

How Righteousness Works Out

by Robert B. Thompson

The sermon explores the intricate relationship between righteousness and grace, emphasizing the transformative work of Christ in believers' lives.

Duration: 1:11:03

Scripture: Isaiah 66:7-8, Romans 6:17, Galatians 4:19, Colossians 1:27, Hebrews 8:7, Revelation 10:7, Revelation 12:1-5, Revelation 22:16

Topics: "Faith And Works", "Christian Obedience"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher criticizes the belief that salvation is solely based on faith in a sovereign and unconditional Christ. He argues that this belief is not scriptural and does not align with reality. The preacher emphasizes the importance of righteousness and obedience to God's teachings in the process of salvation. He warns against relying solely on God's forgiveness without actively striving to live a righteous life. The sermon also touches on the concept of virtual reality and its potential negative impact on society.

Transcript

I remember one time we were at the Feast of Tabernacles, this was many years ago, about the second or third time that we'd been there, and they have what we have, and it's all professional, it's on a much greater scale, and I like pageantry, I like music, I like poetry and these things, I'm that type of person, and I was really thrilled to see the dancing and the light and the color, I'd never seen anything like that. And then the Lord opened my spiritual eyes and what I saw I didn't want to see. I did not want to see it.

Did you ever see anything in the spirit realm that you didn't want to see? Well, it's quite an experience. Usually when your eyes are open you see something that is a blessing or that you're hoping for, but I didn't want to see this. And what I saw momentarily, when my eyes were open, I don't know if you ever saw the Walt Disney film Fantasia, but there was a part in that where there were little pigs and they had a kind of a little ballet, kind of a ruff that went out there, you know, and their little short legs and hoofs and all, and that's what I saw.

That's what I saw. All that, the Lord was looking at it, and what I'm seeing here in this church is something altogether different. It's anointed, and I know why.

It's because while I stand, the Lord got Stan in the music business. He didn't want to do it. He's serving the Lord.

Then Lisa and Stan and Audrey and I prayed about who should be the air traffic controller. How many know what the air traffic controller is? That's the person who goes around making sure that people are responding correctly with the flags at the right time and the right place. That's the air traffic controller.

So the four of us prayed, and one name came up, and that was Cathy Ott. Well, I think Cathy Ott wanted to do that just about as bad as, you know, she wanted to walk on a bed of nails, but she did it out of a love for God, and that's the difference. So when you're looking at the pageantry and the kids, realize the work that has gone into this to make it work, and Giovanni and the others who are active, God is blessing because there's holiness there.

I want you to realize that. It isn't just because it's colorful, and this tonight, I keep saying this is a high point, this tonight with all the flags, how many felt the presence of the Lord? I mean, it's stupendous. Karen's on her face, and I'm thinking, hey, we're poised for revival.

I've never seen anything like that in my life. That's marvelous. Hallelujah.

I hope you're appreciating all of this because it's wonderful. The Whitney's, how does it strike you? Is it a blessing to you? It's really awesome. The presence of God, you're probably so used to it, you don't realize it, but the presence and spirit of God are awesome, and it's because God blesses righteousness and obedience, and we need to keep that in mind.

See, God can accept an offering or reject it. You see this many times in the Bible. He doesn't just accept it because you offer it.

I mean, there's ground rules. And the King, I mean, we're doing this to celebrate the coming of the King. That's why we're doing it.

This is a celebration. The coming of the Lord is near. We're celebrating the coming of Jesus, and I felt his presence tonight in such a rarefied atmosphere, and you could feel those angels.

You could almost see them, these powerful, powerful angels that accompanied Jesus. They were here. He was accepting.

Isn't that wonderful? Hallelujah. You know, this is where I want to go to church. You know, when the pastor wants to go to his own church, you've got something going.

This is where I want to go to church. Praise the Lord. So I just do glorify God for what he's doing.

I want to talk to you, you know, Sunday night of all things, but I'm going to talk to you about righteousness and its relation, I mean, how this works out. Now, I mean, this may seem dull and uninteresting, but maybe it isn't. I'll try to make it as interesting as I can.

But what I want you to realize is that right now, in the four-square theological course that Paul and Earl are going to, they are discussing this. They're trying to resolve where does grace and righteousness, they can't get it. Earl says they cannot get it.

Every time they get up to the idea that it's necessary, the professor backs down, and I'm not criticizing him, whatever, he backs down because the consequences are enormous. I mean, people will leave the church. They say, this is worse.

So, the issue is, you've got on the one hand, you've got people who are afraid if you start talking about righteousness, you're talking about worse. You'll lose half the Lutherans right there. Yeah, because, My faith alone! Brother, that's what they believe.

Then you've got another point of view in our land that get off the holiness thing. If you will just let Jesus have His way in your life, it will happen. Now, that's probably closer to the truth than the other, but there are some problems with that.

We see people who do that, and it comes as such a relief after hearing the word of righteousness, and they say, oh wow, this is what I've been waiting to hear. You know, you don't have to do it. But that doesn't work either.

It isn't New Testament. I mean, I don't know how many ordinances there are in the New Testament you're supposed to do. Do this.

Do that. Do the next thing. Paul says, awake to righteousness and sin not.

It doesn't say Jesus is going to do it for you. But yet Jesus does do it for you. So where does it come together? Does anybody have a little gray porcelain mouse bric-a-brac? If you see any, let me know.

I need one. I want to put it next to my books. I've got an elephant, and I want a little porcelain mouse.

So I don't get confused as to who's doing what, okay? You know the story of the elephant and the mouse. Okay, so we want to remember who's doing the work. All right, now, tonight I'm going to give you some scriptures, and I'm going to try to explain to you, as God helps, a thing that seems very clear to me, but it doesn't seem to be that clear to everybody, but I believe it will in the days to come.

This question of where righteousness comes together with grace is answered simply. It's no profound problem. And it isn't the case that we do works to get saved.

That's not right. And it isn't the case that if we hang back, Jesus does it all. That isn't right.

So we want to look at the scripture and see what the scripture says. We know the end is righteous. That we know.

Romans 8.29. What does that say? I quoted it this morning. Come on, people. I quoted it this morning, Romans 8.29. For whom He did foreknow.

He also did predestinate. King James says predestinate, but the word is predestined. He also did predestine to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brothers.

Now, people, guess what? If the God of the universe has predestined you to be changed into the image of Jesus, you know what? It's going to happen. But what we don't know is how, and when, and where grace fits into this. This is not known.

So that's what we're talking about on Sunday night. And I hope you find it interesting. It interests me, because I see such a need in the Christian church.

They do not understand. They want to repent. They feel a need for it.

But if you take it down theoretically, how can you repent if Jesus is your righteousness? What are you going to repent of? So that doesn't make sense. That's the quandary. The theological quandary.

The Christian church is in today. They don't know, what do you do about the question of righteousness? Where does it fit in terms of grace? So that's what we're on tonight. Are there any questions about that, by the way? I want to talk to Margaret.

She went ballistic this morning, because the Lord reveals something to her about how the righteousness of Christ works out in you. You don't have to drum it up out of your Adamic nature. And it hit Margaret like a boat this morning.

I mean, she was delirious with joy to think, he's going to do it. Yes, he is. We know that.

But how does it work? That's what I want to talk about. So, I need someone to volunteer to read. Just prepare it.

And I'll probably get to it. Revelation 22.16. Let me see a hand. Someone will handle that one? Revelation 22.16. Not read it now.

Danny's got that. Colossians 1.27. Someone? Just have it ready. Maurice's got that.

Revelation 10.7. Okay, David's going to handle that. Isaiah 66.7-8. And Judy. Isaiah 12.1-5. I mean, I'm sorry.

Revelation 12.1-5. Stan? Okay, Galatians 4.19. I'm going to handle that. Brambeck. Romans 6.17. It's a very, very important one.

Romans 6.17 is very important. Okay. Mark Overton's got that one.

And Hebrews 8.7. Tony's got that one. Okay, so we'll start. And I'm going to have you read responsibly.

2 Peter 1. Verses 19-21. And really, this will tell the whole story. But I had to fill up an hour, so I got all these.

But it's all in 2 Peter. If you can see it. And this is the answer.

This is the answer. This is how the New Covenant works. This is how it works.

This is 2 Peter 1. 19-21. And if you get this handled, you've got it. You've got it.

Now, the Lord gave me that verse, I guess, probably in the early 50's. And it is the answer to this question of righteousness. And if you understand this passage, you will understand how the New Covenant operates.

And remember, the purpose of the New Covenant is to produce righteousness. That is the purpose. I might jump over now and have someone read Hebrews 8.7. Who had that? Tony, go ahead.

If it had been faultless, then... What was the first... Moses. Moses. He's comparing the Mosaic Covenant.

And he said if it had been faultless, he wouldn't have made a New Covenant. Okay, go ahead, Tony. You're going to have to keep reading there.

Yeah. Notice. God doesn't say finding fault with it.

With the Covenant. But with what? Now, why do you suppose he was finding fault with them? Because they were not keeping the Covenant. In other words, the Covenant is the Ten Commandments, which is righteousness.

You want a description of righteousness, the Ten Commandments. And they were not doing it. He was finding fault with them.

So he made a New Covenant. What do you suppose the purpose of the New Covenant is? To produce righteousness. To do... To accomplish the job.

That the First Covenant could not do. The purpose of the Christian Covenant is to change our behavior. From lying to telling the truth.

From sneakiness to honesty. From harshness to kindness. See, that's what God is after.

Alright, read on. For finding fault... You're going to hear what the New Covenant is. What Christianity is.

You're going to hear now what Christianity is. What salvation is. Okay? I will put my laws into... Seriously enough, it's Torah.

It's the same word as the word for law. The Mosaic Law. See, the reason I say that is because... We often hear, well, he's done away with the law.

You know, it's all gone. No. What has he done with the Torah? He's moving it from what to what? From stone, see? God has never changed His law.

That's His character. But the New Testament is the lifting of the law from stone to the heart of man. Read on.

I will put my laws into their mind and write them in their hearts. Notice who wrote on the tables of stone. Who writes in our heart? God.

Be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people. And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord. For all shall know me, from the least to the greatest.

There's no more C. Meaning, there's no more people without the knowledge of God. That's what it means. It's symbolic.

Alright, now this next verse is very important. Notice it. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins, and their iniquities will I remember no more.

Alright, now, do you get the point? The New Covenant is not primarily forgiveness. The forgiveness, the forgiving of their iniquities is tacked on the end like a trailer. Now that's important because Christianity is viewed in our country primarily as forgiveness.

But Christianity is not primarily, it includes forgiveness. But what is its primary purpose? To write the law in your heart. Now, if the law is written in your mind and heart, how is this expressed? What difference does that make? Righteousness.

You see, God says it was on tables of stone. It didn't work. So, I'm going to write it in your heart and in your mind, and then you are going to be what? Righteous.

See, that is what Christianity is. That's what salvation is. The sins and iniquities are like I said this morning.

That's the times of this ignorance God winked at. That's not the main. Otherwise it would have said, this is the covenant I will make with them after those days.

I will forgive their sins and iniquities. It's not an afterthought, but it's showing that it is what makes possible the major work. And what is the major work? A righteousness that proceeds from what? Huh? Yes.

Yes. And, alright now, the Torah or the... Now, what do you suppose that word is? That word is Jesus. See? That word, Jesus, is the word.

He's the Torah of God. Jesus himself is the word of God. In fleshly form.

And so when Christ is being formed in our heart, we say we have the mind of Christ, we have Christ in our heart. What is being formed in us? God's word. You see that? The new covenant is the forming of Christ in human beings.

Alright? We're still holding in 2 Peter. Alright? Now, here's what we read. Until the day dawns and the morning star arises in your heart.

Well, what was that talking about? Alright? Whoever had Revelation 22, 16, read that. And morning star are identical. They refer, as I remember, to the planet Venus.

And it's a very bright, looks like a star, but it's a planet. And it comes up just before daybreak. The appearing of the day star is telling you.

It's the darkest hour. I was on the fantail of an LST one time and I mistook it for a very signal. And I radioed up to the officer on the bridge and I said, this might point out where it was.

And I said, it looks like a distress signal. This was probably 5 o'clock in the morning or something. It was light when I played that.

I thought it was somebody on a raft, you know, shooting off a flare. And the officer called back and he looked at it with binoculars and he said, it's the day star. It's the day star.

It's come up and it heralds the dawn. Tomorrow morning you might want to get up at 4.30 or so and check it out. But anyway, I'm not an astronomer and I don't know how and when and where it comes up.

But you see, when God uses something like that, He's telling us something. He's telling us a lot of things, isn't He? Alright now, what is the day star? Jesus. Then the day star is the writing of the law of God in us.

Now that's important to understand now. Where Peter is saying here, until the day dawn, he's saying, until Christ is written in your heart and mind. This is very important.

We're taking it in logical steps now. Okay, so we want righteousness. We've been predestined to be changed.

Okay? So, the change comes as what? As Christ is formed in us. Okay? Keep that in mind now. What we're after is righteousness.

God's covenant is to produce that by doing what? By forming Christ in us. Now let's go over that again. God from the day of one, of Genesis, has wanted one thing of a man.

That he will do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with God. Now that never changes. Some of the rabbis recommend that if you lost the whole Old Testament and had that one verse, you'd have God's purpose.

A man practice justice, righteousness, love to be merciful. Some people practice justice, but then they get pharisaical in their attitude. And love mercy.

And walk humbly with God. And that's all that God ever required of any man. But that is righteousness.

And that's all God had wanted out of Adam. That's all he wanted out of Israel. That's all he wants out of us.

He never changes. But the new covenant accomplishes this. How? By forming Christ in us.

It's not that hard. I'm not asking you tricky questions. This is important.

This, I don't doubt. I don't wonder at why the response is so coming. There's not one Christian, it seems, in ten thousand that understands that simplest of ideas.

God is after righteousness, but not Adamic righteousness. He's after Christ in us who is righteous by nature. That incorruptible seed that Peter talks about.

Now, if I ask you again, what is God's goal for man? That he will be righteous in his thinking, in his speaking, in his action. He will be a righteous person in the image of whom? Okay, we got the goal. Numero uno.

Okay. Numero dos. How is he accomplishing this? By forming Christ in us.

This is not a figure of speech, meaning we ought to do better. It's a divine, supernatural event that occurs within the human personality. Okay? Now, before we go further to explain how this works, you could stop there and say, I got it, I got it.

We don't do anything because Jesus is going to live the life in us. And that's commonly taught. That's not uncommon.

That's called the Jesus-did-it-all doctrine. Okay? Now, the goal is righteousness. The means is, God says, I'm not going to try to work up the Adamic nature.

I'm going to take my son, in whom I am well pleased, and I'm going to take his body and blood, which we're going to take tonight, and I'm going to put it in you. And that new life within you will cause you to quit lying and tell the truth. I mean, because that nature does not sin.

Remember 1 John 3? He that is born of God does not commit sin, because his seed remained within him, and he cannot sin, because he's born of God. People say, well, I don't understand that. What do you mean he cannot sin? It means that that new nature that is born in you cannot sin.

It is Christ. Okay? Now, what I'm talking about is the absolute basis of salvation. You can forget all this flying around and all the rest of it.

This is the heart of it. God wants righteousness. He's going to do it.

All right, now remember the day star is what or whom? All right, now listen. We're going to move now to the third step. Step number 1, the goal is changed people.

And Adam cannot cut the mustard. He cannot do it. Step number 2, God's going to do this by forming Christ in us.

But there's another step, and it's in here that the issue gets hung up. People cannot understand. Now watch it.

It's all right there in 2 Peter. Now look what he says. In verse 18, we heard this utterance.

You know, God said, it's my beloved son made from heaven when we were with him on the holy mountain. That's on the Mount of Transfiguration. A cloud overshadowed them.

And a voice came out of the cloud and said, this is my beloved son. Hear him. Do you remember that story? All right, and Peter was there.

Peter, James, and John. He said, we heard this. But we have the prophetic word made more sure.

Now what in the world would be more sure than the voice of God, the Father speaking out of a cloud? What do you think is more sure than that? Sam? Well, that's certainly more sure than anything else. You got any ideas? You're getting there. The written word.

Now when Peter's referring to the Scriptures, there were no New Testament Scriptures. He's talking about the Old Testament Scriptures. And this is what he's saying.

To which you do well to pay attention. All right, there's where the problem comes. Well, I hope I don't lose you now.

This is where the problem comes. Because that means that you and I are to read the Bible, Old Testament, and now we have the New, and in our Adamic nature, and by prayer, do what it says. Now it's right here that the baby gets thrown out with the bath water.

Because if we start saying to people, what the Bible says, for example, stop your gossiping. Stop your, well let's say foolish talking. Stop it somewhere, where is it, Ephesians, Colossians or something, that says let no filthy communication out of your mouth.

Let's use that one, filthy communication. Don't let filthy communication out of your mouth. Well, if you get up and insist on that, and say if you do such things you're courting death, you're courting the loss of the kingdom, which Paul says those who do these things will not inherit the kingdom.

What does everybody say? Yeah, we're saved by grace, not by works. Because they say it's supposed to be the righteousness of Christ, and you're saying to people, you've got to stop it. That's where the clinker is.

See, our goal is not to reform Adam, but you have to have Adam do the job until what? Until Christ is formed in you. And it's as simple as that. There must be 500, I think Cowboy Brent found 1000 directives in the New Testament that you are to do.

The Gospels are full of them. Forgive your enemies, for example. Turn the other cheek.

When Jesus talked about this kind of stuff, He said what to do, do this, don't that. And then when you start with Paul, wow, every epistle just about. And 1 John, he says if you don't keep His commandments, you don't know Him.

You're talking through your straw hat. You do. Alright, then I've heard this when I was first saved.

You know, I had the four steps pounding in my skull, and the idea was no one has ever done righteous at any time. It was only within the last ten years that I began to notice in the Old Testament the number of people that God called righteous. They had to take a... But you see the Bible doesn't... But then you go into other places, it names righteous people.

And so this is what I was told. We cannot possibly, cannot possibly keep God's commandments. Has anyone ever heard that in here? And that's the reason you accept the grace of Jesus Christ, because no man can do Him.

Hey, do you know something? We have been sold a bill of goods. We have been sold a bill of goods. And Audrey likes to hold forth on the idea, and she has said this many times, God is our Father.

And obeying God is just like a child obeying his parents. God told us to do things, He expects for them to be done. But you see, the preaching of the churches, but we cannot possibly do them.

But when you look at them, maybe something the Bible commands to do, now Maurice for example, he would have no problem with James, where James says, pure religion and undefiled is this, to visit the father, orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself undefiled, something like this. Maurice would have no trouble with that. Many of us might have a great deal of trouble with that.

But then, there may be something that Maurice or some of us have a bad problem with, maybe lying, maybe stealing. So some things we can do readily, God says do them. Don't swear, so we quit.

I mean, what's the deal? I can't possibly, you mean to tell me with all the power of Christ, give me a break. Why is it so into your mouth, that it's moving your mouth in spite of you? But it's this kind of nonsense, and we bought into this package. And if you read the commandments of the Lord, they're basically about immorality, and most of them are about four forms of strife, hatred, revenge, spite.

Well now we might have a problem with this. And when we have a problem with this, what do we do? What does it say in Hebrews? What is it, 4.12? No, that's the Word of God. That says, enter boldly into the throne of grace, that's why the veil was rent, that we may do what? Have mercy in our need.

Well, what's our need? I'm living in a moral life, that's my need. So what do you do? You know, oh, I can't do it. Oh, I can't, I must fornicate.

If I can't, how do I have to do that thing? Or I've got to read pornographic literature, no matter what, I don't care. There's not many people that bound. Most of us, if we're doing something sinful, and we want to please God, we can quit.

And it isn't Christ, it's Adam. It's Adam. I'll tell you a simple way to express it.

It's what to do until the preacher comes. Now, if you're Adamic nature, I'm talking about that which was born of your parents, does not have integrity, does not have hang in there, is not an honest and good heart, you'll never make it as a Christian. Do you know why? Because God has commanded you and me to present our body a living sacrifice.

Hey, who does the presenting? Adam. Adam does that. Christ doesn't go down and do that for you.

Adam does that. That's probably the basic commandment of the New Testament. Reckon yourself dead, present your body, live in sacrifice.

Okay? Now, what if Adam is a sleaze? What's going to happen? What if he's a bum? What if he's not dependable? What if he come into church and was carried away with the music, or with the girls, or whatever? What's going to happen when tribulation comes? When it's not popular? When the girls go somewhere else to church? What is he going to do? That's why I think the Lord told me, a church built on the family urge of young people will not stand the shaking. Because the church has to be built on the Lord Jesus Christ and His Spirit, and when it's not, it will not stand. Because when the fire comes of God, and it's been built on the boy-girl thing, it will not stand.

I can see the wisdom of that, but I didn't make it up. That came from the Lord. But, if you are basically an insincere person, and you say, yeah, I want to be a Christian.

I want to be with them. I love the banners. They're great.

They're happy. Okay, great. But basically, you're an undependable person.

Well, okay, I'll present my body, a living sacrifice, but what's going to happen when that brings on you a lot of pain? What are you going to do? What are you going to do with your body? Or when you're really tempted with lust, what are you going to do with your body? You're going to take it off the altar. Why are you going to take it off the altar? Because that's the way you handle things in life. When they're fun and they're a novelty, hey, you know, and the grand parade's going on, yeah, I want to be a part of it.

This is fun. You're fast, but you don't last. Why? Because you don't have that basic integrity.

The word integrity is taken from integer. One. Integrity means you've got it together in yourself.

You're not a person that flaps this way and flaps that way. You're one. Integer.

Integrity. You're a one person. What you see is what you get.

You're a WYSIWYG. You know, what people see, that's what they get. You're not a bum playing the moves.

Because a person like that can't make it as a Christian. If they ever do, it'll be because they kick that and determine to be a person for once in their life. Because until Adam is pushed to the place where he says, I want God, and I'm going to put my body up there if it kills me, and I'm going to keep it there, and until that happens, you can't make it.

It's impossible. There may be lesser groups. I don't want to talk about lesser groups.

The Bible talks about the winners. The Bible talks about the winners. It doesn't tell us about the promises to the losers.

Except that, you know, Outer Darkness and a few other handy little things. The promises are to the winners. And anybody can win, but in order to win, you've got to be a person.

You've got to be a person of integrity that when you say you're going to do something, you do it and you hang there because sooner or later it's going to be tested. You ever notice that every decision you make, sooner or later, it's tested. You make it when it's fun, but down the track, it's going to get tested.

Did you mean that or not? Because it isn't fun anymore. How many have ever met that in your life? It isn't fun anymore. It was fun when I made it and I thought, well, I'll keep it forever.

I'll love you forever. You know, this kind of thing. But when it's tested, that's where integrity comes forth.

If you're a person of integrity, you say, this is what I said with my mouth. This is what I'm going to do. See, our nation does not honor that.

It seems to be honoring treachery. Because I noticed there was a prominent person who was involved in promise keepers. And I mean, the Navy came down on him because of that.

And this officer said, well, what in the world is wrong with being with men who are vowing to keep their word? But you see, our nation doesn't honor it. Oh, that's religion. We don't want to mix church and state.

So, treacherous nation. If your commitment isn't making you happy, break it for heaven's sake. Change the law.

Do something, but we must be happy. Am I right? You'll never make it as a Christian. Because a Christian says to your Adamic nature, this is what you've got to do.

And Peter is saying, read the Old Testament and do what it says. Take heed to it. What does it tell us? It tells us to serve the Lord our God.

It tells us not to commit adultery. It tells us not to steal. It tells us not to covet.

It tells us not to put God first. Doesn't it? Peter is saying, you take heed to that. He said, it's more certain than a voice of God from heaven.

Remember what Jesus said? One jot or one tittle shall in no way pass from this. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but this will never change. Okay.

Now what he's saying here, and this is the clinker because this is when you say to people, you have to keep God's commandments. And they say, well, that isn't the righteousness of Christ. The purpose of grace is so you don't have to do it.

Do you see the misunderstanding there? Alright, now I'm going to ask you a question and see if you've been tracking. Why do you keep these commandments? What role do they play? And what is their goal? As you obey the apostles, what is the goal of doing that? Well, there's a step in there now. What? You can go deeper than that.

It is the way in which Christ is formed. That's the way in which Christ is formed. That's why if you wait for Jesus to do it all, it will work.

Now, you're never going to get Adam to the state of righteousness that will make you a priest of God or a part of his temple or a member of the body of the Lamb or a member of the Bride of Messiah. It isn't going to happen. Adam doesn't have that in him.

So, you're not keeping these commandments to save yourself, except in kind of an indirect sense. You are not putting works. They say the work of Christ, this is what is taught.

The sovereign, unconditional grace of God is so perfect that if you try to do one thing, you're defiling this pure work of God. See how Satan has got in it. Yeah, that's what's taught.

Hey, that's not uncommon. Don't add any of your filthy works to the perfect righteousness of Christ. If that isn't calculated to keep a person from growing, I don't know what is, but that is common.

That's not an unusual doctrine at all. It's an unconditional, sovereign grace. Something like virtual reality in a computer.

It seems like reality, but if you have a power failure, all of a sudden, and you're in the cold, gray light of a hard, cold world, and your imaginary trip to Hawaii or whatever else you're involved in on the television or something, it goes off, power goes off, and you're facing the world. See, a lot of people, Christian people are going to die. They've been living in this state of virtual reality, and they're going to die expecting Jesus to come and say, well done, good and faithful servant.

They haven't done well, and they haven't been faithful, but they've been taught that they've been saved by a sovereign, unconditional grace, which is nonsense. It's virtual reality. It's a thing that exists in their mind and in God's mind, supposedly, but it's not related to reality.

It's not reality. In other words, so this there I'm telling you is not some academic yet. This is something that the whole Christian church needs to learn, that the four square class that Paul and Earl are attending are at this impasse.

They've got two more sessions. The class is at an impasse on this issue. Where does righteousness fit in? How does it work? And no one is answering it.

This is what Earl told me this morning. It has not been answered. So this is not... I mean, until you answer this question, how are you going to orient your life? I might say to you, you cannot have a violent temper and inherit the kingdom of God.

That's what Paul said. The works of the flesh. You do not inherit the kingdom of God.

And then in your mind is all this mixture, well, Jesus will do it for me, or I'm saved by grace. Don't you see how... Well, let's take... One of the major demons in America is the demon of lust. Well, we have violence and covetousness.

But lust is everywhere. It's like a national psychosis. Lust is like a national psychosis.

It's a sickness. It's an absolute sickness. It's everywhere you turn.

Every magazine, everything, sooner or later comes around in the advertisement. Everything is lust. Well, this is Satan.

This is Satan. And it's a major element in our society. Okay.

Now, I don't care how old you are, how young you are. This demon of lust affects every American person. We're seeing it everywhere we turn.

It's not going to get better. Okay. Let's say that you, you know it's wrong.

You know the penalty. I mean, there is what? Half of the nation now has venereal disease of some kind. You know there's herpes, which is untreatable in some aspects of it.

AIDS, which is totally, I mean every time they get a solution for it, these AIDS germs just do a little U-turn and come up with something stronger. I mean, and AIDS is a primary concern. It's wiping out the young in our nation.

It's wiping out the most productive age, like around 20 to 40. Most older people die of heart attack or cancer, but the AIDS thing is hitting right in the belly of the productive people who should be bringing our nation. What is it AIDS? What's it coming from? Lust.

Lust. Nobody knows what to do. They don't want to teach abstinence.

You know, they bring in contraceptives. They do this and they do that. But the young people are impatient with that.

They say, you know, I'll throw the dice. Maybe I'll get off, and if not, we'll have an abortion or whatever. I'll never get AIDS certainly, you know.

The odds are against my getting AIDS. I know the girl. She's been in high school.

She doesn't have AIDS or whatever. It isn't going to work. I mean, they're going to do it.

Now, Christian young people are no different than any other young person. Christian middle-aged men are no different than any other person. Christian women and 25-year-olds are no different than any other person.

We're all the same. And Satan is playing on something that God gave in the original, but now it's blown all out of any reasonable proportion in its relationship to life and balance and wholesomeness. Now, can you see how important it is if you want to inherit the kingdom of God, can you see how important it is that you find out the provision God has made for lust? He's not excusing you.

If you fornicate, if you are reading pornographic material, if you are doing something nasty, molestation of children, all the other stuff that goes on. These things go on in Christian homes. Hey, why? Because we've been taught wrong.

Now, if that in your skull is the idea, well, God loves me and He's saving me by grace, and you're interpreting grace to mean forgiveness, and that this is the bottom line, and this thing hits you like a fire. All of a sudden, you know, you're going around minding your own business, and it can hit you like that. I remember a preacher telling me, he was going around, he was in a bookstore, and he looked up and he

saw something, and he says, that thing was all over me.

And it can happen just like that. And you've got anywhere back in your mind that if I do it, God will forgive it, because fundamentally, I'm saved by unconditional grace, what are you going to do? You're going to yield. You're going to worry about the consequences later.

The threat of AIDS and all this doesn't move people when they get in the heat of passion. They just ignore the whole thing. But there is something that will stop you.

If you realize that Paul wrote clearly, clearly, that those who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom, and you realize that grace does not meddle with that, it does not meddle with that. What you sow, you reap. Grace, Schemes, the Bible is crystal clear on that.

What you sow, you reap. And once you give in to a thing like that, you may catch AIDS, but if you don't, that thing will follow you for years, that one act. If you ever get your program together.

The reason Paul says you will not inherit the kingdom is because the kingdom of God is the doing of God's will. And so you have done something that is not God's will, therefore you've yanked yourself out of the kingdom. Not only that, but Matthew 13 says at the end of the age, the angels are going to sit down and take out of His kingdom, out of His kingdom, that which offends God.

Not talking about the unsaved. He's talking about His kingdom. Matthew 13, check it out.

Starting in the bottom of verse 40. At the last days, the kingdom of heaven is like a net drawn, let down into the sea and brought up. And it says the angels, just get, I've seen them do that on an oyster.

Just take and bring up the net and everything in it, put the oysters over here and everything else goes out. I've seen that because I was raised on the coast. But that's what it says it's going to do.

He's not talking about the unsaved. The kingdom of heaven is like a net drawn down into the sea. And it's brought up.

And the wicked are separated from the righteous. Talking about people in the kingdom. In the kingdom.

Not people who have never been in the kingdom. People in the kingdom. Matthew 13, check it out.

Given these things, the plain words of scripture, can you see how important it is that we learn how righteousness, we haven't touched the grace part yet. Okay? We said step one was what? The goal is what? Righteous behavior. Not illegal, imputed righteous, but do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with God.

Step two, that can only happen as what? Christ is formed in us because that kind of perfection that God is looking for, cannot possibly be done by Adam. Ultimately, Adam will perish. He's not going to be saved.

Adam is not going to be saved. Flesh and blood cannot inherit. Adam will not be saved.

So it's like John the Baptist said, what did he say with respect to this? He must increase, but I must decrease. See, it's as simple as that. So, what is step three? And what is it that you keep doing until the day of the Lord? And where does it dawn? In your heart.

That's where the day of the Lord dawns, is in your heart. When the day of the Lord comes, the Lord will come with people in whom the day of the Lord has already risen, and the day of the Lord is the day when the Lord alone is exalted. That is the day.

You'll know when the day of the Lord has arisen in your heart, when the Lord alone is exalted. The Lord alone shall be exalted. Then, they will bring that to the rest of man.

That is the mission of the church, is to bring righteousness to the world. That's how the kingdom of God is going to come to the world. You see that? Oh, you're looking at me kind of glassy-eyed.

I'll be through here in a minute. God's kingdom is coming to the earth. Did you ever pray for that? Our Father who art in heaven, holy is your name.

Your kingdom comes. Your will be done on earth. And I'm telling you, how it's going to be done, is when God takes His first roots, which we are, all Christians should be, and we recognize that God wants righteousness.

That's what He wants. The whole Bible is about that. Righteousness.

Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness. See, that's what we're trying to find out. How do you get that righteousness? Righteousness is the goal.

Now, you do well that you take heed to the Scripture. As unto a light that shines in a dark place. So what is the Scripture? It's a light.

It isn't Christ. It's a light. The Scripture tells us the New Testament is full of commandments.

Okay. There's no question about it. Now, can you do them? Can your Adamic man do them? Yes, he can.

Well, your Adamic man can do a lot of things without even prayer. I mean, let's not get mystical. Let's not get mystical.

See, that's what I'm talking about. Do you steal? Well, no, I don't steal. Is it because Christ is in you? No.

I just don't steal. Right? See, we get so mystical, and that confounds the issue. I want you to think of most of the commandments of the New Testament you can do.

They're just... Like, if you give your son or your daughters, tell them to do something, you've got to be in bed at 9 o'clock. You expect it, don't you? They don't say, Dad, I'll pray. And maybe... Well, this is the same thing.

I have to wait until Christ is formed in me. I can't possibly... When you say, get your little leg... Did you ever hear the gospel of... There is a gospel of defeat. Huh? When you see yourself going toward temptation, is that the gospel of defeat? You just turn right around, and you go the other way.

See, now, we have the power to do that unless we get caught up in some violent passion. But you can avoid that because you usually can see it coming. You know, if you're young and you go out and you're going to be out with the girls at 2 in the morning, and it's just the two of you, you don't need a crystal ball to know what's going to happen in these days.

They say, Oh, but my heart is pure, and to the pure all things are pure. Oh, wonderful. Wonderful.

Who's going to support the child? You know? I mean, that's life. But I cannot possibly stop doing this until Christ is formed in me. How do you stop doing this? You don't go out in the car with a girl alone until 2 in the morning.

Can you not do that? Well, of course you cannot do that. Oh, no, only if I pray, Dad. Only if I pray.

Well, you better pray and then do it. Do you see what I mean? And we've been sold a bill of goods on this thing. We've been told, Look at it, it's hopeless.

Nobody can do that. I've got to sin. I've got to lie, steal, swear, get violent, beat my wife up, molest my children.

I have to do it. I cannot possibly not refrain from these things. It's baloney.

We can do just about everything the apostles said. Someone read Romans 6.17. This is a very important verse. Romans 6.17. That you were the servants of sin, but you have obeyed from the heart.

That's the same thing. You obeyed it from the heart. Alright, now, are you ready for a question? We know the three steps.

The goal, the method is Christ, and the way of getting at the method is by doing what the Bible says. Take heed. Simple? Okay.

Now, this is where you're going to be challenged. If you tell somebody this, they'll say, what you're saying is we're saved by works. You're mixing works with grace.

Well, let me explain first of all where grace comes. The first thing that grace comes in is with the shedding of blood. That we cannot do.

We cannot forgive our sins that are past. So grace, grace is much more than forgiveness. It's the divine enablement.

In fact, in its finest sense, grace is Jesus Christ himself. And when you have him, he makes everything possible. All that we cannot do, grace does.

Grace means forgiveness. Sometimes, it's important that we're forgiven. Otherwise, we're always under condemnation.

The purpose of grace is to forgive us. You with me? So that we do what? Pursue righteousness according to God's plan. That's the purpose.

That's where grace fits in. It's the divine virtue, forgiveness and virtue to enable us to pursue righteousness. Now, how do we pursue righteousness? Steps 3 and 2. How do we pursue it? Well, that's step 2. Take it in the order of 3 and 2, in that order.

We read the Word in order to what? To a way. We read the Word so that we can find out the admonition of God and his apostles. And, every time you read the Word and the Spirit quickens it to you.

Now, we have a lot of help, don't we? We have the prayers of the elders. We can confess our sins one to another. The communion helps if it's taken right.

We have the Macintoshes come. God has given us all kinds of things with one goal in mind. And what is that? What? The righteousness.

And that's what Diane has stated is her goal. Is that Christ be formed in people. Okay? So, where does grace fit in? I gave you three things.

Where does grace fit in? He gives God's goodness to us. That comes to us in the form of divine virtue and power and forgiveness to enable us. It's an enabling.

The best definition of grace is the divine enablement. To begin to get our act together. Okay, now, if someone says to you, and you say, oh, I'm not supposed to, and everybody's joking and fooling around and doing dirty stuff.

She says, I can't do that. I'm a Christian. Oh, you're saved by works.

Don't you ever hear of grace? What's your answer? And what is the purpose of this effort you're making in your damned nature? To be changed in the image of Jesus. And how does that happen? Yes, you see, I must decrease, but in order for this process to go on, I must keep the commandments. Now, what's wrong with people saying, you don't have to do it.

Jesus will do it for you. What's wrong with that? Well, for one thing, it's not scriptural, but in the construct that we're talking about, in the mechanics of this, what's wrong with that? What's wrong with that? See, there's churches around that teach this. It's called Jesus alone or whatever.

You know, Jesus does it all. It's a tremendous relief to people when they beat themselves to death. But what's wrong with that, doctor? Why doesn't it work? What did they leave on? Huh? You must decrease.

What did they leave on? Which step? I mean, what step? One, two, three. What did they leave on? Three. That's what they're doing, huh? Three.

No, you've got to see this, people. I can't let you go. My time is up.

I can't let you go to your... When people say, Jesus will do it if you'll just let him, you don't have to work at it like that. See, that's what was taught to some of our people. And they left the church years ago because that's what they were being taught.

You don't... See, here I'm preaching righteousness and righteousness and a preacher came along and built himself a big church. Teaching. Hey, you don't have to work that hard.

Jesus will do it. Doesn't that sound good news? That's good news. Takes the pressure cap right off the radiator and you know that's good for your engine.

Alright, now. They leave it on step three. What was step three? And? Do it.

And can you do it? And what do you do when you can't do it? You pray. You go to the throne of grace. You get prepared for the elders.

Sometimes you have to ask you to do what he said. Now, will that save you? Only indirectly. What is actually its intent? To which you do well until the day starts.

Now, what happens to you when the day star rises? And what is the result of Christ being formed? Yes, you live righteously by nature. It cannot... And then, you know what God will do for you if you do that? He'll give you a body that has no sin in it. And so, your whole nature will be righteous effortlessly.

Just like Jesus. There'll be no desire in you to sin. Whatever.

And that's where that scripture is fulfilled where it says, He that is faithful in the little shall be entrusted with the much. And if you are faithful in each day in getting righteousness, the day will come when God entrusts you with the day star, with the fullness of Christ in you, and with a new body. And so, you've been faithful in the little.

So, He's entrusted you with much. You'll have a crown of righteousness. There's a crown of righteousness.

But if you don't do the little thing each day, and you count on God's forgiveness, you're going to go into eternity like a man that was in virtual reality on a computer and was all involved in... You know, he was surfing. I mean, he could feel it, hear the waves. This virtual reality is a comer.

And boy, it's going to have our nation will be a bunch of zombies because everybody will be rushing home to escape into another world and boy, you can simulate whatever you want. I mean, you can be in a battleship or you can be under seas exploring a cave or whatever you want. And it's so real.

I mean, it's impacting. They've got sensory gloves and all kinds of things. So, your body is being stimulated and your ears and your eyes and everything.

I mean, virtual reality is on the way. It's being developed. I mean, it's just an infant stage now.

That's what the church is in. They're in virtual reality. They've been told, you're saved by abstract grace.

It's all there. So, it's in your mind, supposedly in God's mind, but nothing's happening. The power fails and you're back in the world.

You die, you're facing Christ, you've been fooled, you haven't been changed. It's really important. Praise the Lord.

I mean, I'm very attentive, I must say. So, don't forget it. Maybe Earl's professor will bite you up to explain that.

Wouldn't that be wonderful? Right now, we're going to be taking communion. And this is what it means. It means that Christ loves you so much that He is giving into your Adamic nature something that is not Adamic.

The body and blood of Christ are not Adamic. That's life. That's life.

You see, He that eateth me, even He shall live by me as I live by the Father. That's divine life. And that's one thing that you can do to assist in the development of Christ in you.

And by the way, those other verses, we didn't get to read them, but what they're saying basically is this, that in the end time, the mystery of God should be revealed. And that mystery is Christ in you. It's never been understood by the church for 2,000 years.

It's just now that God, that the church is ready to prevail and bring forth Christ. And what a day to live in! This is the day when Zion is prevailing and what's going to come forth all at once is a... explain in those verses that I gave you. It's too bad we didn't get to them.

That's what's happening to you and to me. So we don't want to blow that program. I mean, this is a rare opportunity to be among God's first fruits.

Now, the communion, if it's taken in faith, this is the body of God. This is the blood of God. And if you purify your heart, get all unforgiveness out of your heart, get all malice out of your heart, get all, everything out that's not right, first, let a man judge himself and then let him partake.

Because otherwise it will bring judgment on you. The communion will. And make you sick.

1 Corinthians 11. So it's not an unmitigated blessing unless you have your heart right before you. Now, that doesn't mean you have to be perfect.

You just tell God, I want to serve you. I love you. I'm sorry if you have forgiven somebody.

Forgive them by God's help. And when you take that, you're feeding Christ. It's divine.

It becomes divine. It's not only a symbol. Not only a drama.

It's the real, if you take it in faith, it will become in you the very life of God. And eventually, if you keep on with your Adamic man, being faithful, the day will come when you live by that life. Just as Jesus lives by the life of the Father.

And that is our goal. Because then righteousness will be, you know, like they say, well, when did we see you in prison? We didn't realize we were doing that. See? That's the righteous person.

I didn't even realize I was being righteous. It just happened that way. That's when Christ is in you.

Praise the Lord. Hallelujah. Well, we have a custom here, if you have a special...

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