

Justified by Faith

by Gareth Evans

Justification by faith means that God looks at us as if we had never sinned, because of the blood of Jesus Christ, and gives us access to His presence, making us new creations in Him.

Duration: 36:49

Scripture: Habakkuk 2:4, Luke 24:36-39, Romans 3:28, Romans 4:6, Ephesians 5:18, Ephesians 5:20-21, Hebrews 10:19-20

Topics: "Justification"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher shares a personal story of preaching in a church in Wales that was once filled with thousands of people but now only had 25 attendees. He then transitions to discussing the theological term of justification and provides a simple definition for it. The preacher emphasizes the importance of taking notes and provides three major points for the congregation to write down. He also mentions the baptism of a woman named Irene and highlights the message of being born again. The sermon concludes with a brief discussion on the tripartite nature of humans - spirit, soul, and body - and references the birth of Jesus and the birth of Martin Luther.

Transcript

What a wonderful privilege we've had this morning watching Irene being baptized. She says that she came to the Lord about a year and a half ago. Mary, her daughter-in-law, says that.

You're never too old to come to the Lord. Jesus said, you know, unless we're born again, unless we become as little children and be born again, we cannot even see the kingdom of God, leave alone enter in. Marvel not that I say unto you, you must be born again.

Last week, I touched on the subject of the tripartite personality of people that we are. I took a text for you from the letter to Thessalonians 1, chapter five, where Paul says words like this. I pray that the God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ will sanctify you wholly, make you whole, spirit, soul, and body.

And for a brief time this morning, I'm not gonna keep you long this morning, I just want to speak about those three aspects of our persons, our spirits, our souls, and our body. 500 years ago, or let me go back, 2,000 years ago, we celebrated this time of the year, the birth of an infant, a child, in Bethlehem. Christmas season is time to reflect on that and to remember it again.

Though, of course, as Christians, we celebrate that every day but 500 years ago, another young baby was born in Germany. His name was Martin Luther, Martinus Lutherus. Grew up in a very strict home.

He had many memories of beatings from his father because he couldn't recite the Catholic catechism at the time. As a young man, he had quite a frightening experience. He's out in a field and he's struck by lightning, or the field is struck by lightning, and he's smitten to the ground.

While on the ground, he cries out to God in fear. And he says, I will give my life to you, by which he means that he will enter the monastic orders of the Catholic Church. It was believed at that time that monks were those people who were immediately exempted from all of the possibilities of purgatory.

They were already made holy by becoming monks and would therefore enter into heaven at their death into the presence of Jesus. All other mere mortals like you and I were to go through maybe having to pay indulgences to buy time to free ourselves from the curse. To free ourselves from purgatory.

As a very convinced monk, as a very orthodox and very good monk, it was his desire to go to Rome and he was sent to Rome by his order, the Dominicans. He was sent to Rome and there in Rome, he was appalled to see that the other monks that lived in Rome didn't seem to have the same intensity or passion for holiness as he did. He began to question very much about his faith.

When he returned home to Wittenberg, the area in Germany where he lived, he was then asked if he would start teaching the Bible at the local theological school because he had so many questions and his mentor advised him to become a teacher at this college. And as such, he became a teacher of New Testament. He became a student of the New Testament.

And as he read in the New Testament, he saw so many contradictions between what he was reading and what he was seeing around him in the church. And of course, you know that from his convictions and the theses he presented to a group of people, he wanted them to discuss with him some 95 theses he presented concerning indulgences, concerning the value of relics and all these other things. The Great Reformation, as we now call it, was birthed.

As he had the courage to stand against the threats of Rome and they were very real threats on his life and on two occasions, he certainly feared that he was about to die. Out of his bravery, others also rose up. There had been men before him like John Hus and others who were brave but had been martyred by the Catholic Church for their opposition to potpourri and the indulgences, et cetera.

But Martin Luther was one of their own. He was a monk and he had some authority. And when he spoke, people listened to him.

And so there's a great deal of pressure against him. But others, taking note from his courage, rose up. Among them, of course, was men like Zwingli in Switzerland and, of course, the great Anabaptist movement of which Baptist churches, from which Baptist churches have developed.

The whole premise of Martin Luther's teaching, the core of his teaching, the motto, if you like, for his teaching would be found in several places in the scriptures, in the Old Testament, the Book of Habakkuk, but Paul repeats it many times, particularly it's led to the Romans and to the Galatians, that men are justified by faith alone, not by works of the flesh. In Romans 3, for example, verse 28, it says, a man is justified by faith without the works of the law. The works of the law simply meaning by obedience to the Old Testament commandments.

Martin Luther took it, of course, as meaning by obedience to the papal edicts and rules and the rules that the Catholic Church would institute. A man is justified by faith alone. In Galatians, the Book of Galatians is a synopsis of the Book of Romans.

Galatians is a small letter, the Romans is the expanded version of the same teaching. In the Book of Galatians, we read that the law, the Old Testament, brings us as a school teacher to Christ in order that we might be justified by faith. In Galatians 2, verse 16, it says, we are justified by the faith of Christ.

The word justified is not a word that we use very often, unless you're a computer whiz and you like to justify all your Word documents by making sure they line up correctly at the end, they all fit in the right place. That's the only place nowadays that we'll ever use the word justified. When we come to theological terms, when we come to church terms, when we come to Christian terms, when we come to biblical terms, what does it mean to be justified? A very simple definition, and I trust you've got, I know in your bulletins you've got space to write notes, and I don't see too many of them.

I've started off by saying some time ago, if you haven't got your Bibles with you, if you haven't got your pens in your hands, shame on you. I wanna give you three major points today that I think are worth writing down. I wouldn't be preaching them if I didn't think they were worth writing down, would I? What's it mean? Very simple definition, a human definition of being justified is just as if I'd never sinned.

God looks upon me because of the blood of the cross, because of the justifying work of Jesus, God looks at me and you just as if I'd never sinned. Now I know I've sinned, I know I'm a sinner. I know there are things and attitudes in my life and words that I speak and things I do that are not pleasing to God, not pleasing to other people, and I leave it on God.

And I know I sinned, but justification means that God looks at me just as if I'd never sinned. In Romans chapter five, verse one, I see there some of the fruit, if you like, of justification. Verse five, verse one, therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God.

What a wonderful word. I don't know how concerned you are, you should be concerned about what's happening in the Middle East, in Iraq and Afghanistan. And I pray and so many of you do for that situation.

I have no idea how on earth we're gonna get out to the mess they're in. President Bush obviously doesn't know how he's gonna get out to the mess he's in, nor does his cabinet, they've got ideas. And now talking with Hezbollah and talking with all the other groups around in Iran, they're wanting to talk with Iran.

Only six months ago, they wouldn't even acknowledge Iran. They're snatching their straws in order to try and find a peace. I went last night to ET, is that Evangelical Temple, is that what ET stands for? Evangelical Temple, Pentecostal Church in town.

I went to see the Christmas tree, synchronous, what a lovely evening, I encourage you to go, it really, really was enjoyable. And Les Markham, who happens to be a man I knew in Victoria years ago, he's a friend of mine, he's the pastor of the church, and I met him afterwards. But Les closed the meeting, and he made this comment that in the century that's just gone since the first world war, the war to end all wars, there has only been, I think he said, three weeks in which this world has been free of any war somewhere in this world.

Men are seeking for peace. I think it's very appropriate that the babe that is born in Bethlehem, the baby celebrated this time, one of his titles is Prince of Peace. And I'm of the conviction, I pray for Jerusalem, the

word of God tells me we should be praying for the peace of Jerusalem, I pray for Jerusalem constantly, but I do not know fully how to pray for the peace of Jerusalem, except to pray, Lord come, for you are the Prince of Peace.

I cannot see how any resolution can come politically to the situation, it can be cease wars for a while, but there can be no lasting peace till the Prince of Peace comes. But justification, being justified through the work of Jesus through faith, that which he grants to me by grace you are saved through faith, and that that of yourselves, being justified by God means among other things that I have peace with God. What a wonderful thing to think that I who am a sinner, I who have spent much of my life turning my back against God, ignoring his overtures of love to me, that when I do acknowledge him and come to him, he gives me peace.

There's no warfare between God and mankind, between God and his mankind, his people. I have peace with God. Verse two, through this I have also obtained an introduction, access by faith, into this grace in which I stand.

To the Jew, religion meant obedience to particular laws, obeying the laws, not doing certain things. There were 356 prohibitions on 500 and something things that they were supposed to do, that was the law. And they could tick off every day how many of those prohibitions they had obeyed and how many of the laws they had fulfilled and measured their righteousness.

That in fact what the scribe's job was is to define what these laws were, and the Pharisees were people who were committed to obey these laws, and thereby obtain, hopefully, righteousness. That was what religion meant to them, was obedience to law. If you ask a Muslim today what religion means to him, of course you get different answers depending on whether they were fundamentalists, whether they were Medina Muslims or Mecca Muslims, you'd find different answers.

But basically they would say trying to be obedient to God. They have no way of knowing intimacy with God. There is no intimacy with God in Islam.

The Christian understanding of religion is access to God. And to think that you and I can come to a place of access to the Holy One thrills me. When Jesus was with his disciples, one of the first things he taught them was to call his father our father.

That's intimacy. And prayer, for example, is one of those gifts given to the church to enable us to develop intimacy with God. We have access to God.

Do we avail ourselves of access to God? Justification means that I have access into the very Holy of Holies, into the presence of God. In Old Testament days, those who've been in the Sunday school, we've been through this past few weeks, look at the book of Hebrews. In Old Testament times, there was a tabernacle upon earth to which the Jews would come.

And the court outside was called the court of Gentiles. In fact, the Gentiles were not allowed into it, but they could see into it. And the children of Israel could bring their sacrificial offerings to the priest and they could watch them being sacrificed on the altar inside the court of Gentiles.

But inside this enclosure was a tent. And inside the tent, the first portion of the tent was called the holy place. And the priest could go in there and they would tend the bread and they would tend the lamp stand.

And there would be a light shining perpetually recognising the presence of God. And there was an altar there upon which they would put incense recognising their prayers. But only the priests could go in there.

And one day a year, Yom Kippur Day of Atonement, the high priest would take a spotless lamb and he would sacrifice it, he would catch the blood. And having made atonement for his own sins, he would then wash himself and cover himself with all his fine garment. And then he would take this blood into the holy of holies, the other part of the tent that only he was allowed into once a year.

And there you stand in front of the Ark of the Covenant. The Ark that contained the tablets of the law and the manna and Aaron's rod that budded. Above which was a solid slab of gold called the mercy seat.

Above which were the cherubims. And there on the mercy seat, God came in his glory to meet with the high priest. And the high priest would sprinkle the blood upon the mercy seat.

And all of Israel would wait to see if the high priest would return. In fact, he had bells upon the hem of his garment and a rope tied to him, so we're told. So that if there was silence in the holy of holies on this most special of all days, they could pull him out, believing that God had smitten him dead because the sacrifice was not sufficient.

I praise God that the day our high priest, the Lord Jesus, having made a sacrifice of his own self upon a cross, and then took the blood of that own sacrifice into the presence of his father. And while he did that, we read that the veil of the temple was rent in two from the top to the bottom. Do you remember that story? And praise God, he came out and he found his people in a locked room and he said to them, peace, peace.

It is I, and he showed them his hands and his feet. He breathed upon them and they received life and they were justified. And that tabernacle upon earth, the type of the tabernacle, is now, praise God, in a vertical aspect, and you and I can come when the veil has been opened and we have access right in to the holy of holies.

Not once a year, but every day and any day we choose to make access. That's what justification means. In Romans 4, verse 6, David quotes, David is quoted, Paul quotes David, King David, from Psalm 32.

He says this, blessed is the man whose sins are covered, the blood covering, because God imputes to him righteousness without works. So I have peace with God, I have access into his presence, but I'm also made righteous. There was a survey done many, many years ago about what are the greatest needs and desires of mankind.

And I can't remember, I'm trying to think this, I'm speaking off the cuff a bit here. I know that one of the number one or two was peace. And very high up there was righteousness.

Now the word righteousness was not used, but righteousness means a right standing. Now, in a sense, you can be righteous in a court, when a judge acquits you in a court, you then have a right standing in society. Again, there's a sense of righteousness, where we have a right standing with one another.

But the righteousness I'm speaking of here is a right standing before God. To think that you and I can stand in the presence, not only have access, but stand in the presence of God, demands that we are people who are righteous. Paul talks about our righteousness of our own self as being filthy rags.

There's a word of God tells me that through justification, through faith, our sins are covered, and we become righteous. And this thrills me, because Paul grasped hold of this, and Martin Luther certainly grasped hold of this when he taught on justification by faith, that I have become righteous by an exchange of garments. And I want to emphasize this.

If I asked you, do you believe, I know all of you say, but do you really grasp hold of this reality that when Jesus died on the cross, he took your sins, clothed himself with your sins. He bore our sins in his own body in the tree, the scripture says. And in exchange, gave us his righteousness.

We're not made righteous, it is not our righteousness that is cleaned up. That righteousness of which we read as filthy, it's not our filthy rags righteous that has been cleaned up and scrubbed. It has been done away with, and in exchange, he has given us his righteousness.

Isn't it thrilling? Grab hold of this picture of the exchange. We used to sing a song when I was a young Christian. He took my filthy garments, and he gave me a robe of pure white.

Remember that song, something like that? That's not exactly what it was. But we need to grab hold of that, that justification implies not only that I have peace, I have access to God, but I'm clothed in his righteousness. It's imputed to me, he who has made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

Paul's prayer in the Philippines, his letter to the Philippines, that I might be found in him, having his righteousness. Eternal light, I've said this verse before, forgive me, I tell stories often, and I like to repeat myself. I know I repeat myself.

I'm a schoolteacher, and schoolteachers are allowed to repeat themselves, because we know that some people need to hear something 10 times before they grasp it. How many times do I need to teach in offenses before you stop getting offended, some of you? How many times do I need to teach on some of these things? Old schoolteacher bit me. We need to grasp hold of the reality that in Christ we have been made righteous.

Him has said these words. Eternal light, holy God, eternal light, how pure this soul must be, if placed within thy searching sight, this soul shrinks not, but with calm delight can live and look on thee. There's absolutely no way in the world, brothers and sisters, that Gareth Evans can stand in the presence of God calmly, with pure delight, clothed in his own righteousness.

I'd shrivel up in the awfulness of his glory, but clothed in his righteousness, I not only have access into his presence, but I could stand before him. That's what justification means. That happened when I was 17 years of age.

From the day I knelt by my bed and asked Jesus Christ to come into my life, he washed me in the blood of Christ, he clothed me that day in his righteousness, and from that day to this day, in the presence of God, I can stand because he sees me in his son, and you too I trust. To me, justification is a past act where I was removed from the kingdom of darkness, where you were removed from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light, where you were brought from death into life. It is a past act, it was salvation for the spirit that was dead, it has become alive and is clothed with Christ's righteousness imputed to us.

Sanctification, salvation for the spirit, past, it means deliverance from the penalty of sin. Penalty of sin is death. Praise God.

From the moment that we trust Christ as our Savior, we are born again in the spirit of God, we've been removed from the penalty of death. But we're more than a soul, we're more than a spirit, we've also got bodies, and you will all acknowledge, I'm sure, that one day, those of us who know the Lord, we're going to be with Christ. That's called glorification.

It means deliverance from the very presence of sin. Penalty of sin has been dealt with, we're still in the presence of sin, we're going to be removed, praise God, from the very presence of sin, we'll be in the presence of our Lord Jesus. This immortality that is presently dying day by day, and I'm getting older, I'm not yet 90, but I'm getting older.

I hope I'm aging gracefully. I pray every day that the Lord will never make me a cantankerous old man as Martin Luther became, by the way. I pray that I'll always have a young heart and a young spirit, but my body's getting older.

And there are days when I ache a little and I get up and my neck is aching, I don't feel too good, I'm getting older. But this mortality one day is putting on immortality. This corruption one day is putting on incorruption.

Hallelujah, do you believe that? God of our hope. That's called glorification. Deliverance, salvation for the body.

When Christ died on the cross, he didn't die just to give my spirit life, he died also that this body of mine will one day be in his presence glorified. It's part of the work of the cross, part of the work of atonement. I was saved, my spirit, I am being saved, and I will be saved.

So when people say, are you saved, brother? Yes, hallelujah, was, am, and will be. This body of mine one day will be delivered from the very presence of sin. That's a future act.

But my soul, with which I was dealing mostly last week, still carries wounds, still carries hurts, needs to be transformed. In fact, Paul says this, be transformed in your mind. Do not be conformed to this world in your thinking.

Be transformed. He knows that a change has to happen within our souls. Our souls made up of our mind, our will, our emotions, our personality.

It has to change. And whereas righteousness has been imputed to us, righteousness needs to be imparted to us. We need to become what's imputed to us.

We need to become righteous. We need to become sanctified. We need to become holy.

Be ye holy, said God, as I am holy. And the word holy, by the way, and I repeat this to you, in the English language, it comes from the same root as the word whole, complete. Holiness is nothing more than being completely what God wants you to be.

That's what holiness is. God has designed you and me to be his children, and now as born again children, he wants us to be as Christ. And holiness means being all that he wants us to be.

Do you want to know the perfect man? Look at Jesus. Are you like Jesus? In the eyes of the father, yes. He calls you his son, doesn't he? He calls you his daughter.

He doesn't call you the son of Jesus. He calls Jesus your son, his son, and he calls you and me sons. He's our elder brother.

And because of imputed righteousness, and because of the work of the cross, because of justification, the father sees us in the same light as he sees his only precious son, Jesus, the only begotten son. But he wants us to be conformed to his image. He wants us to be transformed.

So that Christ is made unto us wisdom and righteousness and sanctification. And sanctification is salvation for the soul. Justification, glorification, sanctification.

The work of the Holy Spirit today is to sanctify us, make us holy, draw us apart, separate us, mold us, transform us. That is the work of sanctification. It's the work of the Holy Spirit.

It's a present work where God is delivering us from the very power of sin in our lives. Sin has been defeated, death has been defeated, but you and I are still dying. Sin has been defeated, but you and I still sin.

And God wants to deliver us from the very power of sin in life. He's dealt with the penalty of sin. One day he'll deal with the presence of sin, but right now he's dealing with the power of sin.

He wants us to become overcomers over the power of sin. And that is the work of the Holy Spirit, transforming us into the image of Christ. Philippians 2, Paul says, let this mind be in you, which is also in Christ Jesus.

Let your mind be transformed. Let God change your thinking about yourself. Let God change your attitudes.

Let him mold you. The fruit of the Spirit, let the fruit of the Spirit grow in life. It doesn't happen overnight.

It only happens to the man or woman who's standing by the tree of living water, allowing the fruit of God to grow. This is part of the process of growth as Christians. And we should be people hungering to be men and women as God wants us to be.

This is the work of the Holy Spirit. We're exhorted in Ephesians chapter five to be filled with the Spirit, to keep on being filled with the Spirit. We are the people who neglect and ignore so much the Holy Spirit.

If the Holy Spirit is God, then he needs to have his way in our presence. And we're exhorted by Paul in Ephesians chapter five, do not be like the world. Do not be drunk with wine, but be filled with the Spirit.

And then he gives us what to me are three examples of being Spirit-filled Christians. Verse 19, speaking to yourselves in hymns and songs and making melody in your heart to the Lord. Does that describe your average day? Do you find that you delight in making melody in your heart to the Lord? Do you ever find yourself singing in your car? I love you, Lord, and I lift my voice.

Or do you only sing those songs in church in the 15 minutes allocated to them? Are you a worshiper? God desires us to be worshipers. In fact, the scriptures tell me that when I look through the scriptures, God is looking for two peoples. In the Old Testament, he was looking for a man who would stand in the gap, an intercessor.

In the New Testament, Jesus said to the woman, my father is seeking those who will worship him in spirit and in truth. When God looks at the departure of a Baptist church, does he have difficulty in finding people who will worship him? Are we worshipers? Are we a people whose hearts are singing melodies unto the Lord? I didn't say simply, are you a musical person? I'm simply, I'm not talking about singing with the lips. I'm talking about, is your heart a worshiping heart? As I speak about the privilege of being justified by faith, does a fire start burning inside? Yeah, praise God.

I'm a pretty passionate person, and I get so excited about being a Christian. Do you? Don't really feel like it's Sunday morning. How many of you dragged yourself out of bed to come here this morning? How are you excited to come to sing praises? It amazes me, I meet people who call themselves spirit-filled Christians.

That seems to be a very common term on people today. And I'm not talking about Pentecostalism and tonguespeaking. I'm talking about people generally who say they're spirit-filled Christians.

And all they can do is complain about the music that's played on Sunday morning. There are times I sit there in that seat, and maybe I don't know the songs, maybe I don't like the particular song, but I find it so easy to worship God. He has done so much for me.

And evidence of spirit-filled life is that you are a person not who only sings in church, but who's being day by day, even through the struggles. They tell me that the nightingale sings most sweetly when a thorn is pressed against its chest. I don't know if that's true.

When a thorn is pressed against your chest, do you sing worship and praise then, or do you start grumbling and complaining? Spirit-filled Christians, there's what the spirit wants, and the spirit wants to glorify Jesus. Jesus said, when he comes, the comfort, he will not speak of himself, he will speak of me. The purpose, the ministry of the Holy Spirit is to glorify Jesus in the lives of believers.

Am I a channel for the glory of God by the Holy Spirit? I want to be. I dare not call myself spirit-filled if I'm not. The next verse says this, always giving thanks for all things.

In my Bible, I've underlined for all things. What Paul meant, I say, of course, was for all good things. No? Or for all good things that bless me.

Is that what I need to be thankful? Paul says we give thanks for all things, for all things work together for good to them that love God and are called according to his purpose. An evidence of a spirit-filled life. And the third evidence, as I come to a close, verse 21, and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ.

Does the fear of Christ really mean anything to you? Do I live my life so aware that I'm trying to serve the King of kings and Lord of lords because of awe and fear for him? I want to make absolutely sure that I treat you and work with you and minister with you in a submitted servant attitude. Or am I sure my opinion is the right opinion? Am I sure that I'm gonna do this thing anyway? I don't care about you. When the command of the King is that we love one another and serve one another, a submitted heart.

The number one call of a Christian is to be a submitted person, recognizing not only the authority of our King, but recognizing also the precious value of the brothers and sisters we have around us in Christ. And to know that not one of us is where we are in Christ except for the grace of God who drew us, every one of us, out of the pit, a filthy pit, and clothed us in his righteousness. What right have you got to think you're better than somebody else in Christ? What right do I have to think I'm better than somebody else in

Christ? I deserve the pit.

He has clothed me in his righteousness, not my righteousness. That's the present work of the Holy Spirit. Transforming us, changing us, imparting righteousness for that which has been imputed already to us by God.

I get thrilled about that. And I'm so glad that the work of the cross was not only to deliver me from the penalty of sin, not only from the presence of sin, but right now, to deliver me from the power of sin. And I can be an overcomer because of the work of the cross, of what Jesus has done.

Amen? Amen. Maybe there are some of you here today and you know there are areas in your life you need to deal with. Maybe there are some of you here today who do not even know that you can say that I have been justified, I know that I can stand before God.

Maybe you do not think that God can accept you. I want you to know the love of God is vaster than any thought that you might have, it can reach beyond any sin in your life. And he wants to draw you to himself, that's why he sent his son.

A wonderful example of great love. And if you had been the only person on this earth, I believe Jesus would still have come and died upon the cross, because God so loved you. Maybe today's the day that you should respond as Irene did apparently one and a half years ago, as a young lady did after this service three weeks ago.

Responded to ask Christ into her life. Today could be that day. And maybe you've already done that, but you acknowledge that you've not grown as you should.

Tell you one story to finish. I went to preach in a church in Wales, a church that held two and a half thousand people. It was built during the Welsh Revival in 1904.

And I was up in the elevated pulpit and behind me is the big organ, filled the entire wall, but there was no organs there, so I had to do every part of the service, the opening prayer, the opening scriptures, and it was a format, I had to follow this format. I turned around and said, let us sing hymn 45, great is thy faithfulness. Turn to the organ, which is electronic now.

Mm, great is. I had to conduct the singing, I had to do every part of the service, because there were 25 people scattered through this big building that used to hold 2,500 people. There was a man and woman sitting down here by the third row back, and when I came down out to the pulpit, the woman came up to me and she said, thank you, Mr. Evans, for your message this morning.

She said, I must apologise for my husband. She thought he'd fallen asleep at the beginning of the service here. I just head down all the way through the service.

And she didn't realise he was right behind her. And he says, all right, Mary, I can apologise for myself. So she left and he came to me.

Please forgive me, Mr. Evans, he said, if I appeared to be sleeping. He said, I was not sleeping. He said, I've spent this past hour making myself right with God.

When I was 16 years of age, he said, I was in that exact same pew where I sat today, and old Elder Lewis led me to Christ as a 16-year-old boy. But he said, I've not lived for him as I ought. And I've spent this past

hour making myself right before God.

I do not know, and then he added something that thrilled me. He said, I do not know what it was about this service that caused me to be reflecting on 55 years ago, whatever it was. He said, when you opened in prayer, I just bowed my head, and suddenly, I did not hear your voice.

I heard old Elder Lewis. And I felt convicted that I had not lived for Christ. So I do not know what it is about you, he said, that made me think of Elder Lewis.

And then he stopped and he said, yes, I do. He said, it's evident to me that you, like he, are a child of the revival. I drove down the valley that night singing at the top of my voice.

The revival in Wales in 1904 that impacted not only my country, but many, many nations of the world. And old Elder Lewis had obviously come to Christ justified in the revival. He said I had a passion with him 20 years after the revival when he led this young man to the Lord.

And here I was 70 years after the revival with the same fire burning within. Brothers and sisters, you want revival to come to Nanaimo? It starts right inside here. It starts with you.

Until a fire is burning in you, do not expect a fire to burn in Nanaimo. And God, the Holy Spirit, wants to come into his people whom he's already justified by faith that he has given them, whom he's already clothed with his righteousness. He now wants to come in to transform them in the work of sanctification.

And he's looking for hearts that will yield to him and say, yes, Lord, transform me. And you can be 25, you can be 38, as a young lady's birthday was yesterday, we celebrated. Happy birthday to you.

Or you can be 90, and God can continue to do the work of sanctification. If that is your need today, I pray as we close in prayer that you ask God to help you in that. Let's close.

Father, what a beautiful day we've had today to see Irene being baptized in obedience to your command. And Father, many of us have been baptized and yet we've not grown from that day. We pray, Father, that by your Holy Spirit, you'll take the words that are spoken this morning, that you will place them in each of our hearts appropriately.

Those who do not know you, Lord, that you would speak to them concerning justification. Those who know you, Lord, that you will challenge them by your spirit to a life of commitment to sanctification, growing more like Jesus day by day. And Father, we thank you for the hope that you've given us.

I pray that you'll make that hope sure in each one of us as you did with our precious sister just a few weeks ago, who entered into your presence. Lord, I hope that we're sure and strong that one day we shall be with you transformed, transformed completely into the image of Christ. Have your way in each one of us, I pray, in this church for the glory of your name.

Amen. Father, as we come before you again today, we thank you for your word. Your word is a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path.

And maybe some hearts have gone cold during this last year and they feel that the Lord is not with them this morning, maybe, but you have promised to be with us day by day. We pray that if there is someone in this service this morning that is still cold and needs you at this time, we pray that they might say with a songwriter, King of my life, I crown thee now. Thine shall the glory be, lest I forget thy thorn-crowned brow.

Lead me to Calvary. And if there is someone that does not know you this morning here, we pray that as we finish this service, that they will make Christ their King. So thank you again for your word this morning.

Bless us as we part, go with us. And we ask it all in the Savior's precious name. Amen.

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