

# The Election of Grace

by E.W. Johnson

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*The sermon explores the concept of the election of grace, where God chooses certain people for salvation without any conditions or prerequisites.*

**Duration:** 48:50

**Scripture:** John 2:23-25, John 3:16, 1 Peter 1:1-4, 1 Peter 1:13, 2 Peter 1:1, 2 Peter 3:9

**Topics:** "Election"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of the Glorious Gospel in establishing the kingdom of mercy. He explains that God became man through the Virgin Mary to fulfill His purpose of sacrificing Himself on the cross for the forgiveness of sins. The preacher highlights the necessity of being born again in order to understand and receive this mercy. He also emphasizes the significance of God's regenerating grace in enabling repentance and a genuine sorrow for sin. The sermon concludes by referencing Peter's second epistle, which warns of scoffers questioning the fulfillment of God's promises.

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## Transcript

...through the Gospel of John, we're in the 15th chapter, and this morning I began at verse 18 and read down to verse 21. The Gospel of John, chapter 15, reading verses 18, 19, 20, and 21. If the world hate you, you know that it hated me before it hated you.

If you were of the world, the world would love his own, that because you're not of the world, but I've chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember the word that is said unto you, if they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you. If they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.

But all these things will they do unto you for my namesake, because they know not him that sent me. Now I want us to focus our attention this morning upon the words of our Lord in verse 19, where it says, if you were of the world, the world would love his own, that because you're not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Now I want us to think together again upon the subject that we considered last Sunday evening, as we are in this part of the Gospel of John where it is twice mentioned, and that is the subject of the election of grace.

Last Sunday evening we considered this from one standpoint, this morning we will consider it from another standpoint. Now what do we mean by the election or the choice of grace? You can have all of the systems

that you want to. Sometimes we refer to one as Calvinism or the same system as Augustinianism.

We consider the other view as Arminianism or as Pelagianism. And we know that within those two systems there are many shades of opinion, there are many groups that have formed themselves around these opinions, but actually there are only two systems. One believes in the choice of grace, the other believes in a choice that was conditional.

And when people could meet those conditions, they themselves hence became the chosen of the Lord. Certainly all that have any knowledge of God, as God is laid before our minds in the Holy Scriptures, know that God not only has all power, that he is not only everywhere present in his knowledge and authority and spirit, but they know also that God has all knowledge. And hence they can know that God can look down to the years and know that which is from our viewpoint of the future.

But as God is neither past nor future, but is the eternal presence, certainly he knows all things spread out before his view. And the third system is that God had certain conditions, and he looked down to the years and foresaw that certain people could meet those conditions, and he chose and arranged circumstances and a coordination wherein they could exercise that option. Now the other system is that God looked down to the years and he could see no difference, that all had sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.

And in the words of Paul in the third chapter of this Roman epistle, there were none that understood, there were none that sought after God, they were all gone out of the way. And therefore he made a choice that was of pure grace. It is what we call the election of grace.

And so those are the two systems. Some believe in a conditional election. Others believe in what has been called an unconditional election.

A better term is an election that is purely of grace. Now we know that grace is a great mystery. Grace is a great mystery even when exercised in the heart of man.

A couple goes out to an orphanage, they choose a child, they adopt that child. Why this particular one? You say the choice is purely of grace. It might be that you and I could see no difference between that child and the other children there.

But in the hearts of those that made the choice, it was the choice of grace. And so we believe the Bible teaches in what we call the election of grace. Now if we want to use the term unconditional election, we would not object to the term.

But we would always explain that it must not be taken to mean that salvation is unconditional. No, so far as intelligent adults are concerned, there is a condition. They must be brought to faith.

And certainly though we stand before God in faith, and in faith alone, holy trusting is mercy, as a holy God can be merciful in the blood that was shed at Calvary. But yet again, our faith is not alone because no person could even see the grace of God, much less trust it, unless he is in a state of repentance. Unless he has a godless sorrow for sin, a sorrow with reference to God.

Certainly all people have a sorrow in regard to sin. But it's a sorrow with regard to wife and child, a husband, as the case may be, a friend, an employer, a neighbor, or more apt to be, sorrow with regard to himself. He's embarrassed, he feels he's made a fool of himself.

He thinks that he is ruining himself. So he has a sorrow, and he repents. But the repentance that saves the soul is a sorrow with reference to God.

And unless a person has that godless sorrow for sin, and comes to the grace of God, and finds that grace in the faith of Calvary, that person cannot appreciate grace. You know, we can be very foolish in our soul winning, and we must seek to be soul winners. Paul said, I've become all things to all men, but by all means I might win some.

Daniel speaks of those that be wise turn men into righteousness. And the book of Proverbs, that he that winneth souls is wise. But it's most unwise to go out here to an impenitent sinner, and say you're forgiven, God loves you, let me preach the grace of God.

And he will say, well, all right. But what does it mean to him? Unless he can be brought to a consciousness of sin with reference to God, so that he has a godless sorrow for sin with reference to God. And then he can appreciate grace.

Then he has a proper evaluation of the death of Christ. And if he has not that proper evaluation of the death of Christ, he doesn't really see it. You can't see what you do not properly evaluate.

And if he has that faith, he loves him that died in his place instead, and that love produces good works in his life. So we stand before our God in faith, and in faith alone. And yet again, that faith is not alone.

And so salvation is conditional, but election is unconditional. He said, I put that together. Election is not salvation, it is unto salvation.

He that chose the end chose the means. And so it's only in sovereign grace that men are brought unto repentance. He said, I don't believe it.

Let me see you go and bring one unto godless sorrow. He said, I can't touch his heart. He stands guard at ear doors, eye doors, Bunyan would put it.

I can't get to it. Only God can open the heart. And so we say that God hath chosen to bring certain ones unto salvation.

It doesn't mean that people do not make a choice. But when our Lord said, you've not chosen me, but I've chosen you, he didn't mean that I could foresee you going to choose me anyway. No, the ultimate decision was the Lord's.

Now this morning, as we come to the preaching part of our hour, it is our custom to read and comment, announce a subject, and then after the offering, special music, have the message. When we come to the sermon part of the hour, I want us to approach this subject from this standpoint. Basically, there are two scriptures that are used against this.

And those who stand against it say, here stand I, I will not be moved. They stand on those two texts. But I want to show this morning that if you take those texts in context, take them as most clearly what they actually mean.

They do not teach what they're teaching. They teach what we're teaching. The Bible does not violate the law of contradiction.

That which contradicts itself cannot be true. It is consistent with itself. And those texts also clearly fit in with this teaching.

As we come to that part of the hour, one of those texts is John 3.16. You're quite familiar with it. The other text is 2 Peter 3.9, which they say simply says, not willing that any should perish. And that is a part of it, but not all of it.

And so later in the hour, we will go into those two texts. Let's pray. Our Father, we are grateful for all that are here gathered this day, especially grateful for the visitors that we have in our midst.

We're grateful for others. We know that some, for various reasons, are not here this day. Some of them away visiting relatives during the holiday season.

Some are long in years, and some ill of body for other reasons. We ask thy mercies upon them. We're grateful, our Father, that there are local congregations in this day that do support the preaching of pure grace, that our hope, our life, our salvation is in thy mercy.

As thou art able to be merciful in Jesus Christ, his broken body and his shed blood, there are people that stand before God, before eternity, before the judgment, trusting nothing but thy mercy as it is in Jesus Christ our Lord. Bless us, O Lord, as you're here gathered, open the heart of the unbelieving to be here and to show them the light of light and salvation. We ask it in Christ's name.

Amen. I'm sure that we all know the setting of John 3.16. In the closing verses of the 2nd chapter of John's gospel, we read that our Lord was there in Jerusalem, and many believed upon him because they had seen his miracles. But our Lord did not commit himself unto them because he knew what was in man and needed not that any man should tell him.

Then in the next chapter, we read of one Nicodemus who came unto our Lord by night. This one was a ruler of the Jews. He came and addressed our Lord as a teacher, a teacher of religion, a genuine teacher, one come from God.

For no man can do those miracles that thou doest except God be with thee. The heart of the teaching of our Lord had to do with the kingdom. Our Lord immediately responded to this approach of Nicodemus, saying, Except a man be born again, he cannot see that which I am teaching concerning the kingdom.

Some say, Pastor, I believe that that isn't the meaning of our Lord. I believe he's talking about entering finally into the visible experience of the kingdom of grace over yonder. But I believe that unless we enter the kingdom down here by faith, we shall never enter the kingdom over yonder.

The Jews were strong believers in the Messiah. They believed the Messiah would be a king, that he would establish a kingdom, and that it would be a redemptive kingdom. But the Jews of those days were like many Gentiles, many Americans that are not Jews of our day.

They did not really know their problem. They thought that their problem was those Romans, and then they had economic problems, they had health problems. Their real problem, however, was sin, the judgment of God.

And hence they did not understand the kind of kingdom that our Lord came to establish. He came to establish the rule of grace. God has always had the power, he's always had the wisdom, he's always had

the right to do what he wanted to do, with one exception.

God is holy. Holiness not only says that this particular thing or that particular thing is wrong, but holiness also said it would be wrong if they get away with it. It would be wrong if sin is not paid for.

If God is holy, he must see to it that sin is paid for. So how can the kingdom of mercy, forgiving and delivering mercy, be established? It is only in the glorious gospel that God became man in the womb of the Blessed Virgin, that God entered this world, as Jonah entered this world, a babe born to woman, yet he without human father. And he came here ultimately for one purpose, and that is to go yonder, to bare his back to the smiter, his cheek to those that would pluck off the hair, to turn out his face in shame and spitting, to be lashed, to be nailed to the cross, to suffer, to bleed and die, that God might be just and the justifier of him believing in Jesus.

And so our Lord said, Nicodemus, you can't see that unless you are born again. Nicodemus said, how can a man be born when he is old? Could he enter the second time to his mother's womb and be born? And our Lord said, that which is born of flesh is flesh, that which is born of spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I say unto thee, ye must be born again.

The wind bloweth which listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth. So is every one that is born of the Spirit. Now, the Greek word for wind is pneuma, p-n-e-u-m-a.

That's also the Greek word for breath. That's where we get our word like pneumonia. So when he is translated as saying, the pneuma bloweth which listeth, that could be made to read that the wind bloweth which listeth.

Then the word pneuma is also the name of the Holy Spirit, the holy breath, as it were, of God. So that could be translated, the Spirit breatheth where he will. And our Lord went on to rebuke Nicodemus, saying, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things? He reminded Nicodemus of the ancient prefiguring of the gospel, saying that when the children of Israel were under judgment and had the bite of death upon them, the serpents were among them, they were in pain, they were dying because of their sins under the judgments of God.

But God told Moses to take a brazen serpent and put it upon a pole, and it should come to pass that every one that seeth it, when he looketh upon it, shall live. And he said, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up. Then our Lord gave us the great text, John 3.16, and we all love that text.

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. He said, Pastor, you are what men call a Calvinist or Augustinian, you believe in the election of grace. Do you believe that text? I believe strongly in that.

I believe John 3.17. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved. And I believe the world will be saved. I do not offer that to explain.

John the Baptist is a priest. Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away, not trying to, hopes to, maybe, but taketh away the Son of the world. And our Lord will go on to say that when the Spirit has come, he will convince the world that unbelief is sin.

He will convince the world that righteousness is found in the finished work of Christ. He will convince the world that the spirit of this world, that rules in this world out here, is under judgment. If you want a stronger statement that teaches that the world will be saved, Paul, right into the Corinthians, in his 2nd epistle, chapter 5, I believe verse 19, says to wit that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their prosperous under them.

And they have given unto us the word of reconciliation. And so beloved at all hands is upon the meaning of the word world. I believe something else.

I believe the word refers to mankind. Mankind as an order of being, the cosmos. And I believe that mankind as an order of being will be saved.

But I do not believe that each and every individual human being will be saved. But I believe this order of being, mankind, will be saved. But not in every individual.

He'll be saved in the chosen part of mankind. You say, who are the chosen part of mankind? They are those who freely choose to believe the gospel. But that brings another question.

Who are those that will freely, gladly, lovingly believe the gospel? They are those who are born again. Unless they are born again, they cannot even see the gospel. You say, who are they that are born again? The spirit breatheth the grace of life where he will.

And beloved, that sound, solid exposition of the Holy Scripture. Suppose a wealthy man went to Africa and he loved those great animals over there, the great predators we would say, the cats, the lions and leopards and cheetahs. Suppose he could see that the encroachments of agriculture and other forms destroy these big animals.

And suppose he purchased a truck of land, a large truck of land. And suppose in some way he induces those great animals to enter this truck of land. Now out of love for this order of being, he has saved this order of being.

And they not only have life, but they have the life that they were created for. They are not just caged animals, but they have the life they were created for. And so he has saved.

He said, did he save each and every one of those large cats? No, but he saved them as a cosmos, as an order of being. He said, how did he do it? He made a very large provision, but still it was a limited provision. And into that limited provision, in some way, he induced those animals to enter that animal park.

He said, can you give us another illustration? I'll give you a Biblical illustration. In the days of Noah, God saved mankind. The whole of it was so wicked that the Lord repented the Lord that he had made man.

Now I know that the Bible seems to be in contradiction. In some scriptures it says with him, there's no man. I know there are other scriptures that says that God is not a man that he should repent.

In other scriptures it says the gifts and callings of God are without repentance. But on the other hand, it repented God that he had made man in the days of Noah. It repented God that he had made Saul king of Israel.

It repented God what he said he was going to do to Nineveh. Jonah didn't go into Nineveh and say, if you repent, God will spare you. He just said, forty days and this place is going to be wiped out.

But they repented. But Jonah went up on the hill to watch the destruction. And when it wasn't destroyed, Jonah sinned in the due gratitude.

And so it repented God what he said he would do unto Nineveh. He said, how can you say that God doesn't repent, and again you say that God does repent. Beloved, how can I say the sun neither rises nor sets? And then again say the sun does rise and the sun does set.

I say it's all a matter of viewpoint. From our viewpoint, the sun does rise, the sun does set. But from the larger viewpoint, it neither rises nor sets.

Beloved, in the days of Noah, the very existence of mankind was in danger. But God made a provision, and it was a very large provision. Noah's ark was the largest wooden ship ever built, according to the record.

It was the largest ship of any type that was built before the building of the Great Easterner in the beginning of this century. It was a very large ship, and it was built barge-like. But in that limited provision, he induced certain people to enter that ark.

And of course the animals also were induced to enter the ark. He said, Pastor, I'm sure that the Lord, by some supernatural way, and that isn't hard to believe, because there is a mysterious intelligence in the animal world, the migrating of birds, the migrating of these old sea turtles and all. There is a mysterious intelligence in the animal world.

And certainly it should not be difficult for us to believe that God could induce certain animals to enter that ark. But man, would you say that he induced them to enter the ark? The Bible says that God was on grace with the Lord. And so all of it grew out of that.

And so in that limited provision, God saved mankind. And hence also, in the cross of Calvary, God saved, and is saving, and will save, mankind. Our Lord says, God so loved.

Do you believe that the man really loved those animals? That he would not save each and every one of them? Could you say that he loved them as an order of being, and yet did not make provision for each and every one of them to enter his animal park? It's just not possible. I don't agree. I believe a man could be completely sincere as he goes to all that expense to save those animals.

And he could be most effective in saving those animals. You say, Pastor, how about mankind? Beloved, I could have questions about the animals. They are immoral.

They have no moral responsibilities. They are dumb brutes, without rationality, and hence without any free agency at all. But man, in the days of Noah, the thoughts of their heart was on the evil continually.

And so the fact that God saved any is an example of God's marvelous grace. And the fact that God saved mankind, and consequently you and I here this day, was an act of grace that mankind was saved as an order of being in that day. You see, Pastor, all that is a great mystery.

It destroys the simplicity of the gospel. No beloved establishes the simplicity of the gospel. And without this doctrinal foundation, the simplicity of the gospel cannot be maintained.

Pastor, explain yourself. A person comes down in the aisle and says, I am a believer. Is that much? Is that meaningful? Surely we ought to add something to that simple faith.

That repentant soul that can see grace, and really believe in grace, and take their stand before life, before death, before the judgment, before God, before eternity, is nothing but God's mercy. Beloved, if you have this great doctrinal foundation, you can maintain the simplicity of that gospel. But without it, unless somebody rebuilds that old foundation, the simple gospel is going to wither away.

And in its place will come ritual and ceremonialism with all of its hypocrisy and all of its oppression. And so I know it is a great mystery, unless the Lord breathes regenerating life, that in that life, men can know God. That in the knowledge of God, they can know Godless sorrow.

And in the knowledge of Godless sorrow, they can know that repentance wherein they throw themselves upon the mercies of God, and the mercies of God alone. In receiving mercy, they receive that mercy in Christ crucified revealed to their soul. I know it is a great mystery, but O Beloved, it is still the simple gospel that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

It is about to explain another statement. You say, unless God reveals himself to their heart, they cannot repent. What do you mean? Beloved, can a man repent toward his wife if he has no love for her? He could be cold and harsh and brutish.

Can he repent unless she touches his heart in some way? And can man repent toward God unless God in some way would speak to him as he spoke to Saul of Tarsus on the Damascus road? Saul, Saul, who I persecute, why are you making war on me? Can you repent without that regenerating grace of God, at least in the beginnings thereof? Then the beauty of this gospel, that a person could say that my heart is so cold, I have no sense of Godless sorrow for sin. I have a sense of sorrow about sin, but it is with regard to this or that, not toward my Maker. What can I do? Can I change my heart? Could the leopard change his spots? Could the Ethiopian change his skin? No, but you could fall down and cry out, Toss me not, O gentle Savior.

Hear my humble cry upon others that are calling, Do not toss me not. Beloved, that is the meaning of that text. Now the other text, Peter, in his second epistle, said that the scoffers shall arise, saying, Where is the promise of his coming? For all things continue as they were since the fathers fell asleep.

And Peter says they willingly are ignorant of this fact. And he goes on and recites certain things. Then Peter explains the delay in the second coming of Christ.

And again, I'm speaking of our viewpoint. From God's standpoint, there's no delay. All things on schedule.

But from our standpoint, he explains the seeming delay in the promise of the second coming of Christ. He said that God is longsuffering to us, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. Now, those whom we refer to as Arminians, or Philegians, or those who believe in conditional election, they say, There you are.

As far as God is concerned, he's not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But again, I say they should take the text in true grammar, in true context. The word any and the word all has the antecedent us.

He's saying that he's not willing that any of us should perish, but that all of us should come to repentance. Now, who's us? The first verses of the third chapter of the second epistle of Peter tells us that the second letter was written to the same group that the first letter was written to. And the opening verses of the first chapter of the first epistle, Peter addresses himself to the elect of God found among the Jews of what the

Jews called the Diaspora, the Jews that were scattered out among the Gentiles.

And so Peter is addressing himself to certain ones of the elect of God, and says that this explains the seeming delay in the second coming of Christ. God is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any, meaning any of us, should perish, but that all, meaning all of us, should come to repentance. So you Calvinists can't use that text, not without explanation.

I know that fits, but you cannot use it, because that would teach that if the elect do not repent, they'll perish. Beloved, as I've often explained, because anything is certain to happen, we must not conclude that for it isn't necessary that it happen. Christ was certain to go to Calvary for him being delivered by the determinate counsel and for knowledge of God.

He was certain to go to Calvary. Yet again, he had to go to Calvary. He said, Pastor, God Almighty cannot know necessity.

You have to believe in the true freedom of God. God cannot know necessity. He cannot know any necessity outside of himself.

He cannot know any necessity imposed by higher authority than himself. But he can know the necessity of his own holy being. And as I explained a few moments ago, holiness not only demands that certain things be disapproved of, be condemned, but holiness also says it is not right that it does not be paid for.

It is not right that whatever transgression and disobedience receive a just recompense or reward. And so, beloved, how can God be both holy and also merciful to guilty sinners? The only way in the world is that God became man in the person of his Son, and then in one undivided person in which he is true man and true God, the one person that in that one person he went yonder to die upon the cross at Calvary, so that the Apostle Paul, speaking to the elders of the church at Ephesus in the twentieth chapter of Acts, in which he said, Feed the church of God, which he, meaning God, hath purchased with his, meaning God's own blood. He said, Pastor, God is pure spirit without body, parts, nor passions.

He has no blood to be shed. I know that. But when in one undivided person he became both God and man, those two natures were not confused and confounded.

You read the Gospels. The human nature stands forth in all of its beautiful simplicity, and the divine nature in all of its majesty and glory. He approached the tomb of Lazarus, knowing that he would raise Lazarus from the dead.

But when he saw those women weeping, he wept. You can see his true humanity and his true deity not confused and confounded, and yet in one person, and he went yonder to die upon the cross at Calvary. You say, but Pastor, the Jews believe that the Apostle Paul invented this theory to explain the cross.

Why don't they go back some seven hundred years before Christ and say that Isaiah invented it? Isaiah explains the death of Christ, and he said it, When the Lord shall see of the travail of his soul, he shall be satisfied, and by this knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many. He said, How could the suffering of Christ satisfy God, that in the knowledge of this satisfaction he could justify many? Is God a sadist who can get a sick satisfaction out of the sight of suffering? Is God masochistic so he can get a sick satisfaction out of the sight of his own suffering? Oh no, perish the thought, but he's legal, and the basic principle of the law is that sin is to be paid for. So God was satisfied in his legal character, that in the knowledge of that satisfaction he should justify many.

Is that any different from the doctrine of the Apostle Paul in writing to the Romans in the latter part of the third chapter of that epistle? He says that God has set forth Jesus as a perpetuation. That perpetuation, the Greek, is a mercy seat. It is a mercy seat provided at an altar, at a place of sacrifice, that God has set forth Jesus as a perpetuation through faith in his blood, that God might be just and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus.

And so beloved God Almighty does no necessity. Now if he wasn't gracious as well as holy, he had no necessity. If he allowed the race of man to go down to their eternal ruin as he did the fallen angels, he had no necessity.

But as sure as he truly chooses to be merciful, he must satisfy the demands of his own holy law. And so the law is not above God, there is some power and authority above him. The law is but the reflection of his own holy being.

And so God knows necessity. And beloved, I believe the elect of God will come to repentance, but I believe they also must. And I get two reasons.

Number one, beloved, they must come into vital union with him that died at Calvary. Now I know this living union is essentially faith. Faith.

It's illustrated in holy matrimony. The basic tie that binds is the confidence, the dependence they have on one another. I know it's an affectionate confidence, but basically it is a confidence.

And though they may still have that affection, if the confidence is broken, that affection is not a source of love and joy, but of misery. And so beloved, our vital union with him that died at Calvary is essentially in our need of him, our confidence in him, our reliance upon him, our spirited obedience and true faith unto him. But we are in vital union with him.

Now these great imputations in the Bible, Adam's sin was imputed to you and me. How could it be done justly? There's a life union between us. We were in Adam when he sinned as the oak trees in the acorn, and Adam is still in you and me.

And hence the sin of Adam is our sin, and hence when he was told that thus thou art, and unto thus shalt thou return, you and I were told the same. When he was told that in the sweat of thy brow thou shalt eat bread, you and I were told the same. When the daughters of Eve were told that in travail and sorrow you would experience motherhood, that this was there because there is this living union between Adam and us.

And so there must be this vital union with him that died at Calvary. If the full satisfaction of the law in the life and death of Christ is imputed to you and me, and hence we must come to this living faith. But beloved honor-dependent sinners can come to this faith.

Honor-dependent sinners can even see the object of faith, the mercy of God in the blood that was shed at Calvary. That is the reason why the cross is a spiritual revelation. Not that they need any more scripture than what they have.

Not that they need any more knowledge of the Bible than what they have. They just need a heart that can evaluate, that can appreciate. You cannot see things if you cannot evaluate them.

And so it is on independence that they come to truly evaluate the cross at Calvary, and hence enter into vital union with him that died at Calvary. And so, dear dying lamb, thy precious blood shall never lose its power till all the ransomed church of God be saved to send them o'er, all for whom Christ died will be saved. But they must be.

You say, what is that salvation? It is to become a true believer in the grace of God. And they come down through the experience of repentance. Then there is another reason why we must come to repentance.

Beloved even you or I who forgives and offends, without some measure of repentance we have compromised our own sense of dignity. Now, we have to be careful because you and I are all sinners, and so let us not make too much out of our dignity. But yet again, if thy brother sinned, rebuke him if he repented, forgive him.

But O with almighty God he would compromise his self-respect, he would compromise his dignity if he forgave sin apart from repentance. And so there must be a confession of sin, and it must be a true confession, so they must be brought into consciousness of sin. It must be a heartfelt confession, a godless sorrow for sin, and in that godless sorrow for sin they must become petitioners, supplicants, seeking the grace of God to come unto the Lord to throw themselves upon the mercies of God.

And so they must come unto repentance. I know they come because they are brought, but they are brought of grace in such a way that they come as free moral agents. They come because it is something they themselves choose to do.

Then, beloved, I believe we have a moment. There is a third reason why God cannot save apart from repentance. Why is that? Beloved, any other system makes the blood of Christ just the lightening of sin.

This world is filled with people that have lost their consciousness of sin and the faith of Calvary, and yet they are not in a state of repentance, and they look upon it purely as the lightening of sin. I regard that as the greatest sin against the blood that was shed at Calvary. Paul speaks of it in the third chapter of his epistle to the Philippians.

He said, But many walk, of whom I have told you often, and I tell you even weeping, they are enemies of the cross of Christ, whose God is their belly, whose glory is their shame, their glory and their sins, whose mind is earthly things, whose end is destruction. Beloved, we must appreciate grace or we'll abuse it. We'll abuse it.

And abuse of that grace multiplies the awful weight of judgment that lies on the head of man. Unless God Almighty bring you to repentance, you will abuse the grace of God. Oh, seek after that salvation.

Dr. Falwell, would you lead us in a hymn?

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Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/1/SID1485.mp3>

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