

Building Our House on the Rock - Session 2

by Paul Washer

The sermon emphasizes the importance of understanding God's righteousness and the depravity of man, and how this understanding should lead to a response of hatred and righteous judgment towards sin, but also a desire to draw attention to God's glory and beauty.

Duration: 1:14:03

Scripture: Exodus 34:6, Matthew 6:33, Romans 3:23-24, Romans 4:7

Topics: "Marriage"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the fallen and sinful nature of humanity. He emphasizes that every person is born with a depraved heart, which is the reason for the existence of sin and its consequences in the world. The preacher argues that the gospel message, which highlights God's love and sacrifice for humanity, is often rejected because it requires acknowledging the radical depravity of man. He uses a hypothetical scenario to illustrate the corrupt nature of the human heart and concludes that all other religions and principles are futile in comparison to the truth of the gospel.

Transcript

Let's begin at the beginning, verse 23, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. This is not really the beginning. You see, the problem is not really sin.

That may come as a surprise. It is a problem, but it wouldn't be a problem except for some other biblical truth. And what is that? God is righteous.

This is the one thing you must understand. God is righteous. He is perfect in any way you want to describe that morally, ethically and always doing what is right.

He loves righteousness. He is righteous. He loves righteousness.

And that's why sin is a problem. Do you see that? Let me give you an example. If a mafioso, if a mafia man.

Who commits horrific murders and crimes and all such things like that, if he walks into a courtroom. He may not be afraid at all, although the charges against him are great, he may not be afraid. There may be no problem for him whatsoever if the judge is corrupt.

If the judge is corrupt, that mafioso and his crimes, there's no problem. Why? Because the judge is corrupt. The mafioso, the criminal only has a problem when the judge is not corrupt.

When he is a righteous judge, that's where the problem starts, God is righteous, not just a little bit, but perfectly righteous. And that's both a good thing and a bad thing, so to speak. And you say, how? Well, it's a good thing in this way.

It would be a horrific thing to have an omnipotent God who was unrighteous. It would be like having Hitler over the entire universe. So it'd be terrifying to have an unrighteous, omnipotent being who could do whatever he wanted to do and what he wanted to do was unrighteous.

It'd be terrifying. And you say, well, we draw consolation in the scriptures because they say that God is righteous. He always does that which is right.

He always does that which is good. And that's true. That should bring you consolation.

But on the other hand, it should terrify you. The fact that God is righteous should bring more terror to your heart than to know that he is to think that he is unrighteous. And you say, what do you mean? Several years ago, I had to speak to a university in Europe, and when I walked out on the platform, really hardly anyone was Christian.

And I knew that they were very angry. They were antagonistic, they wanted to to have a showdown. And so I was back there praying, I said, Lord, what do I do? What do I do? You know, I know I just preach the gospel, but it's not my desire to brag about my martyrdom in Europe.

I want to actually help these people understand what do I tell them? And as I'm walking out there, something just popped into my head. And so I walked out there and I said this, I am going to share with you, those of you, you don't think much of scripture. You don't know the scripture.

You maybe don't fully understand Christianity. I'm going to share with you from the scriptures the most terrifying truth that is found there. Now, before I do, I want to warn you, some of you may ought to leave.

If you have a weak heart, if these kinds of things trouble you, please feel free to leave. I will not be offended. This is the most terrifying thing that is revealed in the Bible.

So they're all kind of ready. And so I said, this is it. God.

Is good and I could see them looking at one another. And finally, one of the bolder students said this and broke in English. And what's the problem with that? Why is that so terrifying? What's the big deal? What's so terrifying about God being good? And I answered, this is what's so terrifying about God being good.

You're not good. Now, what does a good God do with someone like you? You see, there's the problem. God is good.

He loves good. He loves righteousness. He loves truth.

He loves life. He loves what he has made. You see that and the man, the natural man, the man born into this world is not like that.

All have sinned. All have sinned. And fall short of the glory of God.

Now, why do we sin? We don't have time tonight to go back into the most intricate understanding of that concept, but I really don't need to, because the evidence is everywhere where it came from, how it started is not that important. The fact is, every person who is born into this world is born into this world with a fallen, radically depraved, sinful heart. That is the testimony of Scripture, and that is why.

Think about it. The gospel is about the love of God, God loving man so much that God becomes a man and dies in man's place for his salvation. Then why is that message the most hated message in all of America? Because in order to believe that message, you must also believe that man is radically depraved.

I've had so many people tell me, but man's not like that. I said, really, you read the newspaper, you take two children, you take one child, put him in a room by himself, give him every toy that exists on the planet for your child and then find out the ones he don't want, he doesn't want and then put them back in his hands and let him throw it away. Do that like four times.

So you've absolutely proved that this child doesn't want that toy. I can make that child want that toy above every other toy that he's clings to how I bring another four year old child and set that child in front of that child and give that child the toy. And at that moment, what happens? World War Three happens and that what is going on right there is the very reason we have genocide.

The very reason we have racism and murder and everything else. The reason why there's enough food in this world to feed everybody four times and yet children right now in South Sudan are dying in their mother's arms and their mothers die right after. Why sin, sin? It is everywhere and it's not something that was thrown upon us by society.

I'm so sick and tired of hearing people say this man is this way because he's been molded by society and society is made up of what? Of men or to hear some some entertainment, some some movie star stand up there and say, I can't figure out why we just can't get along. And yet he's divorced four women. The reason we can't get along as nations is the same reason why he couldn't get along with his four wives.

It's sin. Something I remember years ago, I was a young preacher and I was preaching at this Bible college and afterwards, this reporter came up to me and he was furious. Christian reporter, he was furious and he said, I don't believe man is that way.

And I said, what way? Well, what you said, I said, I drew that out of the book of Genesis. That wasn't my opinion. It was a clear text.

I don't agree. I said, sir, listen to me. We're in a big auditorium right now.

If I could pull out your heart. And I'm going to say this to you, if I could pull out your heart right now, every thought you've ever had up until this moment. Every deed, every word, everything.

And I could show it here right now on this screen. You would run out of this building in shame and you would never show your face here again because you thought things so twisted you couldn't share them with your closest friend. As a matter of fact, you've thought things about your closest friend that if they knew they'd no longer be your friend.

As a matter of fact, even after my last sermon, some of you thought things about me that you wouldn't want posted up here. That's true. It's true.

What goes on in the heart of man, and that's why all these religions that talk about these principles and these ways of life and all these different things, they're all just foolishness, the foolishness. Because in every one of those religions, we can just open them up and we will see the corruption that really goes on the greatest moralist, the most famous preachers. But the Bible says it's true.

All have sinned. All do sin, and why do they do that? Because they are sinners, we're not sinners because we sin, we sin because of something in us, our very nature. Here's another way of putting it that most people don't want to touch this, but I'm going to touch it.

And it's this, if I tell you today in our culture, you're a sinner, you go, yeah, we're all sinners. Well, let me use another synonym, evil, evil, that man is evil. You don't like that, do you? But that's what sin means.

Just open up your newspaper and tell me it's not true. And you say, well, I'm not like that. It's only because you lack the power.

You lack the power, whatever culture you go into. This is the real thing that goes around in the mind of the thinking man. I remember one time hearing this story about a Jewish man who suffered terribly in the concentration camps.

And when the when the war crime trials started, he was allowed to sit literally across from the man who had tortured him and tortured him and tortured him in that war crime. And the Jewish man is sitting there looking at this man who had just destroyed his family and everything else. And he broke down weeping and someone asked him, why were you weeping? And he said, because when I looked across that table, I saw that I was just like him, just like him.

And that's what the Bible teaches. And that's why men hate the Bible. And that's why you take any other religion and it will be very popular on the movie screen.

You take Buddhism, you take Hinduism, you take whatever kind of ism, any type of religion that says you're good enough to do this. And please, God, and everyone will love it, even if it works them to death and puts them in bondage because they do not have to admit, no, I have sinned. I am evil.

And that's where Christianity draws the line, says, no, you are. You and if you have not achieved the evil deeds of Hitler, it is only because the common grace of God has restrained your evil. And if God were to pull back from you and let you go, you'd make Hitler look like a choir boy.

Can't you see that's the very thing that is happening in the West? It is the very thing that is happening in the West. Don't you see that things that are applauded now in the West only 25, 30 years ago, they were considered unmentionable. You wouldn't even speak about them in public.

And children grew up to be 18, 19, 20 years old without even knowing these types of things existed. And now they're being taught to grade school children. So when you think man's really not that bad, you're not seeing it in a in a full perspective of human history.

Let me give you an example. Now, I'm not saying you can't ever walk on a beach or do something like that. Please understand me.

I just want to make a point that what people who consider themselves to be Christians would wear to a beach. Today, if they had wore the same thing only 50 years ago. The secular, unbelieving, non-Christian

authorities would either find them, incarcerated them or had them admitted for mental counseling.

For emotional instability, you realize that. What just absolutely flaunted today was considered even by unbelievers 50 years ago to be either criminal or mentally unstable. Do you see that that we can't really judge unless we have a standard and that standard is the scriptures.

And why is it the standard? Because it reveals to us the righteousness of God. God really is righteous. And that's why all these religions that say you can save yourself by your works, they're doing one of two things or both at the same time.

They're either diminishing how righteous God is. God's not really that righteous. You can make a lot of mistakes and it's still OK with him or man's really not that bad.

But the Bible says you're wrong on both counts. God is perfectly righteous and to stand before him, you must be perfectly righteous. In the account of creation and Adam and Eve, Adam and Eve sinned one time and all of creation.

Was brought under the curse and condemnation. How many times have you sinned, all have sinned, and you see, here's the problem in our society today that laughs about sin, that uses sin for marketing, that considers sin entertainment, that's not a big deal. You see, the righteous standard, God's law, honor your father and your mother.

No, we do not believe that children who dishonor their father and mother ought to be stoned today. We don't believe that. But what we do know this, it is such a heinous crime before God.

That it is deserving of an eternity in hell. And you say that's not fair. It's only because you don't understand justice.

You don't love righteousness. He does. Another thing that you need to see is that because very little is taught about the attributes of God, no one can understand how grievous sin truly is.

That's why when the Greeks had the opportunity with their brilliant mind to create a pantheon, they created gods just like themselves, gods that were immoral, gods that could trick, lie, commit all sorts of even sexual immorality. Why they made gods in their own image. But the God of the Bible is not that way.

He is pure. He is holy, he is righteous. Another way of saying it that really gets the critics off his case and really turns the argument back on people is this.

God is love, which means he is righteous. Pure. And we are not.

In any shape, form or fashion. We are not. And because the attributes of God are not taught, we don't see sin, but just look at it this way.

Imagine here on the day that the days of creation. And God told stars that could swallow up a multitude of our suns, S.U.N. God told stars to put themselves in certain places and they all obeyed. God told planets to orbit in certain circles and ways and degrees and speeds.

And they all obeyed. God told mountains to be lifted up and valleys to be cast down and they obeyed. God told the sea, you'll come to this point, you'll come no further.

And the sea worshiped. And then God looks at you and says, come and you go, no. No.

No. That's why on the day of judgment, all of creation will rise up and applaud and worship God because he has rid the earth of you. That's evil.

That's how evil sin truly is, and all have sinned and in sinning, they have all fallen short of the glory of God. They have all fallen short of the glory of God. Now, in Western so-called Christianity, what does that mean? It means this, that God had a wonderful plan for your life and you didn't achieve it.

No, that's not what it means. This is not about self-realization, this is not about a plan, this is not for you. You know what it means? You were made for him.

You were made for him, he is your purpose. He's the reason you were made. He's the reason you are to breathe.

It's not about you. You're not the center of the universe. It's not your self-realization that's going to make you happy.

You weren't created that way. You were created for him. And the reason why mankind is so miserable.

They've built every shape, form and fashion of idol that you could imagine. That's what Romans one is all about. That professing themselves to be wise, they turned from the one true God.

And what did they do? They worshiped man, but they didn't stop there, did they? That's why you go into many tribes and peoples and religions around the world. And what are they worshipping? Not man, but actually creatures that are under men, snakes. Monkeys.

Beatles. Fictional characters that they've created with a man's body and an elephant's head rather do anything than worship the one true God, and it's led to nothing but futility. And then in the West, they can say, yes, that is just absolute absurd that someone would be given to such superstition.

Oh, is it worse? To make a monkey an idol or to make a piece of metal called a car an idol or to make prestige in your neighborhood an idol or to make a certain mark on your clothing to be an idol. Or to make your own body the way it looks an idol. You see, we're all engulfed in it, and that's the reason for the misery of man.

We have sinned and we have become fools. And lived our lives for a while in a way that is absolutely contrary. Now, someone would say this, they say, yeah, this is this this gigantic mega ego of the Christian God that everything's about him.

Well, that's taking a biblical truth and twisting it. It really is all about him. And I'm going to explain to you what that means in Christianity, what does that mean? If I desired to show the greatest love that I could show to you in practical means, how would I do that? If I wanted to show the greatest kindness to you, how would I do that? I would do that by giving you the greatest gift.

By giving you the thing or directing you in such a way as to make you most full, most happy, most complete, I would give you the greatest gift I could give you. Now, in terms of reality. If God wanted to give you the greatest gift he could give you, what would it be? It would be himself.

You see, he truly is infinitely beautiful above all things. He truly is infinitely satisfying above all things. He is truly glorious, infinitely glorious above all things.

And for him to give you a thousand worlds are universes of your own and direct your attention to that beauty. It would be judgment. It would not be giving you the most glorious thing.

The most glorious thing God can do is recognize reality and reality is this. He is the most splendid. He is the most glorious.

He is the most beautiful. He is the most satisfying. And the kindest thing he can ever do for his creation is do everything to draw attention to himself so that your wandering eyes can be caught with a glimpse of glory.

That would be so great. You would never be able to exhaust it and you would never want to turn your eyes away from it. That's what it means.

That's what it means, not some mega ego. But one of the attributes of God is that he is self-giving. He is love.

Why? You know, I hear when an athlete says, you know, I'm number one. You know, why is that bad? Because he's not. That's why he's bad.

He's not. He can't even breathe. Apart from the gracious work of God, he's not number one.

Well, he's got to draw attention to themselves. What's wrong with that? They're not all satisfying. That's why this idea that, oh, my husband completes me or my wife completes me.

Listen, if your husband or your wife can complete you, you're not a Christian. You're not they cannot complete you if you have become a Christian. Your nature has been changed to such a degree that if you were to gain the whole world, it would not satisfy you.

And if you were to lose it all, it would not take you down. Because your passions have been raised to a higher standard, and the only one who can complete you is God. That's why people go into these marriages with such wrong views and so disappointed in their husband or wife, because they are a disappointment.

But. Only Christ, only Christ, and every time I sin in doing this or you sin in doing this. Any time we say anything, dress a certain way or do anything that says, look at me, look at me.

Do you realize what we're saying? Don't look at God, don't look at God, don't look at God, look at me. Look at me. Do you see? It's evil.

And stupid, and it shows a love for self, but a lack of love toward everyone else, because we're turning their attention away from that which is greatest to that which is not great at all. Do you see? So it says all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. Now, what should be God's response? I'm going to say certain things in certain ways and go back and explain them, but I'm going to say them in a certain way in order to grab your attention.

What should be the response of a loving, righteous God to sinful man? Ready? Hatred, seething, burning hatred. You've probably heard a lot of sermons on the love of God. How many have you heard on the

hatred of God? Because it's in the Bible.

Now, after saying that, though, I need to explain myself. I've heard people say this, God can't hate because God is love, and I tell them, no, God must hate because God is love. You see, what do you mean? Well, let's say that tomorrow or let's just talk using human history.

If I ask you, what do you think about the Holocaust? And you go, well, you know, I'm pretty neutral on it. What do you think about 18, 19th century slavery of Africans in Western Europe and America's we think about that? Well, you know, pretty neutral. What does that tell me about you? It tells me you're pretty immoral.

It tells me you're loveless. Or what if I tell you that they found a little boy that when he was eight years old, he was kidnapped from his mom and dad and for 10 years he was kept in a jail cell in a basement of a man's house and every day he was tortured and beaten and they found him just yesterday, but it was too late. They found him.

He was breathing his last breath and he was he had died after living that kind of hell. And I told you that and said, what do you think about that? And you said, well, you know, hey. Doesn't really I mean, it's just.

People have their they desire to do certain things, I mean, you know, how who am I to judge? Well, how do you feel about I don't feel anything. What does that tell me about you? You're a monster. That's what it tells me.

You're a monster. Monster. But you open up that newspaper and you'll read about right now, South Sudan and the orphans that are crossing the border into Ethiopia and the mothers that are starving to death and the war that's going on in the conflict between the two tribes.

Are you here about this or that? And you read it or some little child was kidnapped and killed and brutally murdered and everything else. And you read it and I ask you, how do you feel about that? You say I burn with indignation. So you have the right to burn with indignation.

You have the right to hate evil. But now, God, he has to be a doting grandfather and be neutral and apathetic toward all these things. If you and I being evil, as Jesus said, can so hate some aspects.

Of evil. Then how much does a holy, loving, self-giving God hate evil, he hates it. He hates it.

Have you not read the judgments that fell in the day of Noah when all but eight were wiped off the planet? Have you not read of Sodom and Gomorrah and the judgment that fell? Have you not read of the angels, the non-elect angels that fell, that disobeyed God and what was done to them, how they're kept in bonds of darkness? God hates evil, he hates evil. And that hatred is not just against a thing, it is against those who commit it. I hear evangelists say this used to be really popular in the 80s.

The first thing I want to tell you people is God's not an angry God. And I always go. The first thing I want to tell you is, well, actually, God is an angry God.

Matter of fact, the book Psalms says he's angry every day. And if he wasn't angry every day, being omniscient and knowing every sin and grotesque crime that's committed, if that left him apathetic, he would not be holy or loving or righteous. He is angry.

He hates evil. And you say, well, then, Brother Paul, how do you explain this? You're telling me in one sense that that God literally has hatred and wrath is manifest against the wicked. And yet you're telling me that for God so loved the world, he gave his only son that whoever believes in him shall not perish, but have everlasting life.

How does this work? You talk about a God of mercy, yet you talk about a God of wrath. And here's the way it is. We're going to go on further to explain this, but just for right now, I want you to understand this.

God looks down upon the evil of men and he burns with indignation. But in one sense, the mercy of God holds back his wrath. With one hand and with another hand, the mercy of God calls sinners to himself.

But know this one day, one day in the life of every man before the Second Coming or at the Second Coming, completely God's hand of mercy will be withdrawn from men and God's hand of mercy will no longer restrain his wrath. And then the only thing left is the perfect. Violent, holy, burning wrath of God against evil men, people tell me all the time they go, you know, hell is heaven's heaven because God is there.

You're right. They say hell is hell because God's not there. You're wrong.

Hell is hell because God is there in the fullness of his wrath. We think he just lit a fire and walked away. That is his wrath.

Because he hates evil in the same way that he infinitely loves righteousness. He hates it, and because preachers aren't saying this anymore, people do not fear evil. They do not fear it, nor do they see Christ as precious.

Now, let's go on. Verse twenty four. In verse twenty three, he says, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

And he gets to verse twenty four. He says, being justified as a gift by his grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, being justified. And who's he talking about now? He's talking about Christians.

And what does he mean by justified? It is a forensic term. It is a legal term. Now, what do I mean? It is God looking at a man and declaring that man to be legally right with him, that the moment a person places their faith, the moment a person believes in the atoning work of God through Jesus Christ.

God legally declares that person to be right with him. Do you understand that? And not only does he legally declare that person to be right with him, but God treats that person as right with him. And remember that word, he treats that person as right with him.

Now, that's very simplistic, but we're going to go on, I want you to understand some things now, let's talk about religion for a moment. Let's say that I have a Jewish man here, Orthodox Jew. A Muslim fundamentalist.

I could have Buddhist, Hindu, Christian, let's just deal for simplicity's sake, we have the Jewish man here, the Muslim man here and the Christian man. Now, when I say Christian, I mean a real one. Not American version of Christian, not the kind where it says 60 percent of the United States is Christian, not that kind of Christian, a real one, one that has been regenerated by the power of the Holy Spirit that goes on believing the gospel and bears the fruit thereof, a real Christian.

Now, the reporter goes up to the Orthodox Jew and he says, sir, if you died right now, what would happen to you? Well, I believe, I hope, I believe, I think that I would go to paradise. Well, why do you believe that? Well, I love the Torah, I love I love the law of God and I walk in the path of the righteous. The reporter, secular, says, OK, I understand that you'll go to heaven because, well, you've you've done what's right, you've you've pleased God, you've fulfilled your part of the bargain.

Goes to the Muslim, sir, if you died right now, where would you go? Well, my hope is that I would go to paradise. Why? Well, I love the Koran and I have I have the five pillars I have completed. I've made the pilgrimages, the prayers I've given the alms, I've done what I needed to do.

OK, I understand that. Goes to the Christian, says, sir, if you died right now, where would you go? He says to heaven. Why? Well, I was born in sin.

And sin did I come forth. And I have broken every law of my God. The reporter goes, sir, I don't understand.

I mean, the other men, I understand they're going to heaven because they've done what they needed to do. God owes them heaven. They completed their part of the bargain.

God has to complete his. They've done it. You, sir, I don't understand.

They're going to heaven based upon their virtue and merit. How are you going to heaven being such a failure? And the Christian says, because I'm going to heaven based upon the virtue and the merit of another Jesus Christ, my Lord. Now, that doesn't take away from the fact that once someone truly believes, having been regenerated by the Holy Spirit, that they become a new creature and they live a different way and they grow in holiness and godliness.

I'm not taking away from that, but the hope of these three men are very different. We see two hopes. We see hope of self-righteousness based on works and yet deception because they're not seeing the wickedness of their own heart nor the holiness of God.

And yet over here we see the person who has come to grips that cataclysmic, catastrophic encounter with truth. I am evil. God is righteous and there is no hope for me outside of what God has done for me rather than what I could do for God.

That's the fundamental difference of everything with regard to religion. If you want to know, there it is in a nutshell. One is man.

And. Now, look at this, I want you to think about something, the man who claims to be right with God through his own works has set himself above God, for now God is his debtor. God must pay the price of eternal salvation because that man has earned it.

And the one who owes is under the one who is calling to be paid. Yet in Christianity, it is completely different. Even though.

And I can say this without even blinking, historically, I'm backed up on every page. Most of the hospitals in this world were because of Christians. Most of the universities, orphanages, I can just keep going down the line, so I'm not saying that a person lives like the devil and is saved.

I'm talking about a person who realizes they have no hope whatsoever. They look upon Christ. They are saved.

Having been regenerated, they're made a new creature and they go out doing good. But in no way would they consider even their greatest works for one moment to be the reason for their salvation. It is only Jesus Christ crucified and raised from the dead.

That's Christianity. And so all our hope is in a completed fact carried out by a perfect person, and therefore it is hope it is a sure hope he says here being justified as a gift by his grace. Now, that's redundant.

Paul is known for that. And it's not bad Greek. It's just he's trying to make a point.

He's almost saying something like this, that we are justified. We are right with God as a gift, as a gift. Now, this word right here that I want you to see this phrase, it says here being justified as a gift is translated from the Greek word *Dorian*, which is very, very important.

Why? There's a place in scripture in the book of John where the scriptures are cited from the Old Testament. And it says this about the Messiah. They hated him or they hated me without a cause.

And what is being said there is that the people who showed their hatred toward Christ never had a reason to do it. There was no Christ never gave anyone a reason to hate him. And in the same way, what Paul is saying is you never gave God a reason to justify you.

You and I only gave God a reason to condemn us, we never gave him a reason to justify us, he justified us. By his own sovereign grace and his own sovereign work through the person of Jesus Christ, through his doing, not our own, you didn't contribute one thing, one thing, zero, it's not it's not, you know, point nine, nine, nine, nine, nine, nine, nine, nine, God and point zero, zero, zero, zero, zero, one, you. Because if it was, you'd have no hope of salvation because you couldn't even fulfill that part.

It is 100 percent the saving work of God from beginning to end, and that's what Christianity is about now. Now we come to the greatest problem in all of Scripture. This is what the gospel is all about.

And I want you to listen to me. This is what it's all about. And I call it the divine dilemma.

I want you to think about this. Now, think put on your thinking cap. If God is righteous.

He can not forgive you. If God is righteous, he can not forgive you. You see that you say, well, why? OK, let me give you an illustration.

Let's say that a man murders your entire family, all of them, and you come home to find him standing over the body of the one he has just been killed, his hands covered in blood, your family dead. You've got there he is. He's trapped.

You call the police, the police come and get him and they take him to jail and the court is gathered. You're in a small town. The court is gathered because of this this terrible crime.

The judge takes the bench. Everyone in town has come to the courtroom because they all knew your family. It was such a heinous crime.

And the judge looks down at the man that slaughtered your entire family, and he says this, I'm a loving judge, slow to anger and abounding in loving kindness. Therefore. I forgive you, you're pardoned, go.

How would you respond? Would everyone in the town, would you yourself go, wow, that was just loving judge. Is that what you would do? No, you would write and you'd call the newspaper, you'd be in the media, you'd be writing senators and congressmen even trying to reach the president to point out that there is a judge sitting on the bench that's far more corrupt than the criminals he lets free. This man has committed murder.

Can a judge just dispense with justice? No. Can God you say God can do anything? No, God can do everything. Except that which contradicts his most holy nature.

God can do anything, but he will not contradict who he is. I've heard evangelists say this instead of being just with you, God was loving. And I think, does no one teach logic anymore? Because what that evangelist is saying is God's love is unjust.

God cannot God, you know, you hear theologians talk about God's perfect. You just think that means he does things right all the time. What you've got to understand is it also means there is no conflict within the nature of God.

He never will set aside his justice in the name of love. He will never lay aside his holiness in the name of mercy. He'll never do that, he's perfect, there's perfect harmony.

And this presents what the gospel is all about. This is the heart of the gospel. And yet so rarely do I ever hear it preached.

It is this the greatest problem in all the scripture is if God is righteous, he cannot forgive you. His righteousness demands satisfaction. And until that righteousness is satisfied, God's wrath will be kindled against the sinner.

So the question is this, how can God be just and at the same time justify the wicked? That's the greatest problem in all the scripture. It's what the gospel is about the whole gospel. That's what it's about.

Now, I want to go through for just a moment the scriptures and show you this. Go to Exodus for a moment. Exodus 34, verse six.

Then the Lord passed by in front of him. That was Moses and proclaimed the Lord, the Lord, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in loving kindness and truth, who keeps loving kindness for thousands, who forgives iniquity, transgression and sin. Is this not wonderful news that he is this kind of God and that he forgives iniquity, transgression and sin? That's something of a Hebrew parallelism.

It is a repetition upon a repetition. And what it's saying is he forgives all types and kinds of sin. And we say wonderful.

But now here's the problem. Let's read further, who forgives iniquity, transgression and sin, yet he will by no means leave the guilty unpunished. Hold it.

You can't have both things. Do you see that he forgives every type and kind of sin? And yet he will leave not one guilty person unpunished. How does that work? I mean, how can he do how can he do both

things? How can he justify? And yet be just.

When the ones he's justifying are guilty, he's declaring them legally right when, in fact, they're all legally wrong. Where's your justice, God? Where's your justice? Go to Proverbs for a moment, chapter 17, verse 15. He who justifies the wicked and he who condemns the righteous, both of them alike are an abomination to the Lord, he who justifies the wicked is an abomination to the Lord.

The word abomination is about the strongest word in the Hebrew text. I mean, there's nothing worse than that. So hold it, Romans three just told us that God justifies the wicked.

And here in Proverbs, it says anyone who justifies the wicked is an abomination to God. How can you have both things? How? How can you do that now? Let's go back to Romans three. As you get to Romans three, just jump on to Romans four and look at verse seven.

Blessed are those whose lawless deeds have been forgiven and whose sins have been covered. Let me ask you a question. Who's writing this, David? David's being quoted.

Is that not true? What do you call a judge who covers sin? Corrupt, what do you call a judge who sweeps sin under the rug? Do you call him just corrupt? Do you see the problem? Maybe you've never seen this before, but this is what the scriptures are all about. This is what the gospel is all about. How can God be just and being just punish every sin and every sinner exactly what they deserve and yet at the same time pardon sinners? How can he do that? The answer is found in only one place.

In the person and work of Jesus Christ. What happened there? God in his righteousness condemns man. And his wrath is kindled against him, but God in love for his special people became a man.

And he lived the perfect life, they could not live that they did not live, and then he went to a tree. And that crucifixion was not a martyrdom, but it was according to the fore knowledge of God, which means more than just he could see it coming, he planned it, he planned it. And on that cross, what happened? Well, he was carrying the sin of his people upon himself.

To that tree and upon that tree, as Spurgeon said. And as is clearly written throughout all the scripture. And then what happened? So many things that we don't have time to go into tonight, but here's what I want to put before you.

So many people look at the cross and I'll ask them, you know, what happened there? Well, the Romans crucified Jesus, the Jews rejected him, the Romans crucified him. How does that pay for our sin? The Romans beat Jesus up and because of that, our sins were paid for, they nailed him to a tree and that paid that satisfied God's justice against our sin. No, it was part of it, but not the whole of it.

What happened? Do you remember when he cried out, my God, my God, why have you forsaken me? You see, God is holy and our sins have separated us from our God. It is a breach, a chasm that no man can cross. God is holy.

He cannot even look upon evil. You and I should spend eternity separated from God by our own choosing. You and I should spend eternity separated from God in order for us to be drawn near to God.

Someone had to suffer that separation. God's favorable presence pulled back from his son, withdrawn. Now to you, that might not mean much.

Here we're talking about the son of God. Everything God's ever done, everything the father's ever done, he's done it for his son and everything the son has ever done was for the father. And one of the things, especially in a Muslim evangelism, why this is so good is because even they will acknowledge to some degree that God is love.

But here's the problem. God is eternal. So how can God be loved if he's eternal unless there's someone upon whom he can lavish his love? And there wasn't a creation.

Creation's not eternal. But you see, the father and the son and the Holy Spirit lavish their love upon one another. The son was always a delight to the father and the father to the son, and they needed nothing.

The world was not created because God had a need. The world was created because of the super abundance of God overflowing. And on that cross, the son was forsaken of God.

You should be forsaken of God throughout eternity in hell. But on the cross, the son was forsaken of God. And then when he's in the garden, he cried out, let this cup pass from me.

What was in the cup? I've heard so many preachers say, well, you look forward and could see the cat of nine tails coming across his back and it terrified him and the cross and the nails and the crown of thorns. So the captain of our salvation is weaker than the ones who died as martyrs for his sake. We know of Christian martyrs even till today, because about 500 Christians a day are being killed now.

Christians that have gone to crosses praising God and with joy and their wives telling them, play the man, go and die in a manner worthy of your savior. And yet the captain of their salvation is cowering in a garden saying, let this cup pass from me. Do you really think that's what Jesus was talking about? He was afraid of a whip and the cross.

No, what happened on that garden? Is the reality of it all the final battle when sin was placed upon him, he would be separated from his father and then all the wrath, the fierce, righteous, burning hatred of a holy God against you was cast down upon him. Have you never read in Isaiah 53, and it pleased the Lord to crush him. What was in the cup, the wrath of almighty God, all the fierce, holy hatred of God against evil was thrown down upon the head of his son until the wrath of God was entirely extinguished so that there remains no wrath for the people of God, for those who have found their haven in Jesus Christ, for the ones who have said Rock of Ages cleft for me, let me hide myself in thee.

He paid it all. He paid it all. Him on that tree.

In the garden with his entire life, you see that. I was teaching this one time and a student stood up in an auditorium at a university and he said, I got a question for you. I said, OK, what is it? He goes, how can one man suffer for a few short hours and save a multitude of men from an eternity of wrath? And I said, oh, thank you so much for asking that question.

That one man could suffer a few short hours on that tree and save an eternity, save a multitude of men from an eternity in hell, because that one man was worth more than all of them put together. You take everything that is. And I can say this by scripture and by my own heart, you take everything that there is, planets and worlds, mountains and mole hills.

The greatest things on this planet, the tiniest specks of dust, you take angels, you take everything ever made, the most glorious of all glory, and you put it on a scale and you put my Lord and Savior, Jesus

Christ, on the other side of that balance and he outweighs them all. He outweighs them all. So now, how can God pardon a wretch like me? How can he at the bar of his justice declare me to be right with him? Because Jesus Christ paid the penalty.

By taking my sin upon himself and by suffering the wrath of almighty God, by becoming a curse, by becoming sin. And we may talk about that tomorrow morning. Now, look at our text again.

What I've described to you is, first of all, in verse 24, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus redemption. What does it mean? Redemption is a sense of paying a price to redeem or to save a captive or a slave or a prisoner, to set them free by paying a price. The Greek fathers were so wrong in some of the ways in which they thought, thinking that somehow that Christ paid some sort of ransom to the devil, Christ paid the ransom to God's justice.

You see, it wasn't. So much the devil coming after you. It was God coming after you, as R.C. Sproul has said, God saved you from him, from his justice.

By satisfying his justice, and I love to say he saved you. From himself, by himself and for himself. He paid the price, it was the blood of God's own son, and here's what I want you to understand, listen to me.

There's not a law or a morality in the world strong enough to captivate my heart, there is not a law, a principle or a style of life that was strong enough to capture Newton's heart. It wasn't a law or principle or a style of life or self-realization that caused him to lay down the chains of being a slave master and become one of the greatest hymn writers and theologians of his time and the time of the church. It wasn't a bunch of rules.

It was a style of life. It was blood. The high price of the son of God that melted the heart, I've told people before, there's not a proper bone in my body.

I don't care about being pretty and I don't care about anything, I care about one thing. Jesus Christ shed his blood for me. And if I had no other knowledge, that would be enough for any man to propel his heart through an eternity of piety.

He. Shed his blood. He suffered the wrath of God, he satisfied justice.

Redemption. Propitiation is in the next part of the text, verse twenty five, whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in his blood through faith, a sacrifice. That satisfies.

The demands of God's justice and makes it possible for a just God to forgive wicked men while still being just, while maintaining his justice. Now, I want you to look, we're going to finish here. This was to demonstrate his righteousness.

Now, look at this. Maybe you've never really, really looked at this. Verse twenty five, whom God displayed publicly, literally Martin Lloyd-Jones would say it this way, God placarded him.

If you go to some places in the Appalachian Mountains and the Smoky Mountains, you see literally you can't see the mountains for all the street signs. All the big banners about Gatlinburg or this or that you can't see anything. All these placarded things.

God placarded his son as a propitiation. He put him in the literally religious center of the universe, hanging on a tree for all to see. He did it for all to see.

Why would he do it for all to see? Well, he's going to tell us this was to demonstrate his righteousness. Why would God have to demonstrate or prove that he's a righteous God? That's a really good question, isn't it? He is righteous. So why? So the cross of Christ is not not only about atonement.

But it's to demonstrate something about God, something that apparently has not been understood. Christ was placarded before the whole universe for this purpose, to demonstrate that God is righteous. Now, why would God need to demonstrate that he's righteous? Here's the reason.

Because in the forbearance of God, he passed over sins previously committed. What does that mean? Well, I'm going to give you the closest thing I'm ever going to do to a drama. I want you to think about this.

We know so little about the fall of Satan, we do a lot less than most of these books will tell you. But we know that there is a Satan, there's a devil and we know he fell. And we know that when he fell, there was perfect justice.

And when those non-elect angels fell with him, there was perfect justice. Do you ever notice this? God did not send a savior to his fallen angels. So remember this man in humility, he didn't have to send you one.

Do you realize that? But there was perfect justice. And then then God creates this ball of dirt and upon it, he makes this thing out of clay and animates it. And this man and woman rebel against God.

What should be the accusers accusation? Where where's your justice? Well, where's your justice death? You said death. Where is your justice? And then you look at the problem, the ethical moral problem of Noah's Ark. You say, what do you mean God showed his justice? He destroyed the entire world.

He should Noah should have died along with the other seven. How do you explain that, God? Where is your justice? Noah was a sinner. His wife, a sinner, his children, sinners, his in-laws, sinners, none of them should have been saved.

They should have all died. You say, well, faith, faith does not remove sin. They deserved to die.

And then he calls Abraham. Can you imagine Abraham? The devil says you call him a friend. Man of faith, I can count countless times when he doubted you, where's your justice, God? Oh, and Israel, Israel, your your treasure, Israel, idolatrous, even after the deliverance from Egypt for 40 years, they worshipped me.

They worshipped my goat demon gods, they turned from you every time they had the opportunity. Oh, and David, David, David is your son, a man after your own heart. He's an adulterer and a murderer.

Where is your justice? Because all of redemptive history seems to demonstrate, God, you are not just. Where's your justice? Two thousand years ago, it's as though God said this. Do you want to know how I can give a proto evangelical? You want to know how I can give a first promise of the gospel in Genesis 3:15 right after the fall of man and still be just.

Do you want to know how I can save Noah from the flood? Do you want to know how I can call Abraham my friend? And do you want to know that those believing within Israel, how I can call them my treasured possession? And you want to know how I can call David a son and forgive him his trespasses. Look now to Calvary. There's your answer for there.

My son dies for them all. My elect people down through the ages, various, and so we stand there one day. Before God and all accusation silenced.

Why, because of the lamb, only one reason, the lamb of God who was slain for our sin. This is the big story. This is the big picture, this is what this is, what it's all about, and everything else pales to nothing and anything, any good thing that is set beside this gospel message becomes heresy.

If it's made an equal or set above it, this should be the theme of everything you say, Brother Paul, this is about the family, the families about the gospel. And the only way a family can function biblically is to understand the gospel, appreciate the gospel. What is the greatest gift I can give my children? What is the greatest gift for them to look at me? And know.

That that gospel is worth appreciating. It's worth clinging to that the outstanding feature of their father was not his morality or his rules or his success in obedience or his properness, that the one outstanding feature of their father and their mother was that they would cling desperately to Jesus Christ. And they loved him because he was their only hope.

That is family, that is family. And to glory, glory in him, to glory in his life, to glory in his death, to glory. I mean, in one sense, I haven't even shared the gospel with you yet, haven't gotten to the resurrection.

And this is what your family needs, you know, men think, oh, family devotions to my family devotions. Good. You just keep doing them.

But when it talks about washing your wife in the water of the word, it's not talking about you sitting your wife in a chair and preaching to her half an hour a day. That's the easy part, especially when the constant sermon seems to be submission. Do you know what that really means? Washing your wife in the gospel, telling her about Jesus, about what he's done, and every time she fails and this will be my greatest sin.

Every time she fails, you give her the grace of the gospel. Every time she falls short, you give her the grace of the gospel. Every time your husband falls short, you give him the grace of the gospel.

You gospelize your wife, you gospelize your husband, you gospelize your children. Oh, yes, there are rules. Yes, there's time for for rebuke and reproof and all those things.

I don't want to take away from that, please. I'm just coming at it from another angle. But the main thing is this.

When I looked at my father, I want my children to say, I saw a man who believed the gospel and told me about the gospel and begged me to cling to the gospel. And his whole life was about the gospel. And my wife looks at me, she won't go, oh, there's an American hero or there's this outstanding this or outstanding that or is this broad shoulder, deep chested man in whom I could trust that would defend our family.

No, that she would say he clung. Desperately to Jesus. And sometimes he was so broken and so wrong and so small and so stupid, but there was one thing Jesus was his prize and only hope, Jesus, Jesus, Jesus, Jesus.

I know I may sound foolish to you. But just Jesus, he's enough. That's what family is about.

If you came to my house. I don't think you would see hypocrites. But you'd probably not see the perfection you'd be thinking you'd see, but you would be seeing.

A lot of times a husband that was sorry, clinging to Jesus. A wife that every day was just saying Jesus is all I have. Parents that would sit in a room at night and talk about.

Today, we were angry with our children, we so need grace. Today, we were this or that, you'd see children, hopefully they're learning all we have is Jesus. Jesus, everything is about Jesus.

Jesus. And I'll tell you something to move in that kind of context is really freeing and it doesn't cause you, if your heart's been regenerated, to want to slack or to give up on being more holy or to teach your children the right way. No, it doesn't.

When you see this freedom, though, it causes you to boldly go out and want to be more. And yet there's grace when you don't reach that standard and when your children don't reach that standard and your wife doesn't make that standard and so on and so forth. There is great progress, brothers, don't don't.

I'm not trying to tell you that the Christian life is just a powerless failure. It's not. There are families here who are growing and doing well.

There are men and women who are being changed in my own life, even though it's slow. I see progress over the last 30 years. I see progress in my wife.

I see my children coming to understand certain things about God. Yes, there is power in the gospel, not just for justification, but to change us and make us different. But I want you to see that.

I guess you don't fight fire with fire. You fight everything in the home with the gospel. Your problems with your wife or your husband with the gospel.

Teaching your children the gospel. And all those other things are very good in their place, and some of you have a better balance at it than I do, I'm sure. And what I'm coming tonight at you, I'm not coming to you with a balance.

I'm kind of almost it seems like I'm depreciating the other. I'm not. It's good.

But I want you to see, children, it's all about the fact that someone loved you enough. To die for you. And it's devotion to him.

All right, well, let's pray. Father, I pray. That you would work in the heart of people or even as you're stirring, you stir my own heart to think about how much more I want to be pleasing to you because of what your son has done and what you have done through your son.

Lord, help us, Lord. To gospelize one another, to think great thoughts about your son and to love him. And that that would be, Lord, the topic of our conversation.

Our great joy. To speak much about Jesus. In Jesus name, Amen.

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