

Scripture Is Sufficient for Personal Evangelism

by Paul Washer

The gospel of Jesus Christ must be proclaimed in its fullness, including God's justice and wrath, to lead to true repentance and faith.

Duration: 1:00:47

Scripture: Exodus 34:5, John 3:16, Romans 10:6-7

Topics: "Personal Evangelism"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher shares a powerful encounter with a man who has just been told he has three weeks to live. The preacher cancels his plans and commits to staying with the man until he either accepts Jesus or passes away. They spend the night going through scripture after scripture, emphasizing the need for repentance and faith. After a time of prayer, the man has a profound moment of repentance and sees the beauty of God's creation contrasted with his own sinfulness. The preacher recognizes this as the beginnings of saving repentance and emphasizes the importance of proclaiming the gospel message of repentance and belief.

Transcript

The National Center for Family Integrated Churches welcomes Paul Washer with the message Scripture is sufficient for personal evangelism. It is a tremendous privilege, tremendous privilege for me to be here. People always laugh, they say, I always say that, that's because it always really is a privilege.

I can think of no greater privilege other than knowing our Lord than to be able to speak much about his gospel. Before I get started, I want to go to the Lord in prayer. Father.

Father, I come before you in the name of your son, Jesus Christ. And I know that apart from him, I would have no part with you. Father, I thank you for your mercies.

From before even the foundations of the world. From before our conversion. And after.

Lord, that there is not a man who could say, look, I have done this. Look, I am good. Weigh my virtue and my merit and see how I stand.

If you were to judge father without mercy, there would be no hope. So, father, we delight in the gospel. We take great joy in the gospel.

And we recognize that it is the gospel of your dear son that saves us. Father, I pray that today you will give us wisdom. Give us grace.

To understand the sharing of the gospel and evangelism. And the necessity. Of preaching true.

Of following the scriptures, of honoring Christ and doing good to men. Help us, Lord, in this endeavor to be joyful, to be loving, but to be serious and solemn because we are dealing with souls. Father, help us this day.

In Jesus name, amen. The gospel of Jesus Christ. One of my greatest arguments against contemporary Christianity is that the gospel of Jesus Christ is treated as Christianity 101.

It has been reduced down to four spiritual laws or five things God wants you to know. I want you to know this, the gospel of Jesus Christ is the greatest of all doctrine. And.

You could live a thousand lifetimes, you could spend an eternity of eternities in heaven, and you will still not comprehend what it means for Christ to have died for your sins. The gospel of Jesus Christ. Our country, the West, is not so much gospel hardened as it is gospel ignorant.

And it is gospel ignorant because its ministers are gospel ignorant. And because the very people who labeled themselves evangelical are gospel ignorant. When I am interviewing a young man, he tells me he has been to Bible college or seminary.

I'll ask him this question. How many special classes, specific classes did you take? That defined the gospel of Jesus Christ. Most have never taken one.

I want you to think about this, the greatest message that we have to give the world. And yet when we look at seminary training, Bible training and Bible schools, there is so little emphasis. Why? Because we believe that we know the gospel.

But what is that gospel in America today? It is nothing more than, did you know God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life? Do you know you're a sinner? Do you want to go to heaven? Do you understand Jesus died? Would you like to pray this prayer and ask him in? Amen. That is what most people are preaching today in the West with regard to the gospel of Jesus Christ. And I assure you that is not the gospel of Jesus Christ.

It is heretical. It is anti-biblical, and it has led to the damnation of a countless multitude of men and women. And if reformation is going to occur.

It will occur at the rediscovery of the gospel. Of the gospel preached by Paul. By the reformers, by the Puritans, by Spurgeon, by Martin Lloyd-Jones, by every man and woman that has ever truly been used by God.

Now, what I want to do today, we're talking about the sufficiency of scripture and personal evangelism. I want to, first of all, tear down some sacred idols that are all throughout the evangelical community that have gone from the West into every part of the world. So let's just look at it for a moment.

I want to do a critique of what is commonly called spiritual laws. Five things God wants you to know are Romans Road. So we walk up to an individual.

Does not know Christ, a man of the world, a man of the West, and we say to him, God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life. Now, I want you to think about the person you're addressing. He's a man of the West.

He is a man, a natural man, and therefore he is self-centered. Egotistical, he is not about God, he is not about the glory of God, he is not about living for God, he is about self. His life is controlled by self.

That is one of the common characteristics of the natural man. So you walk up to him and you say, God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life. His response is what? God loves me.

Well, well, that's fantastic because I love me, too. And you're telling me that God even loves me more than I love me. Well, that's wonderful.

And God has a wonderful plan for my life. Well, I have wonderful plans for my life, and you're telling me that if I'll accept this, God, he'll help me with all my wonderful plans so that I can have my best life now. That's not the way you preach the gospel.

I want you to imagine for a moment Noah's Ark, the fountains of the deep bursting forth and carrying it up, rain pouring down for 40 days and 40 nights. People screaming and clawing at the door as the boat is being lifted up into safety. And then Moses puts a sign on the door, Noah puts a big sign on the door that says God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life.

I want you to go to Egypt for a moment. Go back into history and go to Pharaoh and all those people who lost their firstborn sons and say God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life. It is true, my friend, that God loves men, and it is true that the sovereign providence of God is delightful and it is for the good of men.

But we also have to understand who God is and the predicament in which men find themselves. Many rebellious, hating God's person and hating God's law and themselves under the wrath of God, and you're just going to walk up to the man in the West and say God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life. You are not telling him the full course of the gospel.

I want you to turn it in your Bibles for just a moment with me. And I want you to look at Exodus chapter thirty four, verse five, the Lord descended in the cloud and stood there with him as he called upon the name of the Lord. Then the Lord passed by in front of him and proclaimed the Lord, the Lord God, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger and abounding and loving kindness and truth.

Who keeps loving kindness for thousands, who forgives iniquity, transgressions and sins, yet he will by no means leave the guilty unpunished, visiting the iniquity of fathers on the children and on the grandchildren to the third and fourth generations. Very rarely in Scripture do we find God proclaiming himself. Here we do word for word and look at the reaction of Moses in verse eight, Moses made haste to bow low toward the earth and worship.

You walk up to a man and say God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life when you use the word God to him, it could mean anything. As a matter of fact, the greatest hour of idolatry in America is Sunday morning because all the people are there gathered together worshiping a God that is not the biblical God, but a figment of their own imagination. And if you were to stand before them and tell them about the God of Scripture, they would storm out of the church saying, I could never love a God like that.

So when you go to men with the gospel, their greatest and first need is to know who God is in knowing who God is. They then have a focus point to determine who they are. So what do we do? We teach men about God.

We tell men who God is, because it's that proclamation of God. That will allow them to see the depth of their own depravity and maybe bow low and worship. Let's take this over to family and children evangelism, child evangelism in the family.

The greatest need of my eight year old, my six year old and my two year old. But my little boys that I'm teaching eight and six, their greatest need is to know who God is. Wise men shouldn't boast in wisdom.

Rich men shouldn't boast in wealth. Strong men shouldn't boast in strength. The one who boasts should boast in this, that he knows God.

They need to know God in his fullness. To be taught about God day after day after day again, let's go back to just our common seminary and Bible training in America. I ask graduates from seminaries or from Bible colleges, how many semesters did you spend studying the attributes of God? Many, apart from just a few weeks in systematic theology, never did.

Look what we're doing. Just think about this. There is no greater truth.

And yet it's something we've just passed by. What does America need? What does the West need? They need men and women, even children, if the men will not do the work who will stand up and tell them who God is. Not a politically correct God, not a God that will get you on the Oprah Winfrey show, but a God of the Bible.

And to proclaim him in his fullness. So instead of God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life. It would be friend, would you give me a few minutes to outline for you biblically? Just who God is.

Let me tell you that he holds claim upon you as your creator. He made you, whether you acknowledge it or not, he possesses and owns you. He is your Lord, whether you acknowledge that or not.

He is a good and loving, kind God who reigns good upon the evil and the good. And therefore, you are even further indebted to him. He is a just and a righteous God.

Therefore, he must deal with you in that righteousness. Do you see explaining to them who God is now? In that explaining. We also must do the dark work.

The hard work. We must speak to men about their great problem. And what is that great problem? Man only has one problem.

It's sin. That's it. That's the only problem man has, and if you're not going to deal with his problem, you're not going to preach to him the gospel.

There are many today, even in the largest churches in America, that boast about the fact that they do not speak to men about their sin. I can tell you those men do not have the ministry of the Holy Spirit functioning in their ministries. The Holy Spirit is a thousand miles from them because one of the chief ministries of the Holy Spirit is to convict men of sin.

And if you're not going to deal with the sins of men, the Holy Spirit is not going to be working in your ministry. Imagine how immoral it would be for a physician, knowing that his patient has a terrible malady that will lead to his death, that that physician refuses to make that malady known because he does not want to hurt the patient's feelings. Or possibly cause some riff in their relationship.

We are immoral when we do not talk to men, women and children about their sin. Now, I want you to go just for a moment to the book of Romans. Chapter three, and I'll be talking about this probably again this evening, Romans three.

Now, if you will look in verse 10 or verse nine of chapter three, what then are we any better than they? Not at all, for we have already charged that both Jews and Greeks are all under sin. Go to verse 19. Now, we know that whatever the law says, it speaks to those who are under the law so that every mouth may be closed and all the world may become accountable to God.

And then the end of the discourse in twenty three for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. What is Paul doing? Paul is using everything at his disposal for one great purpose to condemn all men. To bring men to the point of condemnation, he he is using.

These chapters in the book of Romans, the beginning of the book of Romans, the closest thing we have to a systematic theology, he is beginning his discourse dealing with the sin of men and he's dealing with it in order to bring all men under the reality of their condemnation. That they know their sin, they acknowledge their sin, they feel their sin, how little is that done today? If you were to look at the preaching of the Spurgeon, the preaching of a Whitfield, the preaching of the Puritans, they worked hard, they labored, they agonized over ways to reveal to men their sin and thus their need of God. But is that done in America today? Absolutely not.

Because usually, as I said, it begins with God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life. And then it goes on to something like this. Do you know you're a sinner? That's like a doctor going to a. A very ill patient and saying, you know, you have cancer, don't you? How can we deal with sin so tightly, do you know you're a sinner? And if the person says, yes, I know I'm a sinner, then they go on to the next question, what would you like to go to heaven? But let's just stop here for a minute.

If someone's if you ask someone, do you know you're a sinner? And they kind of smile and say, yes, they didn't understand the question. You see, here's what you need to know, even if they say, yes, I know that I'm a sinner, it means absolutely nothing. Go ask the devil if he knows he's a sinner, he'll say, well, yes, I am, and a mighty fine one at that.

He'll boast in his sin, that's what men do, they boast in their sin. So you've asked him if he's a sinner. He's kind of smiled with a twinkle in his eye and said, yes, that means nothing.

The question to the sinner is not, do you know you're a sinner? The question is this, having shared the gospel with you, sir, having told you who God is and who you are and what Christ has done for you, having shared the gospel with you, has the Holy Spirit so worked in your life that you are now beginning to hate the sin you once loved? Has something happened in you? Is the Holy Spirit working, convicting of sin, showing you the heinous nature of what you have done against God? I remember years ago preaching in a church and as I was preaching about halfway through, the Holy Spirit began to move and I saw people weeping for their sin over to the left of the church. And then over here, people started weeping. And then about three quarters of the way through the sermon, people just started coming

forward because it's what they'd been trained to do.

And they were crying and they had prepared a whole bunch of counselors there to do the counseling. And I saw the person who was the head of the counselor looking at the head of the counselors looking up at me like, shouldn't we go? Shouldn't we help them? And I said, no. And then I realized after about five minutes, this counselor wasn't going to listen to me.

So I stepped down out of the pulpit and I walked over there and I said, no. Don't counsel these people. Have none of the counselors go forward.

And then finally, I realized this person was going to bolt on me and was going to go ahead and do it anyway. So I touched them on the shoulder and I said, don't touch the ark of God. What's my point? God was breaking these people over their sin.

We have no business comforting them. Leave them alone to God. Let God deal with them.

Let the spirit of God drive it home until they have absolutely no hope whatsoever in the flesh. Let them feel the weight of their sin. Do not try to save them from God.

Do not say peace, peace when there is no peace and thus heal the people superficially. There are some of you who are older, you remember when preachers preached this way. And with great power, but they do so no more.

Do you know you're a sinner? Well, sir, let me open the scriptures and show to you just how great your sin is and in just what a great predicament you are truly in. If they say that they know that they're a sinner, then oftentimes they're asked this question. Well, let's go through it again.

Do you know you're a sinner? Yes, I do. Well, would you like to go to heaven? That's usually the next question, would you like to go to heaven? Let me ask you a question. Who doesn't want to go to heaven? That's what political theory is all about, to produce a utopia on Earth.

A place where everybody gets exactly what they want. So when you ask a man, do you want to go to heaven? And he says, yes, do not let your heart jump inside you as though a great thing has happened. My dear friend, remember this, if you remember nothing about what's said here this afternoon.

Everybody wants to go to heaven, they just don't want God to be there when they get there. So the question is not, do you want heaven? The question is, since I have preached the gospel to you, has the Holy Spirit so worked in your heart that the God you hated, the God you ignored is now becoming precious to you? Has something so happened in your heart that now you desire this God that I explained to you? And see, that's very important, because if you portray God, as most of the evangelical community is proclaiming him today as nothing more than a cosmic servant to give you your best life now, then of course he's going to want a God like that. But if you tell him the God of the Bible, he is not going to want that God unless the Holy Spirit is dealing with him, unless the Holy Spirit has shown him the glories of God through the preaching of the word, unless the Holy Spirit has shown him the depth of his own depravity and his great need, he will not want that God.

That's why it's so important before you go offering God's gospel that you explain exactly who this God is. Do you want to go? To heaven. My dear friend, that's not the question, but if we're interviewing a person usually in personal evangelism here in America, we say, do you know you're a sinner? And if they say yes,

we go on to the next question.

Would you like to go to heaven? Well, yes, I would. And then. Well, would you like to pray this prayer and ask Jesus to come in? I will challenge you, don't do it here, come up after this meeting.

You can't find that in the Bible. There's no apostolic call anywhere in the book of Acts that makes that kind of statement. Jesus never asked that question.

No one ever did. And you say, oh, brother Paul, we've got you here. The book of Romans chapter 10, before we're done, I'm going to show you that the book of Romans chapter 10 is one of the most twisted texts.

In the Bible today, listen to Jesus. The time is fulfilled, the kingdom of God is at hand now, repent and believe the gospel. He didn't come to Israel saying the time is fulfilled, the kingdom of God is at hand now, who would like to ask me into their heart? That's not what he said on the day of Pentecost, Peter, after preaching the great discourse, defending what the spirit was doing in the life of the apostles and proclaiming the gospel, he did not say now who here would like to ask Jesus into their heart? But it was again, repent.

Believe the gospel, turn to the Messiah, listen to the Apostle Paul, Acts 17:30. Therefore, having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to all men that all people everywhere should repent. Now, I want you to realize something that is often said when a preacher preaches a historical Orthodox gospel, they say you're preaching a works gospel.

Well, why? Because you're calling men to repentance and that's a work. Well, sir, let me just share with you something by that definition. Then faith is also a work.

First of all, we need to understand that when the gospel is proclaimed in the Bible, the invitation is repent of your sins and believe. Secondly, we need to understand that in the Orthodox confessions of the Christian faith, the Westminster and the 1689 London Confession, repentance and faith. Are listed there as the way in which a man gets saved, but here's what you need to understand.

We can call for men to repent of their sins and believe the gospel because we know that those things are not the product of the flesh of a man, but they are the product of the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit, that salvation is a super natural work of God. It is a creation. A creation on par, if not greater than the very creation of the universe, because God created the world ex nihilo, but when he saves a man, he creates a new creature out of a massive depravity.

See, here's what you need to understand. We have taken the doctrine of regeneration and reduced it down to nothing more than a human decision. Evangelism today in America is nothing more than decisionism.

Have you made your decision? I want to tell you something. You can pray that sinner's prayer a million times and you can make that decision a thousand times and still be lost. Because salvation.

Does it come from a change of the will and action of the will? Yes, we must repent. Yes, we must believe. But what you must understand is how does a radically depraved, God hating man with a heart of stone that cannot respond to divine stimuli, how does he repent and believe only because of a supernatural work of the spirit of God? Let me share with you something about preaching.

When I walk out into a pulpit, when I walk out into the street, when I walk out into the middle of the jungle, I am Ezekiel in a valley of dead bones. Those men stand about as much chance of coming to Christ as those dead bones, very dry, have a chance of being raised up. But we go out there and we go out there by faith.

And if someone asks us, even the Lord, can these bones live? We say, you know, oh, Lord, it is in your power to command all the manipulation, all the exercise of the will, all the speaking with eloquence will do nothing to raise the dead. That is why as preachers we go out only armed with the gospel of Jesus Christ. And we know that if we go out there long enough and we preach faithfully enough, somebody is going to be raised from the dead.

It is a supernatural work of the spirit of God. You see that, oh, it makes our ministry so glorious, we're not little boys peddling stories, we're not salesmen manipulating other men, we're prophets and we proclaim a singular message. That requires the very power of God to be effectual, repent.

Believe the gospel. Repent and believe the gospel. Tonight, I'm going to be sharing the content of the gospel.

So tonight, today, I'm primarily or this morning, I'm primarily focusing on on the invitation, on the presentation of the gospel invitation. Now, I want you to look at something. I preach the gospel to a man.

On a personal level, airplane, park bench, wherever. Or to my own children. And after I have preached to them who God is and what God has done for them in the person of Christ, I tell them over and over and over again, you must repent, you must believe the gospel.

And so many times, even from my own children, so many times people will say to me, Brother Paul, I see that I must repent. But what is that? How do I know that it has happened to me, that I have done it? I'll give an example. I had a dear, a dear man from Mexico who is working construction and my brother in law was was witnessing to him every day, every day.

And God began to seem to deal with him. And one day he came to my brother in law and he said, I need to get saved. I need to get saved.

I desperately need to get saved. Of course, this was all in Spanish. And and so my brother in law said, well, let's go talk to Paul.

So he came into my office. And he said, hermano, necesito Jesus, brother, I need I need Jesus, I need something, I need to be saved. And I said, well, tell me about it.

He said, well, I've heard the gospel over and over and over in the last few months, just every day from John and and from you a few times. And and I understand I've understood it with my mind. But but yesterday I was out working construction out on the road and I said, and what? He said, I looked up at the sky.

And it was a clear day. And I said, and and he goes. It was just so clear, it was so clean.

And the whole thing was screaming at me, telling me I was filthy, I was filthy, I was filthy. I said, really, then what happened? He said, and then he goes, I know I can't explain it, but I looked over at the trees. They were so straight and and right and and perfect and beautiful and strong, and God made them that way.

And I'm so twisted and deformed and ugly and full of sin. What's going on there? A work of repentance, my friend, a change of mind that the power of the Holy Spirit could lift a man's face to the sky, show him the clarity of a cloudless day and make him hear the entire book of Romans chapter one, two and three. The spirit of God, a supernatural work, and so I said, well, brother, it looks to me, friend, like.

There's the beginnings of repentance here. Of saving repentance, and so what am I to do? I take him through the biblical characteristics of repentance, sufficiency of scripture verse by verse. This is what the Bible says repentance looks like.

I talk to him about a change of mind. I talk to him about a brokenness or sorrow for sin. I talk to him about a personal acknowledgement and confession of sin.

I talk to him about a desire to turn away from sin, a renunciation of self-righteousness and good works, a turning to God. And then I said, is this in any way a reality in my life? And before I could a reality in your life and before I could get the words out, he said. He looked down at my Bible and he said, that's it, that's what's happened to me, that's what I'm doing because I'm repenting, aren't I? Yes, you are.

Well, what more do I need? Believe. On the name of Jesus Christ and you shall be saved. But I know, Brother Paul, I know that.

He died, I know that he's the only son of God, I know that he's the way, the truth and the life, but what do you mean? And I shared this with him to become a recipient, a beneficiary, beneficiary of God's great work of salvation. We must believe our trust in what God has done through his son, Jesus Christ, on our behalf. We must forsake all other confidences and place our trust exclusively in the person and work of Jesus Christ, his death on the cross for our sins and his resurrection from the dead.

We must believe what he did. He did for us and that he has that we have been reconciled to God and given eternal life in him. And he said, that's what that's what I'm doing.

I believe that. And then he said. I'm saved.

I'm saved. How do you know the word? What the Bible says, I know it's true, I know I'm saved now, what would have most evangelists in the United States of America done to that man? They'd had him praying a prayer a long time ago, no reality of the spirit's work, trusting in the fact that one time in his life he asked Jesus to come into his heart and he thinks he's sincere. Instead of dealing with a man biblically, let me tell you a story happened to me about 30 clicks south of Alaska years ago.

Just love this story really happened. I was preaching in this church, actually the grizzly bear population outnumbered the people in the town from what they tell me. And as a hunter, that was a good thing.

And I started to preach and the doors opened up in this mountain of a man came in. He looked to be about 65 years old. He was a giant, saddest human being I've ever seen.

And he walked in and he sat down on the front row and he just looked at me. And so I just began preaching the gospel. There are only about 20 people in the building.

And after I finished preaching the gospel, I went down to him, I said, sir, what's wrong? I said, you have to be the saddest human being I've ever seen. He pulled out a manila envelope with an X-ray in it and he held it up and he said, I've just been to the doctor. He told me I'm going to die in three weeks.

He said, I've worked all my life on a working cattle ranch, you can only get there by bush plane or riding in by horseback. He said, I'm not afraid of anything, ever been afraid of anything, he said, but I'm afraid now, he said, I think there's a God and. I've never been to church, though, until tonight, but some time ago, one guy told me about some fellow named Jesus and you talked about him tonight.

I'm going to die and I'm scared. And I said, sir, you have every right to be scared. And he said, what must I do? And I said, didn't you hear the message? He said, yes, I heard the message.

Did you understand it? He said, I understood it. He said a child could have understood that message. Jesus died for us.

And I said, well, do you believe it? He says, well, I mean, I think you're telling me the truth now at that point. What would have happened in a typical evangelism scenario? Someone would have said, well, would you like to have Jesus come into your heart by praying this prayer? But instead I said, sir. You have three weeks to live and I'm supposed to leave tomorrow on a plane, I will cancel my flight and here's what we'll do.

I will stay with you and share with you the gospel until either you are converted or you die and go to hell. And so we began he needed to repent, he needed to believe. So we go through scripture after scripture on repentance, on faith, Old Testament, New Testament, the entire Bible, the full counsel of God screaming out at him at what he must do over and over and then praying through texts and teaching and on and on gets later and later in the night.

And then we stopped for prayer again. And after prayer, I said, sir, read John 3:16 one more time. Everything you need to know is found there.

Read it, he said, but we've read it so many times. I said, yes. And so he had that my Bible on his lap.

I'll never forget those big old hands of his turning the pages. And he started to read, he said. It.

For God. So loved the world that he gave his only son, and then he just started to shake. And he said, I'm saved, I'm saved, I have eternal life, I'm so my sins are gone.

I said, how do you know that? He said, haven't you ever read this verse before? What's going on? Listen to me, people, not just our children. But the drunk in the gutter, how dare you give him some kind of gospel that lasts a few minutes and then purposely declares him to be born again because he prayed some prayer he repeated after you. People are important, you deal with them, you stay all night with them, you pray with them until they come to understand, because isn't it true the verdict against modern day Christianity is ten thousand and ten thousands worth of people get supposedly saved every day and none of them walk in holiness, none of them return back to the church.

I had a beloved brother in Romania tell me years and years ago, he said, I'm tired of all these Americans coming over here, preaching the gospel and giving their invitations. And I said, why? He says they go back to the United States telling people that two thousand people got saved, but not one of them returns to the church on Sunday. He says, if what the American evangelists say is true about my country, Romania, then everybody in Romania has been saved four times.

A superficial gospel that does not honor God and does not benefit men, it is not the way our fathers taught. If you honor Spurgeon, why don't you preach like Spurgeon? If you so appreciate the Puritan and

the reformer, then why don't you deal with souls as they do instead of being caught up in this contemporary American Christianity that has no biblical foundation? It's dealing with the souls of men. My children.

I've witnessed to them since they were born. There are signs now in my ear that possibly there's evidence of a working of God, but I share the gospel with them over and over. And when my son says something like, Daddy, I believe.

Many times I've looked at that and thought to myself, it's merely self-preservation, he's afraid of hell. There's no brokenness over sin. I thought that in my own heart, he has little understanding of what he's saying.

But do I tell him that? Absolutely not. What do I tell him, son, I have no way of looking in your heart. And if you are truly believing the gospel of Jesus Christ, you are saved.

But son, these evidences are going to follow. More and more, Christ is going to become a delight to you. You are going to desire his word, and though you will not be immune to temptation and sin, you are going to begin to delight more and more in righteousness.

And when you turn away from Christ, you're going to sense the discipline of God. Oh, son, tonight, if you have truly believed, you are saved. But because I love you and I am your father and I know the word, I'm going to study scripture with you.

I'm going to watch over your life until with the scriptures themselves you have a solid biblical assurance of conversion. Do you see the difference? Instead of trying to parade your son off to a baptismal class so that you can boast about what homeschooling does. Dealing with their souls.

Now, with the time that is remaining to me, I want you to go for just a moment to Romans chapter 10. We don't have time, of course, to go through this entire text, I wish we did, but. He goes on in in verse six, he says, but righteousness based on faith speaks as follows, do not say in your heart who will ascend into heaven, that is, to bring Christ down or who will descend into the abyss, that is, to bring Christ up from the dead.

What does he say? Salvation does not require from man some great feat beyond his power. We are not saved because of our ability to conform to some law, we are not saved because our ability to strenuously seek out salvation. The salvation is a gift and he goes on and he says this.

But what does it say? The word is near you in your mouth and in your heart, that is, the word of faith which we are preaching. What is that word of faith? It is the gospel. But my dear friend, let's stop here.

If that gospel is nothing more than God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life, a superficial dealing with sin. And. If it is just a distorted picture of what man is and what God is and so on and so forth, be very careful of inviting someone to receive that kind of message.

Paul is talking about the real gospel that he preached to men, a gospel that spoke much of the glory of God and who God is, a gospel that spoke much of man's radical depravity and total inability to save himself, a gospel that explained the Christ event as something more than just Jesus died. But Jesus died. Your sin was imputed to him and he was crushed under the righteous judgment of God to satisfy the demands of justice against you to appease the wrath of God.

And when he said it is finished, he paid the price in full on the third day. He raised again from the dead. He's seated at the right hand of God as lord of lords, as king of kings.

And he's coming to judge the world. And yet. While time remains, he is mighty to save.

And this king, this God, this Lord, this Christ. Is calling you to repentance and to faith, he is commanding repentance, commanding faith from you. And so he goes on and he says.

The word is near you in your mouth and in your heart. He's saying you've heard the message. It's there, it's been proclaimed to you.

You can even speak it back. And then he says. In verse.

Nine, that if you confess with your mouth, Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved for with the heart, a person believes, resulting in righteousness and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation. Now, what have we done with this text in America? I'll tell you what we've done. Now.

How many people would like to receive Jesus? Raise your hand. Oh, I see that hand. Are there more? No one's looking.

Play the music. Come forward, maybe even if it's a large enough evangelistic crusade, we'll plant believers. In the audience who will come forward really quickly so as to make it easier for you to come to Christ, my friend, if that's not manipulation, I don't know what is that's wrong.

That's what you have to do when the Holy Spirit's not working. And you get them forward, OK, they're forward and then you read them this text. If you confess with your mouth, Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you'll be saved.

Do you believe that God raised him from the dead? Those of you have come forward. Yes. Would you like to confess him with your mouth right now and pray and ask Jesus to come in? Yes.

After they've done that, were you sincere? If you were sincere and you confessed with your mouth and you believe in your heart, then you're saved. Welcome to the family of God. Turn them around and say church meets your new family, your new brothers and sisters.

That's not what this text means at all. Not at all. First of all, we are saved by faith alone.

Now, by faith and confession, we are saved by faith alone, what is being taught here? We are saved by faith alone. Let me read to you one of the scholars of old. I think it's very important to hear this man out, Robert Haldane, the Geneva series commentaries, one of the most respected scholars of old.

Listen to what he says. A man becomes righteous, perfectly righteous through believing God's record concerning his son. But the evidence that this faith is genuine is found in the open confession of the Lord with the mouth in everything in which his will is known.

Confession of Christ is as necessary as faith in him, but necessary for a different purpose. Faith is necessary to obtain the gift of righteousness or salvation. Confession is necessary to prove that this gift is received.

If a man does not confess Christ at that hazard of life, at the hazard of life, character, property, liberty and everything dear to him, he has not the faith of Christ in saying then that confession is made unto salvation. The apostle does not mean that it is the cause of salvation or that without it, the title to salvation is incomplete. When a man believes in his heart, he is justified.

But confession of faith in Christ is the effect of faith and will be evidence of it at the last day. Faith, which interests the center in the righteousness of Christ, is manifested by the confession of his name in the midst of enemies or in the face of danger. Now, what is he saying? You are saved only by faith in Jesus Christ.

But if you have truly been saved, you have been born again. Again. And being born again, you become a new creature with new affections, with new desires, and as a new creature truly born again, you now have a supreme allegiance to Jesus Christ.

And even if you're standing before a firing squad and they tell you not to confess Christ, you will. And by doing that, you will be demonstrating the validity of your faith. Now, let me give you an example.

It's actually it's a letter written by Pliny the Younger to the governor of Bithynia. During the the Roman persecution of Christians from 98 A.D. to 117, I just want you to listen to this. It is written by Pliny, the governor of Bithynia, to the Roman Empire, the Roman emperor, and he says this, An anonymous information was laid before me containing a charge against several persons who, upon examination, denied that they were Christians or had ever been so.

They repeated after me an invocation to the gods and offered religious rites with wine and incense before your statue as Caesar and even reviled the name of Christ. I thought it proper, therefore, to discharge them. Now you're beginning to understand something of the context of Romans chapter 10.

Now, let me just create a scenario scenario for you. Let's say we're living during that time and we have a house church in my home of about, let's say, twenty five, thirty people. OK.

And as everyone is making their way home from the house church. Two of our best men are caught. And then they round up the rest of us and they bring us in before the governor on charges of being Christian.

Now, before us is set up an altar. A little bit of fire, a little bit of incense in a bowl. And all we have to do to save our lives is to go up and not confess Christ, invoke the gods, invoke the gods.

And then offer incense to the emperor and say. Caesar is Lord. So one of our members gets up, walks over there quickly to the platform, reviles Christ, invokes the gods, throws incense into the pot.

And says, Caesar is Lord, and to our astonishment, walks away scot free. And then another jumps up and does the same thing. And then the third one.

A young girl is brought to her feet, known for her godly character among us. She goes to the platform and they prod her and they say, deny Christ. She says, no.

Invoke the gods, no. Offer incense to Caesar and say that Caesar is Lord, and with tears running down her face and with her body trembling with fear, she cries out, Kirios, yes, Jesus is Lord, and they kill her. And then another stands up and takes her place and they kill him, and then another stands up and takes his place and they kill him.

And it goes on and on until the lot of us are slaughtered. All day long, we are slaughtered, and American Christianity takes this text and turns it in to a sinner's prayer and it has nothing to do with it. We tell men, how must you be saved? Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.

If your heart is broken, it is by faith alone, by faith alone. One aspect of repentance is not only repenting from evil deeds, but it is repenting from any trust in good works. It is by faith alone.

But a person truly having believed has been born again, regenerated by the spirit of God, the God who began a good work in them, completes it and keeps them. And makes them able to stand. So that on that day, when they're called to deny Christ or die.

They confess with their mouth, Jesus is Lord. And then for us living in America, where for now, at this moment, at least there is no physical persecution or jail time, we confess Christ. The evidence of having been born again, the evidence of having been saved by faith is your confession of faith in Christ throughout your life, a confession that is backed up by the fruit of your life, because Jesus said many will come before me on that day and say, Lord, Lord, and I'll say, depart from me.

I never knew you. Do you see how easy it is? To think you're using the scriptures. When, in fact, you are not, you've created a system.

So that most Americans believe they're saved because one time an evangelical preacher or evangelist told them they were because one time they prayed a prayer and asked Jesus to come in. But there's no continuing work of God in their life, there's no growth in sanctification, there's no discipline for unrighteousness, and there is no true confession of faith in Jesus Christ. Do you see, my friends? The gospel is powerful.

That's not the question. The question is, are we preaching it? Are we preaching it? Are we preaching it? Or are we preaching another gospel? Let's pray. Father, I come before you.

And I pray, Father. That you will make clear the truths that have been taught here. In such a limited way by such a limited man.

And. Oh, God, that we would preach the gospel, that we would preach the gospel to every creature. That we would exalt your person, your attributes.

That we would preach. About the sin of man for their own good. And.

That we would rejoice in the gospel of Jesus Christ. As we share it passionately with people. That we would call them to repentance and faith.

And father, that we would end our time with them, with many and varied gospel warnings. Things. That the evidence of true conversion.

Is an ongoing work of sanctification. For you who began a good work. We'll finish it.

God help us in Jesus name. Amen. Family to the word of God.

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