

Weighed in the Balance and Found Wanting

by Ian G. North

We are all weighed in the balance by God and found wanting, but we can respond to God's judgment by loving Him and loving our neighbors, and by using our abilities and gifts to serve Him.

Duration: 48:10

Scripture: Exodus 20:12-17, Ephesians 5:14-16

Topics: "Judgment"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the good news, or the gospel, found in the Bible. He emphasizes that God has done what we could not do, providing a way for us to have a relationship with Him. The preacher presents four weights that can be put on our side of the balance to ensure our salvation. These weights include the grace of God, the opportunities we have to grow in knowledge and serve God, the judgment of lost opportunities, and the weight of our own conscience. The preacher references verses from the book of Titus to support his points.

Transcript

O God, we feel that all we can do is to bow before you in worship, in wonder, love, and praise, glorifying him, the Lamb once slain, but now upon the throne of glory, the throne of all authority in heaven and on earth. And as we bow before him, we pray that the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of truth, the Spirit of power, the Spirit of holiness, the Spirit of life, may breathe upon every person here. O God, may we see no man but Jesus Christ only, behind the human voice.

God grant in your mercy that we may hear your voice speaking to us. In Christ's name we pray, amen. So sorry that Dr. Stanley is not feeling well, but these respiratory problems seem to be fairly prevalent here in Atlanta, as I have found also, and no doubt many of you.

And we hope Dr. Stanley, if you're viewing as I know you must be, that you'll be back with us very soon. We're waiting for you and praying for you, but we've come here together today to meet God. Is that right? Amen.

And he is nearer to us than our own hands and feet, nearer than breathing, is the Spirit of Jesus. And I pray that every one of us will sense the presence of God in our lives and in this service as he speaks to us. Please take your Bible and turn to the book of Daniel in the Old Testament.

The book of Daniel, if you find the Psalms in the middle of the Bible and keep on going to the right, you'll have Isaiah and Jeremiah and Ezekiel and Daniel. Daniel chapter 5. The passage that we're going to read concerns an incident in the history of the nation of Babylon at the close of, actually, the reign of one of the last kings of Babylon. And it involves Belshazzar, who was a very garrulous, godless king.

The time came when his days were numbered, his kingdom was numbered, there's a time to be born, and there's a time to die. And God has numbered our days. No wonder David prayed in the Psalms, Lord teach me to number my days.

And we need to be very conscious of the fact that every day is a gift, a gift from God. And this man Belshazzar was now face to face with his last day, though he did not know it, when he arranged this magnificent banquet and invited all the lords and ladies of his kingdom to come. But right in the midst of the banquet, while he was enjoying his wine and the music, suddenly he stood to his feet and began to tremble with fear.

His face turned pale and those about him looked in the direction of his gaze and saw, to their amazement, a supernatural thing happening. The fingers of a man's hand appeared on the plaster of the wall writing, and what was written was very strange. The words are here, and we shall read this incident.

When they were unable to understand the reading, they called in this man Daniel, the man of God he's called, and the man of God read the writing. Let's see what Daniel has to say to this proud and arrogant king. Verse 22, And thou his son, O Belshazzar, hast not humbled thine heart, though thou knewest all this, but hast lifted up thyself against the Lord of heaven.

And they have brought the vessels of his house, God's house, before thee, and thou and thy lords, thy wives and thy concubines have drunk wine in them. And thou hast praised the gods of silver and gold, of brass, iron, wood, and stone, which see not, nor hear, nor know. And the God in whose hand thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways, hast thou not glorified.

Then was the part of the hand sent from him, and this writing was written, and this is the writing that was written. This is the interpretation of the thing. God hath numbered thy kingdom and finished it.

Thou art weighed in the balances and art found wanting. Thy kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians. Then commanded Belshazzar, and they clothed Daniel with scarlet, and put a chain of gold about his neck, and made a proclamation concerning him that he should be the third ruler in the kingdom.

In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain, and Darius the Median took the kingdom, being about three score and two years old. The subject of the message is, weighed in the balances and found wanting. Now, this expression, weighed in the balances, would not be unknown or unfamiliar to the people.

It seems that the ancient Egyptians, conceived of their God Osiris, weighing the actions of the dead in a literal balance. And very probably, the people of Babylon, in the cross culture of that day, also understood very well the concept of a God weighing their actions in a balance. Now, Daniel says to this man, Belshazzar, you are weighed in the balance and found wanting.

The words are interesting. It's thought to be ancient Chaldean, written in perhaps ancient Hebrew script. And yet, even if Belshazzar could read the words and know what they meant, he couldn't put it together.

He was unable to interpret it because it was a very cryptic statement. There was the word mene, which simply meant numbered. Tekel, and that word simply meant weighed.

And then peres, and that word meant dividers. Well, if you read those three words written on the wall, what would you make of them? Numbered, weighed, dividers. He said, I can't make it out.

There was something supernatural and awesome about it. When Daniel came in, he said, this is what it means. The word numbered means that your time is numbered and God has finished it.

And the word weighed means that you are weighed in the balances and found wanting, lacking. You have failed to pass the test of God's balances. Dividers simply means that men are now coming and they will divide your kingdom.

It was a judgment against this man. It was written up there on the wall. In those days, it was common for kings to write on the wall of a great royal hall like this, the exploits of his army and his conquests and his glory.

And in fact, we are told by archaeologists that written on the wall in ancient cuneiform in Babylon were in fact some of the exploits of the king. And how very typical this is that against all the exploits and the glory and the achievements of man, God writes the final word and his final word written over all the civilizations of man, all the nations of men, all the individuals that constitute the nations of men, over you and me, written over it all are the words found wanting, weighed in the balances and found wanting. Well, even to us today, the idea of somebody being weighed in balances is not altogether uncommon.

I remember when I was in India during the war between India and China, there was a great demand by the Indian government or request that the Indian people contribute to the defense fund. Of course, India is not a wealthy country even now, and so the people of India sacrificed and brought whatever they had. And when Prime Minister Nehru went to Rajasthan in northwest India, people had brought gold for the defense fund, and they put Prime Minister Nehru in the balance, a great big balance, and on the other side, they put the gold that the people had brought, and they literally weighed Prime Minister Nehru against gold.

And they gave him his own weight in gold as their contribution to the defense fund, weighed in the balances. But when God weighs us in the balances, we are not weighed against gold. What then are the weights which God puts in the balance against us? I would like to suggest to you that there are several weights that God puts in the balance against which you and I and every man are weighed.

What are these balances? What are these weights? Firstly, God puts on his side of balance the great weight of the Ten Commandments. In Exodus chapter 20, we have reference to the Ten Commandments. We need to go back to these as the very cement that holds the structure of our civilization together, and yet this is a day in which we have ignored the authority of the Ten Commandments.

I think it was President Roosevelt, Theodore Roosevelt, who said, when you educate a man in mind and not in morals, you educate a menace to society. And somebody else said also that there is little use in educating people in mind only because, in fact, the only man that modern society needs to fear is the educated man. Education is not the answer.

We need to get back to God's laws and God's commandments. Here in Exodus chapter 20, we have the basic commandments, the Ten Commandments against which God weighs us. What are these commandments? Exodus 20 verse 3, thou shalt have no other gods before me.

Verse 4, the second commandment, thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image or any likeness of anything in heaven above or in the earth beneath. Verse 7, thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain. This is becoming very common nowadays.

People say, for God's sake, and they don't really mean for God's sake. You hear people say, my God, and they don't really mean to relate God to the event taking place. We need to be very careful of taking God's name in vain.

Of course, it means more than that because it meant to these people, you have taken God's name and you have called yourself by that name Israel, using the name of God to describe yourself. We have taken that name Christian, taking the name of Christ, but if I call myself a Christian and do not live according to that name, I am breaking the third commandment. I'm taking that name in vain.

And then fourthly, remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Verse 8, the fourth commandment. Well, what about the Sabbath day? Of course, for the Christian, Jesus Christ is our Sabbath.

For the Christian, every day is the Sabbath and the whole of life is a Sabbath and we are to live it as our Sabbath day. And then we have in verse 12, the fifth commandment, honor thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee. And the next commandment, thou shalt not kill.

And again, the seventh commandment, thou shalt not commit adultery. The eighth commandment, thou shalt not steal. The ninth commandment, thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

No lying about other people, no misrepresentation. How interesting that that is brought in here, right into these few commandments that God has given. Thou shalt not covet, the tenth commandment.

Thou shalt not, that is, desire your neighbor's house or anything that is your neighbor's, going right to the heart and the motivation that drives us and compels us. The ten commandments, the first great weight that God places in the balance, the ten commandments. But then there is a second great weight that God puts in the balance on his side.

In Matthew chapter 22, a lawyer confronted Jesus Christ with an apparently sincere question. Jesus gave him the answer. In Matthew chapter 22, we read in verse 35, then one of them, which was a lawyer, asked him a question, tempting him and saying, Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy mind.

The second great weight that God puts in the balance on his side is the greatest commandment. Now, why is this commandment not there among the ten commandments? Why is this greater than any of the ten commandments? Of course, the first of the ten commandments is, thou shalt have no other gods before me. And yet Jesus says this is still greater than that.

Why? Because, of course, there are many people who have no other God but God, and intellectually they say it is impossible to conceive of there being two gods or more gods. There is only one God. We have no other God.

But it's another thing to love that God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind. The question that comes to you and me today is this, do you really love God? Some people are afraid of God, or they have a concept of a God way out there. It's impossible to love a God like that, they say.

You don't love God. In fact, Jesus, speaking to the people of his own day who were religious people, had this to say. He said, I know you that you have not the love of God in you.

And yet he was speaking to people who were moralistic, they lived good and upright lives. Listen, you can live a good life and yet not love God. They were people who had the law, they had the commandments, but they did not love God.

They were religious. And it's possible to be very religious and yet to be hard and unloving, they did not love God. I wonder if Jesus would point his finger at someone here and say, I know you that you do not have the love of God in you.

And then God has another great weight that he puts in the balance against which we are weighed. And that is the second greatest commandment. And that too is found in Matthew chapter 22, following on the statement, this is the first and great commandment in verse 39, Jesus says, and the second is like it.

Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. We are very familiar with this command. Again, the word love, the apostle Paul in Romans 13 says, love is the fulfilling of the law.

And so Jesus says, the second greatest commandment is like the first commandment. That is again, love. Thou shalt love thy neighbor as you love yourself.

What does it mean? It means that when I see my neighbor in need, I identify myself with him. I put myself in his place. I sympathize.

I empathize with him. Wow. What a beautiful quality that is to find in somebody when someone else is in trouble, you actually feel their trouble.

You feel their pain. And you love them. And you do to them as you would like that it should be done to you if you were in their place.

That means loving my neighbor as myself. But do we really do that? God puts that weight in the balance against us. And then there is another great weight that God puts on his side of the balance.

That is found in the first letter of Peter. First Peter chapter 2 verse 21. First Peter 2 21, for even here unto were you called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that you should follow his steps.

The fourth great weight in the balance against which you and I are weighed is the example of Jesus Christ. He left us an example that you should follow, that you should follow his steps. How do we stand against that weight? You see, Jesus Christ is God's normal man.

Sometimes we look through rose-colored spectacles at Jesus and say, I could never be like that. He was unique. And of course he was.

But we fail to realize that Jesus Christ is God's normal standard for human life. And this is why Paul says very confidently in Romans 3 23, all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. We have seen the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, the apostle Paul says.

Therefore, falling short of Christ, falling short of the glory of God, means that we are weighed in the balance of the example of Jesus Christ and we are found wanting. Well somebody says, well I can never

be like Jesus. I can never meet that standard.

Exactly. That's why the Bible says you are found wanting. You have sinned.

You've come short. And against God's standard in Christ, you have been found wanting. The Bible says he did no sin.

In all the years of his life, in all the weeks and days and hours and minutes and seconds of that marvelous 33 year period, he never committed one sin. He did no sin, neither was any guile or any deceit found in his mouth. When he was reviled, he did not revile back again.

When he suffered, he threatened not, but committed himself to him that judges righteously, the example of Jesus Christ. And then there is a fifth weight that God puts on his side of the balance. The fifth weight which God puts there is the weight of the abilities and the gifts that God has given to every one of us.

For example, in the gospel of Mark, chapter 12, we find Jesus with his disciples sitting near the entrance to the temple in Jerusalem. It says in Mark 12, verse 41, Jesus sat over against the treasury. That means the offering box.

There was a great big box placed at the entrance to the temple. And as people came into the temple to worship God, they simply put their offerings in the little slit there in that big box. And Jesus was sitting nearby there watching people coming up, putting their offering in the box.

And he beheld, it says, how the people cast money into the treasury, and many that were rich cast in much. I can imagine Judas Iscariot sitting there, counting it bit by bit, watching some of those hundred dollar bills going in there, some of those five hundred dollar checks, and gasping with amazement, thinking of the money in that money box. And then here comes a poor shabby woman, a widow evidently, obviously poor at a glance.

And as she passes the box, she takes out two tiny little coins and drops them in. And it says there in verse 43, he called his disciples and said to them, verily I say to you, this poor widow cast more in than all they which cast into the treasury. And of course, Judas, being a good accountant, is quickly turning over in his mind what on earth does Jesus mean? He saw that woman put in two little farthings.

Jesus goes on to explain, for all they did cast in of their abundance, but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living. What does this mean? It means this, that God is going to judge us, not by how much we give, but by how much we keep to ourselves. For you see, a Christian has come to the point of realizing that all that he is, all that he has, all his faculties and abilities and gifts are a trust to be held in trust for God.

Now, whatever your position in life, whatever your social or financial status, if you are a Christian and you have recognized that you are possessed by God through Jesus Christ and you belong to him, everything you have is to be held for God. And God will judge us by the abilities and the gifts and the talents that he has bestowed upon us. This comes through also very clearly in the parable of the talents.

In Matthew chapter 25, men received various gifts and talents to serve God, and one of them was very negative in his approach to this. And that poor man who was so negative went and hid his talent. He did nothing with it.

Now, he might have been very good in other ways, but he was very negative. There are many Christians like that. They don't do this.

They say, don't eat that, don't drink that, don't dress that way, don't go to that place, don't this and don't that. But they never really do anything. And this man who was given this talent from God went and hid it.

And when the master came to take account, the man brought the talent out and gave it back to the master. But you see, that's not acceptable to God. Some of you have gifts and talents and abilities that God has given you, and you're to be called into an account for what you have done with those gifts and talents and abilities.

Are they given to God? Are they reproducing? Are they creating for the kingdom of God? We shall be weighed against those abilities. And then sixth, God has another great weight to put in the balance on his side, and that is the weight of the opportunities that God has given to us that we have not taken. The opportunities presented to us a long life.

In Ephesians chapter 5, the apostle Paul is anxious to help these Christians feel the urgency of the days in which they live. And before speaking of being filled with the Spirit, he says in verse 14 of chapter 5, verse 16, Some of you who have modern translations may see that rendered, buying up the opportunities. Or another translation has it, buying up the opportunities, redeeming the time.

Oh dear friends, the opportunities are vast for us here, and God is going to judge us against that standard. Jesus walked through Capernaum in his day, a beautiful town there near the Lake of Galilee, that Jesus said to Capernaum, your hell is going to be deeper than the hell of Sodom and Gomorrah. Why? Was it because it was a very wicked city, worse than Sodom and Gomorrah? No.

Why then were they to be punished so severely? Because Jesus himself had walked through their streets and they had missed their opportunity. They had failed to recognize him because of their preoccupation with their selfish interests and their own indulgences. And there are many people who fail to meet the opportunity that God is giving to enter into life in Christ, to find God's fullness for their life, because they failed to take the opportunity.

Some time ago an artist made a statue representing opportunity, and on pedestal of the statue were the words opportunity. And he showed one of his friends, and the friend said, well yes that's a beautiful statue, but why have you made it like that? Because the artist had made it with hair hanging right down over its face, and with wings coming out of the feet. What does that mean, said the friend.

Well, said the artist, you see this is so true of opportunity. When opportunity comes it is rarely recognized, and when it comes it quickly takes wings and flies away. I am sure that there are many people here who look back with deep regret over lost opportunities.

All the opportunities that God has given the people of this land, and of this part of the United States of America. Opportunities to grow in the knowledge of God, opportunities to hear his word. Why, on Sunday morning driving to church you can flick on your radio, and you can hear at least seven or eight Christian programs on radio.

You can turn on your television and hear the truth of God. The opportunities to grow in the knowledge of God, the opportunities to serve God with our talents, our abilities, our money, our gifts, and yet we are bypassing the opportunities that God has strewn along our way. And we should be judged by those

opportunities lost.

And then there is one last weight that God puts in his balance against us, and that is the weight of our own conscience. Dr. Stanley this morning on channel 17 spoke on conscience. What a terrible inquisitor our conscience can be.

How many restless nights a man has. Some time ago a man who had murdered a young woman in Australia, with no possibility of anybody ever finding out about that murder, walked into a police station in Sydney and confessed his crime and handed himself over to the police. Why? Because he could no longer stand the torment of his own conscience.

In John chapter 8 you read about some people who brought a poor woman caught in the act of adultery and threw her down in front of Jesus Christ and said now tell us what should be done to her. Moses says this and that. And of course they were getting Jesus into a trap because if Jesus said well yes that's right stone her to death, he would be violating the law of the Roman administration.

If he said no don't stone her to death, then he would be violating the law of Moses. So he turned to them and said let him that is without sin among you cast the first stone. And the Bible says they all began to go away from the oldest to the youngest being convicted by their own conscience.

We are to be judged against the light of our own conscience. Well you might say what about people who've never read the Bible, never heard the truth of God. Nevertheless the Bible says in Romans chapter 2 and in verse 14 thereabouts that those who do not have God's written law nevertheless have the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness either accusing them or defending them in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ.

We are to be judged against the weight of our own conscience. So God has placed on his side of the balance these great weights and in the light of God's word all of us are weighed in those balances. Is there anybody here this morning who can say I am not found wanting in the light of God's word? Is there anybody here who would say I'm not found wanting, I'm ready to meet God, I need nothing else, I've achieved, I've accomplished, I meet the standard, I would like to meet you.

No of course not, it's impossible. The scriptures say they have all gone out of the way and whoever you are today, however high your own standards may be, in God's eyes you have gone out of the way and the scriptures say they have become unprofitable. The word is worthless.

To the man who buried his talent Jesus said bind him hand and foot and cast him into outer darkness there shall be weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth. That is the result of God's balance in our life. Found wanting, found wanting, found wanting, you are weighed in God's balances, you are found wanting, you are found wanting.

Is there no hope then? We have here in the bible good news, the gospel, the evangel, good tidings. What are the good tidings? The good tidings are these that what you and I could not do God has done. God has provided a series of weights for you and I to put on our side of the balance.

What are those weights? I'm going to suggest to you four weights, listen carefully, four weights that you can put on your side of the balance. If there is somebody here today uneasy, convicted, without any assurance of your relationship with God, listen to these four weights. You can put these on your side of the balance.

Now these four weights are so interwoven you can't separate them. When you put one you put them all, but we need to look at them one by one. Four great weights that you can put on your side of the balance to swing it in your favor.

The first great weight that you can put on your side of the balance is the weight of the grace of God. It's written all over it, the grace of God. Titus chapter 2 verse 11, the grace of God that brings salvation hath appeared unto all men.

And in Titus 3 verse 5, not by works of righteousness which we have done but according to his mercy he saved us. When I was in North India in one of our crusades at the invitation a college student walked forward and went into the counseling room. I went in and found a counselor speaking to him.

The young man was under deep distress. After he had gone I asked the counselor, he said that young man was convicted tonight of the sin of telling lies. And he had lied particularly to his mother.

He had wanted to do some work, some tuition of small children to help with his fees so that he could earn some pocket money. And she said no I don't want you to do that, you have enough money, we're making enough provision for you, we want you to concentrate on your studies. But privately he went away and made arrangement and was going out to teach small children.

And whenever his mother saw him going and asked him where are you going he'd say I'm going to study. It was what we call a white lie but there are no white lies or black lies with God. And that night God spoke to that young man.

The counselor said you must go home and confess this to your mother. If you want a right relationship with God you must have a right relationship with your mother. There must be honesty and openness and confession.

Oh he said I could never do that, she would throw me out of the house. And he was terrified of going home. But listen, he reckoned without the grace and the mercy of a mother heart.

Next night he came back to the meeting. I hardly recognized him. His face was glowing, he was radiant.

I asked him what happened. Oh he said when I went in I told my mother I confessed that I had lied to her and I asked her forgiveness and she put her arms around me and hugged me and her tears fell down on my face. She forgave me.

And you can put that weight on your side too my friend. God is not willing that any should perish. God is not willing that any should perish.

And you can put that weight on your side the mercy of God. Secondly you can put on your side of the balance the finished work of the cross. What does that mean? When Jesus hung on the cross he said it is finished.

One word in the Greek. It is finished. What was finished? In Hebrews chapter 9 there is a reference to this once for all act of Jesus Christ.

Hebrews 9 verse 26 the last part of verse 26 but now once underline it and circle it. But now once in the end of the world have he Jesus appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. Verse 28 so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time

without sin unto salvation.

The finished work of the cross. How many of you have heard of Hudson Taylor? I'm sure many of you. The great missionary to China of a century ago.

Founder of the China inland mission. I have the two volume biography of Hudson Taylor. When he was a young man he had wandered away from the simple childhood faith that he had enjoyed in a Christian home.

But he was restless and uneasy. His experiments in worldliness left a bitter taste in his mouth until he discovered the finished work of the cross. May I read to you a little of the testimony of Hudson Taylor.

It may mean something very much to someone here today. Hudson Taylor a young man restless conscious of sin. Now let me tell you how God answered the prayers of my mother and my beloved sister.

On a day I can never forget my dear mother being absent I had a holiday and in the afternoon looked through my father's library to find some book with which to while away the unoccupied hours. I turned over a basket of pamphlets and selected from among them a gospel tract that looked interesting. Saying to myself there'll be a story at the commencement and a sermon at the close.

I'll take the former and leave the latter for those who like it. I sat down to read the book in an utterly unconcerned state of mind. Believing indeed at the time that if there were any salvation it was not for me.

And with a distinct intention to put away the tract as soon as it should become prosy. Little did I know at the time what was going on in the heart of my mother 70 or 80 miles away. She rose from the dinner table that afternoon she went to her room turned the key in the door resolved not to leave the spot until her prayers for her son were answered.

I in the meantime had been led in the way I've mentioned to take up this little tract and while reading it I was struck with the phrase the finished work of Christ. Why does the author use this expression I questioned. Why not say the atoning work of Christ.

Immediately the words it is finished suggested themselves to my mind. What was finished and I had once replied a full and perfect atonement and satisfaction for sin. The debt was paid for our sins and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.

Then came this further thought if the whole work was finished and the whole debt was paid what is there left for me to do. And with this dawned the joyful conviction as light was flashed into my soul by the spirit that there was nothing in the world to be done but to fall down on one's knees and accepting this savior and his salvation praise him forevermore. It is finished the debt of your sins was paid once and for all by God at Calvary through the death of Jesus Christ.

It is finished put that on your side of the balance and then thirdly you can put on your side of the balance this weight the righteousness of Jesus Christ. What a weight that is. What do we mean you see when Jesus Christ came to this earth he came to live representatively.

That is to say he was the last Adam to represent a whole new humanity and when he fulfilled the law to the last letter it was for you and for me so that when I come to Jesus Christ and I receive Christ God clothes me and God puts around my shoulders the robe of Christ's perfect righteousness. What a relief it

is when I see my own sin my ugliness to turn away and look at the righteousness of Christ dear friends. The scriptures say in first Corinthians chapter 1 verse 30 Jesus Christ is made unto us righteousness.

When you put your trust in Christ God credits the righteousness of Christ to your account. Augustine that great saint of the fourth and fifth Christian centuries. Augustine a dissolute reckless young man brilliant in mind but lost spiritually followed by the prayers of his praying mother went to the city of Milan in Italy to teach rhetoric.

It happened that the great Christian preacher Ambrose was the minister there and preached. Augustine came under terrible conviction of his sinfulness and one day in his desperation and distress he flung himself on the ground under a fig tree in a garden and wept asking is there no way out and as he lay there weeping suddenly he heard the voice of a boy or a girl he did not know which from a neighboring house and the voice said take up and read. He thought they must be playing some game though they knew of no game in which those words were found but he got to his feet picked up a new testament opened it at the first place that his eyes fell upon and what should it be but those wonderful words in the book of Romans.

In the book of Romans referring to the closing of this age and the provision that God has made Romans chapter 13 verse 13 let us walk honestly as in the day and how this spoke to the heart of this man not in rioting and drunkenness not in chambering and wantonness not in strife and envying but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ and make no provision for the flesh Augustine said that in a moment of time the light burst in he said no further would I read nor did I need for instantly as the sentence ended by a light of security infused into my heart all gloom of doubt vanished away Augustine rose from his knees clothed with the righteousness of Jesus Christ and the peace of God flooding his heart and lastly you can put on your side of the balance the weight of your own simple childlike faith and trust in Jesus Christ you can lay hold of this gift of God for yourself you might say right there stop that's my problem I have so little faith listen my friend it's not the size of your faith that counts because Jesus said that if you have faith as big as a grain of mustard seed that was the littlest of the seeds if you have faith as big as a grain of mustard seed you can say to this mountain be removed and cast into the sea and it shall be done because you see faith is like the eye it does not look at itself but at the object it views and the eye of faith is not concerned with the size of the faith but the greatness of the one to whom it looks God says look unto me and be saved there is life for a look at the crucified one by simple faith in him Ephesians 2 8 and 9 for by grace are you saved through faith and that not of yourselves it is the gift of God not of works lest any man should burst have you put that on your side of the balance where does the arrow point now as we sit together as you view by television where does the arrow point found wanting or found pleasing

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/28/SID28616.mp3>

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