

The Blood, the Call, the Promise

by David Smith

The blood of Christ is the core of the Christian faith, satisfying God's holiness and righteousness, and providing redemption and forgiveness of sins.

Duration: 1:33:48

Scripture: Ezra 8:5, Nehemiah 8:8, Matthew 6:33, Acts 2:4, Romans 3:28, Galatians 3:2, Ephesians 2:8-9

Topics: "Gospel"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of understanding the word of God. He criticizes the idea that listening to a message in a language one cannot understand is holy, calling it a deception and bondage. The preacher prays for those who are resistant to the gospel, asking for God's mercy to reveal His glory and shake them to life. He concludes by urging listeners to see the beauty of Christ, to approach God as their Father, and to understand the righteousness and fear of God. The preacher references the story of Ezra reading from the book of the law and the response of the people, as well as passages from Psalms and the importance of accepting Jesus as Lord.

Transcript

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Lord, what can we do but say You are good and Your mercy endures forever. Lord, You have been merciful to each one of us. God, thank You for Your mercy that You have withheld Your wrath from us, Lord, in our stubborn rebellion, Lord.

Father, in my heart, oh, my heart rejoices, Lord, in this gospel, this saving gospel, Lord, that has saved me. God, this is the gospel that I love. Father, in my heart's prayer tonight is for those that are holding out,

God, that are where Wayne was four months ago.

Father, have mercy again. Father, only Your Spirit, Lord, can shake a dead man to life, Father. Father, my heart's prayer is that You would reveal Your glory tonight, Lord, that You would make Your Word plain, Father, that You would present eternity before each one of us, Lord.

Father, let me be faithful with this hour that You're giving me. God, just set me aside, I pray, that You might receive glory and that You might be all in all, for truly You are Lord and I exalt Your name right now. I give glory and I ascribe strength and beauty to You, Lord.

Glorify Your name, Lord Jesus. Amen. Amen.

I had marked in my Bible here a passage in Nehemiah 8, that as our brother Wayne was sharing, he expressed to me one concern that I have, a desire that I have for many. Even as we were singing that song, I had never heard it before about, I can't remember what it was, but it spoke about taking the gospel to the uttermost parts or to those that were out in the uttermost parts. And I just had to think that while we have people sitting under preaching and teaching in a language they don't understand, they're unreached.

And I had to think of the exiles that came back again in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah, and they assembled the people together as one man in the street, and they stood up and read the book of the law in the streets of Jerusalem. And it was in the presence of the people, it says before, the men and the women and those that could understand. And the ears of all the people were attentive unto the book of the law.

And again, it's a picture of the people that have come back from their captivity. They've seen the judgment of God. They've seen their idolatry judged.

They've seen the mercy of God in bringing them back. You know, after a good hard spanking, sometimes. And Ezra stood up on a pulpit, and with the help of the Levites, and he read from the book of the law in the sight of all the people.

And when he read, all the people answered, lifting up their hands, and they bowed their heads and worshipped the Lord with their faces to the ground. And it says, they read in the book of the law of God, and they listened distinctly and gave the sense. So they could understand.

This is meaningless to those that can't understand. It's a lie. It's a spirit.

It's a bondage to convince people that there's something holy about listening to this message in a language they can't understand. It's a bondage. And it says, they wept when they finally understood what this was about.

What had to be there in place though for this to come together the way it did? There had to be a yielded heart. They had to be there willing. There had to be a brokenness there.

Their heart was prepared. Just let the Word of God come with understanding into a prepared heart though. To a yielded heart.

Oh, and that's my prayer tonight. That by the Spirit of God, that I might find grace to give the simple Gospel clearly with understanding to a prepared heart. Next, John 7.17 says that if any man will do his will.

Jesus said, if any man, if there's a willingness, a readiness to do the will of God, he'll know the doctrine. He'll know the teaching. Whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.

The condition for spiritual understanding. You know, there's a condition to spiritual understanding. It's a yielded heart.

It's a will that's bound to just show me what the will of God is and I'll do it. The person that's heart is steeled in their own selfishness, their own determination to live life for themselves, their pride, the Word of God can flow right over them. And they won't even know it.

They'll be sitting there in their blindness willingly. The saying goes, there's no one blinder than he who will not see. But my prayer is for those that just have never heard, never really understood.

Up till now, you've been consumed with your own life. But God has been softening you and breaking you and breaking down your resistance. And maybe now, maybe tonight, you just need to understand.

Jesus said in Matthew 11, as He rejoiced before God, He said, I thank Thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent and hast revealed them unto babes. If any of us are sitting here tonight and we can say we know God, it's because He has chosen to reveal Himself to us. You know, if God hides something, who among us can find something that God is hiding? If you and I are here tonight, stiffened against all this, this new belief or whatever we want to call it, God will just let you there.

But if He sees a heart, just a simple heart, a willing heart, He says, All things are delivered unto Me of My Father. No man knoweth the Son, but the Father. Neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son.

And He, to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him. There's a couple of needs I would just say here. There is a need for a clear presentation of the Gospel.

And a need for the saints of God to pray. The Father came to me yesterday and that was His encouragement. Just make it clear.

And that's my heart's desire is that I would do that. That I would be faithful. The other need is for the saints of God, the saints of God to pray tonight.

Can I plead with the saints of God here tonight to pray that the darkness would be driven back, that's hiding those that believe not from the glorious light that our brother Wayne found. Brethren, we must pray. Can we pray tonight in Jesus' name that this glorious Gospel would shine in the hearts of those who have been darkened up till now.

And every one of us here, if we can say the light has shone on us and we've seen God's truth. The Father has been revealed to us. Oh, we realize that this is not just for us.

It's for all men. The blood of Christ is the propitiation for our sins and not just for our sins, but also for the sins of the whole world. By God's grace, we're going to continue to be faithful to Him.

And we're going to consider three primary points tonight. The blood, the call, and the promise. The blood.

The blood. You can line any false religion, any cult, you can line them all up and they'll all have one thing in common. They do not understand the blood of Christ.

You don't have to study all the errors of Jehovah's Witnesses. You don't have to study all the errors of Mormonism or all the ways of Islam, though they might help in being articulate and clearly communicating and understand their thinking, but they do not understand the blood. Any religion that is laying on men, that is laying on men a responsibility of works and of self, of performance and of merit, whereby we are responsible for our own justification, for our own righteousness, does not understand the blood.

Oh, may God give us boldness and joy in declaring the wonder of the blood of Christ and the beauty of that gory cross. The blood is at the core of the Christian faith. When I speak about the blood, I'm speaking about not just in the very specific sense of the physical blood that flowed from Jesus' body, of the blood that was placed on the heavenly mercy seat.

I'm including, in the primary sense, the blood, but it includes all of His finished work, all of what's done in the cross. It includes His death, His burial and the resurrection and His exaltation. But the blood is meaningless to a person who thinks he's got to do it on his own.

What is the whole point of the blood? Ask any religious person who's trying to get there on their own. Well, if God had left it up to you and me to make it on our own, what was the whole point of the life and death of Jesus Christ? It's pointless. It's foolish.

Utterly foolish. The death of Christ, the blood of Christ, implies explicitly God's holiness and His righteous judgment against sin. Hebrews 9 says, without the shedding of blood, there is no remission.

The blood of Christ, turn to Romans 10.3, Christ's death reveals the ineffectiveness, the powerlessness of law or any system of works to retire the debt of sin that we owe. If there was ever a system built on works or a law, a holy law, that could affect salvation in fallen mankind, it was the law of Moses, wasn't it? How foolish that we think we can add other man-made commandments and ordinances to affect salvation and righteousness. What an offense to God! In Jesus' name, repent of that.

If that's where your trust is tonight, if you're defending that kind of a system, repent in view of God's righteousness. For it says in Romans 10, we'll read verses 1-4, Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge.

For they, being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. Ignorant of God's righteousness. They do not understand whether willingly and knowingly they're hardening their hearts in their own pride, in their own hypocrisy, or they just don't know.

They don't understand that the blood of Christ is the righteousness of God displayed. It's the judgment of God on sin, and through the resurrection, it's the justification of the Lamb. It's the justification of the righteousness of God.

For Christ is the end of the law. He's the end of the law of Moses. He's the end of any system of human works for righteousness to everyone that what? Believes.

Believes. The death of Christ indicates our state of alienation from God. It had to be His death to bring reconciliation to a people that had turned from their God.

Our guilt, our separation, and our hostility, and our independence, our pursuit of life, of life lived for our selfish pleasure, is seen in the death of Christ. The need for the death of a substitute. The holy and righteous Lamb of God must, of necessity, have died.

But not like the priests of the old covenant who had to offer blood for their own sins before they offered blood for the sins of the people. He offered His own blood, not for His own sins. Amen? Amen.

But for ours. That righteousness qualifies Him to plead the case of that sinner in that courtroom. Amen? You know, the devil when he brings those accusations out, every one of them would be true, wouldn't it? But God.

Amen? Glorious words. But God. The blood.

The cross of Christ spells death to any hope of man's own goodness tonight. Amen. This is glorious truth, brethren.

Men throughout the whole world are under the delusion that there's some goodness in them. Be gone! Lie in the name of Jesus. There is no goodness in man.

Christ's death and the blood of Christ is living proof. Eternal proof. Let me say tonight, brethren and sisters, we're either trusting tonight in our life or Jesus' death.

It's one or the other. What is it going to be? Are you going to come to God with your life? Or are you going to come to God with Jesus' death? One or the other. If it's anything less than the blood of Christ, it will not satisfy God.

Oh, the glorious truth of the blood. It has satisfied God. Anything less will be short of meeting that requirement of righteousness.

The death of Christ reveals God's mercy. The bad news is our need. Let's look at Ephesians 2. You know, brother Wayne, those cigarettes and any other sin, we can just say, until we acknowledge and call those things sin, there's no hope for deliverance from them.

If we are living and if our behavior is anything other than sin, then there's no forgiveness. There's no remission. What are you going to repent of? But until we call unbelief a sin, until we call the fear of man sin, until we call our lust sin, while it's just a vice or a habit or anything less, there's no forgiveness and there's no salvation.

You're a righteous person in your own eyes. And Jesus didn't come and die for you. Oh, it's so hard on the flesh to actually admit who we are.

Ephesians 2, and you hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins, wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience, among whom also we all. Among whom also we all. Who does that leave out? Does that leave anybody out? The Pharisee of Pharisees was Paul.

It threw him in there. The most righteous man that has ever walked the face of the earth is here among this whom we all. Had our conversation or our behavior, our life in times past, in the lust of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

You know, until we see ourselves in that all, we don't need a Savior. Jesus came for others. Oh, have you ever shared the Gospel with somebody who became offended when you dared suggest that they were a bad person? There's the problem.

We don't need a Savior if we're not a sinner. But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins. Even when we were dead in sins.

And that's where we have to see ourselves. If we are not born again, if the Spirit of God has not made you alive, if you have not repented toward God and put your faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, you're dead in trespasses and sins. That's just the condition whether you want to admit it or not.

You know, the person falling from a high-rise building, they can convince themselves that they're flying, but they're really falling to their death. The law of gravity will convince them otherwise if they're believing they're doing anything other than falling to their death. The blood of Christ.

Colossians 1, verses 12-14. Giving thanks unto the Father which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light, who hath brought us into the kingdom of heaven, who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son, in His Son in whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins. Glory to God.

Redemption. Redemption. Oh, what a beautiful word this picture is here in the word redemption.

There's a couple of different words that are translated to redeem or redemption in the New Testament. It means to be set free by the payment of ransom. To be bought or to be bought out from as a slave on the slave market.

Needs to be bought out of that slave market in whom we have redemption through His blood. In whom we have the opportunity, the liberty to be set free. The ransom price has been paid.

Now what was it that was holding us in captivity? What was it that was holding you and me in slavery? Sin. Does a slave shackled have any means wherewith to affect his own freedom? He's a slave. He has no rights.

He's bound and there he is. And he's full of anger and he's full of bitterness and hatred for the condition of his life, but he's powerless to do anything about it. He must be set free.

The blood of Christ in whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins. In Colossians 1, verse 20, it says, and having made peace through the blood of His cross, having made peace. Have you ever talked to somebody or suggested to somebody, have you made your peace with God yet? And in my mind, I know there's probably, I'm sure there are people who have referred to themselves or that situation in the proper sense, but just imagine with me what I'm thinking of here.

When the typical person might say that, what they're saying is, well, they've settled down and like one brother said, they've settled down, but they've never settled up. Amen. They've just kind of let go of the bigger, most gross outward things in their life.

And in their heart, they've got a sentimental fondness or something towards God, or they've accepted some level of religion. They've made their peace with God. Now, I'm just going to suggest that there's no way you can make your peace with God on your own.

There has been one who has made peace with God. Jesus made peace through the blood of His cross. Jesus alone in His death satisfied the righteousness of God.

He alone satisfied the wrath of God. Jesus alone brought an end to the hostility that existed between God and men. That's what reconciliation is.

It's the bringing to an end of hostility between two opposing people. To bring together, to join together that which has been separated. That is what peace is.

That's only capable through the blood of Christ. Having made peace through the blood of His cross. Romans 5.1 says, Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

I just want to say that the blood of Christ isn't magical. There's nothing mystical about the blood of Christ. The blood of Christ was literal blood that satisfied the absolute requirements of righteousness and justice before a holy God.

The blood of Christ gives us access into the grace of God. I give credit to Watchman Knee in some of these points here. He asks the question, how has the blood of Christ made peace? In Isaiah 53, it says that He shall see, meaning God shall see the travail of His soul and be satisfied.

The blood has satisfied God. God's holiness and righteousness demands that a sinless life should be given for man. When I see the blood, God said, I will pass over you.

God is satisfied with the blood. And if the blood satisfies God, then the blood is acceptable. It must satisfy us as well that the blood is sufficient.

Is the blood sufficient enough for you and me tonight? Amen. What other hope do we have? If we have any other hope, it's a vain hope. It's a broken cistern that will hold no water.

It's taking refuge in a lie. How arrogant of us to think that we would come before God with anything other than His blood and our faith in it. God have mercy.

God open our eyes. I'll read a few passages here from the book of Hebrews. Speaking of Jesus, who needeth not daily as those high priests to offer up sacrifice, first for His own sins and then for the people's.

For this He did once when He offered up Himself. Hebrews 9.26, for then must He often have suffered since the foundation of the world. But now, once in the end of the world, He hath appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.

Hebrews 10.10, by the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God. For by one offering He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified.

What more could man add to that? It was one sacrifice for all. Hebrews 10.19-20 says, having therefore, brethren, boldness, confidence. This isn't a boldness of arrogance and brashness, recklessness, foolishness.

It's a confidence. It's an internal security that says, I have a right to this. This is My Father.

I can come. The way has been opened. I have confidence, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus.

What a grand statement it was to the Jews. When Jesus cried, it is finished. And He gave up the ghost.

And that temple veil, that thick, heavy curtain, woven together, ripped from the top to the bottom. Oh, glory to God! The way to the holiest was now open. Not just to that trembling high priest who had to make sure that he had all his sins covered and that the blood was applied just exactly right and washed all the right way and all those things.

And history says they tied a rope around him because if he did go in there improperly, not properly cleansed, that he would die in the presence of God. And you couldn't go in there and get him because you'd die too. So they had to tie a rope on him and pull him out if he were to die.

It's a fearful thing to go into the presence of God for the sinner. Isn't it, brother Elmer? Boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus. By a new and living way which He has consecrated, listen to these words, for us.

He's done it for us. Through the veil, that is to say, His flesh. The blood of Christ is our forgiveness.

It's for atonement. It's to cover our sins. It's to satisfy the righteousness of God and the justice of God.

Why in 1 John 1-9, have you ever wondered? I don't know, maybe you never have, but this is a beautiful truth. That God is faithful. If we confess our sins, He is faithful.

And He's what? He is just. Why does it say He is just? To forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness? Because the blood has satisfied His wrath. His justice against our sin has been satisfied in Christ.

Romans 5. Our access to God is through the blood. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die. Yet, perverture for a good man, some would even dare to die.

But God commendeth His love toward us in that while we were yet sinners, His enemies, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. Being much more then, justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him.

For if when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. What's the basis for our salvation? In its fullest sense, it's the death of Christ in forgiveness. It's salvation that's delivered through His life.

Much more if the blood of Christ, if we can admit that the blood of Christ paid the price for our past sins. It says even much more now, we shall be saved from wrath through His life. We're going to consider the significance of the resurrection in a moment here.

But verse 11 of Romans 5, and not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ by whom we have now received the atonement. The atonement. I wish we would have more time to develop what is all wrapped up in this concept of atonement.

But we're just not going to be able to. The facts are though, that God's righteousness demanded death for sin. The question is to all of us now, are we really approaching God by means of the blood of Christ or by

some other way? Now, how can this affect even the believer? By this.

Listen. Obviously, we can see very clearly. God has said that there's no other access into God by the blood of His Son.

The unbeliever, we can clearly see. We had no right to go to the presence of God. We had no access to the unsearchable riches of Christ because of our sin.

But there's a subtle tendency now as believers. We start thinking, well, I've been praying faithfully. I've been learning.

I've been studying. I've had my devotions regularly. I've been witnessing.

I've been going to church. Where does now the confidence start shifting? On us. The blood of Christ is still.

If we are trusting in anything else, it's a false hope. It's a broken tooth and a foot out of joint. When we ever think we've got some basis by which to be justified before God, whether it's in our first approach or whether it's in our daily approach as believers, we are in pride and God is resisting us.

He is faithful and he resists the proud wherever he finds them. So the peace has been won. That is the good news.

Let's look at Second Corinthians five. God on his own, apart from anything you and I did, has brought peace between us and God. The question is, are we going to enter into it? The hostility that exists between God and man, you know, it's one sided today.

It's on the part of men towards God. Men are stubbornly refusing to accept the peace that God has accomplished for them. The wrath of God has been settled and judged against sin.

In Second Corinthians five, we'll just read a couple of verses here. We'll read verses 17 through 20. Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he's a new creature.

Old things are passed away. Behold, all things are become new and all things are of God. All things are of God.

God has done it all. Who has reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ and has given to us the ministry of reconciliation. To wit, the ministry.

What has God given to us that have been reconciled? The word of reconciliation. That God, this is it. To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them.

Who did he impute their trespasses unto? Unto Christ. He laid on him the iniquity of us all. Do we really believe this? And hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.

Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ as though God did beseech you by us. We pray you in Christ's stead. Here's what it comes down to.

You be reconciled to God. Stop running from God. The war is over from God's point of view.

Be reconciled to God. For he hath made him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. A couple of thoughts here now as we finish up the first point here on the cross, the blood of Christ.

Wrapped up in the whole event of the cross is the resurrection and his exaltation. The resurrection. I think there's much need for understanding concerning the resurrection.

The resurrection was at the heart of the first church's gospel messages. They just preached this Jesus raised from the dead. What is wrapped up? What's the beauty and the truth wrapped up in the resurrection of Christ? You know, in Romans 10, 9 and 10, it's probably in more gospel tracks than maybe any other verses, or at least as many.

It says that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus and shall believe in thine heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. That's Romans 10, 9. You know, I've been guilty in my early days, in my naïve zeal of virtually tricking people into saying Jesus is Lord. Can you believe that? It's happening all over the place today.

Believe it. A gospel message that doesn't call the sinner to repentance, which is that's what I was guilty of. You just get people to say these words.

Now, I was confused. I had the real thing. But I was in my ignorance and in my zeal, my desire.

I wasn't calling people to the same thing that God had called me to. Well, what's the significance? Why does Paul say, believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead? Now, most religious people would say, well, I believe Jesus was raised from the dead. And they could even say, I believe it in my heart.

But what's missing? Why do you come away from a conversation like that many times feeling we've not connected? It's not there. It's because they do not understand the blood. All of what we just read about.

The hopeless condition of man. The absolute requirement of God's righteousness to be satisfied in the blood. They're still hoping in themselves that there's some goodness.

And you can say, I believe Jesus was raised from the dead. What's the significance, though? Romans 1, verse 4, it says that Jesus was declared to be the Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness by the resurrection of the dead. There was a declaration made by God in the resurrection that this was no sinner who died for himself.

This was my son. And to document Jesus's righteousness and his holiness, God raised him from the dead and he's alive today. It wasn't a resurrection like Lazarus or like others that Jesus raised from the dead who would then die again.

This was a resurrection whereby he lives forevermore as an ongoing, permanent testimony of the righteousness of the Lamb of God. Amen. That's what you need to know and understand when you say, Jesus, You are Lord, and I believe You were raised from the dead.

It implies that I am dead and I am hopeless. And that You died for me. And to prove to all the world, to the principalities and powers throughout eternity and to any man that You are alive forevermore.

And He's interceding. He ever lives, making intercession for those that would just trust in Him. Romans 4, 24 and 25.

Well, we can read verse 23. Well, let's go back up to verse 22. Speaking of Abraham, it says, Oh, and there's so much misunderstanding out in Christendom about the blessing of Abraham.

Oh, we're going to touch on that just for a brief moment. A little bit later. Oh, but what a glorious truth this is.

It says, And therefore it was imputed to him, to Abraham for righteousness because he had believed, it says. And now it was not written for his sake alone that it was imputed to him, but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was delivered for our offenses and was raised again for whose justification? Ours. So not only was Jesus raised as a statement of His own justification, but He was raised for yours and mine if we would believe on Him.

Do we grasp that? They say we can't grasp the glory of the resurrection until we see the absolute necessity for the death of Christ. And we see ourselves in light of that. His exaltation.

The resurrection and exaltation go together. The exaltation. This is Jesus' present place of authority.

Oh, I think of the man-centered Gospel being preached so often in which, you know what? It's not an easy thing in the flesh to declare the righteousness of God and the demands of God on sinners. Our flesh recoils against that. You know that.

It does. It's much easier to say, God bless you, than it is to say, repent before Jesus. You're lost.

But Jesus Christ is Lord. So often we place the sinner in the center of this whole matter, don't we? You need to choose Jesus. You need to do all this stuff.

And there is a choice. I'm not taking anything away from our need to choose. But it's as though the sinner, as one man back home draws this picture, the sinner is there, the big shot at his mahogany desk, and there's this feeble knock on the door, and in comes Jesus.

Kind of shuffling with, you know, meekly begging for a hearing, a meeting with this sinner. And our appeal comes to sinners. Well, you need to accept Jesus into your heart.

As though Jesus is begging us to just give Him a little place. It's not that way. Tonight, Jesus the Christ, the Son of the living God, has been exalted.

And He reigns in unchallenged authority and dominion at the right hand of the Father. Exalted forever, before whom every knee shall bow. This is our Lord.

This is what Romans 10.9 is talking about. Jesus has been exalted, raised from the dead, justified, and reigning tonight over heaven and earth. It's reality, whether anyone here wants to admit it or not.

It is reality. The Christian is the person who has simply conformed his life with reality, and has bowed his knee to the Lord Jesus Christ. That's our appeal tonight.

That's my appeal tonight. Just yield to reality. Jesus is the Christ.

It says in Matthew 28.18, Jesus said, All authority in heaven and earth has been given unto Me. Acts 2.36, Peter says, Therefore, let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. Philippians 2.9-11 This is the present position of Jesus

Christ.

He is the Lord. Because Jesus humbled Himself, it says, Wherefore, God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and in things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. That is truth.

That is the truth. Now the call. Isaiah 55.1 It says, Ho, everyone that thirsteth, come ye to the waters.

And he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat. Yea, come, buy wine and milk, without money and without price. Amen.

You know, from that place of exaltation, the Lord is saying, come. Come on My terms, but come. Come on My terms, without your money.

Come and buy. But come. Let's look at Mark 1, when Jesus was in His earthly ministry.

And you know what's inherent? If I were to say to a little child across the room, come here. What's implied in that call to come? It implies that there's some distance between us, doesn't it? You know, God is calling us to come because there's been a distance opened up between us through our sin. But He's saying, come.

I've closed the gap. Will you come? Mark 1. We'll read in verse 16, through verse 20. And that's my appeal tonight.

Just come. Come on God's terms, but come. Now as He walked by the Sea of Galilee, He saw Simon and Andrew, His brother, casting a net into the sea, for they were fishers.

And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after Me, and I will make you to become fishers of men. And straightway they forsook their nets and followed Him. And when He had gone a little farther thence, He saw James the son of Zebedee and John his brother, who also were in the ship mending their nets.

And straightway He called them. And they left their father Zebedee in the ship with the hired servants and went after Him. What do you think might be hindering you and me from responding the same way that these fishermen responded to the call of Christ to come and follow them? They left their nets, their boats, and their father.

And they left it on the spot and turned and followed Christ. How many of you have been charged and challenged with this accusation that if you follow this way, you're going to be breaking God's commandment to honor your father and mother? Do you think Jesus was requiring these men to break that commandment of God? No, He wasn't. What did the disciples see in Jesus? These were not... These were sound men, strong men, responsible men, capable men.

What did they see in Jesus that provoked them to respond like they did? I'm convinced that it was more than just... You know, they saw in the Pharisees, they saw the solid religion, outward holiness, religiosity. They saw that. I don't think that's what they saw in Jesus.

I don't think they saw in Him a chance to make money or to get prestige and honor of men. I think they saw something in Jesus that I want to invite, and I pray in the name of Jesus that God would open the eyes of those who haven't seen this yet, that they would see the beauty of Jesus. I think they saw the

beauty and love of God wrapped in human flesh.

I think they heard the gentleness and the authority of God in His voice. I think they saw He was a genuine man. No guile.

No pretense. I think they saw His love. But they knew that it would cost them something if they were to really lay hold of it.

And they were willing to pay the price. They were willing to face the ridicule of their father or of their brothers. Have you seen it tonight? Have you seen His beauty yet? Have you seen the beauty of Jesus yet? Amen.

I think that there are many who have grown up in religious settings, and in irreligious settings too, who have just never seen the beauty of Jesus. Note that Jesus called these disciples to follow Himself. He didn't call them to follow a new set of principles, a better set of rules.

He didn't call them to follow an institution or an organization. He called them to follow Himself. That's who's calling you and me tonight.

It's the Person of Jesus Christ, and He's calling you and me as individuals to follow Him. It's Him that we're standing before today, and it's Him that we'll stand before in eternity. Alone.

Our parents won't be there. No one else will be. If He's not pleading our case, we have no hope.

But if we don't bow tonight, or in this life, to His Lordship and His authority in our life, then He won't be pleading our case. There will be no hope. We will be without God having no hope in the world.

And no hope in eternity. In Luke 14, there is a cost that He gives us to follow this call. You know, just as it's wrong and there's a false gospel out there being preached that you're on your own to work this thing out, that you can't know if your sins are really put away, there's also a false gospel that's being preached that well, you can just add Jesus to your life.

Both are wrong. Both are lies strategically designed to deceive in Luke 14. I'm not there.

Verse 25, it says, And there went great multitudes with Him, and He turned and said unto them, and I mentioned this when I was here last, but I just have to mention it again. It's always interesting to observe what Jesus said when great multitudes came and followed Him. And this is what He said this time, If any man hear My call to come, and comes, but hates not his father and his mother and wife and children and brethren and sisters, yea, even his own life, he cannot be My disciple.

Jesus has laid a condition there. If we're going to enter in and come, there is a condition. To say that the gospel and salvation is unconditional is not true.

But likewise, to say that it's laid upon us to affect it, that's likewise not true. What does it cost? What does He say? And whosoever does not bear His cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple. It's impossible.

What does it mean to hate our life? To hate our Father and Mother? We've got to understand that compared to truly loving Christ the way He warrants and He demands, we must forsake the opinions, the affections of everyone and everything else. Whatever it costs, we will secure ourselves in the love of God.

We will settle for nothing less than to love Christ with all our heart, all our soul, all our mind, and all our strength.

That's a commandment, my friends. It's not an option for those seeking a better Christian life. It's a commandment.

Jesus said it's the great commandment. It's not the noble exercise of the truly devout ones. And the rest of the Christian world is just kind of somewhere less.

Verse 33 says, So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be My disciple. What is this forsaking? It's forsaking of our life. It's the taking of this life.

I live for myself. And just chucking the whole thing. Forsaking the whole.

All the pursuits. All the pursuits of my own righteousness, trying to please God. All my pursuits of self-gratification, self-indulgence.

It's self in every manifestation. Just saying, I'm leaving the whole thing and I'm going to follow Jesus. Because in Him is my life.

It's unconditional surrender. It's embracing the forgiveness of Christ and His right. His rightful demands upon yours and my life.

He is demanding our life right now. Do you know that? He's inviting us to come, but He's also demanding it as well. You know, the Christian, to be a disciple, it means we've taken our place in submission to Christ to be learners of Him and followers of His ways for the purpose of being like Him and bringing honor to Him.

That's what a disciple is. For the disciple, he says, it's not my life any longer. I'm not adding Jesus to my life.

I am forsaking my life and I'm accepting Jesus' offer. For what? An exchanged life. Oh, bless God.

I mean, truly, God changes the sinner, doesn't He? But He doesn't do it by reforming the sinner. He does it by imparting His very life to him and exchanging His life. God's remedy for sin and for sinners wasn't reformation.

It was death. Amen. That's liberty.

That's what freedom it is to know that though, isn't it? I'm not my own any longer to live life for myself as I choose. But like the Hebrew servant who's been bought, then is given the opportunity to go free, he says, I love my Master. I want to serve Him forever willingly.

Voluntarily. Amen? Amen. I love my Master tonight.

I'm not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ. This truth is the power of God unto salvation. This is foolishness to those that are perishing, but it's the power of God to them which are saved.

Now, there are errors of neglecting either one of these two aspects or certainly both aspects of the Gospel, the finished work, and the call to be a disciple. If we don't properly understand the finished work of Christ in the blood, we remain under a load of trying to affect our own righteousness. We wind up in bondage to fear.

That sense that we're never quite right despite our best attempts. We never sense the approval of God on our life. We wind up with a dead works theology laboring to attain righteousness in the flesh.

But likewise, if we esteem that, but neglect the call to forsake our life, we wind up in dead orthodoxy. We can name all the right doctrines of justification. We can espouse all these truths and yet be living in darkness, in hypocrisy.

We're deceived by our correct knowledge of theology. We do not know what it is to distinguish between true and false faith. Because there is a faith that does not save.

I don't think there's a sinner in the world that really believes that this world we live in was made by nobody. We can even believe in our heads with understanding of imputed righteousness and all these things and never own it personally. Because we're still clinging to our rights to live for ourselves.

Let's look right now as I say that. Let's look right here. It's very simple to see 2 Corinthians 5. This is the truth here that answers many questions for those that have what they think is the correct doctrinal understanding on many of these things.

In verse 14, it says, For the love of Christ constrains us, because we thus judge that if one dies for all, then we're all dead. What's this saying? It's saying we understand and accept the truth that because Jesus died, we understand He did it for others than Himself, because all were sinners. And that He died for all, that they which live, those that believe these things, should henceforth live not unto themselves, but unto Him who died and rose again.

The question is tonight, who are we living for tonight? We may know all these things, but are we living for ourselves tonight or not? Are we living for Jesus? The blood, the call, and the promise. The promise. 1 Corinthians 2 says that this mystery, that if the princes of this world had known, if the devils had really known what was happening in the cross, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory.

I suppose that if the devil could ever have been happy, it was when suddenly, after defeat, after defeat, after defeat, after defeat, he suddenly saw that Son of God being nailed to the cross, and thinking, finally we did it. Only to discover that that was the final, the finality of His defeat in the cross. Let's rejoice in our Lord! He is Lord! Glory to God for us! And for His own namesake He did this.

The promise, that the promise. Let's look at Acts 2 again. Have you ever wondered how the disciples felt when Jesus said, it is better for you that I go? Oh, how could they imagine that? Better for us that you go? Why? Because if I go not, Jesus said, the Comforter cannot come.

This is the promise, my beloved. This is the promise. Look at verse 33.

Therefore, being by the right hand of God exalted. There He is. He is exalted.

And having received of the Father, what? The promise. The promise of the Holy Ghost. He has shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.

You know, in one very real sense, the promise is not a thing, it's a person. The promise of God is a person that God said would come to those who believe after the exaltation of Christ. It's a glorious thing to know that our sins are forgiven, isn't it? Oh, but it's even more glorious to know the God who did it for you.

And have Him dwelling in you. To know Him. This is eternal life.

It's not necessarily just to live forever and ever in heaven. It's to know God. Not just know about Him.

It's to know Him by His Spirit. So he goes on to say, this Jesus, having been exalted to the right hand of God, has shed forth this promise that you now see and hear. Then after they heard this, they were pricked in their hearts.

And they said, men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins. And ye shall receive what? The gift of the Holy Ghost. For what? The promise.

The Holy Ghost is unto you and to your children. And blessed God, you know what? We're here in this next phrase. And to all that are far off.

It's to you and to me. If you don't know God tonight, the promise is here tonight for you. Repent.

Obey God. Surrender your life. Believe on God.

The promise of the Holy Ghost is to you as many as the Lord our God shall call. The promise of the Holy Spirit. Let's look in Galatians 3 here now.

I appreciate your attentiveness. Look at verse 2. Now, this was a group of believers who were being tempted to be drawn back into a works-based religion. A works-based righteousness.

They're relying on themselves, their own works, or the law, to gain access and merit to God. He says, You fools, this only would I learn of you. Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law or by the hearing of faith? Now, as I've shared before, is Brother Johnny in here tonight? Rule? Amen.

Brother Johnny's got a red Ford Ranger pickup back home. There's no question about that. He's got it.

The only question is, was it given to him or did he buy it? Now, can I ask you, brethren and sisters here, that have the Holy Spirit tonight, do you know you have the Holy Spirit tonight? If you know you have the Holy Spirit tonight, there's only one question left then. Did you buy it or was it given to you? Did you earn it or was it given? Now, if you don't know you have the Holy Spirit tonight, you don't have Him. He was not asking them, do you know if you have the Holy Spirit? He's saying, you know you do.

How did you get it? This is the promise that is to you and me tonight. It's the Holy Ghost. It's righteousness.

Now, let's just keep going here. What qualified God to grant the Holy Spirit to you and me? First of all, it was the righteousness that He saw in Christ. It was the wrath of God declared on sinful men.

It was the blood which Jesus placed on the mercy seat. And when He was exalted, God said, now, here, go into the world, Comforter. Indwell those that are justified with the Son of God.

Indwell them. Give them a new heart. The new heart that He promised in the New Covenant.

He said He'd put a new heart within you. And a new spirit. And His own spirit He would put in you.

Galatians 3.13 Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law. What is the curse of the law? In simple terms, I'll answer it for you. It's the law itself.

It's the fact that you can never do it. It's being under it. That's being under the curse.

Because Jesus being made a curse for us, for it is written, cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree, that He did this, that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ. Now, what is the blessing of Abraham? Oh, there's a tragic heresy being taught out there that the blessing of Abraham has something to do with material health and prosperity. What a deception to put our eyes on carnal things.

On our flesh. Self-gratification. What's in it for me? In the flesh.

It's a deception to take our eyes off of the blood and the righteousness of God. What is the blessing of Abraham? It says here in verse 9. Well, it says in verse 6, even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness, know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are children of Abraham. Verse 9, so then, they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.

Now what is the blessing of Abraham, my friends? It's righteousness by faith. It's justification by believing God apart from works. But to those now that are blessed with faithful Abraham through Jesus Christ that we might receive for this purpose that we might receive what? The promise of the Spirit through faith.

This is the promise, my friends. If you don't know God, if you're dead, if you're still dead, if you've been running from God, God desires to be your Father. Romans 8.15 says, for we have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but we receive the spirit of adoption whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

You know, our sins in a very real way have rendered the whole human race orphans. Oh, I was raised in a fatherless home, but I wasn't fatherless. When I came to Christ, when the Spirit of God came and dwelt with me and bore witness with my spirit that I was a child of God, it cried, Abba, Father.

I was not ready for that. But years and years I had grown as a fatherless child. I'm talking in the flesh too, but you know, what the reality was is my sin became exceedingly sinful and I realized that I was spiritually fatherless.

God became my Father. God wants to be your Father tonight. If you don't know Him, you might know Him as the righteous judge, but do you know Him as Father tonight? But God does reveal His fatherly nature conditionally.

We'll just look here now at a couple more passages, or one more passage perhaps, before closing. In 2 Corinthians 6, verse 16, we'll start. And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? For ye are the temple of the living God.

As God has said, I will dwell in them and walk in them and I will be their God and they shall be My people. Wherefore, come out from among them and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing and I will receive you and will be a father unto you and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

God reveals this fatherly aspect of Himself to the one willing to turn from their unclean things. Willing to turn and lay down their stubbornness. Willing to stop running.

He'll be a father. As a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pities them that fear Him. So, in closing here, my invitation is perhaps you've really failed to see the beauty of Christ.

You've failed to see God as your Father. You've failed to really believe that He's approachable and that there is access to Him. Because you've been loaded down with this sense of a works-based religion.

But maybe, maybe you've been deceived in thinking that you can add Jesus to your life and still live for yourself. You haven't known the righteousness of God. You haven't known the fear of God.

And neither have you known God as your Father. We need to see both the goodness and the severity of God. Psalm 2 says, kiss the Son.

It says, serve the Lord with fear and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest He be angry. Can we pray? Lord Jesus, Lord, I have labored to be clear.

I have labored to be faithful tonight, Father. Your people have prayed tonight, Father. God, I'm praying once again, Lord, that You would brood over this place, Lord, that if there are those that do not know You tonight, those that have not received the promise, God, those that are holding out, Father... Saints, let's stand and pray and call on God.

Lord Jesus, we plead for those that are holding out tonight, Lord. I'm pleading for those that don't know You, God. For those that are deceived, Father, that are thinking they've got to do it on their own, Lord.

For those that are thinking they can do it. Lord, I'm praying for those, God, that are deceived and thinking that they're Christians and they're living for themselves. That they think You're just up there to answer them and to respond to them, Father.

God, You're demanding our very life tonight. Father, have mercy. Have mercy on us, Lord.

Have mercy on us, Father. Lord Jesus, You demand that we love You. Oh, God, and You love us first.

You give us the grace to do it, Father. Oh, Lord in Heaven, have mercy. Finish the work You intended for this night, Lord.

Lord, You ordained this night. It's not by chance. God, I pray You'd finish it now.

Bring it to completion, Lord. Let us endure. Let us labor, Father.

Let us wrestle. We wrestle now in Jesus' name. We take our place at Your feet, Jesus.

We submit to You, Lord Jesus. We resist the devil in the name of Jesus. Lord, cleanse every heart.

Cleanse every heart, God. Cleanse the hearts of every saint here, Father, that we would not impede what You want to do to the lost, Lord, in our lives, in our midst. Father, have mercy.

Satan, we declare Your judgment. We declare judgment on unbelief tonight. We declare judgment on fornication.

On hypocrisy. It's been judged. We declare judgment on lust in Jesus' name.

On lies in Jesus' name. And we declare Jesus Christ Lord to the glory of God. Hallelujah.

In Jesus' name, Amen. Can we sing number 284? Have you yielded yourself that living sacrifice? Have you offered your body? Our brother labored to free his hands of your blood tonight. It's my burden that you would yield your life to Jesus Christ tonight.

Find in Him your all in all. Young men and young ladies, husbands and wives with your marriage problems, this is a men's leadership seminar, but you ladies can also respond. If God is calling you, hear the Lord Jesus calling you tonight.

Come. Come ye. Let's sing that first verse again.

Amen. You come tonight. Yield your life to Jesus.

For each hour I live, to Thee alone... Thank you. Those of you that have responded, you can make your way out the doors here to my left and Brother Aaron will direct you back to the prayer rooms. You pour your heart out to God.

You will be found of Him. Amen. Our Lord Jesus is worthy of our adoration for all eternity.

Praise God. Thank you, Brother, for bearing your heart with us tonight. Amen.

Well, the end of another blessed day that we thank God for. Thank God for this opportunity we had today. Thank you, brothers, Brother Denny, Brother Moes, Brother Aaron, for laboring in the Word for us today.

We appreciate it. You brothers, go home tonight praying. We don't want to just have another leadership seminar.

We want to be right with God. We want people to learn to know God in truth. Have a personal relationship with Him.

So, you go home praying tonight. There's more to be done. God bless you all.

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