

Justification by Faith

by Ron Bailey

Ron Bailey's sermon on 'Justification by Faith' emphasizes the foundational role of faith in receiving God's grace and the implications for believers' lives.

Duration: 1:12:30

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Galatians 3:1, Titus 1:2-3

Topics: "Justification"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker begins by acknowledging the importance of understanding the word of God and its impact on our lives. The sermon focuses on the concept of justification by faith, which is the foundation of our relationship with God. The speaker emphasizes that justification by faith is not the end of the story, but rather the beginning, as it leads us into a deeper understanding of God's plan for us. The sermon also highlights the need to apply ourselves and delve into the teachings of the Bible with greater detail and commitment.

Transcript

You can ask your Lord to take it and use it and give us not just knowledge but understanding, Lord, that sinks down to the very depths of us and fixes foundations in our character upon which other things can be built. We do look to you today, Lord, for your special help to speak and to hear. Amen.

There are so few that I won't ask about coffee at this stage. Just a word of explanation then about today's notes. You'll find there are just two sheets, a sheet four and a sheet five.

Sheet four is a replacement for last week's sheet four. No major change of doctrine since last week, just one or two additions. And then page five.

The reason I've done no more than that is that we only actually got halfway down page two of last week's session. So, if we get to the end of this one we shall be doing well and that will take us about halfway through chapter four. So, we'll have a third of the book to do next week.

So, we'll see how we get on. We're coming really into the real meat of this letter now. The part where we shall need to apply ourselves and consider it maybe even in greater detail than we have up to this point.

If you've got a revised one of these things, this was actually called justification by faith, this study. I suggest you call it justification by faith and more, because we shall find that although justification by faith is

the great foundation from which other things are built, that isn't the end of the story. Justification by faith really is very much the beginning of the story and we shall find out how we go on from that into the greater fuller things that God wants to speak to us of.

We shall see that a little bit this morning as we're working our way on. Page two then and we'll try and work our way through the verses verse by verse as we did last time. Let's see if we're more successful this time.

Galatians chapter three. This is the part of the letter that if we are using Graham Scroggie's little outline, is the part that begins from chapter three and verse one and goes on to the end of that chapter and then into the next section. So it's what he called the doctrine argued and applied and the doctrine illustrated and applied.

Okay those are the parts of it. Now page two then and this is chapter three and verse one. This is what we've called an appeal to their own experience.

What Paul does in the spirit of God now is having said some of these things about his encounter with Peter and having begun to say some basic things about justification by faith. Let's just remind ourselves of that definition. The justification by faith.

Justification really is a legal declaration of righteousness and justification by faith is what happens in that God is able to legally declare us to be righteous on the basis of our faith union with Jesus Christ. Now he's begun to talk about that in chapter two and then when he comes into chapter three he illustrates it and he illustrates it in two ways. First of all he goes to their own experience and secondly he goes to Abraham's experience.

So you've got a kind of a practical application of it first of all as an illustration and then he goes back to its biblical roots and shows that their experience is founded on the truth of the scripture. So this is what he says in chapter three in verse one. Oh foolish Galatians who has bewitched you that you should not obey the truth before whose eyes Jesus Christ has been evidently or graphically set forth crucified among you.

Then he goes on to say this in verse two this only would I learn of you received you the spirit by the works of the law or by the hearing of faith. This is his basic question reminding them of their experience reminding of their their own encounter with God and he asks this question from your own experience he says did you receive the spirit as a result of you keeping the deeds of the law and so gaining your own do it yourself righteousness did you receive the spirit as a result of your contribution or was it as a result of faith receiving that that God had provided for us. Let me just say this at this point that sometimes and particularly in the days in which we are we are living faith is made much of and in some ways too much of and you might almost say well it's impossible to make too much of faith but it is if we don't understand this that faith is not the source of salvation.

Grace is the source of salvation by grace are ye saved through faith. Faith is the root that grace takes to bring salvation to us.

Faith is the hand that reaches out to receive what God has provided but faith on its own can't provide anything it can only receive what God has provided but he's basically saying here how was it that you received the Holy Spirit was it by your energies and keeping the law or was it as a result of your faith and then he goes on and he says are you so foolish having begun in the spirit are ye now made perfect by the

flesh have ye suffered so many things in vain if it be yet in vain he therefore that ministers to you the spirit and works miracles among you doeth he it by the works of the law or by the hearing of faith these few verses are a fascinating little insight into what paul understood as the beginnings of a christian experience you see he talks about receiving the spirit he talks

about beginning in the spirit he talks about having the spirit ministered to us and he also talks about someone who is ministering the spirit to us literally someone who is continuing to add the spirit to us that's really where it all starts that's what salvation is really all about it's all about a personal relationship with the one who gives the spirit and who continues to give the spirit unless we have had a beginning which is in the spirit not just one that is a result of our own mental appreciation of things because we've come to understand the basics upon which god is working but unless we've had a real beginning that's in the spirit you can't really build anything on that and without becoming too introspective we do need to know that for sure paul is able to refer to the experience

of these people he's able to because he was there when they had their beginnings he's able to put his finger on it and it says you remember when you began in the spirit you remember when you receive the spirit you remember as you constantly have the spirit ministered to you you remember as miracles are wrought or worked amongst you how does it happen as a result of your keeping of the law or as a result of your faith receiving that that god is providing okay do you notice how paul says in chapter three in verse one before whose eyes jesus christ has been evidently set forth crucified among you i find this verse very moving very challenging um more than challenging really very sobering because obviously as the result of his preaching and his living jesus christ had been set forth among the

galatians evidently graphically obviously crucified they'd seen it they'd heard it but most of all they'd seen it before your eyes he says it's been done there's a little verse in titus that i was looking for the other day and couldn't find but i found it there um in titus chapter one titus chapter one and verse three well we'll read verse two because we'll need to notice this verse a little bit later on he's speaking well we better read from the beginning paul a servant of god and an apostle of jesus christ according to the faith of god's elect and the acknowledging of the truth which is according to godliness in hope of eternal life which god that cannot lie promised before the world began but has in due times manifested his word through preaching which is committed unto me according to

the commandment of god our savior this is what provokes and challenges and sobers me this little phrase here he manifested his word through preaching the word there is the logos preaching really is intended to be the manifestation of the eternal word through the spoken word the bible is the manifestation of the eternal word that's jesus christ himself through the written word so i suppose if you've got a good biblical preacher it's the manifestation of the eternal word through the written word by means of the spoken word that there's the definition of preaching for you not just standing up and talking if it's not actively manifesting manifest really means to make a thing very plain and obvious it means to it really has built in it the idea of something shining and something which has

appeared something which is increasing in its appearance you see it with increasing clarity that's what preaching supposed to do supposed to set forth jesus christ you are to be witnesses he said unto me there are many doctrines that spring from him but doctrines are just truths from the truth about the truth um he is the truth and it's the preaching which manifests him which is the preaching which sets forth christ crucified among us evidently in some of wesley's hymns quite a few wesley's hymns you've got this um little the little phrase where he talks about our eyes now seeing christ crucified lots of them this kind of an

eternal present tense in lots of wesley's hymns and it's almost as though the hymn itself is setting forth this present tense fact of jesus christ now the galatians

had seen this they'd seen it they had the lord was speaking to us about this the other week they had looked and lived they had fixed their eyes upon the crucified son of god upon the snake on the pole going back to the numbers experience and the illustration of it that we have in john chapter three they'd fixed their eyes upon him and they had lived as a result of it now that's that's the enormity that's the tragedy of what they'd done they had once had their eyes on him now they have put their eyes on it and on me what do i have to do how do i have to maintain what god has given to me that kind of pattern of things um just to make this point because we'll need to see this um i need to establish this for later on that there's no doubt at all that these galatian christians to whom this

letter was written are genuine born again believers they have received the spirits that's really what christianity is all about it's not about us making the right decisions it's not about us having the right understandings it's not about us doing the right things ultimately at its very foundation it's all about who have we received that's why the great question of the new testament is is not actually have you been born again it's not have you been converted it's not are you saved it's not any of those things the great question the fundamental question of the new testament is that that paul spoke asked of the people in ephesus when he said having believed did you receive the holy spirit in other words you can believe and not receive the holy spirit having believed did you receive the holy

spirit paul can point back to a point in their experience when they did he knows that they did receive the holy spirit and he knows and they know that they didn't receive the holy spirit as a result of their keeping the law they were probably ignorant of most of it at that time then he kind of works his way on here coming down to verse six where we come to um just a little phrase which we'll go back to see in genesis but it is an amazing phrase and if you we read it as we will do in genesis in a moment you'll see it's even more amazing where it crops up there but he says this verse six even as abraham believed god and it was accounted to him for righteousness we're going to be talking about accounts accounted to him if you're using different translations you may have reckoned or computed

or calculated all kinds of different things this the word actually comes from the word logic it really means to calculate but on a sure foundation on a sure fact a sure basis you know that this thing is absolutely definite and what it says here is that abraham believed god and it was let's change a little bit it was put to his account as righteousness that's to say abraham believed god and god took abraham's faith and he put it to abraham's account as righteousness this is the whole basis of justification by faith if we just look at it in genesis chapter 15 and we'll spend a little time trying to work systematically through this so that we don't miss any parts of it in genesis chapter 15 very significant where this comes it comes in promises concerning the seed not seeds many but seed

singular it's when abraham is um bemoaning the fact to god that he doesn't have any seed of his own no natural children verse three then and abraham said behold to me thou hast given no seed and lo one born in my house is mine heir can you see seed and air notice these two words seed and air because we shall be coming back to them in galatians and behold the word of the lord came unto him saying this shall not be thine heir but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir and he brought him forth abroad and said look now toward heaven and tell the stars if thou be able to number them and he said unto him so shall thy seed be and he believed in the lord and he counted it to him for righteousness god speaks this promise about the seed and the air to abraham and i

don't know to this day how much abraham really understood of it at this time but he believed it in fact more than that i like it the way it's expressed in the new testament abraham believed god he put his trust entirely in god he relied entirely in god to work this thing out and make it so it tells us in very great detail in romans chapter 4 the whole process of abraham's faith and the process of abraham's faith or to use the bible's phrase the steps of the faith of our father abraham is very very instructive for us to look at to kind of just see how faith develops but abraham to begin with just believe god and as a result of his faith his belief that god would do this thing god credited abraham's account with righteousness last week it was algebra this week it's accountancy um he

credited abraham's account with righteousness and we'll see why god was able to do that in a little while um let's just have a look at romans chapter 4 and verse 12 and romans 4 and verse 12 this is the chapter where he's talking much about abraham's faith and uh he says this um let's read from verse 11 where it calls abraham the father of all believers verse 11 and he received the sign of circumcision a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had being yet uncircumcised that he might be the father of all them that believe though they be not circumcised that righteousness might be reckoned unto them or accounted to them or imputed to them and the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father abraham

which he had being yet uncircumcised you'll see this is one of these very long involved sentences just by way of experiment this isn't really very um i don't know what the word is um recently i i put the letter to the galatians through a style checker on a computer um to see what they made of it and they liked it and they thought there was a lot of action in it and a lot of personal pronouns which makes it very easy to read but they didn't like the length of the sentences and that's one of the things you always get when you come into paul's letters the length of the sentences so if we just kind of break this up a little bit in verse 11 what paul is saying this is this that they that abraham is the father of all them that believe literally of all the believers abraham is the father the

characteristics of abraham concerning faith have to be reproduced in every believer you follow that that's why he's the father his family likeness is reproduced in them concerning faith he's the father of all that believe but then he goes on to say this he's talking about them that were not circumcised because abraham wasn't when he first believed and then in verse 12 he says that also abraham is the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father abraham which he had being yet uncircumcised what paul is saying is this that for gentiles non-circumcised non-jews abraham is the father of the believers for the jews the circumcised he is their father in as much as in as much as they are both circumcised and

believing in other words the gentile the non-circumcised has to believe the jew has to have circumcision and faith that's what he's saying if we were going back to our algebra and we were to say all right well if faith is the thing that's necessary to salvation and that is sufficient and then faith plus circumcision leads to salvation we could ask ourselves the question again if that is true what is the value of circumcision in that equation and now you know why paul said it's nothing circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing it has no value in terms of its merit it only had value in terms of something else some other effect that god was using it to display at that time so the jew a true jew was not just someone who was circumcised he was not just a physical descendant of

abraham he was a physical descendant of abraham he was circumcised and he was walking present tense in the steps of the faith of our father abraham in other words he was a man who was living in faith i

don't know how many jews that leaves us with but that's god's definition of it in fact um earlier on in chapter two of romans paul makes this statements concerning jews verse 28 for he is not a jew which is one outwardly now there's an interesting statement for you it goes counter to most of what evangelicals teach these days but he says he is not a jew which is one outwardly neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh but he is a jew which is one inwardly and circumcision is that of the heart in the spirit and not in the letter whose praise is not of men but of god let's see

if we can work our way on a little bit if we had followed the pattern of abraham we would have seen that the order really was this is the top of page three in most versions i think um top of page three this was abraham's order first came the promise we didn't read that but it's in genesis chapter 12 verse 3 secondly comes the faith third comes this state where god reckons righteousness to abraham's account because of his faith and it tells us in romans 4 and verse 23 where it says this now it was not written for abraham's sake alone that it was reckoned to him but for us also to whom it shall be reckoned if we believe on him that raised up jesus our lord from the dead who was delivered for our offenses and was raised up for our justification when it talks about believing here again it's

really talking about believers not just someone who has had a crisis of belief not someone who has just come to a point of active faith but someone who is continuing to believe someone who is a believer it's a great title for christians in the new testament it doesn't refer to christians very often at all the main title for such people as we would call them is believers that was their characteristic they were believers people who were believing constantly that god had done this thing the law in galatians it tells us that all that the law did was that it brought a curse or that it pronounced the curse i'll just read these um notes as we go because i want to come a little bit farther down the law then pronounces the sentence of the curse that's galatians chapter 3 and verse 10 and the law

of course demands total obedience this is galatians 5 verse 3 for i to every man that's circumcised that he is a debtor to do the whole law and james in his letter says this for whosoever shall keep the whole law and yet offend in one point he is guilty of all the law then can never justify anybody it can never bring a person to the place where it can say this person has perfectly kept all my righteous requirements therefore i declare him to be righteous that was never the purpose of the law the purpose of the law was always to convince men utterly to make it plain to them just that that was not true of them um this is that the law can't justify if we go to galatians now uh chapter three just to link it in with where we're supposed to be we'll read from verse six and you'll see that those

things that we have been reading in romans are stated here in galatians verse six even as abraham believed god and it was reckoned to him for righteousness know ye therefore that they which are of faith the same are the sons of abraham and the scripture foreseeing that god would legally declare the gentiles to be righteous through faith preached before the gospel unto abraham saying in thee shall all nations be blessed so then they which be of faith are blessed with believing abraham for as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse for it is written cursed as everyone that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the lord to do them but that no man is justified by the law in the sight of god is evident obvious for the just as the righteous man shall live

by faith and the law is not of faith but the man that doeth them shall live in them and then he says this in verse 13 christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law having been made a curse for us for it is written cursed is everyone that hangs on a train i don't know whether you can follow the pattern of what he's saying here it really is very wonderful jesus christ of course was without sin he was perfect as regards

the law even he had fully fulfilled all the righteous requirements of the law the testimonies to his character come from all kinds of unexpected places in the scripture and you get even his enemies and the people who didn't really want to admit it at all who have to admit that they find no fault in him but there's in him nothing worthy of death jesus himself threw out a

challenge on one occasion and said which of you convicts me of sin there was not a single thing that anyone could put their finger on and say this is sin i remember years and years ago hearing someone preach and um they they took three different characters i can sometimes remember sermons like this and they took three different characters they took peter first of all and they said peter was a man of action that's true and they came to this verse in peter's letter where it says of jesus christ who did no sin he as a man of action committed no offense against the law of god that was peter's way of expressing it paul they said was a man of the intellect and in second corinthians paul says this of jesus christ who knew no sin and then this person went on to say that john was the one who got

closest to the lord and knew what was in him and john and his letter simply says in him there is no sin these are categoric testimonies to the sinlessness of the lord jesus christ and yet he hung on a cross and anyone who hangs on a cross it says in the old testament anyone who hangs on a tree that person was cursed it was because it was the execution of a sentence against some sin so how can it be that someone who is not cursed suffers the consequence of the curse and what is the consequence of all that well this is what paul says he says reading that verse again verse 13 christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law if we have time and if i find out what is in the notes and we'll find that constantly through the galatian letter paul uses these personal pronouns we us and our when he

does that he's nearly always referring to we jews the great problem for the jews was that they had this written sentence of death against them which was the law the gentiles didn't have that the law was not given to gentiles now that doesn't mean that the gentiles were without law they had the work of the law written in their hearts but the specific details of the law were not given to the gentiles they were given to the jews prior to them going into their own land and were part of the conditions of the covenant between god and his people that were going to exist that he was bringing them into christ for the jew has redeemed him from the curse of the law he has redeemed him from the curse he has suffered the curse which the law could only bring that's all the law could do it could only

bring in the sentence of death against the sinner christ who was not a sinner has suffered received the sentence of death himself so now the law's power to enforce its penalty is exhausted it's finished charles spurgeon used to say this i can remember it he used to say that it was as though god had taken the sword of his righteous indignation against sin out of its scabbard and had sheathed it once and forever in the body of his own son upon the cross it's finished it really is finished all god's righteous indignation all the penalty of the law was all focused in on jesus christ all our sins met together in him and all the penalty for them met together in him he became a curse not just the sin but the curse he became receiving it all and then he goes on to say this remember when he says

we he's talking primarily about the jews um verse 13 christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law having been made a curse for us for it is written cursed as everyone that hangs on a tree that the blessing of abraham might come upon the gentiles through christ jesus that we might receive the promise of the spirit through faith if we go from the beginning of verse 13 to the end of verse 14 you can kind of follow the line that he's on perhaps a little bit more clearly he's simply saying this christ redeemed us from the curse of the law that we might receive the promise of the spirit by faith there could be no receiving of the spirit

until christ had fully received in himself the full penalty of the law until the law was exhausted in its righteous indignation against sin until the

penalty was executed it would have been unrighteous for god to have given the spirit the spirit is the spirit of life whereas the law brings the sentence of death how could he give the spirit of life to those who had incurred the spirit of death you remember that's what he refused to do in the garden of eden he refused to let those who had incurred death receive the spirit of life because of their sin do you remember that they were driven out from the tree of life so that they couldn't touch it because if they had touched it they would have lived forever it it could not be god is a righteous god and all that he does is utterly just if we come down to this part now we need to talk about propitiation i'm page three in the middle of it where it says christ brings a blessing and then a he has

taken the full penalty of the law of us for us and then b the law's full force was received by christ and then we come to this passage romans 3 verse 23 and 20 to 26 these are among the most wonderful verses in the bible if there are any most wonderful verses in the bible these are foundation truths that if the spirit of god will quicken them to us and they can really settle down into our understanding they will alter everything i'm quite convinced that many people good christian folk people who really have received the spirit come under all kinds of accusations and find themselves in all kinds of backwaters not able to flow in meetings and things because they have not fully appreciated deep down the real consequences of what christ has done upon the cross because they haven't fully

understood the implications of justification by faith so let's have a look at this and see what it says verse 23 he's just been talking about jews and gentiles and then he says for there's no difference for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of god then he says this being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in christ jesus whom god has set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood to declare his righteousness for the remission the passing over of sins that are passed through the forbearance of god to declare i say at this time his righteousness that he might be just and the justifier of him which believes in jesus paul in this part of the letter to the romans is really justifying god he's really acting as god's advocate god's lawyer he is

bringing his reasons as to why god is just why what god has done is not just how is it that god can refuse to visit the sentence of death upon a sinner how can it be possible that god should declare someone who has sinned to be righteous how is it that god justifies the ungodly that's the phrase how can it be true how can it be honest how can it be righteous how can these things be and this is what paul says here he speaks of jesus christ in the very last two words of verse 24 jesus christ whom god has set forth to be a propitiation this word propitiation is a long one and is just used three or four times in the scriptures but it's a word which is one of the great bible words and for us to really understand this well it'll just lay a foundation in our hearts to understand what god has

done to propitiate someone is basically to appease them there is an instinct in men and women that if you offend somebody somehow every man and woman knows that they ought to do something to get back into the good favor of the person they've offended a child of two or three knows this he's naughty and then he goes out of the garden and picks some buttercups or something and brings them back to mum and although mum has said she's forgiven him and it's all over there's something in him which says i something ought to be paid to get me back into my mother's good books that's an instinct it's right through the human race it's the basis of all blood sacrifice throughout all heathen religion that a price has to be paid to get back into the good favor of someone that we have offended by some

action of ours it's a true instinct but without the revelation of god's word it becomes a cruel power that works in all kinds of vicious ways it works in so-called christian people too who think that unless they repent enough or are sorry enough or believe enough or any of these things unless they do them enough the cause of the offense still remains and that is some separation between them and god well paul says this a propitiation is this is a definition for if you want a propitiation is it is the price paid to remove the cause of the offense so that there may be reconciliation that's what a propitiation is when people try to propitiate the gods or try to whatever it is what they're trying to do is that they are trying to pay the necessary prize price to remove the course of the offense

so that there can be reconciliation you see people know they do know instinctively that you can't just ignore sin you can't just pretend it never happened you can't just say oh well forget it it's okay somehow there has to be more than that there's an instinct there has to be more than that they would not they would not have a clear conscience what paul says is this that god set forth jesus christ to be a propitiation in other words god paid the price to remove the cause of the offense so that man might be reconciled to god in other words god has been entirely just what he has done is he has enabled his son to receive the full penalty of the law in himself one of the old classic illustrations of this and it's a lovely one i think it's an effective one is of a man who um he was a

judge and one day there came in front of him a young man who had committed some crime and the fine for this particular crime was going to be 50 pounds or a period of imprisonment the young man had no money at all but there's another little bit of this story i haven't told you and that's the fact that the young man was actually the son of the judge so what the judge did acting justly is he sentenced this young man to the fine of 50 pounds or a period of imprisonment and then having declared the sentence he took off his robes of legal authority and he went to the clerk of the court and he paid the 50 pounds the price is now paid the young man is now free as regard the law can't touch him the law can't say to him but you didn't pay it the law doesn't care all that matters is that the price

is paid this is exactly what god did he stripped off all the robes of his of his legal nature as the judge and he came down into our world to pay the full price to satisfy the righteous demands of the law and to be a propitiation that is to say to pay the price which would remove the cause of the offense and so make it possible for man to be reconciled to god do you understand that god has done that it isn't something that he has to do it's something that he has already done one of the other times that this word propitiation is used is in john's letter john's first letter and smaller units they created the ultimate demolition system called democracy which kind of breaks down into smaller and smaller units becoming more and more unmanageable until every street has its own little democratic

council or every family and if you know anything about greek history you'll know that democracy destroyed them just an interesting political point if you've got any confidence in democracy it destroyed them because they could never work together every little city state had its own way of doing things and it was always different to what any other city state had to do so when there was trouble when there was war that came from outside everyone was making their own individual decisions about whether to go and do anything about it or not it just it breaks down like that now this excessive individualism is right the way through our our world system in the west it's right the way through our educational system our kids are taught it stand on your own feet do your own thinking ask the right

questions it doesn't matter about the answers you've got to ask the right questions you've got to be yourself you've got to be individual now there is a kind of truth in that that it's important for us to have

because we are all to hold fast to christ our head as individuals that's true but there's another truth that it obscures and that's this that the bible makes it plain that we are not just individuals but that we all are in this together there is a corporateness we are involved in something together this is a spiritual truth and this spiritual truth is seen in places like hebrews where um the right of the hebrews is showing that the priesthood which christ has is and melchizedek had is greater than the priesthood that aaron had and the way that the right of the hebrew shows it is by

saying this well he says abraham paid tithes to melchizedek that's to say abraham gave tithes to someone who was more important than him because without any contradiction the lesser is blessed by the greater so melchizedek was the greater and abraham paid tithes to him and you say well where is this going now this reasoning probably sounds very strange to our western minds but the writer goes on to say because abraham paid tithes to melchizedek levi paid tithes to melchizedek because levi is the tribe that the aaronic priesthood came out of because levi was in abraham when abraham paid tithes to melchizedek now if you're honest the first time you come across that idea with our western understanding it sits very uncomfortably on your mind well it did for me i remember whether it did for

you you think this is a peculiar way of reasoning i mean surely the soul that sins he shall die is isn't it a personal thing how can you say that what how can you kind of apply that thing to true and say well it's they're all joined together that levi was in abraham because you know that you've got abraham isaac jacob then levi so abraham was dead before levi was born but the scripture says that levi was in abraham when abraham paid tithes to melchizedek you see this sense of being in something together this collective thing is something that in the we lose in in simpler cultures they feel it much more um in tribal cultures and village cultures in in in the simpler parts of the world i wouldn't have to spend all this time explaining this because there is a kind of a sense of being in

something together it's our excessive individualism in the west that says i'm all right jack i can stand on my own feet that's all there is to it what i do has no repercussion to anybody else that's not true it's not true in the church of god everything that you do affects me everything that i do affects you you might not know it but the truth is that it affects you if one member is honored all are honored doesn't matter whether they feel it or not they're all honored it's a it's an absolute spiritual fact of life all right so you and i were in adam when adam sinned so we share his uh his history we added our own personal contribution anyway so you can't blame anybody verse 13 for until the law sin was in the world but sin is not reckoned when there is no law let me just pause at that

point because this this is confirming really what we've been saying so far sin is not reckoned when there is no law you've if there's no law sin can't be quantified you can't measure sin if there's no law you know if and maybe children feel it like this sometimes there are kind of all kinds of hidden laws that they activate without knowing it and they suddenly find you mustn't eat your soup with the spoon that way and you mustn't dip this and you mustn't do that and they suddenly discover all these kind of little laws that they never knew about but they are not culpable that's to say they are not blameworthy unless they have broken the law themselves consciously i hope you work like this with your children at home i hope you don't kind of work on the principle that the children ought to

know all these things by some kind of peculiar instinct um but that if they haven't known about it they can't be held responsible for it now when there was no standard given in law men were still sinners paul's going on to show that because he says they kept on dying um so that was his proof sin has touched everybody we all die that's the proof um even those who haven't sinned after the similitude of adam's transgression

he's going to say but the point he's making is this that when the law came in it gave a standard against which things could be measured let me illustrate it um like this as far as i know i don't think it ever accuses abraham in the bible of lying or sin of any kind now if you and i read the story we'll see lots of things in abraham's life which are not very pleasant and

certainly things that you wouldn't want to justify you wouldn't want to say yes that's all right because abraham did it but you'll find the bible doesn't do it because abraham was before the law and although there was no standard there was still sin but until the standard comes in until the score system comes in you don't know how badly you're doing sin was not reckoned it was not counted when there was no law can you see the logic of that um some nods and i think those are the folks who are going to sleep and um you can't how can i illustrate that um um it's it's i'll tell you how you can illustrate it i remember some years ago talking to some teenagers at uh at the school and um we were going to talk about law and thing and i was just chatting to them in a kind of a common room and

we've got this chess set out no it was drafts that's right with drafts and um i said oh i'll have you again so this lad started to play and i think we started off on the white on the black squares and um i kind of moved some of mine onto the white squares and he said you can't do that and i said why he said well because the laws as well don't take any notice of the laws do we i mean it's why not just kind of do it in our own way he said he said you can't do it like that you're going to have laws we shan't know where the fouls are we shan't know you're going to have laws now if there were no laws there'd be no fouls and you wouldn't be able to you know it's like this score system they have with is it kind of a kind of car driving and things i've i haven't got any on mine so i don't know

how it works but when you get to a certain number the chop comes down they say that's it no more driving um but unless there was a unless there was a score system those those things it would not be counting up so sin is not counted it's not reckoned no record is kept of it there's no accumulation of it you don't know how much debt you're getting to into if there's no law all right and that's why the law was given so we could we could know exactly how much debt we are in verse 13 for until the law sin was in the world but sin is not reckoned where there's no law nevertheless death reigned from adam to mooses even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of adam's transgression who is a figure of him that was to come that was the word the little phrase i wanted to get to that adam

is according to romans there a figure that's to say a picture a type of him that was to come now why was adam a type or a picture of the one that was to come well because adam did something and the consequences of his act were passed down to the generations his his progeny his children received what adam had become if we go to the first part of the book the first part of the bible in genesis in genesis chapter 1 of verse 26 this is how it all started off and god said let us make man in our image after our likeness that's how man was created he was created in the image and the likeness of god if we go now to genesis chapter 5 we find this statement repeated genesis chapter 5 and verse 1 this is the book of the generations of adam in the day that god created man in the likeness of god made

he him male and female created he them and blessed them and called their name adam in the day when they were created and adam lived in 130 years and begat a son in his own likeness after his image and called his name seth the only tragedy is that in between verse 2 and verse 3 you actually have genesis chapter 3 you see if if adam was a perfect image let's suppose we are we're taking copies of something we're taking copies of the cassette here let's say the first cassette is a perfect image of what i have been saying complete with splutters and all the rest of it now the next copy of that with you know given the the

weakness of whatever machine we're using can be a very very close copy of what i've been saying and that if that that then is the master tape and you can have all kinds of

copies from that one but if something happens to this master tape if some if someone puts it against an electric motor or something like that and it it affects the magnetic record that's on the tape and that's happened to the master tape every single copy from this master tape and every copy of a copy from the master tape is going to have the error in it that's now in the master tape there's no way that you can get back to the original once the master tape has been corrupted there's no way you can't do it you might be able to you can't put anything back that was there you might take out some things that um weren't there to begin with you might take out some noise or crackles or hiss or something but you can't put back what has been lost now what happened to adam was that he was in the

image and likeness of god perfect but he sinned and his likeness of god was distorted he was no longer in the image and likeness of god he was a hideous distortion instead of being what god wanted him to be i don't just mean physically i don't mean physically at all particularly i mean in his character but that distortion he passed on through his spiritual genes to the next generation even seth who was a good man as good went in those days but he passed those spiritual genes onto seth and onto the next and onto the next and right it down ultimately to you and to me we have received spiritual genes that have come right the way down from adam i was in adam when he sinned there was a part of adam that's that was in me and those i was in adam in that kind of sense that's why we need you and

they said it before some of it that's why we need to be regenerated spiritually nothing else will do it no kind of modifying will do it no kind of education will do it we need we need a new spiritual history we need an exact reproduction of ancestral characteristics but with a new ancestor that's our only hope where our only hope is that we can have a new ancestor and this is why it says that adam is a figure or a type of the one that he should come why because adam passed on his moral likeness to his sons and the one who is coming would pass on his moral likeness to his sons that's why you have to become born again that's that's why it has to happen there's no other possibility there is no way that your let's go to the natural there is no way that your father's natural characteristics

can get into me the only way that your father's characteristics can get into me is if i was born again and your father became my father at that point i would have some common characteristics with you is that right is that this logical it is the bible is devastatingly logical it really is that you have to be born again it isn't just a question of alterations and modification adaptations improvements you have to be born again there's no way that's why so i don't know it was here the other i don't know whether it was but and we sing this little chorus which is a nice little chorus but it talks about um changing me from earthly things to the heavenly can't do it you can't change earthly things to the heavenly you can't change flesh to spirit not as a process that has to be a crisis there has

to be a passing away of the first and the coming in of the second then you can go not from earthly to heaven but you can go from glory to glory to glory to glory you can go from heaven to heaven to heaven to heaven to heaven you can go but you've got to start somewhere new it's like you know the irishman's definition of heaven or you know you know the story that someone asked an irishman they said how do you get to dublin and he said if i were you i wouldn't start from here and and if if you if you want to know the answer is how do you get to heaven if i were you i wouldn't start to hear from here you've actually got to start from heaven to get to heaven you know that this is what the bible says the bible says the only thing that will go into heaven is that that came out of heaven

categoric statements so unless you have got a life in you that came out of heaven it's not going to go back this all right okay um what would have topic that we're discussing today oh yes galatians i remember now um this this um galatians verse well it says how and when galatians 2 and verse 20 and here's a literal translation i have been and still am co-crucified together with christ nevertheless i live yet not i not the same i but christ lives in me but that which i now live in flesh in faith i live if there are some folks here who for whom english is not their first language and this sounds strange it is strange because this is literally from the greek this is strange for english people as well um i have been and still am co-crucified with christ nevertheless i live yet not i emphasize

but christ lives in me but that which now i live in flesh in faith i live that of the son of god who loved me and gave himself for me he's stressing the fact that he is still co-crucified with christ and because of that the law has no power over him if he if he is if he is alive he's in trouble because the law will come looking for him but as long as he stays co-crucified with christ the law has no power over him the old me is still undergoing crucifixion that's hands pinned down feet pinned down helpless and i've talked here and i wanted to put it in these kind of provoking terms because paul does in galatians 2 verse 20 coming to the end of the chapter and we were supposed to have got to the end of the next chapter this morning but we've got five minutes so who knows what might happen

um he says in verse 21 this is a solemn thing here really i do not frustrate the grace of god for if christ but if righteousness come by the law then christ is dead in vain that's to say uselessly if righteousness comes by the law christ's death was unnecessary and therefore a total waste can you imagine peter still listening to this maybe we've forgotten but this is paul talking to peter he's saying to peter paul if righteousness comes by the law the death of christ peter that you witnessed with your eyes that was an irrelevance it was an utter waste of time it was just some kind of spectacle some kind of demonstration some completely irrelevant non-thing you can see how strong this thing is in fact it's like this that if we can kind of see it in this line um i think it was last week

that we we had a we'd had a little bit of kind of spiritual algebra and here's another little bit of spiritual algebra i ought to written it down because you'd need to be able to see it but if you can imagine a blackboard and um i write on the blackboard if you've forgotten your algebra i forgot most of mine but if if we have an equation that says christ equals salvation if that equation is true and i put underneath it a second equation christ plus law keeping equals salvation if the first statement is true what is the value of law keeping in the second equation we've got some math teachers here zero if the first equation is true that christ can bring a sufficient salvation then in the second equation christ's death plus law keeping equals salvation law keeping is zero now let me put

another algebra equation on my imaginary blackboard um here's the first one law keeping equals salvation if that statement is true and i put another statement underneath it which says first statement says law keeping equals salvation second statement reads law keeping plus christ's death equals salvation what is the value of christ's death in that equation zero you see this there's there's no there's no possible compromise that you can make on this thing and that's why paul is making these things so strongly as he's saying them to peter and for us there cannot be a compromise if you give any value at all to law keeping in terms of effecting our salvation the only way you can give value to law keeping is by taking value from christ the only way you can put any value at all on law keeping

for salvation is by taking that value from christ because christ is the end of the law he's the goal of the law he's the purpose of the law that's what the law was all about he is what the law was funneling us into it's

just coming up to so we'll stop at that point and then we can get into chapter three which is really most of this these notes next week let's just pray shall we let's sing it's done yes it's done it's done yes it's done it's done yes it's done through the precious blood of jesus the battle is won it's done yes it's done it's done yes it's done by the precious blood of jesus the battle is won thank you lord and do write it on our hearts and ever increasingly into our understanding lord do help us to begin to understand at least lord just how thoroughly and finally you have

satisfied all the righteous requirements of a righteous god so that even the faith which you give to us enables us to come into you and thus be perfectly accepted with nothing to add lest we should take from that that you've done thank you lord amen

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