mature as a Christian, I become more effective as a Christian. And then, of course, that's how I impact the devil's domain. That's how I dismantle it.

Luther had an interesting statement about what had occurred, and he was talking about the Word of God being let loose. And, of course, the papacy was in power for centuries. And, I mean, this was, you know, it was like, I mean, the thought of the fall of the papacy was kind of like we might have been back in the, you know, maybe 60s, 70s, 80s, or whatever.

You know, the thought of the fall of communism seemed so far-fetched. It just seemed the greatest improbability of all time, didn't it? You remember when Russia was the other superpower, and the Cold War was going on, and all of that. I mean, nobody ever dreamed that that vast communistic empire was going to crumble, but it did.

Likewise, nobody would have ever been able to imagine that that papal empire crumbling, but it crumbled. And when Luther was questioned about it, this is what he said. Now, remember, these guys are Europeans, and Europeans have a different view of alcohol than we do.

And so Luther said, well, actually, I'll tell you what happened. Philip Melanchthon, that was his best friend and fellow theologian, he said, Melanchthon and I were in the pub drinking beer, and the Word of God was dismantling the papacy. Just the power of God's Word was bringing this whole system down.

That'll give you an understanding of why the devil so viciously fights against any ministry that will stand upon the Word of God and faithfully proclaim it. He has been successful over the centuries to get church leaders to compromise, to turn away from truth, to deny certain aspects of the faith. He's been so successful.

I mean, it's very rare to find those who hold faithfully to the Word of God. And, you know, that's one reason I think that Pastor Chuck is to be commended. For 40 years, he hasn't budged.

That's huge. I mean, it really is. I don't know if you understand how huge that is.

I mean, it is huge. He's not a perfect man by any stretch, but in this particular area, he has been faithful and immovable, faithfully proclaiming the Word when people all around are falling. I was just reading an interview with a guy last night, a Calvary pastor who's drifted over into a lot of liberalism, and I was astounded at the things he was saying.

I mean, he's already embraced sort of a theistic evolutionary position in some areas, and now he's not really sure if homosexuality is sin or not. You know, he has to rethink that. And, you know, the Dalai Lama is a good guy, and he's doing a lot of good things in the world.

I don't know if we could really say that he's not going to be in heaven and all of that. You know, I'm reading this interview, and I'm thinking, this is unbelievable. But there's a tremendous amount of pressure, and when you get up in, you know, different levels of church leadership and all of that sort of thing, you get into the pressure of the academic world and all the, you know, you know, I remember times when Chuck would take a stand on certain things, and people from the, you know, the theological academia would kind of send over a little statement, you know, like, well, Chuck, you just committed theological suicide, you know, because he took a stand on the Word of God instead of what the theologians are saying presently.

So the core message in God's Word is grace, and that's why the devil hates it. That's why the proclamation of the Word, and that's why he fights tooth and nail to keep it from being proclaimed. So we're going to go deeper and deeper into this doctrine as we go through Romans, but as we pick up here, just getting through this rest of this third chapter, we still have some time, good.

So verse 25, he says, whom God set forth as a propitiation by his blood through faith to demonstrate his righteousness, because in his forbearance, God had passed over the sins that were previously committed, to demonstrate at the present time his righteousness, that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus. Now Jesus is declared here to be a propitiation, whom God set forth as a propitiation. To propitiate means to appease.

A propitiation is a sacrifice to appease a person who has been offended. This word, interestingly, was used among the Greeks and among the heathens in regard to the appeasing of their gods. And you know how in the various mythologies and things, a god would be offended, and then you would have to do something, offer some sacrifice, or do some heroic deed, or whatever.

You would have to do something to appease the god. Now because the word was used in that context, sometimes Bible commentators today are a bit reluctant to admit that there was a necessity of appeasing God, because to them it just gets a little too close to the pagan idea. But the fact of the matter is, God had to be appeased, because he was offended.

He was offended by man's sin, and the offense of man's sin brought forth the wrath of God. And the only way for the wrath of God to be stayed is for God's justice to be met. So that's what Jesus did.

He was the propitiation. He offered himself as the sacrifice that would appease the wrath of God. Now of course, we know that God the Father was the initiator of the whole plan.

So it wasn't that Jesus, you know, had to step between us and an angry God in the sense that, you know, what God was really hoping to just wipe us out, but Jesus appeased him in that sense. No, of course, the whole plan originated with God the Father himself. Some people have said foolishly that it would be an

immoral thing for someone to die for another person, like the Christians say, Jesus died for people.

Well, that would only be true if Jesus was forced to do it against his will, but we know that that wasn't the case. Jesus said, no man takes my life from me. I lay it down.

He was, he gave his life, and this was an agreement that was made between the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. So as the propitiation, God's just demands are being met. Now, you see, what we have here, in a sense, what Paul is describing, in a sense, is God's dilemma.

Now, we know that God really has never been in a dilemma, but let's just say, you know, for argument's sake, that he was, just to explain and to understand better what's going on here. You see, here's the dilemma. God is just, and his justice has been offended.

So how is it that God is going to be able to retain his justice and still save the people that's offended him? Now, you see, if he were to just simply say, you know, I'm just gonna forgive and forget, that would have been nice, but it wouldn't have been just. See, that's the problem. That's a dilemma right there.

How do you forgive truly guilty people but still retain your justice? How could God be just and forgive those freely who offended him? Well, this is how God was able to do it. He punished someone else in their place. You know, when Adam and Eve sinned, have you ever wondered, why didn't God just, when he showed up in the garden and, you know, he found out what had happened, I mean, he already knew, right? But, you know, Adam, where are you? Oh, I hid myself because I was naked.

Why didn't God say, you know what, let's just try this again. Okay, let me, let's just get the instruction a little clearer, and, you know, we're going to just roll the tape back, pretend like this didn't happen, and we'll have another try. Now, why didn't he do that? Instead, why did God drive them out of the garden? Why did he do all that he did? Why did the curse come down upon them immediately? You see, this is the thing about God.

God is absolutely just, and that is a concept that you cannot understand. It is a concept that I can't really understand. We have this distorted idea.

You know that the idea of a merciful judge is really more of a human idea than a biblical idea? You see, God is a merciful judge, but he's only able to be merciful because the penalty has been paid for the violation. That's the way God has been able to be merciful to men throughout all of history, because, remember, before the foundation of the world, it was ordained that Jesus would die. So God's mercy toward people has always been based upon that fact.

So what Paul says here is that by putting forth Jesus as the propitiation, the one who takes the sin upon himself, he says that God is able to be just but still justify the sinner. If you had committed a crime and it was certain that you were guilty and you went before the judge and the judge said, you know, you are guilty and you deserve condemnation, but you know, I'm in a good mood today, so I'm just going to let you go. I'm going to let you off scot-free.

You're free to go. You're acquitted. We'll see you later.

Stay out of trouble. Now, that might be a heck of a nice guy, but he is one bad judge. He is a horrible judge.

He would have to be removed from his position if he did something like that, because that's not what a judge is to do. A judge is to uphold justice, to maintain justice, and he just completely violated it. You see, God could not do that.

God could not remain God and just say, you know what, I just forgive you guys. Don't worry about it. Well, you know, we'll try it.

Start over again. He couldn't do it. See, it's hard for us to grasp that because even on our most just day, we're still tainted.

We're sinners, and there are elements of injustice in me even when I try to be as just as I can. I remember sometimes dealing with my kids when they were younger, and you know, sometimes I have to confess I was giving preferential treatment. I didn't want to, and I knew I shouldn't, and it's not fair, but I just did it because that's just the way we are.

God doesn't do that. There's none of that in Him. If there was a threat of that in Him, then He would not be God as we know Him to be because He would not be perfectly just.

Here's the problem for the Muslim. This is the great Islamic dilemma. You see, the Muslim sees Allah as the just one, but you ask a Muslim, okay, on what basis is God going to let you into heaven? You have sinned, right? Oh, yes, yes, we have sinned, they say, but yet you expect that you're going to eventually go, you know, into paradise or whatever.

Yes, we believe that. On what basis are you going to go? Well, Allah is merciful. So they'll tell you Allah is just, Allah is merciful.

And I was speaking to a Muslim guy one day, and I said, you know what? I said, the reality is Allah is not just. You see, if Allah is just going to overlook your transgression, then He just violated His justice, because that's not just. Oh, but He's merciful.

Okay, so His mercy cost Him His justice. And it is truly a dilemma for the Muslim. And I said to him, you know what? The God of the Bible doesn't have that problem.

The God of the Bible is truly just. He remains just, because He punished Jesus. Sin did not go unpunished.

People do not get away, you know, free. A penalty is paid, but it's paid by the voluntary act of the Lord Jesus Christ. So that's how God remains just, and still can justify us, because Jesus was a propitiation.

So where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law of works? No, but by the law of faith. Therefore, we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law.

Or is He the God of the Jews only? Is He not also the God of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also. Since there is one God who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith, do we then make void the law through faith? Certainly not. On the contrary, we establish it.

So Paul says this eliminates boasting. I have only one thing to boast in. As Paul said, God forbid that I should boast in anything except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.

There's going to be boasting in heaven, but it's not going to be about all that we did and how wonderful we were and important and spiritual. It's going to be boasting about the Lord Jesus Christ. Because that's, in the end, that's where we all have to come back to, because that's the only reason why we will be in heaven, because of what the Lord did for us.

So this propitiation, and remember Paul says this was witnessed to by the law and the prophets. Again, if you want to read probably the clearest passage in all the Bible about the propitiation, just meditate on Isaiah 53. That's it right there.

He was wounded for our transgressions. He was bruised for our iniquities. When you shall make his soul an offering for sin.

It's powerful stuff. Father, we thank you for your amazing grace that you, Lord, would devise a plan that your son would come and take upon himself the punishment due to us. How we thank you, Lord, for that, for your grace.

Thank you, Lord, that it's free. It's free for the taking. It's free for the asking.

Lord, may we grow in that grace, more and more and more being established in it. Lord, do that work in us and bless even our time of fellowship now this evening as we gather together in Jesus name. Amen.

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