

A CHANGE OF
MIND

WE ARE GOD'S
CHILDREN FOREVER



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VOLUME 4

A Change of Mind

Volume 4

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ABC's of Repentance

Open your Bible to 2 Corinthians 7:8-10.

This is one of the chapters, starting with the eighth verse, that is confusing people. They can't figure out how to apply what I teach here because of all the different words for *repent* or *repentance* in verses 8-10. The whole purpose of this section of the letter to the Corinthians was to get them to trust in Christ alone for salvation - to quit trusting in their works. I'm going to break these verses down so you understand exactly what is being said, so no one can use them against you by trying to describe something that isn't there. Moreover, with this knowledge, you will be able to apply it in your life and explain it to others who might be confused or misguided concerning the interpretation of these verses.

But before I get there, I want you to know that my concern is how Christians are being misled — misled concerning salvation. Recently I was listening to a very famous preacher. He just held a conference and charged \$200-\$300 to attend (I don't remember the exact cost; I didn't go.) He pulled in about \$850,000, and that probably isn't including all the Jesus-junk that was sold on top of that. Conferences are big business, but to tell you the truth, I don't even care about the money. Again, my concern is how Christians are being misled concerning salvation. The main speaker in this conference was telling these gullible people — I am assuming most of them were gullible — that they shouldn't be concerned about being theologically correct. Listen, I know no one is going to be 100% theologically correct, including myself. You have seen me change a few areas from what I use to teach to what I teach now. It's called growth - spiritual growth. Thank God, the last thing I want is to become a stale Christian with no growth potential. One of the things on his list that he said not to be concerned with was salvation. I have told you in this series, that is where it starts; that is one area you cannot be off on. So, it is important to be theologically correct in that area. His gist was that instead of worrying about that, people should be more concerned about being in "oneness with Christ." Everyone be "kumbaya" with Christ. I wish we all could be in oneness with Christ — especially in the area of how preachers preach salvation and how people understand what salvation is about. I would more than love for that to happen. It would be wonderful to see. I have been preaching for a while now, and that has not happened. What they preach is like a rat trap; they lure you in with — (I was going to say some quality cheese, but it's not even that; there's nothing of quality about it.) — some cheese and as soon as you are close enough, they've got you. In this conference, there was some truth being laid out, but that is how you're lured in.

I have told you about a lot of the books I go through. With some, I hope to get a paragraph out of it. I'm down to that. The rest is fireplace material. As I get older, the more I'm turned off with the nonsense that I hear and read about salvation and what they preach concerning repentance. I have said that for a while now. I am so tired of hearing this "oneness in Christ." It is just another effort of works. If only we all could get along with each other - which we're not able to do. Christ will do the correcting eventually, and we will all be at "oneness in Christ" at that point, but until we get there, I don't see it happening. I wish I was wrong, and I pray that I am wrong, but I just don't see that happening. And this "oneness with Christ" is just another effort of men trying to unify themselves into believing that Christ is more pleased with that than He is with us trusting Him and

His word, trusting in Him and His Son above everything else. It's a trap, but hopefully I have covered enough ground through the years that you can see these things for yourself as you read or listen to these individuals that preach another gospel.

Read 2 Corinthians 7:8-10 - *For though I made you sorry with a letter, I do not repent, though I did repent: for I perceive that the same epistle hath made you sorry, though it were but for a season. Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing. For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death.*

I have had people confess to me that when they read these verses they become confused — and for the longest time I used to be as well — not just because Paul seems like he's just rattling on and it gets wordy (it doesn't seem that clear, especially reading the King James Version), but in verse 10, you can come away with the illusion in the King James (and other versions of the Bible) that just being sorrowful for what you've done brings you repentance. Sorry, that doesn't cut it.

My whole goal from this point on is to put to rest the notion that you must quit sinning in order to be born from above or born again. That is not what 2 Corinthians 7:8-10 is stating. Also, I want you to understand God's original intent (through Paul) by using the original Greek words. I briefly mentioned this before, but now I want to give you more details. Let's just call these three-word variations the *ABC's of Repentance*, and I'll explain what they really mean. I am going to try and make it as clear as I can for you using all the variations of the word *repent* that we find in these verses.

Now this passage consists of three verses where we see three variations of the Greek word *metanoia* or *repent*. Therefore, I want you to put "A", "B", or "C" at the areas where I tell you to put them.

Assign the letter "A" to *metanoia*; the most simple and clear definition of that word is "a change of mind." Assign the letter "B" to *metamelomai*; simply put, it means to "feel sorry" or "regret." Finally, assign the letter "C" to *ametameletos*; the clearest definition of this Greek variation of the word repentance is that now you are put in a position where "you cannot change your mind," a more permanent position that is "irrevocable."

Now let's read the verses again and place the letters where they apply:

*"For though I made you sorry with a letter, I do not repent, [Place the letter "A" here. The definition that applies here is a "change of mind."] though I did repent: [Place the letter "B" here, *metamelomai*; "I regret" or "I feel sorry."] for I perceive that the same epistle hath made you sorry, though it were but for a season. Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: [Place the letter "A" here, *metanoia*, "a change of mind."] for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing. For godly sorrow worketh repentance [Place the letter "A", "a change of mind."] to salvation not to be repented [Place the letter "C" here; "irrevocable" or "you cannot change your mind"] of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death."*

Now, you still might be a little confused, even though you have all the letters and the definitions of these words, the *ABC's of Repentance*, but I am going to show you how it would read if put into today's everyday language:

2 Corinthians 7:8-10

For though I made you sorry with my letter, I do not change my mind about the reasons that were necessary to make you feel bad, though I did feel sorry for having to upset you. For I perceive that the same epistle hath made you sorry, though it were but for a season. Now I rejoice, not that you were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to changing your mind from trusting in works, to trusting in Christ alone. For ye were sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing. For Godly sorry worketh that change of mind from works to Christ to salvation not to be revoked once saved. God cannot change His mind. But the sorrow of the world worketh death.

God cannot change his mind. He saves you forever. Now, it is not part of the verse but, "as long as you keep trusting in what His Son did" should be added. I want to add that though it isn't part of these verses.

What these verses prove is that *repentance* in salvation means a *change of mind* from works - or even a change of mind in Discipleship because that is usually where people include works — or whatever other combination of spiritual mumbo jumbo they come up with. You cannot say you have faith in Christ and then add on your works. Now, I never said Discipleship is not necessary, but it doesn't save you. Isaiah called it like he saw it, and he called it "filthy" works. I am saying we are completely hopeless, and we are completely helpless without Jesus Christ. Only Christ's righteousness can be seen by the Father as a worthy payment - not for His sin, but for ours. That is why when God perceives us now, He sees us with Christ's righteousness, the robe of righteousness that Christ places on us that gives us that access. He removed our punishment, He removes our guilt that was rightfully ours because we were born with sinner's blood, and He credits us with His righteousness.

Look at 2 Corinthians 5:21, ***"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."***

That is why He is called our Savior. That is why the death penalty is removed. That is why everlasting life is given. That is why we have access to the Father. We can come boldly to His throne. I have said it many times, but in John 6:47, Jesus says, ***"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life."*** There are no other substitutions. I am sorry; it has to be Jesus the Christ to have eternal life, to have access to that free gift, which comes the split second we trust in Christ who died for our sin. He was buried, came back to life, came out of that tomb, and rose again. Quit trusting the Christian lifestyle. Quit trusting the preaching you hear about repentance and know what God's Word clearly says about it. Do trust in Jesus, period.

I am not saying once you start trusting in Him and you have had that change of mind that He will allow you to live your life as you please. Far from it. He will chasten and correct you along your

journey. But as long as you trust Him on a daily basis — and some days there will be more trusting going on than others — He's not going to leave you, my friend; He isn't going to let you go. That is probably the most wonderful thing He did besides what He came to fulfill for our benefit. Once that happens, through my stumbling, through my heartaches and my falls and my slipups, He is there ready to grab a hold of me. I can imagine him just picking me up by my shirt and saying, "Nope! This is the way we are going now. Get back on the path of trusting Me, I will direct your path." Let me tell you - I am almost 60 years old and through my life of experience, that is exactly what happens.

Keep your eyes on Jesus, keep your eyes fixed on Jesus, and keep trusting in Him and His Word.

How Some Ministries Get It Wrong

Open your Bible to John 3:16. Anyone who has been a Christian for any period of time is very familiar with this verse.

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth [pisteuo in the Greek, another word for faith; the definition of that word in the Greek is trust and confidence in Jesus Christ.] in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

In the gospel records and in the apostles’ epistles, we repeatedly see the requirement for salvation: whoever has trust and confidence in Jesus - that He came, He died, He rose again, He carried His shed blood up to the heavenly mercy seat and sprinkled His blood to finish His commission, from which we benefit. That is our rescue plan. He is our savior.

I have been going through many different verses demonstrating that it is not by any works of ours that earns us salvation. There is nothing we can do — nothing whatsoever — to be saved. It was all Christ’s works. There is nothing we can do. But if you look at the statements of faith across many ministries (e.g. ministry websites or church bulletins), you will see they mix in a little bit of the works.

First of all, they don’t get the concept down because they keep using the word *repent*. We see the word *repent* in the King James Version and other translations, which is an English word meaning *to be sorry or sorrowful*. Christ never used the word *repent*. He used the word *metanoia*, which literally means a *change of mind*. [See *A Change of Mind*, Vol. 1.] A change of mind will change your heart. There is another word that is similar, but it was never a word Christ used ever, nor did His apostles. All Christ wants from us is our trust in His completed, finished work. That is the only way we can have salvation in our life. We can’t earn it.

Some may ask, “What about the things we do after salvation?”

Well, that is after salvation. Don’t mix the two. Discipleship and salvation are two different things, even though many ministries like to combine them together, slipping works on the backend. I’m sorry, but that is taking God’s righteousness — the righteousness that He imputes to you because you have trust and confidence in Him and His finished work on the cross — and then adding in some of your stuff, which becomes self-righteousness because it puts a little bit of the focus on you.

Why do we do what we do as disciples? A) Because it pleases God and it puts us in positions to have faith and trust in Him and B) it earns us rewards; it earns us different crowns in heaven. So, number one, be obedient and be faithful as a disciple in the place where He has put you in His Great Commission. Not everyone is called to do the same thing. Whatever capacity God has called you to be part of, a ministry or church or to be on point, be faithful as a disciple, as a learner — that is what disciple means in the Greek — and be ever growing and maturing in Jesus Christ, taking the challenges of faith head-on, trusting and leaning on Him to get you through. If you do

that, it pleases Him. It shows you to be obedient, to stay in the faith, and be faithful to Him. And number two, it earns you all kinds of rewards.

Christ wants to reward us when we get there. Why do you think there is a Judgment Seat of Christ? Not everyone will be rewarded the same. Some will receive greater rewards than others. The Judgment Seat of Christ would not be necessary if rewards weren't in our future. Once you are saved because you trust in Jesus Christ, you're going to heaven, so why would you need something in between? As I taught in the *Giving* series, it is because He wants to give you inexhaustible rewards that will carry on throughout eternity.

Still so many have taken this message of salvation and slipped in works and their manmade invented doctrines, and that has brought in confusion. It's turned off many and made many more self-righteous Christians who think God is impressed with their good works, and for that, they are saved. Sorry, it doesn't work that way.

I want to read to you something from a person who's commenting on a very popular ministry. (I won't name names yet about this ministry.) A lot of it sounds good, but see if you can recognize the change that twists the salvation plan from what the Gospel record declares it to be. This commentary is about a pastor in San Antonio, Texas:

His mission in the ministry is to “aggressively fulfill” the Great Commission by making disciples out of all people, to bring the lost to Christ, and support fellow believers. [His] television show can be seen all over the world. His show is on most every day on the TBN station, as well as other stations. He has written many books. He is an all-around good guy who believes in what he is doing for Christ and for others.

[And I believe that they do believe that.]

[He] is a good, sincere man who preaches his sermons with both a force and a conviction rarely seen in other pastors, today. In fact, one of his trademarks is to shout loudly phrases such as “Give Him praise and glory...” at specified intervals during his sermons. He is thoroughly entertaining, very intelligent, and a master of the art of public speaking.

[His ministry operates a well-built Internet site. You may visit his website and read about him, his ministry, and everything his ministry accomplishes. He also has a place on his site where you can learn about salvation - his plan of salvation. He has a video posted on his internet site. Once you click on that in a certain section, you will be taken to a video presentation.]

I will paraphrase for you the plan of salvation according to [this pastor] rather than provide it word for word so as to avoid any legal copyright issues.

The plan of salvation according to [this pastor] is as follows (paraphrased):

[He] says that we are all sinners. He quotes Romans 3:23, which says, “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;” [he] then says that we all need Christ’s blood to cleanse us from our sins. [He] says that our good works cannot save us. He says that God loves us, and he then quotes Romans 5:8, which says, “But God commendeth his love toward us.” [He] then says that Jesus is God’s gift to us. He then quotes Romans 6:23, which says, “For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

[He] says repeatedly that salvation is a gift from God and that we cannot earn this gift by our works.

[I have no problem with that, but let’s continue...]

[He] then quotes Ephesians 2:8-9, which states, “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.” In his explanation of Ephesians 2:8-9, [he] says repeatedly that salvation is “not of ourselves.” He repeatedly says that salvation is by “grace” through “faith” and that it has nothing to do with “us.” He says that good deeds, such as giving to the poor, cannot count toward our salvation. [He] then talks about repentance.

[He] defines repentance as turning from your sins. [He] says that turning from your sins is a “required action” ...

[Listen to that. “Turning from sins” — Jesus never said that. That is added on to the plan of salvation by preachers, pastors and theologians. Nothing needs to be added. Most of you, if you hadn’t heard the previous teachings on this topic, would say, “What’s wrong with turning from sin? Isn’t that what we are told in the Gospel record?” Find it for me. Find it with the proper understanding of what the Greek word *metanoia* means, what Jesus said was: *change your mind*. For the English translation, the King James people put in *repent*, which means something totally different than what *metanoia* means. You are going to think it’s there because that is what you have been brainwashed with repeatedly by ministry after ministry, believing it to be true. So, what are you to change your mind about? Christ and what He was about to do...and what He has already done. Your ways are not going to cut it. Once this life is through, that’s it. He came with a plan of salvation that would give you eternal life forever. So, you had to change your mind about what Jesus did for all of us and the benefits that come with it.]

...” required action” on our part if we want to be saved. Then [he] quotes Romans 10:9, which says, “That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe...

[That Greek word there for *believe* is *pisteuo*, which means trust and confidence.]

...in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.”

[By the way, what is translated as *confess* in this verse is really *profess*; the Greek word means profess...profess with thy mouth. Profess what? That you have trust and confidence with all your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, and you shall be saved. Not confess—but profess. Some of these well-known characters should learn how to read the Greek.]

[He] says, *in light of this verse, that we have to confess Jesus as our Lord with our mouths, verbally, and that we also have to confess our sins.* [He] then teaches that *we have to ask Christ to come into our hearts. His prayer of salvation instructs us to admit to God that we are sinners, to ask God to forgive us, to ask Christ to come into our hearts, and to be the Lord of our lives.* [He] says that *we must tell God that we will obey Him and that we will follow Him all the days of our lives. In sum, that is the plan of salvation.* [According to this famous pastor.]

[This author continues...]

Old television shows are the best, and when you get right down to it, I'm sure you'll agree that they just don't make television shows like they used to. As for me, I absolutely love the television show known as "Green Acres." The show is based upon a lawyer who becomes tired of his job and of life in the big city. He, along with his reluctant wife, move to "Hooterville" where they buy an old ramshackle house on several acres of farmland. Mr. Douglas' neighbors are truly unique personalities who always end up giving him tremendous amounts of grief. What is so funny about the show is the utter frustration that his wife and neighbors cause him. There is a form of constant "communication breakdown" that occurs in all of his dealings with the townsfolk of Hooterville, which is actually very entertaining and worthwhile to watch as a whole because we realize the show is only make believe. It is not real; therefore, it is funny in its own, crazy way; however, if the problems that Mr. Douglas had to deal with during each episode of this show were true, it would be a different story altogether.

When it comes to a person's eternal life, we cannot afford any "communication breakdowns." A good way to view a presentation of a false plan of salvation would be to equate the preacher of a false gospel to that of a lawyer who is guilty of malpractice. When a lawyer is found guilty of gross negligence in his or her duty, resulting in egregious error, they are often found guilty of malpractice and, as a result, are not allowed to practice law anymore. They become an object of scorn and they become disbarred.

This also occurs to physicians who are grossly negligent or incompetent in the practice of medicine.

But for a pastor to be guilty of "malpractice" is much more serious.

[Woe to the shepherds. I preached a whole series on that in the beginning years of this ministry.]

When a pastor or bible teacher promotes a false plan of salvation, the results are eternal and not merely temporal.

At this point, I would like to share with you the plan of salvation according to Jesus Christ. Since Christ wrote the bible using the inks and scrolls of people, I would like to share various verses with you on what Christ says about salvation – some quote Christ directly, while others do not; however, they are the words of Christ, nevertheless.

Jesus told Nicodemus point blank that he had to “believe” ...

[*Pisteuo* is the Greek word there. The King James wrote *believe* but the word in that particular verse is *pisteuo*, not believe. I already told you, that is the “so be it faith.” The faith that you have full trust and confidence. *Pistis* is the kind of faith you begin with. Faith comes by hearing and hearing the Word of God. *Pistis* is the hearing that leads to persuasion that what you’re hearing is the truth. That will build you the confidence and trust that what you are hearing you can stand by it, live by it in your journey with Christ. So, Jesus told Nicodemus that he needed to trust on Him and Him alone. (John 3)]

Jesus said to Nicodemus (and to us all) in John 3:16 that, “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth [trusts and has confidence] in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” The only “requirement” Jesus mentioned in this verse is “believeth which in the original Greek manuscript means to “trust.” Jesus told Nicodemus that in order to be born again he had to “trust” that Jesus was the Messiah, that He would die for the sins of the world, and that He would rise from the dead.

By implication, Christ always meant that He would die, be buried, and rise from the dead when He spoke of “believing in Him.” [once again, plug in “trusting” in Him] Nicodemus asked Christ how he might go back into his mother’s womb, and Jesus had to correct him by telling him that being born again involved being reborn spiritually.

*In Thessalonians 4:14, we see Christ’s plan of salvation with complete clarity: “For if we believe... [again, trust and confidence, *pistueo*.] ...that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.” Pay close attention to that first phrase. “For if we believe [have trust and confidence] that Jesus died and rose again...” is the plan of salvation according to Christ. The second phrase deals with the dead-in-Christ whose bodies will rise out of their graves.*

While this chapter of Thessalonians deals primarily with a future event, we are given the plan of salvation according to Christ in its simplicity. This is exactly what Jesus was telling Nicodemus and exactly what he was saying in John.

According to Ephesians 2:8-9, God is telling us through Paul that, “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God. Not of works, lest any man should boast.” This means salvation is a free gift given by God to all who place their trust in His son alone, apart from works. And by works, God is in fact referring to anything of self, such as turning from sins.

[Again, Jesus never said to turn away from sins. If you think once you are saved, you are never going to sin again, you are crazier than a loon. And if you know the formula, please inform me because I haven't figured it out. That old nature in me still wants to sin on occasion. Now the more Christ molds me into the creature He wants me to be, the less I have the desire for those things. But it is a fight between the old and new creature in me, and it is going to be a fight until the end. Christ knew that. That is why He said to just trust in Him. He didn't say trust in him *and* turn from your sins. I challenge you to find it in the Gospel record.]

In following him in obedience for the rest of our lives.

[“Well, don't we have to follow Him in obedience for the rest of our lives?” Sure. But those are the aspects of Discipleship, which I haven't gotten to yet.]

To be saved, one must first be born again. Any plan that mixes grace with discipleship is a false plan of salvation according to Christ. While those are right and honorable things to do, they do not count toward salvation. Rather, they come after salvation.

[Once you become a disciple of Jesus Christ you are going to have your ups and downs. There are some things He is going to commission you to do and in some you will succeed and in other things you won't do so well. If you don't do very well, does that mean you aren't saved any longer? No, because then you are counting on those works, believing that those works keep you saved. Sorry, it doesn't work that way. Sorry, no self-righteous are allowed in Christ's Gospel because it is only by His works. I hope you are picking that up as I repeat it.]

While this preacher quotes Ephesians 2:8-9 in his salvation video and vehemently agrees with this verse, he then contradicts himself at this very same passage of scripture because of an academic mistake. [This pastor] misidentifies the word repentance. Instead of using the original Greek translation for repent, he uses the English definition for repent [which most people do, by the way] which is different than the intention God conveys in His bible. The English definition includes turning from sin, feeling sorry for sin, and quitting the activities or behaviors that lead to sin; conversely, the Greek definition for repent is to have a "change of mind." The Greek word for repent is metanoia. "Meta" means "change" and "noia" means "mind." Join them together and you have “a change of mind.” When Jesus told people to repent, he was also referring to the Greek meaning [because He used the right words] “a change of mind” and never to the English definition.

The Greek word for "turn from sin or to feel sorry for sin" is "metamelomai" and it is never equivalent to "metanoia." Christ always spoke of "metanoia" when He said "repent." [Again, the King James people wrote in repent. Jesus said, a change of mind.]

In context, Christ was always telling people to change their mind from what they were currently trusting in to get them to heaven and instead to trust only on Him to get them to heaven.

[Jesus is saying, "Let go of all of that stuff; it's just ME you need to put your trust in."]

[He] tells us salvation is a "free gift" that cannot be earned, but then he turns right back around and makes quitting bad habits as well as obedience to Christ's lordship an essential part of salvation.

[And like I said, there will be some days, some weeks, and some months that you are going to be more obedient than others. It is an up and down struggle when it comes to discipleship. Even Paul struggled with it. Read the Corinthian letters. I've pointed them out to you, and hopefully you did the homework on it. Even he struggled with sin.

You're not a perfect saint, but God looks at you as a perfect saint. Why? Because Christ sprinkled His blood on the heavenly mercy seat.]

To give you an accurate equivalent of what [this pastor] is saying here, imagine if you were to ask him for directions on how to get to San Francisco, California. You want to go to San Francisco with all of your heart, and you ask [this pastor] for the directions that will take you there. But instead, he gives you directions on how to get to Tampa, Florida. If you take him at his word, you will not arrive in San Francisco; instead, you will end up in Tampa. If you take him at his word, but then look at the directions and then question him about your final destination, he will say emphatically that he has, in fact, given you accurate directions to San Francisco. If you press him on the subject, he will read various portions of a road atlas to you, but even though you may have doubts about arriving in San Francisco, you assume he knows what he is talking about and you trust him, anyway; however, days later you find yourself in Tampa rather than in San Francisco, despite all the signs you saw along the way that never pointed to San Francisco. You saw the "Tampa signs" and you knew you were going in the wrong direction, but you so wanted to believe he told you the truth, so you didn't follow that small, soft voice inside of you that said, "This is wrong!" You chose to trust him rather than in what you knew to be "right."

Friends, when you are "on the road" of a false plan of salvation, you will see "God's signs" all over the place if you are able to understand only a handful of the verses I have shared with you in this chapter. [And I have shared a little more than a handful with you.]

If you are on a road that leads you in the opposite direction of where you know you want to go, pay attention to the signs. In terms of salvation, God says it is “not of works.” [This pastor] also uses the same scriptures that I do, and he claims salvation is “not of works.” But reader, “turning from sins” [highlight that somehow in your mind] IS WORKS. It takes effort. And since Ephesians 2:8-9 says that salvation is “not of yourselves,” how then could [this pastor] turn right back around and imply that salvation IS of yourselves while simultaneously saying over and over that it is “not” of yourselves.

Something is wrong! Something is very, very wrong! Either [he] is right and Christ is wrong, or [he] is wrong and Christ is right!

Isn't it sad how so many intelligent and learned men and women cannot rightly define repentance? What they say about repentance flies in the face of the very scriptures they point out to us. If you say that salvation is a free gift and that we cannot earn it, and then turn right around and imply that it will cost you, that you have to change your behaviors, submit yourself to following Christ in obedience to His Lordship “in order to” be saved and make it to heaven, then that is nothing more than “double-speak.”

People may questions, “Well, are you saying we’re not supposed to follow Christ’s Lordship in obedience?” Again, sure, as a disciple of Jesus Christ, but His salvation plan is simple, and it doesn’t require any of that to be saved. That is an after the fact event, after salvation, with different implications for the reasons why you are a disciple.

It is literally the same thing as asking for directions to San Francisco but receiving directions to Tampa, instead. Trusting in “turning from sins” in addition to faith in His death and resurrection from the dead sounds completely wonderful and holy, but it is not the plan of salvation according to Jesus Christ. It is just a “counterfeit” of the original.

Yes, [this pastor] is a good man. I admire him in a lot of ways, especially his support of Israel. But [this pastor] presents us with a plan of salvation that differs from the one Christ Himself presents in His bible.

If you choose any plan of salvation other than the one Christ offers, you will be accountable for it because you are adding something to what Christ already said; it’s all on Him, not on you. It is not of yourself.

If you remember only one thing, I want you to remember what the will of God the Father is concerning how to be saved. Jesus said, “And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth [pisteuo, have trust and confidence] on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day” (John 6:40). Jesus is saying that if we recognize Him as the Messiah, that if

we trust in Him alone (death, burial, resurrection [blood on the heavenly mercy seat]) that we will be saved. Nowhere does the bible say that we must repent of sin.

Nowhere! Even John the Baptist didn't say it. But we have been led to believe that is what is being said by using the English definition for being sorry or sorrowful for your sins. Christ didn't ask us to do that. All He did was ask us to trust in His redeeming work as all that is needed. Nowhere does the Bible say we must repent of sin. Find it for me! I know you are going to look up the verses and see the word *repent*, but do your research. Dig deep. You cannot find it anywhere in the original languages that these Scriptures were written in. You cannot find it anywhere, but that is what is preached around this world.

The phrase "repent of sin" doesn't even occur in the Bible, nor does it ever imply that we must "turn from sin" in order to be saved.

If you place your trust in any plan of salvation other than the one Christ gives to us in His Bible, you will not go to heaven. That we can find in God's Word. You are in jeopardy.

So, who is this popular pastor in this commentary? John Hagee. Do I believe he is sincere? Do I believe he is passionate about what he does? Absolutely. But I don't believe he has the plan of salvation down. And he is not the only one who adds additional works on the back-end. They don't understand what Christ revealed to us; the only thing He wants from us is to be saved. Salvation is alone by Christ alone. There is nothing we can do to earn it, to merit it, to get it on our own. It all is through His redeeming work. What people confuse is the discipleship journey. They somehow want to incorporate that into salvation and tell you'd better do those discipleship deeds, or you lose your salvation. Not once will you find that in Scripture.

I'm saying salvation is just the beginning; Discipleship comes after. Discipleship is where we get involved. We get to participate in what God has called us to do in the capacity he has called us to do, to please him from faith to faith. We will earn those heavenly and inexhaustible rewards we will receive, and He is waiting there to bless us because of our faithfulness. Don't mix the two. Too many have, but don't.

Be My Savior

Open your Bible to Romans 8:1.

“There is *therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.*”

‘There is’ in the King James Version is in italics; it isn’t in the original languages. It should read ‘Therefore’. ‘Therefore’ comes after what Paul wrote to the Romans in chapter 7 verses 14-25 about the struggle of the sinful nature that still remains in us.

“Therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh...”

‘After the flesh’ has been explained away by most preachers by giving you a list of sins that you pursue, which leads you to *not* pursuing God and Jesus Christ to be filled with the Spirit. But before I get to that, let’s quickly just read the verses and how Paul even struggled with the old man — his old sinful nature.

Once you have been born again, there is no condemnation. I don’t mean born again in the way it has been cheapened in the world by people going around asking, “Are you born again?” when they really mean is “Have you repented of your sins?” That is what they’re really trying to ask you. There is not one request by Jesus or anyone else in the New Testament that demands you must “repent of your sins” to be born again. I have put the challenge out to prove me wrong, but I have had no takers yet. I thought I’d at least get a few from the preachers — which I did with the Last Days series, but they always come up short. You cannot find anywhere that we are to “repent of our sins” in order to come to Christ and be saved from the wretched beings that we are because we all are sinners. All He asked us to do is recognize that we are sinners. Sinners like us need a savior. He asked over and over (along with the apostles) that we trust Him. Trust Him for what? What He said He would do for us – that He would die and that He would be the sacrificial unblemished Lamb who would go to the cross; He would suffer horribly as was prophesied in the Old Testament, including the way He would die. Three days later He came out of that tomb and He sailed away to the heavenlies and met the requirement to sprinkle His blood —just like the Old Testament high priest would do when sprinkled the blood of the slain lamb on the mercy seat in the tabernacle. Christ was our tabernacle and He sprinkled His precious blood on the heavenly mercy seat and said to the Father, “All is fulfilled; you cannot perceive them or look at them as sinners anymore because they are in Me; I have imputed them with My righteousness thereby making them blameless.” That is why there is no condemnation, because we are in Christ Jesus.

But Paul only wrote that after Romans 7:14-25, ***“For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin.”*** Because of Adam’s sin, we were born with sinful blood. Jesus was not born with sin-filled blood and I gave you the explanations why biblically. (See *Incorruptible Blood*.) ***“For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good. Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth***

no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

Paul bemoans that the good he desires he did not do (stressing the object, the act, how it is phrased there in the Greek language) but the evil he did not desire is what he practiced. He is developing a concept of conflict between his new nature, the born-again nature, which he rejoices in the now New Law of God, and his old nature. We can see that in Paul's letters. What new law of God? Not the Old Testament Law, or Mosaic Law, but what Jesus provided, which freed him. But he still has the problem of his old nature (his sinner's blood) that wants him to think that while he was a Christian there is something good in him, something that he can do to keep himself saved. I have said repeatedly, no there is not. There is nothing good in us that we can do because our part of the transaction would be in the flesh, which would be works; thinking that whatever we do, God would pay close attention and say, "That's pretty close," so that provides you salvation or that will keep your salvation. Bullshit! There is nothing you can do. That is why I can imagine Paul probably just raising his pen and saying, "Therefore now there is no condemnation" and to heck with all that I just said in verses 14-25 because that struggle will be there continuously until we die.

"O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

Then he answers it:

"I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God;"

What mind? The mind that recognizes that it is not through his merit that he will be able to be a servant to the law of God. It is Christ, because he finishes it up by saying, *"but with the flesh, the law of sin."* So, any time you bring the flesh into it, any works, it allows you to bring in sin, especially concerning anything that has to do with your salvation. That is why he says, *"Therefore now no condemnation,"* —*katakrima* in the Greek; it means *no judgment, no separation, no divide* for those who are in Christ Jesus ... *"who walk not after the flesh."*

Some ask, "Doesn't God go to work in your life after He saves you?"

Sure, He does. As soon as you start trusting Him on true salvation and what it means, He starts going to work on your life. He knows how you sin. He knows how I sin. But that is what the Holy Spirit is for - to guide you through His Word. Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God; it's a continuous action that never really ends, and He will mold you into the creature He wants you to be even while we are in this sinful flesh. And even that is His doing.

There are so many flawed plans of salvation out there and how sinners can reach heaven by their own merits or by some combination of faith in Christ plus their own works and deeds.

I've been on this topic for the last few weeks to help you understand beyond any doubt whatsoever the truth of what Christ says about the gift of salvation. It truly is a gift. Every day that goes by, I am more astonished by it. The second reason why I spend so much time on this is to help you arm yourself with the knowledge of God's Word that is necessary for you to be able to detect what I have been preaching against — which is probably the greatest arsenal our enemy, The Adversary, has to keep people from having that connection. Oh, they talk about it, but they haven't come to the understanding of what it is like to be truly a free man in Christ. The truth shall set you free. The Adversary wants to con people into living the "Christian lifestyle" (whatever the heck that is) without realizing that they are more concerned about that lifestyle than salvation. I'm telling you right now, they are as born again as the street rat running down the road. There is more talk about being born again than actually understanding what it means. I have been trying to provide you the truth, because the truth will set you free. I have seen some messages from some who never realized Salvation and Discipleship are two different things.

I am sure it hasn't made me very many friends in the Christian world, especially if you follow some of these churches and preachers. I talked about John Hagee. In this message, I will look a little bit at Joel Osteen. They are not the only ones. Charles Stanley - everyone has heard of him. It is salvation plus whatever their opinion is of how you get salvation and how you keep it. Like I've said, if you can't do good works to earn salvation, what makes you think bad works will make you lose it, or not enough good works. The Hagees, the Osteens, the Stanleys, Kirk Cameron (one of the younger faces), Billy Graham, and even (and this is going to offend some of you) my mentor are all part of it. He preached grace without works, but he brought discipleship in. So, in a sense, he preached lordship salvation, which means what you do after you are saved could make you lose your salvation. It is what it is. Do I think these men I mentioned love God and are sincere? Absolutely. I was accused once of preaching works for salvation. I read the message to you, and I know many of you were as surprised by it as I was. You are not going to find anyone who preaches a message quite like I do, who clearly understands the Gospel record. Yes, God says we are sinners and, I'm sorry, no amount of good works or behavioral changes on our part can make us holy enough to enter heaven. That is why God sent His son to pay for our sins. Jesus paid for our crimes by dying on that cross, not just for me, but for all of us. His dead body was in that grave, but His dead body on the third day did raise from the grave, and He is alive and well. The instant you just (people use the word *believe*, but I say) *pisteuo* (that is one of the Greek words for faith, but trust is a better translation) that is, put your confidence and trust on what Christ's work of redemption provided, and, as soon as He knows that, that you trust what He's done for you without all the other attachments that preachers want to attach (e.g. what you have to do to be a sinner saved by Christ's grace), He saves you with no additional attachments. All He wants to know is you trust His death and resurrection, and what it did for mankind, and you personally. That is why there is no condemnation now to them which are in Christ Jesus.

Verse 2 in that same chapter says, ***“For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free [or redeemed me is another translation] from the law of sin and death.”*** From the law of sin and not just sin, but also death. ***“For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, [because we couldn’t keep the Law, no one could] God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh,”***—it didn’t say he had sinful blood, but in the likeness of sinful flesh—***“and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh...”***

I’m sorry; I’m not so much concerned about you did this and you did that, and they are sins, so therefore, you are walking in the flesh. That is another subject and another topic that is handled differently. You walk in the flesh even greater when compared to those other things if you think you had anything to do with salvation. The only thing you participate in is when the Spirit draws, you respond to the drawing and you start trusting and having confidence in what He said, what He did do, and what He did; the death and resurrection for us for our benefit.

Verse 4 continues, ***“...that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.”***

John 6:47 states, ***“Verily, verily, [He wants us to pay close attention] I say unto you, He that believeth [trusteth] on me hath everlasting life.”***

This free gift that He’s has given to anyone that has responded to that drawing is based solely upon trust in what Jesus had done for you. It has nothing to do, and I repeat, nothing to do with what you do for Him. Nothing whatsoever.

Ephesians 2:8-9 reads, ***“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves;”*** [Everyone should have that memorized by now. And not of yourselves,] ***“it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast.”***

I know I have made this clear to you in message after message, but do you realize how free a person you are in Christ? Have you stopped and sat down and analyzed it and said, “Everyone talks about freedom, but this is true freedom and only Christ can provide it?” So, I am literally saying Jesus saves you the instant you trust in what He did for you. That’s it. Salvation is not what you do for God. Salvation is what God did for you and nothing of yourselves (works) ever enters into the contract. Ever.

The problem is all these people that I mentioned who are the more popular preachers (and some are no longer with us) have clouded that message of salvation, so you cannot see the clarity of it. Like I said, you are always questioning whether you are saved or not. I’m telling you, if you question whether you are saved or not, you can only question based on the things that you do, thereby bringing works into it, and like Paul said, that makes you guilty of boasting of what you did or didn’t do or should have done that will maybe keep you saved or get you saved. But like I said last time, these preachers (and many others like them) keep you guilty. They keep you

questioning your salvation, keep you wondering whether you are going to make it in or not because of the things you did, mostly based on failures. Remember, I pointed out David and what happened with Bathsheba, the adulterous affair that he had. He didn't want to be caught in his sin, so he sends her husband Uriah (one of the soldiers in David's army) to the most dangerous point in the battle where he was sure to be killed; and he was killed to cover up David's sin, but Nathan the prophet came in later and pointed it out. David was surprised, but God didn't let it go by without notice. Horrible. This is King David, a man after God's own heart who committed something so awful. Do you think King David is in heaven right now? I do.

What is free and available for everybody by grace through faith in Christ Jesus is hijacked — that is the only way you can really say it — by the addition of human efforts. There is no way to add your good works or deeds to the contract that God made about salvation no matter how good they are. God is not going to honor that kind of contract. And, if you die under those terms of your own works-based contract — which essentially makes you the Savior and not Christ — you won't be standing before the judgment seat of Christ where the saints will be, not to be judged but where the rewards are issued. You will be standing at the Great White Throne of Judgment, which will be the judgment where all nonbelievers will be, including all the different categories of that and what they thought salvation was and how they contributed to the salvation process. Salvation has been hijacked by the addition of human efforts, as I said.

Oh, I could rip apart Joel Osteen's dividing of the Word of God to shreds, but what really is aggravating is what he preaches on salvation. He says we must make Christ both our Lord and our Savior.

You might say, "Well, I have heard that all my life."

Then you have been told all your life that the works of discipleship are necessary to be saved or necessary to go to heaven. You see, you begin to recognize Christ as Lord when you begin serving Him. He has His purposes for why that event is going to happen after salvation, but don't make that a necessary component of salvation. It's not. As far as salvation is concerned, Christ said in His Word that He must be your Savior **first**. Period. Many will call Him Lord, but He is not their Savior. What good is that going to do them?

Now don't make a mistake and think I'm saying something I'm not. Once you become His, you should not have the attitude that you will live as you please and do whatever you want. It isn't a free for all. Salvation is free, but Jesus has a way of interfering in your life, especially if you live disobediently. Don't say I didn't warn you - all you 'newbies' in the faith, or people who are trying to decide whether they should trust Jesus as their Savior. You are not listening by accident. The spirit is drawing you. Are you going to respond? Are you going to *metanoia* (not repent, that is the King James wording), what is required, what Jesus said, have a change of mind? Change of mind about what? I already pointed this out. Change your mind about how you are going to get to heaven. You can "repent" all you want, but if you don't have a change of

mind about how you are going to get to heaven — and the only way is to start trusting that Jesus is your savior — then I've got news for you. You have got troubles. He will interfere in your life after you start trusting and have confidence that He is your savior. I wake up every day saying, "Thank you Lord for being my savior, knowing that by trusting Him to be my savior, I know whatever I did that day or the day before, past present or future by the way, my sin isn't covered like the Old Testament, but removed as the New Testament proclaims." Once salvation happens, He definitely is going to interfere in your life...especially when you are living disobediently. I guarantee you; He will step in and correct you as many times as needed over the lifespan of your years.

What is very sad about today's Christianity is that just about every pastor you can listen to or read their writings on this subject matter will make this discipleship a necessary part of salvation. To do so is not scriptural. It's just not there. It voids the salvation contract that God wants to make with you. Period. Well, aren't we supposed to be disciples? Absolutely, but distinguish between salvation and what comes after that. As I said, you can be a disciple and never be saved. The perfect example is Judas. He was a disciple of Christ. He followed Christ as Lord. But yet, Judas never trusted Jesus as His savior, which is obvious now because we have the record. He's not in heaven with Christ now just because he was a disciple of Christ. He lived with the other apostles; he heard everything Jesus said. As far as we know, he did everything that Christ told him to do while he was still yet a disciple. But yet, when it came down to the end, he didn't trust Him as Savior.

The point is, in terms of the Osteen plan of salvation, you could quit sinning (if that was even possible) and follow Christ as your Lord for the rest of your life, but still end up in the lake of fire because you wrongly assumed what salvation was because someone was not preaching it the way Christ intended it to be heard and received. There is nowhere in God's Word that says that "making Him Lord" or quitting sins or even bad habits is ever necessary to obtain the free gift of salvation, which is the promise of everlasting life. Yet Osteen and others like him preach that, preach works. The very same works that Christ himself condemns.

If Joel understood how simple the plan of salvation is, which is found only in Christ alone, and actually taught Christ's way of salvation instead of man's way — just think about it, with his audience not just here in the States but worldwide — what an explosion of salvation would happen, like we've never seen before in history, including the early church days. True revival. It would literally turn the world upside down. If you just take the preachers that I named who are still alive and who preach a works-based salvation in one form or another ... an explosion of people that have changed their mind, who would become living walking testaments of the free gift of grace, and that would be contagious to others.

But I guarantee you that the satanic blindness in the church world starting behind the pulpit with the pastors will not change because they would have to admit to the world that they were wrong about salvation all along. Ezekiel 34, "*woe to the shepherds...*" They were not feeding the sheep.

This is Christianity 101. Without salvation, there is no reason to move further into anything else that we find in God's Word. Like I've said, if you don't get this right, you are in a heap of trouble. I don't think Satan and his demonic army is going to allow that to happen if they have anything to do with it. They don't want to see this explosion of people that truly become free in Christ because of a change of mind. Even though Satan's power is limited, he knows there are too many pastors out there who are more concerned with their image and standing in society. Even if an unbelieving pastor finally realizes it, he'll never admit it to his audience, because of his spiritual pride. He might lose his credibility or even his salary, friends, family, or wife. With Osteen's kind of platform, he could literally change the world by giving a pure plan of salvation that is easily found in God's Word. And it should be something every person who considers himself to be a pastor to research out, but no. What do they have instead? They have their congregations trust in Jesus partially and discipleship partially. Listen to them. Read their works. That is exactly what they are doing. What they are doing is producing counterfeit followers believing in a counterfeit gospel. It's sad.

I lived for years with that concern on a daily basis - if I didn't do this, if I didn't do that, I could lose my salvation. Do you want to know how you lose your salvation? Because I don't believe "once saved, always saved." I believe you are always saved if you keep trusting in Jesus and His redemptive work daily, even if you fail in all the other aspects of discipleship because that will be an up and down rollercoaster, believe me. That is why it is so beautifully written in Romans 7, the last nine or ten verses. Even Paul struggled with this concept of sin in the flesh and with the Law and how people would perceive it. Like I said, I think he just threw his pen down and raised his hands and said, "Therefore, there is no condemnation." To heck with everyone else's preaching and what they are trying to convince me of, no! There is no condemnation for the ones that are in Christ Jesus. Period. You walk after the flesh when you want to add all those other things to the plan of salvation, and not after the Spirit, because the Spirit doesn't add anything to your salvation plan. Like I said, that isn't the contract that God made. Christ is very clear about his trust alone requirement. I've presented you many of those Scriptures (which I won't go over again now), and Christ cannot lie. Christ says no works, but Osteen says works. Two plans of salvation, who are you going to trust?

He saved me the instant I trusted in Him and what He did at Calvary. He delivered the full payment for my sins, for yours too. And He did it without any behavioral changes or promises to serve Him. Now those discipleship aspects of the relationship with Christ comes after we are born again, but the Bible never says or implies that we must follow Him in obedience first and live our lives for Him in order to be saved. To add that to what is already clearly there as the plan of salvation is to add in your boastful works of what you can do, which is flesh that Paul preaches against in that chapter, which makes you a little personal savior. You think too much of yourself, if you're guilty of that. You are destined for doom. God's Word is trying to set you free. You don't have to change first and then come to Christ. Just say, "Christ, I recognize. Boy! I truly am a sinner man or woman, and there is nothing I can do to change the aspect of that. I'm

going to trust and have confidence in you solely based on what you did at Calvary as was promised in the Old Testament, which was fulfilled. Be my Savior.” You don’t need to say a sinner’s prayer. Three words: Be My Savior. What are those three words based on? The death and resurrection of Christ Jesus. Be My Savior.

Those who say we must follow Him and commit our lives to Him as a condition of being saved are reading a different Bible or they are reading the Bible incorrectly. They are skipping past parts of the Bible, I suppose, that state clearly that we are born again only by trusting in Jesus alone. I have no problem with the true explanation of what a born-again person is, not the way it has been described. I sin daily. I got news for you too, so do you. When we trust in Christ alone as our Savior, we are seen positionally as sons and daughters of Christ. Do you realize what a wonderful privilege that is? Think about the greatest honor you could receive for your efforts in something you’re involved with in this world or would like to be involved in. That does not even compare or come close on the position we have with Jesus Christ as sons and daughters...the greatest honor. We don’t do anything for it except to have trust and confidence in Him, that the shedding of His precious blood did it all for us. Do you trust? Do you have confidence that He did do that? And if you do, then all you have to do is say the words, “Be my Savior. “

This phrase that Osteen uses quite often: “We are all children of God.” Who says! God’s Word? Think about it. It’s not just Osteen. You hear it a lot, “we are all children of God.” Sorry, God is the Creator of all things, even human beings. But we are only His children...and I repeat, we are only His children if we trust Jesus as our Savior. You need to start training yourselves on listening to these preachers and what they are saying, and how they are twisting God’s Word. Furthermore, we think it has to be in God’s Word because it sounds so much like what God would say. Jesus is our Savior and once saved, we are seen by Him as sinless even though we still sin. After trusting and having confidence in Jesus as your Savior, the Holy Spirit enters your life and He helps you overcome the sins in your life, but we will never be fully sin-free in this life because we inhabit a sinful body and were born with a sinful nature. That is not going to change until we get a new body. Even though believers, or people that now trust in Jesus Christ have a God’s new nature in them, implanted in them by the Holy Spirit, we still possess this old sinful nature that we received at birth. We are what we are: sinners. We cannot change that no matter how many efforts of good works we do. That is why we need a Savior. We cannot ever save ourselves. We are helpless. Christ knew this. He knew it and He died for us and rose from that grave to secure a place for you and me in heaven throughout eternity if we trust Him. Christ credits me with His righteousness. My righteousness stinks. All the self-righteousness that people walk around thinking it is the Holy Spirit because of their good works, stink. It falls short of what we can have in us without any of our efforts. Christ’s righteousness. We become His children. He keeps you saved. Listen closely. He keeps you saved. Christ Jesus keeps you saved. Christ Jesus keeps you under that no condemnation status — not your works or discipleship.

I read a few articles from this person's ministry before. Some things I agree with and some things I don't agree with. But at the end of an article that I saw today, it disappointed me, even though I had suspicion on this basic subject of salvation. It reads (and I will just read you the last few sentences:

"You cannot believe it on your own," meaning the mystery of Christ's death, "but if you repent and allow the Spirit to illuminate your heart, only then you can truly believe."

I am sorry, but that is dead wrong. It is not scriptural. Do you see that, folks? You probably just read by that. I want testimonies from those of you who have been following for a while: How many times you've heard that in some form or fashion. *"But if you repent and allow the Spirit to illuminate your heart, then and only then can you truly believe."* He added works that you do first, then the Holy Spirit looks at you as a candidate, and then after that, *"only then can you truly believe."* Then he says, *"At that moment you pass from death into life."* Sorry, that is not correct. This person is Rick Frueh. Let's just call it fraud because that is unquestionably a works-for-salvation plan even though he might have some insight on other subject matters. This is one he surely gets wrong and that frightens me. That frightens me because I have said if you don't get it right from the beginning, you are on the wrong track.

You can choose to trust Christ and what He says about salvation, or you can follow all these works or lordship salvation plans. You're going to be accountable if you choose incorrectly. Discipleship has nothing to do with salvation. It is all Christ's doing. We become disciples when we make Christ our Savior, and then He has a lot of work in process to accomplish in each and every one of us. That sign is never put away. I have an invisible sign, I'm sure, on me somewhere that reads, "Work in progress, leave my sign alone." And as long as I keep trusting in Jesus, I know the enemy will come in the seen and unseen world to try to interrupt that progress. But greater is He that is in me than he that is in the world, both the seen and the unseen. He is the potter; I am the clay. He knows what is best. And by the way, don't think you become someone who is saved by the Savior, (according to His plan) and think you can live your life your way, doing what you want, because you are forever in control of your life. You might think that, but let me forewarn you now, if you turn your life over to Christ and let him be your Savior first, but a disciple and everything afterwards is your way, if He doesn't think He likes the path you on, He will bring up evil in your life...because He doesn't let go easily. Some of you are more hardheaded than others because you don't want to let go of your way or control of how things happen. I got news for you, be ready for the rollercoaster because not only do you have Him working on you, the New Creature, now that you are in Christ, that work in progress, but Satan and His minions don't like what is happening. They will do everything in their power to try and interrupt that in your life. That is why you need the full armor of God to go to war and battle what truly controls, the seen and the unseen enemies of your life. But I've got news for those enemies: remember Christ is the Creator of all things, and He knows how to put a black eye or two on my seen and unseen enemies and that goes the same for you.

He's a wonderful Savior, and we go to the Table of the Lord because He has instructed us in these gospel records and also in the epistles. Paul clearly states that Jesus states that we should remember Him. Remember what about Him? Before He went to the cross, what He was going to do at Calvary for all of us. He was going to save you from eternal damnation. And what He asks us to do is remember Him as often as you eat and drink. That means as often as you eat and drink something.

Some say, "Well, I don't remember every time."

Well, make it a practice to do better at it — not because you are going to lose your salvation if you don't, but because it's honoring Him.

Were you ever a proud parent? Your kids came in first place for something? I'm not talking about where everyone gets a ribbon type of thing, but a real competition where your kids got first place in something. I mean you are so proud; you can't wait to tell everybody. Heck, kids do good in school and parents put dorky looking bumper stickers on their car that tell the world what their child achieved. The point I'm trying to make is Christ wants you to remember what He achieved for you, what He achieved for me. He wants us to acknowledge it. The more you acknowledge it, believe me, the more you see what a free gift of grace it was, and what a sacrifice it was that paid for our debt that He didn't owe, but He freely went and paid it for us. We serve a wonderful Savior. That's why, plus other things. We remember Him: The why, and what, and when two thousand years ago He was nailed on that tree, taking on the sins of the whole world, which includes my past, present, and future and yours too, and set me free from the bondage of sin forever, removing my sin from my sight, and His and His Father's. Oh, what a wonderful Savior.

If He is not your Savior, then cry out to Jesus, Be my Savior. And when He becomes your Savior, constantly remember what He did for you. The bread represents His body. The wine represents the blood that He spilled, a remembrance of what He did at Calvary. Thank Him, praise Him, honor Him, remember Him each time as many times as you want. This is one thing you cannot overdose on, what He has done for you and me. Tonight, we do that again. Thank you, Jesus, for being our wonderful Savior.

Dead Works

Open your Bible to II Peter 2:1.

“But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you...” False prophets and false teachers among the people - it was true back then and even more so today. Just turn on any religious television program and see what they are preaching, what they are teaching, and what they are prophesying. ***“...who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying...”*** A better translation for denying is *contradicting* ***“the Lord that bought them...”***

The thing that aggravates me the most is hearing salvation preached incorrectly, or hearing damnable heresy being preached concerning salvation. That is why I decided to do this series. Of all the messages and all the series I preach and teach on, this is the one I know I was called to preach more than any other. Now, some would argue with that and say it's the *Last Days* series. The *Last Days* is fine, but if you don't understand salvation correctly and what God has done for us, it skews your path and your journey as a disciple or as a Christian, from the point that you hear it until the point the Lord takes you home. I have pointed out some of the damnable heresies.

They do contradict the Lord ***“and bring upon themselves swift destruction.”*** The Greek word for destruction is the same word used for damnable earlier in the verse and means *ruin* or *loss*. ***“And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way [path or road] of truth shall be evil spoken of,”*** — a better translation would be *vilified*. The way of truth will be vilified by these false prophets and false teachers. Why? They don't preach *metanoia*. They don't preach *metanoeo*, and *metamelomai*. They don't teach the definition of any of those terms in the Greek that really focus in on what God is looking at and how we respond to His word when we hear it. They preach repent or go to hell. Now, I have preached “come to Jesus or go to hell,” because that is exactly what is going to happen if you don't. But repent, no; Scripture never calls for it if you know how to rightly divide the word of God. I will stand firm on this until my last breath. It calls for belief and faith, (both in the *pistis* and *pisteuo* stage of the word) but never repent as we understand it defined and used in the modern languages of today.

I've been criticized because of the *Last Days* series, and some other things I've preached on, but none greater than in this series. I have been vilified — and don't feel sorry for me. I expected it, and I knew it was going to come because I'm going upstream with a very heavy current trying to block the progress. I'm not just talking about the seen world, but the unseen world. There is no greater message nor greater series that I could be involved in the privilege of preaching to you and others who need the message than this *Change of Mind* series — unfortunately, because the church world has preached a message of dead works.

Go to Hebrews 6:1 - ***“Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ [or the word of the beginning of Christ], let us go on unto perfection [lit. completion]; not laying again the foundation of repentance”*** — here the word should be defined as a *change of mind* — ***“from dead works, and of faith toward God...”***

There are three types of works in the Scripture: 1) evil works; 2) good works — most of the time *ergon* is used for works, meaning the employment of something (i.e. the word of God as it is employed in a person's life and the word of God as it is employed in other people's lives); and 3) dead works. Whether evil, whether dead or even good, they're all works. All these types of works involve human effort, and that's the problem. The Gospel has been corrupted by false prophets and false preachers in the Scripture who declare good or dead works — let's just call it that, dead works — as a requirement to be saved. That is what I am coming against. I'm sorry, but it's a false plan of salvation to require doing any good works to be saved.

Now don't get me wrong. You are going to be involved in good works, but they have nothing to do with your salvation. However, that is not the only false plan that is circulating out there. I could probably spend the rest of my time on the plans that are out there. There is also a false plan of salvation that requires ceasing from sinful works to be saved. Works are works, no matter how you look at it, no matter the plan of salvation. If works are involved, they are all dead works. Listen, I grew up in the Catholic Church before I became a disciple of Jesus Christ and got away from all that. They required all kinds of good works. Catholics aren't the only denomination requiring good works; Seventh Day Adventist does also, and the list goes on and on. They teach salvation is by grace and faith, but also that good works are a necessary part of the equation. Right there I just named Jehovah's Witnesses, incidentally. These false plans of salvation all require you to cease from what they perceive as bad works prior to having faith to be saved by the true Gospel of Jesus Christ.

What did II Peter say? Damnable heresies. In the Greek it's very simple: that which leads to ruin or loss. So many are losing out from the get-go, from the beginning of their possible journey with Jesus Christ. They'll preach a person's faith in Christ is not valid until good works - or let's just call it dead works again - are somehow performed. These are all plans that are out there, my friend. I am not going into details on these plans because I did it in the past. I should review them in the future. Other false plans of salvation definitely require a person to discontinue the bad works in order that one can have any possibility of being saved. Billy Graham was champion at that — and everyone loves Billy Graham. How about A. W. Tozer? Everybody knows about him. He was a champion of that too. Either they're right and the Scripture is wrong — or my interpretation of the Scripture is. I believe my interpretation is the rightly divided word of God because I not only look at God's Word but also try to bring to you all the verifiables, the actual proof throughout God's Word - what God's word is actually saying and what it means for us today. The point is that they all reject the simplicity that is the Gospel.

Some may ask, "Where do you find that?" Go to II Corinthians 11:3. "***But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent*** [the Beguiler, the Deceiver] ***beguiled Eve through his subtilty*** [lit. cunning craftiness]" Paul is saying: "***But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent...***" — meaning these false prophets, these false teachers, these false preachers, and whatever damnable heresy they are using on you — Paul is hoping that you won't be deceived by their cunning craftiness (as Eve was) "***so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.***" All these false plans and all these false teachers proclaiming these false plans are no better than the serpent that beguiled

Eve because they bring another damnable heresy that takes away from the simplicity that is in Christ.

We have seen that Greek word translated *simplicity* here in Matthew 6:22, when we did the first message in the giving series *Where Is Your Heart?* Simplicity there means the *generosity* **“that is in Christ.”** That is why it is a free gift; it’s because of Christ’s generosity and God’s generosity in sending His only begotten son and because Christ was a willing and obedient son of God. He was willing to rescue us because of that generosity and love for us.

“For if he that cometh preacheth another [lit. another of the same kind] Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another,” — here the word is a little bit different; different and altered, and that is what they have done, they have altered it — **“spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him.”**

The Gospel involves, I believe, four things. Some think it’s only three: the death because Jesus died on the cross, the burial, and the resurrection. I believe we recognize one other thing when we go to the Table of The Lord: that He is coming back again. All things are not final yet. That is the good news, which is what the Gospel means, my friends - unless you recognize that you are a sinner in God’s eyes and there is nothing you can do to change that fact, *except* by having a change of mind about what Jesus did for you. If you do, then hold on to that. Trust that. Have confidence in it. Put your faith in it. You’ll still remain a sinner, but now a redeemed sinner, a sinner that has become right with God.

We all deserve to burn in hell — if that is what happens there — for our sins. Scripture says, **“For the wages of sin is death,”** — not life. If you are on the fence and you’re not sure about this salvation stuff, that is where you start - by recognizing that you are a sinner. You must see yourself as a guilty sinner in the eyes of God in order to be saved, my friend. If you don’t, you are not saved because you are relying on your dead works to get you there. That somehow, for some reason, you believe that your human effort can measure up to what God expects. I’m sorry, you have to come to the knowledge that you are a sinner, otherwise, why would we need a Savior?

So you ask, “What happens if I admit I’m a sinner in God’s eyes and start believing in the Gospel, the good news of Jesus Christ?”

It’s very simple: immediately you are saved. Period. You don’t need fanfare. You don’t need everybody in the church to come and say hallelujah and do all their shouting and praising. I’m not saying those things are wrong — I’m just saying you don’t need all that. That is the simplicity that is in Christ. He immediately saves you. One of the wonderful promises is in the Gospel of John, chapter 6 verse 37 reads, **“All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.”** You come to Jesus because you recognize you need to be rescued. You recognize you are not right with God. You recognize that you are a sinner, a guilty sinner. There is nothing you can do to change that fact other than to trust and believe in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Believe in the simplicity that is in Christ, the generosity, the free gift he provided for you. He died for you. He rose from the grave for you. He paid the penalty of eternal death for all of us.

“So, what are you saying?”

There are no works required for Gospel salvation.

“You mean it is that simple, just believe in Christ and what he did?”

Well, let’s go to John 6:28. *“Then said they unto him, what shall we do, that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe [pisteuo, trust and confidence] on him whom he hath sent.”*

Jesus is referring to Himself as the answer to the question. The “work of God” to be saved is to believe Jesus is the Christ whom God the Father sent, who died on the cross for our sins, was buried, and rose up three days later — and He’s coming back again for us. It’s as simple as that and you’re saved. We have a greater possibility of seeing that return as He pierces through the heavenlies to receive His own. That is a promise we can hang on to right now.

There is no such thing as a work of self-righteousness that can save you. It is His imputed righteousness, the righteousness of God, that God is looking for. He cares less about your self-righteousness. All the salvation formulas out their hinge upon our human involvement. Hebrews 6 says they are all dead works.

I have said this enough; repentance is nothing more than changing your mind about what you want to do to get to heaven and what you must do to get to heaven. That’s the kind of response God is looking for. I’m sorry; you must even cease in trusting your church to get you to heaven. They can’t. They can teach you the word of God, hopefully — if you are going to a church besides listening to me — but they’re only doing that. I’m sorry; you must cease trusting your good works. I’m sorry, you must cease in the sacraments, the confessional booth, and all the manmade false salvation plans that are out there that require some merit for you to get to heaven, some merit that you must perform for you to get to heaven. None of these things can save you. These are all dead works.

See, all the denominations out there want to fit us all with glasses so that we can see things through their perspective. I’m preaching that Christ wants us to open our eyes, so we see the truth, the rightly divided word of God. In the Greek, the word is *cut straight*. Write this down:

Eternal life is a take proposition. Eternal life was never a give proposition.

Salvation costs you nothing. That is why it is a free gift. Salvation costs you nothing, but Discipleship will possibly cost you something, if not everything.

Some ask, “You mean God will save the vilest sinner that is out there, that is walking on this planet and desires to be saved?”

Absolutely. You might not think that person is ‘worthy’ enough to be saved but thank God, that isn’t how God looks at things. In fact, if that vile sinner comes by faith, believing in the Gospel,

believing in Jesus Christ, God will save that person. I don't care what he's struggling with. It could be drunkenness, sexual immorality, or whatever. Go to Jesus. Run to Jesus. Believe in Jesus.

This is going to make some very aggravated with me, but God doesn't require that a person makes a commitment to stop doing evil works as a prerequisite to be saved.

I know some will say, "I never heard that."

Then you never heard the truth. If God did require it, then what I am reading here in God's Word is a lie because it wouldn't be a free gift!

Now, because there will be some who just twist my words six ways to Sunday, I'm not saying that Christians have God's permission to sin. Oh, we're going to sin, but I'm not saying we have permission. What I am saying is the first thing that God requires in His word is that every new believer have a desire to grow after they are saved. He will mold you. He will change things about you that He wants changed. If you don't believe that, go to I Peter 2:2. "***As newborn babes,*** [individuals who are saved...and I believe you have the desire throughout your journey, but he's talking about the newborn babes for now] ***desire the sincere milk of the word,***" [for what purpose?] "***that ye may grow thereby.***" God is going to change the vile sinner that you are. If you have the desire to grow by understanding and applying His word in your life, you are going to find out God could care less about some things you thought were sin. With things that God cares about, you're going to find that you try to avoid them because you know they aren't pleasing to God. Each individual has a different growth pattern. That is why there is no formula that you have to follow. God is the potter, you're the muddy clay, and He knows how to form you into a vessel that He can show off throughout eternity because He is creating it. He creates perfect completed vessels.

Too many false salvation plans today focus on Lordship Salvation, and that is nothing but dead works. Their requirement to be saved is to follow Christ, forsake the world, (which I don't really have a problem with), cease from all intentional bad behavior, and make public confession of Christ. No matter how you slice it, all those things are rooted in human effort. Translation? Dead works. We need a revival of born-again people from dead works including professing Christians.

Now, it is also in the Old Testament if you really think about it. Cain tried to impress God with his own works, produced by his own hands. Cain put some human hard-working effort in tilling his fields. He didn't bring a cheesy offering to God. He brought the wrong type of offering and that is why he was disobedient to God, but he worked hard at tilling his fields, day and night, weeding, irrigating, whatever it took. He put in that human effort and brought an offering that was produced by human hands. I'm sure Cain really knew how to grow a garden; not the genetically modified organism plants that we eat today that only make people sick in the long run. He brought the best of the best to offer to God. Review the story in the Scripture again. The Lord rejected it instantly. Why? Because it was the production of dead works. They were dead works, because it was all based on human effort and God rejected it. It was not part of God's requirement for the redemption plan for mankind. If you go to Isaiah 64, he warns all man's self-righteousness is nothing more than filthy rags. Are you getting the point? Your very best effort, if you really think about it, if it is not part of what God wants from you, is offensive. It's offensive to God! And that is the difficult

truth many will reject. You could spend your whole life doing good things, feeding the starving, (and I am not saying not to do these things, so listen closely) clothing the naked, helping little children, and still go straight to hell because that isn't the requirement to be saved. They are wonderful things to be participating in, but they are not the requirement to be saved. No amount of good deeds can counter the evil deeds.

Repent or repentance, as Christ meant it to be concerning salvation, means to change your mind from trusting in what you can do for God to only trusting what He can do for you. In other words, only trusting Him and what he can do for you. It's back to John 6:28, ***“Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.”*** The only work that is required for salvation is that you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. How you choose to live — and there are consequences to those choices — after you are saved has absolutely nothing to do with the gift of eternal life. That is why it is important to understand that all the aspects that you get involved in doing in your disciple journey that are pleasing to God, are separate from salvation.

I have said many times - not everything is equal in heaven. We are all not going to get the same gold star. Satan's greatest weapon is the con job that he's used against Christians, deceiving them into living what they call the “Christian life” without ever truly being born again. I'm sorry; I'll repeat it as many times as I have to until the Lord takes me home; salvation is not doing your best. It never was. It never will be. It's all about having Christ's best - what He did and how He put to our account - the ones who believe in Him by faith and what we can receive by what He did for us. That's it. See, God only saves those who are trusting in Him to be saved. The older I get the more I see that God is not saving those who are trying to be saved. Either God does the saving, all of it, no exceptions, or you are not saved at all. I know they are harsh words, it sounds harsh, but it takes us right back to Hebrews 6:1. It teaches we are saved, if you really think about it, not repenting from our sins but by repenting from our dead works.

“But I have to clean up my life of sin by doing good works.” No!

“I gotta stop desiring sinful activities.” No!

“Following Christ in obedience.” No!

“Joining a church membership.” No!

“I have to keep the Sabbath.” No!

These are all false securities that too many Christians or professing Christians have been banking on. Changing your mind - the true meaning of repenting - is required and stop trusting all those things I just listed for salvation. It's not dead works that gets you saved. Think about it. Who can repent, using their definition for repent? Who can repent of all their sins past, present and future? No one. It's a doctrinal error to add an unbiblical requirement that is not in God's word for a person to forsake sinful behavior to be saved. That is a manmade requirement that God does not require. I'm sorry - more dead works.

Now listen closely so you know where I am coming from. God wants, and in areas of His word, commands each of us to part from wickedness. But that is a call to Christians who are already saved. It is not a call to the lost who are not saved.

II Tim. 2:19 says, “Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.”

It’s a command for the ones who are already saved. Unfortunately, you can be saved and still fall in iniquity. That is why you need to run back to Jesus and depart from wickedness and iniquity. We don’t get saved because of good works. God does save us. That is found in Ephesians 2:10, unto good works, but that is a whole different subject that is not part of this conversation now, this teaching.

I never said God takes sin lightly. Whether you are saved or unsaved, He doesn’t. But you can’t force or change the hand of God upon sinners by corrupting the plan of salvation. It is flat out wrong. It puts pressure on new converts thinking that they must live holy lives. I believe so many reject salvation because, unfortunately, they don’t think they are worthy enough to ever live that type of holy life. Another unfortunate thing about that false doctrine, that damnable heresy, is that it leads to false conversions in the church today because they believe it is their own effort, their own cleaned-up program on their life of sin, which they thought was a requirement to be saved. I repeat, none of this is God’s plan of salvation. It goes against everything in II Corinthians 11:3-4 that we’ve already looked at. It corrupts. It pollutes. It leads to ruin and loss because it diverts away from the simplicity, the generosity that is in Christ Jesus. That is what Paul preached. That is what the disciples preached. That is what Jesus died for and rose again, that gives us hope. Nothing we can do will ever please God if it is by our own human efforts, trying to make ourselves right with Him and leaving out His son. Sorry, only Jesus is the way, He provided the truth, and He will give us eternal life if we have trust and confidence in Him. And He will work out all the other things as He starts the molding process in your life.

There are Christians listening now who for many years never knew or understood the salvation plan of God, the simplicity that is in Christ. It is my mission in this series that there be no doubts about what God’s word says on this subject.

False Conversion

Open your Bible to Ephesians 2:8.

“For by grace,” [for by unmerited favor] **“are ye saved...”**

“Are you saying grace is it?”

Yes. I know some of the new funky preaching that is going on out there differs with that, but you know, they have a right to be wrong.

“For by grace are ye saved...” It doesn’t say anything else, including “by faith.” See, I don’t necessarily believe in what is preached concerning “saving faith.” Faith never saves you. You can have faith in just about anything. Does that mean you are going to be saved?

“Well, it’s faith in God.”

Then be more specific than that because God is not doing the saving unless it is through His son, Jesus Christ. There are a lot of definitions for God out there. And I know this is going to aggravate many people, but it says — and not just this verse — for by grace are ye saved *through* faith. Well, how do you even get faith to be saved by grace?

Faith, and I have said it many times, you have *pistis* and the *pisteuo* level (of faith) in the Greek. Faith comes by hearing and hearing the word of God. And in hearing and hearing the word of God, you will either reject it or you will be persuaded into believing, which takes you to the next level of faith, the *pisteuo* level of faith, where you have total trust and confidence in what the son of God has said about Himself, because **“for by grace are ye saved through faith”** — through faith in who? Jesus Christ. **“And that not of yourselves,”** — meaning anything you think you must do to become saved. **“It is the gift of God.”** Grace is the gift of God, **“not of works lest any man should boast.”** I have said many times, you can’t save yourself by works.

I have a few people who follow me from where I came from. You were told that if you didn’t give (offerings) you were going to hell. I am sorry, but that is wrong teaching. That is flat out wrong. You can’t find it anywhere in Scripture. You can manipulate Scripture to make it sound that way, but it isn’t in the Scripture. That is a works-based salvation, a different type of works. You give because you are obedient to Christ command to lay your treasures up in heaven. And by not doing that, you are cheating yourselves and you are cheating and robbing God of the opportunity, Christ Himself, to reward you, which He’s waiting to do. So, it serves a purpose here, obviously, so others can hear the rightly divided word of God, but it serves even a greater purpose there. I think I made that clear in the *Where Is Your Heart?* series. There is nothing you can do because if you could give your way to heaven, then who needs Jesus? If you could give your way to heaven, why did He die on the cross? If you can give your way to heaven, why did

He allow himself to be tortured, bruised, and battered? If you could give your way to heaven, why did He leave glory to come to a decaying sinful world? That is just one works-based salvation message. There are others.

I have paid the price and this ministry has paid the price because I have set you free and some Christian freeloaders out there — listen, I know you don't like to hear that, but this isn't a massage parlor ministry. This is telling you exactly the way it is. See, receiving eternal life and where you spend your destiny is my biggest concern. Whether you receive rewards in heaven or not, or whether you receive rewards, period, in heaven is my concern and that is where my passions lie — bringing to you what God cares about. I'm not a man pleaser. I have messages all the time saying they are so glad to have found this ministry because there aren't many out there teaching the way I am teaching. The pastors don't dare go against the denominational viewpoint and doctrines they must follow. They don't dare confront their congregations. They are afraid the people will go somewhere else because churches are a dime a dozen. They don't care about their souls; they care about filling a seat and receiving an income from the possible seat filler. God has set me free from that, but He hasn't set me free from laying out your responsibilities — the ones that God has laid out. So, you shouldn't use what I'm teaching to somehow escape those responsibilities by becoming a freeloader — which some of you do.

“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast.”

Most of Christianity has the wrong idea. You hear this a lot: if a saved person does this, or if they don't do that, then they must be false converts. We have a lot of false teachings to thank for this mindset. They deceive so many. If those converts haven't changed and lived the same type of life they do, or if they didn't have the same type of conversion they did, or, if they refuse to repent of their sins....

If anyone was serious about the Bible and what it truly has to say about repenting, they would know it has nothing to do with *repent* the way it's taught. The Greek word clearly states you have a *change of mind* about what Christ has done and what He said: I am the way, I am the only one who provides total truth, and through Me you receive eternal life. That is what he asked us to do. That is the starting point. He doesn't want to hear your list of sins. He wants to hear, “I have sinned Lord, but now I trust that you will wipe out those sins. All I have to do is start trusting in you, putting my total confidence in what you did was sufficient, and anything that I can do falls way short of meeting the standard that God has placed.”

These people who judge other's salvation believe that if you aren't going to do what they tell you to do, and you aren't going to live the way they tell you to live, then you must be a false convert. Well, they are full of something, which I can't express to you because I might have children listening and I won't go that far. But I think you adults know exactly what I mean. They are the ones that are false converts because they don't fully understand what God's Word says here -

that salvation is by God's free grace; it is a free gift, through faith alone, in Christ alone. That is what it is saying here in Ephesians 2:8-9.

So, you must ask the question: Who are the false converts? We who believe what I have been preaching in this series, or the other side? If you believe you can be saved by your works or any human effort — you're lost. I've said it enough; I think you get that point. See, a false conversion in the Scriptures is a conversion that was not done by Christ alone. When anyone tries to work, or, pridefully in their arrogant way work their way to heaven, or add work to faith, it will always result in a false conversion.

So, what is a genuine conversion? I guess the best way of saying it is when one trusts in the grace of God to save them, and puts their faith alone, once again, in Christ. Period. Nothing is added. Zero. Nada. Understanding what happened: He died, was buried, and rose again. He paid the penalty that we deserved, He paid it all for all, and the way to receive that free gift is to trust and have confidence in what He did. It's then that you start living your life for Jesus and become a follower of Christ. He will direct your path and He will start molding you in to the being He wants you to be for His purposes. I have been saying it for a long time now, put your focus on Jesus because it's all about Him.

Now, I put together a small list why the church community is so overpopulated with false conversions, which produce false converts:

Galatians 1:6 states, ***“I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel.”***

Why do we have so many false conversions that lead to false converts? Number one - the false gospel is being preached out there.

Another gospel means another of the same kind. If you haven't already, write that in the margin of your Bible. It looks very similar to what Christianity should sound like, especially because of traditions and how it has been preached. Even Paul was dealing with the same thing then: it sounds good, it sounds like what Christ wanted from us and what he said, but is it? Now for naive Christians or Christian babes, it's going to be hard for them to pick out the differences, because they just became a new convert, supposedly by trusting in whomever they heard preach a salvation message, saying this is the way to go. I feel for those people. That is why the *Change of Mind* series should be the number one requested, the number one distributed eBook out there. Millions of millions should be distributed. I can't do it alone. That is where foot soldiers come in.

Another of the same kind, the true Gospel of Christ can be proclaimed in different ways by different people, but its truth can never be altered.

Verse 7 continues, ***“Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ.”***

I told you what the Greek means here for pervert: *to turn around by corruption, twisting, to turn one’s mind their way*. So, the false gospel of Christ is a bunch of perverted individuals out there that twist God’s word into something that it’s not.

“But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, if any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.”

Paul included himself in here should the occasion arise. The Greek is very clear about what accursed means: *excommunicated, banned*. Once you know the truth, including if you are in a church that preaches something different, you must make a tough decision. You must excommunicate yourself from that knowing that they are preaching a false gospel which leads to false converts – because the Greek is very clear, excommunicated or banned. You must ban yourself.

“As we said before, so say I now again,” Paul repeating himself, ***“If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.”***

He says it twice!

“For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men?” [I am in the same position.]
“For if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.”

So, what is he saying? These perverts are not servants of Christ. They might have good intentions. They might be ill taught. But you must ask yourself, if Christ knows their intentions are good, you’d think sooner or later He would guide them into the rightly divided word of God and how it should be preached, so others don’t fall into the same ditch that they are in.

Some of you think I am getting soft. I don’t know where you got that impression. I’m preaching the rightly divided word of God. I am the one who preached *Woe to The Shepherds* — which must be preached again; I preached it many years ago when this ministry first started. I haven’t changed. If anything, I’m eternally boiling hotter than I was before on this subject matter. Never assume anything about me. That’s not your place.

“For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.”

I hammer on Lordship Salvation people. They’re just one example of promoting a false gospel. They deceive many and they keep them lost. In my opinion, preachers that preach that message need to be avoided. You need to excommunicate it and ban them from your life. Period!

Let’s look at Paul’s words in Romans 16.

Verse 17 says, ***“Now I beseech you, brethren, mark...”*** [*Mark* in the Greek is *skopeó* from *skopos*, where we get our English word scope. What it literally means is *to take aim*.] ***“Now I beseech you, brethren, take aim at them which cause divisions [or disunion] and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.”*** [Here we find the same message.] ***“For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ...”*** [And too many of you are in churches that are not serving the Lord Jesus Christ. You’re there for whatever reasons, but you are in the wrong place, my friend.] ***“... but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple [or unsuspecting].”***

So, number one, a false gospel. Number two, adding to faith or faith addition, whichever you choose.

Read Galatians 2:21 - ***“I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.”***

“Well, you don’t keep the Commandments.”

If righteousness comes by the Law, Christ is dead in vain. Do I go out of my way to murder someone? Obviously not. Do I go out of my way to steal from someone? Obviously not. Do I go out of my way not to love God? Obviously not. And the other 600 plus laws? But I can’t keep them perfectly, I will admit that to you, and no one ever could.

“I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.”

So that means adding to faith cancels faith and doesn’t save.

Turn to Romans 4:13 - ***“For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect.”***

What is that saying? You must trust in Jesus alone by faith alone, as I repeat, in Christ alone. Faith doesn’t save you. Christ saves you because of His marvelous grace as that free gift He gave to all mankind. He died for all before anyone even believed in Him. Most didn’t. Most became believers after the fact, including the apostles. You may be a false convert for just the simple reason alone that you think you must repent of your sins in order to be saved. That is a faith addition or adding to faith, because anything added to faith is what the unsaved individual is really trusting in and there is no salvation available in that message.

Now I won’t be able to get to everything on my list here. Number three - traditions produce false gospels and false converts.

Tradition is why so many people believe, as an example, you can lose your salvation, or people will prove you never had salvation to begin with. The saddest thing about traditions is that they

keep people away from hearing and trusting in the truth of God's Word and how you are liberated from all their nonsense to bask in the marvelous grace of God. Jesus dealt with it in John 8. When He is talking to these Pharisees, they wanted to hold on to their tradition and how salvation would come. They never for one second acknowledged Jesus might be who He said He was.

And number four - there are people out there who believe they are born into Christianity. Matthew 3:9 says, "***And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father***" [in other words, they were counting on Abraham as their father for knowing they were saved] "***for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.***"

See, the problem is that there is a very common thought with many who were brought up in the church. They say, "I was brought up in the church, so I am saved." They assume that they are Christians because their family is Christian. That is what Jesus was talking about in Matthew 3:9; the Jews thought because they were Jews, they could use their ancestral lineage to somehow guarantee them a place in heaven. I'm sorry; you must personalize it. You must personally believe, personally put your trust and confidence in Jesus Christ, in order to receive everlasting life. No substitutes. You must trust and have confidence in what He did for you in order to be saved and become one of those born from above Christians that I have been preaching about. If you don't believe me, go to 1 John 5:1, "***Whosoever believeth,***" [*pisteuo*, whoever has trust and confidence] "***that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him.***"

That is where it lies, my friend. Only through Jesus Christ and by Him alone can you have everlasting life. That is how you become born from above and a person that is filled with the spirit of God to serve his purposes. It's a wonderful gift.

I'm not going to talk about it much, but, number five is public testimony conversion. Some of these false converts running around giving their public testimony conversions are so void of the Word of God, so void of what salvation truly means in the Bible and how to receive it, they can't seize on the gift of grace that God has given to us. They have so many fuzzy, weird, and quaint stories that are so emotional they grip their audience. Have you ever heard some of those? They think they are alright with God because they experienced some emotional experience, that really lead them to a delusional relationship. I am sure some of you have heard those. If you have not, you might in the future. You won't get that here. In Christ alone. I'm only interested in the conversion He talks about that I can receive—not what people's emotional experiences are all about. Now, that doesn't mean you aren't going to have a testimony or mean you can't share your own testimony, but it better be based on the right scriptural references that God has given us as educational tools to share with people and how that did arrive, if it is a genuine conversion. I've seen people who say, "I was converted because I read the *Left Behind* series." Really? That's what did it? There is a lot of silly nonsense out there, but I don't want to dwell on that.

So, what I am saying is false converts and false conversions are very real and it isn't something you should take lightly. We shouldn't take any chances. We can't take any chances where it comes to souls getting to heaven, or souls going to hell. We must, when the right occasion presents itself, maybe share with others if they are that interested in knowing the difference.

I repeat, many of you out there are still clinging on to that church you were raised in or the church you are going to now, knowing they aren't really preaching the right message, but you can't seem to excommunicate or ban yourself from it. Well, decision time is here and now. You know you should have done it, but you weren't sure. I just gave you the reasons why. If it is not this ministry, find one that preaches the rightly divided word of God on this subject matter, because as I have said many times before, you can't get this wrong. You can get many other things wrong, but you can't get this wrong. You can't get the salvation message wrong. I'm dedicated, this ministry to presenting the clean, clear, free grace Gospel even if it costs me viewers. I am not here to please man. If you are looking for man pleasers, I can give you a long list. I won't drift away. I will tell people that Jesus Christ died for them and He does give eternal life. All you must do is simply believe in Him and what He's done for you. The Gospel is not complicated. It's become complicated, it's become perverted by all the additions and all the traditions. I dare you, walk into any church and ask them, what is salvation? It's nothing like you hear here. There is a good test for you; next time I tell you I am not going to be live, go to some church and ask them if they can explain salvation. If you happen to hit on the right one that preaches the rightly divided message on the subject matter, hallelujah! Go buy a lotto ticket because you are on a lucky streak.

But these are the things you need to be aware of and able to communicate to others if they ever ask you questions. Don't try to complicate it. Present the simple Gospel. It's not complicated. It's become that because it's become perverted, yet it's not. And look at the opportunity to finally share what you have learned and hopefully bring light to others. My guess is most of the time there is going to be resistance, but on occasion there won't be. And if that is not in you to do that, at the very least you can support ministries that do.

With that, thank Jesus for His wonderful gift of grace and how He has allowed us to participate in that, and receive that, and be filled with the Spirit by just having trust and confidence in what He's done for us. That is how simple it is.

While We Were Yet Sinners

Open your Bible to Romans 5:8. It reads,

“But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”

It reads, ***“while we were yet sinners.”*** Sinners. Now that, my friend, is something that too many preachers have missed, and they have come up with their own plan of salvation. Now, everyone has heard of A.W. Tozer. I have all his books. People ask me, “Why don’t you recommend more books?” Because if I were to recommend a book, I would have to tell you to avoid certain pages or read only a certain sentence on another page and so forth, or you may think I support the whole book and what it is saying. I just won’t do that. At one time, I had thousands of books in my collection. Before I moved, I spent many months cleaning out the unnecessary baggage of carrying around and storing all those books. I made a joke about it: if I took all those books and just tore out the sections or cut and pasted anything I could use (that I thought was rightly dividing the word of God), I could probably whittle down those thousands of books to half a dozen. There has been a lot of spiritual garbage written that is not “Thus saith the word of the Lord.” But back to Tozer, he said,

“The idea that God will pardon a rebel who has not given up his rebellion is contrary both to the Scriptures and common sense.” (Root of The Righteous, pg 23)

I’ll be getting to Proverbs here in a moment, but I don’t care very much about common sense and neither does God. I care about “Thus saith the word of the Lord” because He is speaking and His word says, “While we were yet sinners.” But Tozer is saying,

“How horrible to contemplate a church full of persons who have been pardoned but who still love sin and hate the ways of righteousness. And how much more horrible to think of heaven as filled with sinners who had not repented nor changed their ways of living.”

What is this saying? Tozer is appealing to common sense, which is a very dangerous thing to do when it comes to Biblical doctrine. I came to the conclusion that if I am going to preach a *Change Of Mind* and what it means in these series of messages, you’re going to know the Scripture inside and out and why I have come to the conclusion that I’d rather know the Scriptures than these preacher’s opinions about what they think “Thus sayeth the word of the Lord” is, using their common sense.

Proverbs 14:12 says, ***“There is a way which seemeth right,”*** - the common sense way - ***“unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.”***

That is a profound Scripture if you can burst through your ego long enough to realize God’s ways are not man’s ways. They never were and never will be. ***“There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.”*** Take an earthly court room scene, for

instance. Do you think a judge with a common-sense earthly point of view would pardon a person who has no intent of reforming his life? It would be a reasonable conclusion in a court of law, run by man's law, of it not happening. Am I correct? But that is not how God works. That is not how the plan of salvation works, my friend. That is why it is extremely dangerous to use common sense. We all need our ego constantly pounded down to size — starting with this chair and whoever is reading this — because we tend to slip into thinking that we know what is in God's mind and what He truly means. Therefore, we start adding to Scripture, or in some cases, even taking away from it, which develops extremely dangerous doctrine. Oh, it sounds good —and there are things that Tozer does say that are good and are right — but this isn't it. I have said it from the very beginning, if you don't get this right, it leads people astray, down a dangerous road. I've said it many times over, Christ paid our sin debt, not us: Christ. In a sense, the Lord went into heaven's court room with His blood and placed it there at the mercy seat. For whose benefit? Mine and yours.

Hebrews 9:12 states, ***“Neither by the blood of goats and calves [or young bullocks], but by his own blood [Jesus Christ's blood] he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.”***

Look at verse 24, ***For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.”***

Jesus paid it all, my friend. Jesus paid our debt of sin, not a partial payment, not a halfway payment, but a 100% payment on our debt for sin. He made us righteous unto God and that is why I preach a Communion message titled *Precious Blood*. I'm sorry, but Mr. Tozer got it wrong. He's dead wrong! He has the wrong mindset concerning what is required, and that is a change of mind unto salvation. Jesus Christ appeased his Father's wrath against all of us with His blood. Period. Those who have sight to see light, you get it. But there are those whose spiritual ego can't accept what I am saying to be true because it's not what is preached.

Now listen to me closely because I am going to follow up on this remark: You don't have to give up anything to be saved. That is going to irritate so many people, even those who listen to me faithfully. They're going to say, “What is he saying now?” I repeat, you don't have to give anything up to be saved; ***“But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners,”*** [sinners who hadn't given up anything at that point] ***“Christ died for us.”***

By the same token, God's wrath only abides in those who reject His only begotten son, Jesus Christ. That is the message in John 3 in the Gospel record. God gave up His only begotten son to pay for our sins. If you really think about it, it is the greatest sacrifice a father could give, giving up his only son for someone else's sins. Tozer teaches something different. He teaches a person must give up their rebellion in order to be saved. If that is true, and if what I am preaching is wrong, then that means man has a part in his own salvation. The Scriptures clearly say we don't. Man has no part in his salvation, none whatsoever, except to acknowledge and recognize that we need a change of mind about what Christ did for our salvation. That's it!

Ephesians 2:8 says, ***“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not [none] of yourselves:”*** Why? Because ***“it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.”***

If that isn't clear enough, let's go to Titus 3:5.

“... not by works of righteousness which we [ye] have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration,” [a better translation is restoration, a spiritual rebirth] ***“and renewing [to make new] of the Holy [Spirit] Ghost...”***

To have the correct biblical mindset concerning salvation is to understand that Jesus paid fully the debt that we owe for our sins. Therefore, we are saved by what Christ did on that cross and solely by Christ's righteousness — not partially, by what we do to try to reform ourselves, such as forsaking sinful bad habits and “surrendering to Christ.”

So you wonder, “Well, isn't that important?”

Yes, but those things and many others that I haven't mentioned are all matters of Discipleship. Don't confuse the two. Those things aren't matters of restoration, forgiveness, or salvation.

What Tozer did in his book was put the cart before the horse and attempt to do the work of the Holy Spirit through manmade efforts of the flesh, which somehow, I guess, he thinks can make men holy. What is the truth of the matter? God saves ungodly sinners (whether you like it or not) who are still in their wickedness. Then God changes those individuals over the course of their lifetime so they can grow and spiritually mature in the Lord. It's not really complicated. The change comes after the person is saved. A lot of people, including myself, would like to see that change happen pain-free and much quicker than it does, but because we are still fighting that old man, sometimes it's a slow process. Therefore I have said we are a work in process. Change comes to all individuals who have been saved, who now possess the Holy Spirit. And you will change. I have said that many times over. But you cannot mandate the change, and that is the problem of the church world today. There are no prerequisites for salvation. If you require prerequisites, it's a damnable false gospel of self-righteousness and dead works.

You don't need to manufacture feelings to think that you are saved. I wish I had a nickel for everyone who has come up to me saying, “I don't know if I am saved or not,” because they didn't go through all the emotional mumbo-jumbo spiritual whoopie fits, so they think that they're missing out on something. You don't have to speak in tongues, spiritually dance across the altar, and you don't even have to be baptized to be saved. (With saying that, I just eliminated a whole bunch more people.) So how do we know that we are saved? I

I Corinthians 5:21 says, ***“For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”***

I know that I am saved because my salvation is rooted in the righteousness of Christ. That is what Scripture is saying; that is the promise of God. We also find it in Romans and the Titus verse we just read. It's what Christ did for us. He paid for your sins and my sins, and that's what gets us to heaven — there's nothing that I can do, and nothing that you can do.

Romans 4:5 states, ***“But to him that worketh not, but believeth [pisteuo; have trust and confidence] on him [Jesus Christ] that justifieth the ungodly”***—[it is God who justifies me, you

and all sinners]—“*his faith,*” [his trust and confidence that God can do that for us] “*is counted for righteousness.*”

These aren't my words; it's what Scripture is declaring. It's not for those who are willing to reform or first clean up their act in some way before being saved. This Scripture is clearly saying faith is counted for righteousness, faith in Christ. That means faith in Christ is all that is required to be saved.

“Well, that is fine and dandy, but I don't know if I have enough faith for that. How much faith does it require?”

Let's go to Romans 10:13; this is all you need to do.

“For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.” That is how much faith is required. God didn't even make that difficult and complicated or confusing. It is as simple as that. With all sincerity, **“whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.”** It's not a joke.

Circle the word *call*. What does that mean? The word call means *to appeal unto*, which means if you rely upon the Lord to be saved, then He will save you. All you have to do is put your trust and confidence in the Gospel and you are safe and secure in the Father's hand forever if you keep having trust and confidence in Him and what His son did.

You're wondering, “How can you say forever?”

John 10:29 tells us, **“My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.”**

That is security, my friend, when you have trust and confidence in Jesus and what He did. As long as I have trust and confidence in what Jesus did, as long as you have trust and confidence in what Jesus did, nothing — I don't care if it is the strongest creature that God ever created — can pluck us away or snatch us away from His hand. No one.

Jesus paid our debt in full, my friends. Scripture teaches Jesus paid a debt he didn't owe. We owed it. It was a woeful debt of sin that we in no way could pay, no matter how goody-two-shoes one is. Salvation is without works. Salvation is without man's effort. Salvation is without intent of reformation. Salvation is those that believeth on Him, as we read in Romans 4:5, He justifies the ungodly.

I'm not done with this message, but I want to read one last Scripture that I read so many times and it finally dawned on me that I missed something, even though I've read it many times over the years. Go to Revelation 5:4. This is where the seven seals book is and what I am now preaching on in the *Last Days* series.

“And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon.”

Some of you may have caught it right away, but ***“no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon.”*** Verse 9 says, ***“And they sung a new song, saying, Thou [referring to Jesus Christ] art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.”***

Now there have been some big heavy hitters in faith throughout the millenniums. Think about it - if your good works or your good deeds or even your faith can part the Red Sea, and even if your faith brings people back from the dead, it isn't good enough. ***“And I wept much because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book.”*** No man except who? Jesus Christ. If those giants of faith couldn't open the book, what makes you think we can? Let's look at something greater. What makes you think (because we can't open the books) that we can merit our own salvation by our deeds? It can't be done. I'm sorry, you goody-two-shoes, thinking that your dead works will get you to heaven; you're wrong. Good works are part of discipleship, but it has nothing, and I repeat, *nothing* to do with salvation, nothing whatsoever.

Imputed Righteous

Open your Bible to Romans 4:6.

It reads, ***“Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works...”***

Circle *imputeth*. What does the word imputeth mean? If you look it up in a Greek dictionary, it will give you all kinds of words, but write this down in your Bible or notes: *to pass to one’s account*. We would say in our day *to deposit into one’s account*. So, Romans 4:6 could read, “Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God passes or deposits into his (or her) account without works.”

You will see the same Greek word that is translated as imputed is also translated as *reckoned*, which is why verse 10 reads, ***“How was it then reckoned.”*** Reckoned there is the same Greek word that was translated imputed. We see this in different areas of the Scripture, so remember that.

This means that Jesus placed His righteous record, His righteousness upon our record, without works. There the word is *ergon*: the employment of the Word or the employment of whatever to achieve or to earn something. Jesus places his righteousness upon our record and that happens if we trust him, and him only, for our salvation.

In the same chapter, verse 3 reads, ***“For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed [pisteuo; have trust and confidence] God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.”*** It doesn’t say he worked for that righteousness. It says he trusted God. It goes on to say in verse 4, ***“Now to him that worketh is the reward...”*** [What is the reward? Whatever you can obtain here with your own effort, that falls short of God’s criteria.] ***“...not reckoned [imputed] of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth [pisteuo] on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.”***

Now, neither David nor Abraham was saved by good works, just as we are never saved by good works. But rather, he believed, and he trusted God. I’d say his biggest understanding of what was to come was by looking up to the Gospel in the stars. I preached that before; what caused him to be saved was by what he saw coming and that was Christ’s righteousness. And for that, Christ’s perfection, (even though He hadn’t come yet) was imputed or placed on Abraham’s record, which caused God the Father to see Abraham from that point on as having the righteousness of Christ.

We tend to complicate these passages because we want to bring works into the equation. Works, no matter where you go, is left out of the equation. Abraham was saved by placing his trust and confidence in and upon the Lord.

Genesis 15:6 says, ***“And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness.”***

Why was Abraham able to believe and have trust in God in place of good works that he somehow had to earn or merit? The simple answer is Jesus paid the price not just for Abraham’s sins, but for all of mankind’s sins. You cannot - Abraham couldn’t - please God in our own fabricated self-righteousness. God will just not have it. We’ve been to these passages before, but let’s look at them again because I really want this imprinted on your mind so that when someone does approach you, you can recall them to share with them.

Romans 10:3 states, ***“For they [Israel] being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law...”*** [Understand, they were still trying to be Law keepers and they were brainwashing themselves that they were doing a good job of it, which they weren’t.] ***“For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that [practices the Law? No,] believeth.”*** There the word again is *pisteuo*, those who have trust and confidence in Christ Jesus.

We read in Titus 3:3-4, ***“For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish [lacking intelligence], disobedient [no one could persuade us], deceived, serving divers lusts [strong desires] and pleasures, living in malice [badness] and envy, hateful, and hating one another. But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration [restoration; spiritual rebirth], and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly [richly] through Jesus Christ our Saviour.”***

If you won’t put your trust and confidence in Jesus, it doesn’t matter how much good you’ve done in this world, or how much of a saint others perceive you to be. If your trust and confidence is not in the saving work of Jesus Christ and what He did at Calvary, in His precious blood and the importance of that, your sins are still recorded in heaven. Period. I repeat, your sins are still recorded in heaven, and to be right with God, our sins must be dealt with. There is no getting around that. That is why His only begotten son was sent, to pay a debt He didn’t owe because we owed a debt we couldn’t pay. Therefore Jesus came. Therefore He paid the price for our sins in His own precious blood. That is the message of I Peter.

I Peter 1: 18 tells us, ***“Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers...”*** [That still applies today, traditions from our fathers, traditions that we make up.] ***“...but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.”***

My friends, all of us prior to being saved by the precious blood of Jesus Christ are corrupt. Even where it concerns our sincerest efforts, we are tarnished with the curse of sin, which leads us to rebellion. There is no getting around it. I repeat, we need His righteousness daily, the imputed

righteousness that we read about in Romans 4, the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ. We are saved by God's righteousness by having faith in Christ, period. There is no getting around that, no faith in anything else, except Jesus Christ.

Go back to Romans 4:5 which reads, ***“But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.”*** And then we read in verse 8, ***“Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.”***

I've told you *blessed* here means *fully satisfied, bathed in the blood, blessed*. That is what it means. And “will not impute sin” means He will not pass to his account sin. See, Christ's righteousness was imputed or counted to Abraham's record. And look at this: Abraham's sinful record was imputed to Christ. We would look at that as a bad deal. If I were Christ, and I imputed my righteousness to you, which is acceptable to God the Father, (the only way we can be right with God the Father is through Christ's righteousness) what did I get in return? What did Christ get? Our sins — Abraham's, mine and yours — were imputed to Him on that cross. You've heard it many times - Jesus became sin for us and died a sinner's death. That is the message in Second Corinthians 5, ***“For he hath made him to be sin”*** for our benefit, for us, and He knew no sin, but He did it for us. For what reason? That we may be righteous, because we are made righteous by His righteousness in God's presence.

Talk about the most wonderful gift you can receive. You just can't escape it. It flows through Christ, but the kicker is, once again, you must have trust and confidence in the Gospel, the message of the good news which brings us to the point where Christ died for our sins. He paid the penalty that He didn't owe but we owed, that made us right with God if we have trust and confidence in Him. You've heard, “That is the deal of the century.” Well, what Christ did for us is the deal of eternity! It's a beautiful message that God was willing to impute God's own son's righteousness to us as He did to Abraham and all we must do is believe on Jesus.

Romans 4:22 states, ***“And therefore it was imputed to him [Abraham] for righteousness. Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe [pisteuo] on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead.”***

What a wonderful and amazing Scripture that we are the beneficiaries of, because verse 24 says ***“but for us also.”***

Romans 10:1 also says, ***“Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law,”*** [the end; it doesn't say Christ is the continuation of the law] ***“for righteousness to every one that believeth.”***

If you still believe that it's your own righteousness that gets you to heaven, you're wrong and Paul is right. *"Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth* [has trust and confidence in Christ Jesus].” Man can't earn that kind of righteousness. Why? Because we are born into sin and we sin. The only hope we have of having that type of righteousness is if we receive it from Christ, which He purchased for us on Calvary. We can receive it if we have trust and confidence in what He did at Calvary and what the gift of grace has provided for us that makes us right with God. Satan cannot enter unto God's throne and accuse us any longer. I know some preach he can still accuse us like in Job's day, but no, not after Christ presented His precious blood at the heavenly mercy seat. Not possible. If it is, then why did He die? Why did He spill his blood? Why did He spend 3 days in the grave if after coming out of that grave His blood wouldn't be sufficient when He presented it to his heavenly Father upon the heavenly mercy seat? If Satan had access (to heaven) any longer, which I don't think he does, he couldn't even open his mouth. He would be speechless. That is what Christ has done for us.

Which brings us to this: there is a process in our life that we go through. For those that are called and able to see the truth that is preached, hopefully rightly divided, they will understand the points I am making right now. Number one - let's look at the order of life. One, right from the get-go - we are born in sin.

- Number one - we are born in sin.
- Number two - because we are born in sin, our sins are recorded.

Three, if the next step didn't happen, it's gloom and doom for sure. If you don't see it, if you don't believe it, and if you don't have trust and confidence in the Gospel record—I pray you do because your eternal destiny is not looking up if you don't—and that's assuming you even believe you have one.

- Number three - Jesus became sin for us on that cross.

That had to happen; and because He became sin,

- Number 4 - He paid the price for sin.
- Number 5 - we must believe that the Gospel record is true.

If you put yourself in that position that you have trust and confidence in what Jesus did, then

- Number 6 - you receive Christ and His payment for sin as a sufficient payment that God requires.

Now this next one could be 7 and 8 but well just make it one.

- Number 7 - man's sins are covered/removed, making man right with God.

This means God will not impute sin, as we read in Romans 4:7, ***“Blessed is the man whom the Lord will not impute sin.”*** God will not impute our sins to us because the record in heaven is wiped clean. It’s removed, never to be seen again.

- Number 8 - God will impute no sin to us.

Salvation isn’t complicated. You probably could break it down in a simpler way, but we are born into sin, our sins are recorded, and they stay recorded. Jesus had to come and become sin so that the erasing process could start because He paid the price and penalty for sin. If we believe in what He did, (have trust and confidence that what He did was sufficient to please God), then those sins no longer exist because we have received Christ and His payment for sin. Our sins are covered. Our sins are removed. We are made justified or right with God; that is what Justification means - becoming right with God in the sight of God. Lastly, God will impute no sin to us because they have been wiped out. All this happens with no effort by us concerning how to receive Salvation. It’s all about Jesus, my friend. It’s always been about Jesus. Forever it will always be about Jesus. The only way to become right with God is through Jesus. Christ became our substitute on that cross, which literally, He put himself in place of us for sin. God the Father imputed our sins to His only begotten son on that cross.

We received a wonderful deal and all we have to do to receive salvation is receive that grace, that gift, and put our trust and confidence in Jesus, and nothing else. It’s that simple.

We Are God's Children Forever

Open your Bible to John 1:12.

“But as many as received him, to them gave he power...” [Power here, in the Greek, basically means he is giving you the *privilege* and the *right*] ***“...to become the sons of God, even to them that believe [pisteuo; trust and confidence] on his name [Jesus Christ]: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.”***

Many Christians don't have a very good understanding of how God perceives us. God sees us differently from the way we see ourselves, and He sees us differently from the way others see us. I thank God for that. It's like He's looking at us and we are looking at ourselves, and we see two different people! In His eyes, He perceives us as sons because of what Christ did. That gave us the privilege and right to be Sons of God, after we are truly born again of the Spirit and have had that change of mind about what Christ has done for us.

How do we see ourselves? Usually it is through past experiences. That is how we develop an opinion about ourselves. But that is not what God does. He does not choose to see us through our perspective. He has chosen to see us now through Christ's perspective, in the present and the future, if we keep our trust and confidence in Christ Jesus. If we do that, He sees us in Christ Jesus now and forever. So, we must put on the shelf how we perceive ourselves and try to understand how God perceives us.

John 1:13 tells us, ***“Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.”***

Being truly born again is none of those things. They don't come into play any longer. How it is done is only through Christ Jesus. God has given us a new opportunity. It is a new day, a new forever.

I am sure in your walk of life you've heard people say (and you really don't have to be a Christian to hear this), “We are all God's children.” Understand, that is the furthest thing from the truth. Christ came and died for all, but that doesn't make us all God's children. Something must happen. Only individuals that are born again and have God's Spirit in them and put their trust and confidence in Jesus Christ (and that has to happen to be born again in the first place) are legitimate children that can say, “I am God's child now.” That is the privilege and the right again. Why does that happen? Because when we become born again, God adopts us as His own.

Galatians 4:4 says, ***“But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem [or rescue] them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.”***

We are no longer slaves of sin and the devil. We are now God's children. Since we are His children, God has made us His heir.

Ephesians 1:13 states, ***“In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise,”*** [here is another promise] ***“which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.”***

The Scripture is saying the Holy Spirit was given to us as a deposit that guarantees our inheritance. As heirs of God, we have this inheritance. If we keep our trust and confidence in His son and what He provided for us to give us that privilege and right, no one can take that from us.

II Corinthians 1:21 says, ***“Now he which establisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.”***

God has set his seal of ownership on us, and He has put his Holy Spirit in our hearts guaranteeing us of what is still yet to come — more promises. (While there are other promises, we are focusing on the inheritance and the promise that comes with that.) He has freed us from the one who has held us in slavery. We were slaves to sin, slaves to Satan and his ways, doing his bidding. But now that has all changed. Hallelujah! He set His own seal and His ownership is on us. We are no longer slaves and now are a new creation in Christ, which makes us Sons and Daughters of God because Christ paid the price. We are bought at a price, and it cost Jesus His precious blood, which now makes us God's inheritance. We belong to God, and no one can ever change that. Another promise we have is that God himself has put our care under His son. What is the Father's will? That the Son lose not one truly born-again individual who is part of that inheritance.

Jesus says in John 6:37, ***“All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.”*** [It was God's will that we would not be castaways.] ***“And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.”***

Everyone that looks on the Son, everyone that has trust and confidence in His Son, the Son of God, Jesus Christ, and believes on Him will have eternal life. We have so many wonderful promises in the Scripture. There is no reason to ever be depressed. (I know it is part of our flesh when we get worn down in mind, and spirit, and physically.) Remind yourself in those moments of despair what God has promised us. There is plenty to look upon in the Scripture. God is not a man to lie, and He will keep His word. All of these promises that I've covered so far, we cannot accomplish; we cannot use our own personal efforts to receive any of these promises. All this is the work of the Father, all this is the work of the Son, all of this is the work of the Holy Spirit. If we have trust and confidence in Them, what They do cannot be undone. Yes, we might trip up, we might fall, we might sin, (and I guarantee you that is going to happen) all those things are going to happen, but they have a strong grip in our lives, friends, and they won't let go if we keep our focus on them.

Nothing in this world, nothing in all the cosmos, nothing in all of God's creation can change what God has provided for us, and what Christ has done for us.

Romans 8:37 says, ***“Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature,”*** [no matter what you are going through in the present or future] ***“shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”***

Nothing in creation can change what Christ has done for us and no one could ever take us out of Their hands.

John 10:27 states, ***“My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.”*** [Pluck here means to *take by force*. And believe me when I say the seen and unseen are trying to take us by force and put that separation between us and God.] ***“My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one.”***

What else do we need? These are just a few of the promises we have. No one can take us out of Their hands.

Someone may be saying, “Well, I don't have very much faith today.”

I don't care if you temporarily lose your faith. God is not going to let you go that easily, my friend. The promise is there that what is His, He is not going to let go of easily. Some of you are worried you are going to trip up on a sin today and God won't love you anymore, He won't care for you anymore. I can tell you this much, it's going to take more than a single sin to separate us from the love of God. All we must do is run back to Him and start putting our trust, faith, and confidence back in what He has provided and what He has promised. What He has promised is if we are born again, even with our flaws, we are God's children forever. That is promise number one, we are God's children forever.

He No Longer Counts Sin Against Us

I started teaching a little miniseries inside this series on how God perceives us: how God sees you, how God sees me. (I am referring to those of us who put our trust in Jesus and what He has done for us.) I mentioned that the Scripture is full of promises on how God perceives us through His precious son, Jesus Christ. The first message was titled, *We Are His Children Forever*. I gave you the promises on why that is a fact when you study the Scripture. Now we are going to look at another promise: He no longer counts our sins against us. That is another promise. With that brief introduction, go to Psalm 32:1. The psalm of David reads,

“Blessed..” [A better translation of this word in context would be *oh the bliss*. You will recognize *oh the bliss* here in a moment.] **“Oh the bliss is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered [concealed].”** Now, I’ve preached through the *Table of The Lord* series and the *Change of Mind* series that our sins are not just covered any longer, that is Old Testament. In the New Testament, our sins are not just covered; they are removed forever. So, we have more to be joyous about - Oh the bliss! Our bliss should be greater knowing our sins are removed forever.

That is what David foresaw, I believe, in the prophetic psalms he penned. I think Paul understood it, too. Turn to Romans 7:14.

“For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin. For that which I do I allow not:” [a better translation than *allow* is *know*; I know not] **“for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I.”** [And there is the struggle.] **“If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good. Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.”**

There was a popular saying decades ago, “The devil made me do it.” Some of you who are old enough can probably remember that saying circling around in the United States. A very famous comedian made it popular. Here Paul is saying: **“no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me,”** [Or, sin made me do it; and he’s right.] **“For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.”** [He sought but he could not find.] **“For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?”** [Or, a better translation is *this body of death*; Oh, wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of death.] **“I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.”**

Then Paul continues in Romans 8, **“There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.”**

This is what Paul was communicating in these verses and trying to explain because it may be a little bit confusing. Having admitted as much as he tried, he just could not completely stop sinning — that is what Paul is saying here — and he gives us God’s perspective from the Scriptures on the matter. He said when he sinned it was no longer - he himself who sinned but the sin that lives within him. I know it is hard to comprehend, but you must wrap your brain around that. It was no longer he who sinned but the sin that lived within him and here is what he meant; go to Romans 7:9.

“For I was alive without the law once...” What does that mean, I was alive without the law once? **“...but when the commandment came”**—here comes the Law— **“sin revived, and I died.”** Well darn that commandment; look at the destruction and chaos it creates in a person’s life. What was Paul talking about here? He’s talking about the age he became accountable for the sins. Before he reached that age, he wasn’t accountable. Therefore, as Paul would say, he was alive; he had eternal life. Even though he was born in sin like all of us are as babies — we are born into sin — God doesn’t hold children accountable until they reach a certain age. Then He does hold them accountable. Now, if you are living by the Law or by whatever means you follow, you are still accountable. Again, before he reached the age of accountability, Paul was not accountable, and he had life. It isn’t because he didn’t sin before, but because his sins were not counted against him. But when he became old enough to be held accountable, the penalty for his sins was applied and he no longer had eternal life.

Now, let’s try to piece that together using other Scriptures.

Matthew 18:3 says, **“And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.”**

Unless you have a change of mind and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

Consider John 3:3 - **“Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”**

These verses of Jesus pair together with what Paul said in the Romans letter and his comments on accountability; we can see these two statements made by the Lord are not unrelated, are they? Paul said little children have eternal life because their sins are not counted against them. Those are Paul’s words. Now Jesus, from the verses that we looked at, said that in order to enter the kingdom, we must become like little children again. But He also said in the Scriptures here that, in order to enter the kingdom, we must be born again or born from above. So, putting this all together, the way to become like little children, (as Jesus mentioned) so our sins are not counted against us, is to be born again or born from above. The proof for this is when Paul was born again, God no longer counted his sins against him and the same is true for us. In Romans 7 he attributed it to the sin that still lived within him. He attributed those sins, and sins past, present and future, and those sins that still lived within him as a struggle that all of us face. But if we are born from above, the struggle is over. So, stop struggling over it, because if we are born from above, the sins, past, present and future are no longer counted against us. Paul was saying in Romans that he gained

eternal life and although he couldn't prevent himself from sinning, he still had that eternal life promise, because he was born from above; he was born again.

When you put your trust and confidence in Jesus Christ and you have faith and trust in his redemptive work and understand your sins are not just covered anymore, they are removed forever because of what Christ did at Calvary; you become born from above. The Spirit of God comes into your life, and He will work you and mold you into the being He wants you to be, not what man thinks you should be, but what He wants you to be.

We must become like little children again according to what we find in the Scriptures and stop struggling with the concept of sin. You must understand that if you put your trust and confidence in what Christ did on that cross, then your sins are removed.

I am not saying to go out there and sin it up. Like I said a moment ago, He will work you over and He will mold you, and He will form you into the creature He wants you to be, the being He wants you to be for His purposes, and change is coming. What you must do is submit and become a disciple who learns from God's Word what Christ wants you to be, not what man wants you to be.

Become like little children again. Become child-like, understanding that as their sins are not accounted to them, our sins too are not counted against us because of Jesus, our precious Savior. He came down and rescued anyone who would put their trust and confidence in Him.

We Are Made Perfect in God's Eyes

Get the Table of The Lord elements ready and open your Bible to Hebrews 10.

Hebrews 10:14 says, ***“For by one offering [Christ] he hath perfected...”*** [*perfected* is okay for a translation here but it is also meant to include *completed*] ***“...for ever them that are sanctified [holy].”***

How do you become sanctified? It is a *setting apart*. How do you become sanctified or set apart? Well, you must have trust and confidence in what Jesus Christ did to provide you salvation. Once you start trusting in your daily life what Christ did and you have that change of mind experience (you come to your senses and you put your faith and trust in Christ), you are sanctified because you are now set apart. You are in this world, but you are not of this world.

In Romans 3, Paul explains how no one will be declared righteous by the keeping of the Law, because the purpose of the Law (if you tried to keep the Law, which no one could completely do) was to make them aware of their sinfulness. That was the Law's purpose. In trying to uncomplicate all that, Paul writes in verse 20, ***“Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.”*** So, no one could be declared righteous by keeping the Law. It just gave one the knowledge to be made conscious of their sinfulness. That's it. Verse 21, ***“But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe [pisteuo; have trust and confidence]: for there is no difference: For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.”***

Even supposed Law keepers come short of the glory of God. “Well, I don't sin.” There are still Christians today who say, “I don't sin.” Really? Verse 24, ***“Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.”*** See, God made known a righteousness from Him apart from the Law that comes, according to Scriptures here, through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe (put their trust and confidence in), being justified freely by His grace.

II Corinthians 5:17 reminds us, ***“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature:”*** [Not because you kept the Law.] ***“old things are passed away;”*** [including the Law] ***“behold, all things are become new.”*** If you are a new creature in Christ, you are nothing less than a new creation in Christ. Period. That old is gone. See ya! The old is gone, the new is here. It has come.

This is not something that Paul is saying will happen someday in the future, nor something that must come about because we do something to change our behavior. From God's perspective, the way He sees things because of what His son did, it has already happened and not only that, it is irreversible. It happened to us because we are in Christ, or we are born again, born from above, as I preached previously. All of this is made possible because of Jesus Christ. All of this is made possible because the son of God was without sin. He became sin for us. Therefore, God was able to make us as righteous as He. What do I mean by that? Go to verse 21 in the same chapter, ***“For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”***

So, through God's perspective — and here is one of those wonderful promises I've been preaching on — from His perspective, if you really think about it, we've become perfect and completed forever because of His Son; one sacrifice for sin, that is all that was required, and it applies for all time. That means covering your whole entire life as a believer. That is back to Hebrews 10, the verses we looked at, Verse 12, ***“But this man [Jesus], after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. For by one offering he hath perfected [and completed] for ever them that are sanctified [holy; set apart].”***

So, from God's perspective, we've become perfect. I can imagine the reaction some may be having, “I don't feel perfect.” Well, that is because we are still dealing with the old man. But God sees us as the new man — if we put our trust and confidence in His Son and His redeeming work, removing sin. God sees us differently. He sees us as perfect individuals. That is how much He honors His son and what He did to bring his creation back to Him. They did so much, if you really think about it, yet ask so little.

When Jesus went to the cross (you all know this), He forgave us of all our sins because He took the blow that we deserved. And for those who had already died, and we have covered this before, He would go and deliver those that were in Paradise who were waiting for His atoning sacrifice. Those in Paradise had their sins forgiven retroactively. Now the other believers that were alive at the time of his death received the benefits of what He provided immediately. Now, we were not born for almost another 2000 years. This means all our sin, which would be in the distant future, was also covered and removed. Our sins would be forgiven as soon as we heard the Good News and put our trust and confidence on what we heard, having had a change of mind that brought us to our senses. Even though He provided it 2000 years ago, we still get the benefit of it now and no matter how far into the future we live. If you really think about it, what He did had to apply for the things I just said, for all time—past, present, and future. And it must apply for the whole time of the believer's life. So, it is a lifetime promise for each of the believers who put their trust and confidence in Him. If it wasn't true, then that phrase He forgave all of us our sins would be a lie. But we know it is true, He did forgive all our sins. God can now see us as if we've always been and always will be perfect. That is why when we go to the table of the Lord. Jesus says, “Do this in remembrance of me.” I believe most Christians who read those words or even hear those words don't understand the full benefits that they were given because of what He provided as that free gift for us. As a result of already paying the penalty in full for all the sins, He can regard us as being righteous, which makes us right with God, as if we'd never sinned in the first place. That is mindboggling.

So, how does God perceive us? From His perspective, we are innocent. That is the Good News. The bad news: you are a sinner. The Good News: you are a sinner saved by grace. Nothing of your own doing can save you. No Law keeping. No change of behavior. I'm not saying you are not going to change. God goes to work on you as I have said many times, but you are His problem, not someone else's problem, who are trying to fix you to fit the Christian mold and what they think you should be like. You are God's problem. He's the potter, we're the clay. He does the molding. He molds us into the vessel that He wants us to be, the container that He wants us to be for the cause of Christ. And, because he loves and cares for you, Christ is our mediator. Nothing gets to God unless it goes through Him. And whatever goes through Him, God doesn't see it from the

point of view that you think He sees it from. That is what I am trying to get across to you in these messages. He sees you as a perfected being that His son paid the price for and views you from that perspective. If His son didn't do it, God would have no part of us.

So that is what we thank Jesus for, for what he has done for us, that one-time sacrifice. The only sacrifice that was necessary from that point on to cover all past, present, and future sins and transgressions. No other religions, no other belief system provides that restoration process the way it is described in the Scriptures. Do a religious comparison study. Each will tell you (in their own philosophical way) what you must do to reach heaven or nirvana, or whatever their religion proclaims. The Christian message of the Good News is the only message that says you don't have to do anything, except put your trust and confidence in what His son already did. Once you do that, God's Spirit, the true baptism that you should be seeking, enters your life and He goes to work. This ministry's mission, my mission is to get the Good New rightly divided out there without the confusion, fear, and chaos that too many preachers bring to the message because of all the add-ons that they put in that requires your salvation to be validated in their eyes. That's bad news, we will concentrate on the good news, the good news of Jesus Christ and remembering what Christ did for us.

There are many things we can thank Christ for; the list is never ending. But right now, let's remember and rejoice and proclaim our thanksgiving that He has made us perfect in God's eyes. With that, thank you, Lord Jesus. We take these elements remembering what you have done for us. I pray this message and all the messages in the *Change of Mind* series don't slip from your memory banks, and you remember who provided you the free gift of grace, that which brings peace. For that we are thankful and rejoiceful; we know who to keep our focus on and that is Jesus, the Son of God. Thank you, Jesus for making us perfect in our Father's eyes. Take the elements.

We Cannot Be Condemned

Open your Bible to Romans 8:1.

This is the fourth and last message in this part of the *Change of Mind* series on how God sees us, how God sees me and how God sees you. These messages have been for individuals who have put their life in Jesus' hands, individuals who trust in His redemption plan. And as I said, in previous messages, the Scripture is full of promises on how God perceives us through Christ. I'm only giving you just some, but there are many.

Now we've covered three of the categories on how God sees you and me: One - *We Are His Children Forever*. That is a promise if we put our lives in Jesus' hands. Two - *He No Longer Counts Our Sins Against Us*. Three - *We Are Made Perfect in His Sight*. In this message, I will cover Four and Five together. Four - *We Cannot Be Condemned* for any reason if we are in Christ Jesus. And number Five - when we are standing before God, *We Shall Be Like Him*. Wow, think about that! You probably have never thought about that. Well, after this message, hopefully you will think about it more often. There are a lot of wonderful promises in God's word.

I've been to Romans 8 so many times you should have it memorized by now, ***“There is therefore now no condemnation”***—I repeat, none whatsoever—***“to them which are in Christ Jesus,”*** those who have put their trust and confidence, who have faith on a daily basis in Christ Jesus and knows for a fact, without any doubt, what His rescue plan has done for them in their lives. “Who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit” was added here by the translators. I've explained this in previous teaching.

Now what is this verse saying? It's another wonderful promise. Because of what Christ did for us, we can no longer be condemned for any reason whatsoever. See, when Christ came 2000 years ago, he didn't come to condemn the world as some might think; He came to save the world — not to condemn it, but to save it.

John 3:17 reminds us that, ***“For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.”***

Think about it. I've come across some Christians in my lifetime whose mission is just to condemn the world. I can see where the world is heading, and there is plenty of Scripture that warns us what it looks like, but I'm not in the business to condemn the world as some do. That is God's problem. My mission is to come and preach and rightly divide the word and provide the Good News of who can save them from the miserable path and existence they are on, if they are not in Christ Jesus. It doesn't read God sent His son into the world to condemn it, but that it might be saved. Oh, there is judgment coming but that is reserved for the end, not the period we are still living in.

John Chapter 3 is not the only place that says that. John 5:24 reads, ***“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth [pisteuo] on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.”*** That is a promise.

When you look at these two Scriptures, John 3:17 and John 5:24, side-by-side, they require nothing of you; those Scriptures require nothing of me, and those Scriptures require nothing of the rest of this world except to *pisteuo* - to believe, have trust and confidence that when Jesus walked that pathway to the cross, He went for us. He went for me and He went for you. Everything - no exceptions - everything was settled for us at that precious moment that we each believed what He did was for our benefit because God so loved the world, He sent His only begotten son.

God has given man chance after chance - so many chances it would be interesting to calculate throughout the Scripture, New and Old, especially the Old, how many chances He's given mankind. Look at the children of Israel after they left Egypt; it didn't take very long for them to start worshipping false idols and false gods. Then calamity would come, they would ask God for forgiveness and move on for a few short years, then go right back doing the same thing. Repeatedly they kept falling for the moon god worship, false idol nonsense. But God kept giving them chance after chance, and when He sent His only begotten Son, as was promised, He sent the last sacrifice and the most perfect sacrifice to give us all that second chance.

You may be asking, "Well, I fail, I slip."

You know what? So do I and so does the rest of the world. There are plenty of Christians daily (whether they want to admit it or not) who don't have a stellar day every day, day in and day out. Everything was settled for us the moment we came to the point where we had trust and confidence in what Christ did for us. And when we move forward, from that day on (whenever that day was for you), there is now therefore no more condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus. You cannot be condemned for any reason whatsoever. "Well, I sin." Christ already paid the price for that. There is something about sin, which I will get to in the future, that Christ deals with, but many of you don't realize how He is dealing with it in His own way. That is a study for a future *Change of Mind* series message. He will deal with you. He is a loving Father and a loving Father trains his children. But the thing is, stop living in this condemnation frame of mind. I don't care if it is preachers, family members, or your own self that puts you there. Get over it! Stop diminishing the promises of God that His son paid the price for. By diminishing the promises of God, you are diminishing what He did for you in sending His only begotten son...and you know what His son did. So, stop diminishing what They did because of your hang-ups, mostly brought on by bad teaching or no teaching at all; or if you just concluded that you are a lost soul and there is no salvation for you for whatever reason.

Now that was number Four. Let's go to number Five: when you stand before God, you will be as perfect as He is. Go to 1 John 3.

Recognizing that you are a child of God, you can look at this verse from a different perspective because it fits the promise that I just gave you: when you stand before Him you will be as perfect as He is.

1 John 3:1 says, "***Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.***" We are in good company. "***Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we***

shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.”

Another translation reads, “But we know that when Christ appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.” (NIV)

At that moment — and I probably should be referring to the rapture here — we will be instantaneously changed from mortal to immortal. And if it is a rapture experience being talked about here, that means it would apply to body and spirit, not just body. So, with the instantaneous change from mortal to immortal, in what we now by faith hope, we will become in fact.

I Cor. 15:51 reads, ***“Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.”***

Any physical imperfection, gone. Any emotional imperfection, gone. Any mental imperfection, gone. All these imperfections and anything else you can think of, gone, and not just gone — gone forever. Even the desire to sin, gone. Let’s just keep going. All guilt, gone. All shame, gone. All disappointments, gone. What a day that will be. What does that mean? Our incorruptible selves will be in perfect alignment with God. We will be in perfect harmony with God and with Christ Jesus. This curse that gives us all the inabilities that we’ve been under because of Adam’s sin, that we labor through all our lives in the here and now, will be lifted. There will be no dark cloud. Though we shouldn’t be living that way now because we are a new creature in Christ Jesus, we have our doubts. We have our disappointments. We have our sadness. We have our trials and tribulations. All those things will be in the past. We have a bright future ahead. We have a limitless future ahead. All those things will be gone, gone, gone, as I said. And gone forever. I don’t care what kind of sinner you think you are in the here and now. I don’t care how many times you have stumbled. I don’t care how many times you have fallen. I don’t care even about the disapproving individuals in your life and how they look upon you and what they think. Even all those thoughts and experiences will be gone and when we stand in front of our Creator, all earthly self will disappear. What these Scriptures are saying, if you think about it (and you need to remind yourself of this), is when all those things are gone, gone, gone, we will finally be a perfect example of ourselves and what He originally created us to be. And part of that, if not all of it, is how we are fit at that time to dwell in His presence forever and do whatever He has designed for us in the future.

So, what does all this mean? All these different things that I have mentioned, none of them come to us as a result of our behavior. As I pointed out, as soon as we believe, as soon as we put our trust and confidence in Christ Jesus, it was accomplished in our lives as a free gift of God’s grace. That is Ephesians.

Eph. 2:8 says, ***“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast.”***

I don't know why God chose to make this act of His grace (really so opposite to His requirements that people had to labor through in the Law of the OT), but I thank God He changed that by showing up 2000 years ago and redirected from that point on what needed to be understood, and who we needed to put our trust and confidence in. I think part of it is answered in verse 7 in the same chapter, ***“That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.”***

That is the only explanation He gave: that through us, He wanted to demonstrate the incomparable riches of His grace and still in the ages to come. Think about that...why? We've been changed. Why does he have to demonstrate it? What lies ahead? What does God have planned in the future? Now, my mind can go a mile a minute and I could come up with theories, but I am not going to get into speculation. We will see as time marches on.

I hope, that through this really brief study on how God sees us, that I have given you some insight of what Scripture has identified, so we can dig in and see for ourselves what God has promised to us and how He perceives and sees us.

I'll repeat them again. What goes along with the wonderful grace God gave us is the promises that came with it:

- We are His children forever.
- He no longer counts our sins against us.
- We are made perfect in His sight.
- We cannot be condemned for any reason if we are in Christ Jesus.
- When we stand before God, we will be like Him, incorruptible and without sin.

All those things I mentioned are gone, gone, gone. That is something to be rejoicing over, to be thankful over daily. When you go to the table of the Lord, you can drive these promises home that God has given us (in your own mind or verbally), of how our relationship has changed with Him because of what His precious son did for us. Thank you, Jesus. You can't say it enough. You can't thank Him enough. You can't honor Him enough. You can't adore Him enough concerning what He has done for us. Be faithful to Him. Follow Him. Pursue Him. Seek Him. Search Him out. Ask Him to keep His Spirit in you that He has planted, growing and striving to be, the man, woman, or child you were destined to be in the here and now and in the forever of ages to come.

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Please email us at email@teachingfaith.com if this has encouraged and strengthened your faith.

In 2 Corinthians 9:7 it reads, “God loveth a cheerful giver.” The Greek word for cheerful is Hilaros which means when someone is prompt to do something, they are ready in mind, with a joyful heart. In the Septuagint it also means to cause to shine. Today I am looking for Hilaros Givers who are ready and full of joy for the opportunity to cause others to shine by hearing, learning, and growing in God's Word.

Join with us today and participate as a Hilaros Giver. If you wish to participate use the following link: <http://www.teachingfaith.com/giving>

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