

When Is Good, Good Enough?

by Shane Idleman

The sermon emphasizes that human righteousness is insufficient for salvation and highlights the necessity of Christ's imputed righteousness.

Duration: 5:20

Scripture: Matthew 5:20, Luke 9:23, Luke 14:27, Romans 3:10, 2 Corinthians 5:21

Topics: "Imputed Righteousness", "Genuine Faith"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the insufficiency of human righteousness compared to the standard set by Jesus, highlighting the need for Christ's imputed righteousness for salvation. It challenges the misconception that being 'good enough' can earn salvation, stressing the importance of repentance, belief in Christ, and understanding the true cost of the cross. Genuine faith is emphasized over mere religious actions or good deeds.

Transcript

The deficit in the law. And I could spend a whole sermon here but I'm not going to. This is very critical.

Jesus said, for I say to you that unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and the Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven. When he said that to a Jewish audience, they probably almost fell back. He said, well who then can be saved? Nobody can exceed their righteousness.

Nobody can. They had the letter of the law. They had it down.

That's why they were the religious leaders. Paul said, I was a Pharisee of Pharisees. I had the law blameless.

I was this, circumcised. I was the tribe of this. Boom, boom, boom.

People are saying, now what are we going to do? We cannot enter the kingdom of heaven. In a nutshell, and I don't have time to break this down. If we did part two, I would.

But he's basically saying, there's none that are righteous. No, not one. Your righteousness has to exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees.

It can't do that. Exactly. That's why you need my, Christ's, imputed righteousness.

There's a big theological term that the seminary students don't think I know. Imputed, imputed righteousness. Christ is imputing, giving us his righteousness.

We're right standing with God because of what Christ did. So that's the only way. That's why we can't say, but I'm a good person.

I'm a good person. I hear that more than anything else. I'm sure I'm going to hear it more.

Do you not? But I'm a good person, Shane. I don't care. It doesn't matter how good you are.

Was Noah good enough? Was Abraham good enough? Was Moses good enough? Was Joshua good enough? Was Paul good enough? Was Peter good enough? No, nobody was good enough. So why do we think we can be good enough? We can't. Good is never good enough.

That's why we have to take Christ. Can I have your imputed righteousness? Can I have that? How do I get that? By repenting and believing in the only name that says, Lord, I repent of my sin. I take on that imputed righteousness.

Now I can be in right relationship with God. And there's many people filling our churches that are good people. But good is not good enough.

That's all this verse. If you were to break it down, the cross is not some general display of love. It's not.

It wasn't meant to be just a symbol. It wasn't meant to just display it as decor. Christ bore and endured and received the full penalty of the law.

That's what the cross is about. The cross is messy. It's bloodstained.

It's ruthless. It's cruel. That's the cross, the cross of Christ, the wrath of God being poured out upon Christ.

It's not some little symbol. It's not an icon. It's not decor.

It's ugly. And that's okay. Can we still have in our house? Of course, because as long as you remember what it's there for.

When Jesus would say, if you want to follow me, you must carry your cross. You must die to self. Why don't we say that anymore? You want to follow Christ? Just say this little prayer.

Jesus can make your life so much better. So great. Yeah, brother, just we don't say it's dying to self.

Are you ready to come follow Jesus and die? That's what it is. Count the cost. Count the cost of the cross.

That'll be another good title because we need to always remember that's what communion is for, to count the cost and remember the cost. So just remember about this text that good is never good enough. Jesus said, unless your righteousness exceeds the highest standard, which it can't, you will not enter the kingdom of God, of heaven.

And that needs to get out. I think that's one of the reasons our churches are complacent, is people are not saying this in love. Listen, you're not good enough.

Just going to church is enough. Just reading the Bible isn't enough. Being baptized isn't enough.

Saying a quick little prayer at 12 years old is not enough. Genuine faith has genuine fruit. And there's a lot of people doing good things, doing the right things because they're trying to change an environment, or they're trying to please somebody, or they're thinking this, or if God will see this, God will allow.

No, no, no. He's just going to look at what Christ did. I've had somebody very close to me many years ago.

When I was telling him this, he said, well, I just hope God sees all my good stuff I've done too. I said, no, you won't. God's not going to get good.

He's going to say, what did you do with Christ? My law condemns, Christ releases. That's it.

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