

# (Revelations of the Gospel) 3. a Revelation of My Responsibility and God's Grace

by Jason Robinson

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*The sermon explores the essential ingredients of the Gospel, emphasizing man's responsibility to respond to God's grace and the need for true repentance.*

**Duration:** 1:10:32

**Scripture:** Deuteronomy 30:19, Jeremiah 6:16, Luke 13:34, Romans 5:2, Romans 11:6, 1 Corinthians 15:10, 2 Corinthians 6:1, Titus 2:12, Hebrews 4:16, Revelation 22:17

**Topics:** "Grace and Responsibility", "The True Gospel"

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## Description

Jason Robinson emphasizes the importance of understanding the complete Gospel amidst the confusion of various interpretations in a post-Christian society. He outlines sixteen essential revelations that form the foundation of the true Gospel, including the responsibility of man to respond to God's grace and the necessity of repentance and faith. Robinson stresses that while God's grace is freely given, individuals must actively choose to accept it and live in accordance with it, highlighting the balance between divine grace and human responsibility. He warns against the dangers of a diluted Gospel that neglects these critical elements, urging believers to seek a genuine relationship with Christ that transforms their lives.

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## Transcript

Yeah, you know, we've been speaking this weekend about the Gospel and we've talked a lot about how being in the last days and being in a post-Christian nation, the enemy has taken the good news of the Gospel and he's made other Gospels. And these other Gospels have ingredients to the real Gospel, but they're not complete. We talked about the concept of a recipe and if I had my grandma's recipe or famous cake and I didn't like some aspects of the recipe so I changed them and added parts and took out parts, then whatever cake I would make would be different than my grandma's cake.

And it's the same thing with the Gospel. When we look at what's happening in this country with churches and with millions and millions of people that profess to know Jesus, we see various different groups saying all kinds of different things and saying, well, this is the Gospel, and another group saying this is the Gospel. And we've been talking about the need to, with an honest and humble heart, go back to the Scriptures and see what God has said in His Word in regards to this and we went through what we've been calling revelations.

Sixteen different ingredients that make up the complete Gospel. Each one of these ingredients must be a revelation that God gives to us, not just some intellectual understanding that we get from reading something in the Bible, but something that God, through His Spirit, makes alive to us and reveals it supernaturally. And just to recap, we talked about, number one, a revelation of your unholy, vile condition before a holy, pure Creator.

And number two, a revelation of your unbroken will that the root of all sin is self-will. Every time we sin, ultimately, the root of all our sin is me doing my will. And number three, we talked about a revelation of the fear of God, that the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom and that the everlasting Gospel is fear God.

And we've talked about how that's been taken out of the Gospel a lot in many places. Number four, we talked about a revelation of the reality of death and the coming judgment. And we talked about how these are kind of progressing.

I see how ungodly I am. I see God's law, and I see how much I've fallen from it. And then I see that the root of all my sin is me doing my will.

And then I see a fear of God. I see how powerful God is. He's able to cast me into hell.

And I fear Him. And then I have this understanding, this revelation that someday I'm going to die and I'm going to stand before Him and have to give an account of my life to Him. And it's progressing.

And then we talked about number five, a revelation that Jesus is the only Savior. He's the only way to heaven. Number six, how the means of God being willing to impart forgiveness to me, the means that comes through Jesus, dying on the cross, the death, burial, and resurrection.

Number seven, the burial. Number eight, the resurrection. And then we talked about once I've seen all this and once I've seen the solution is Jesus, it's the death, burial, and resurrection, then what's my response to be? And then we talked about the revelation of repentance and how this repentance is lacking so much in the message of the Gospel, the need for me to turn from myself as the center of life and turn to Jesus Christ.

And number 10, we talked about the revelation of the need to forsake all and how that's an incredibly lacking ingredient that has almost completely been taken out of all Gospel tracts, almost all preaching of the Gospel in many realms. The message of forsake all, leave everything, be willing to hate mother, father, wife, children, sell all that you have, cut your umbilical cord. This great fear of God comes over me and I see how this world is vain and it has nothing to offer and that umbilical cord has been giving me a false life.

And I cut that off and I turn to Christ and say you're the only one that I want to get sustenance from and life from. And we talked about the last point was a revelation of what it means to be a kingdom Christian and we studied what a kingdom is and that Jesus is setting up a kingdom and this kingdom here is in total contrast to his kingdom and that the message of the Gospel that they actually preached the kingdom of God, it was an intricate part of their presentation of the Gospel, that the message of the Gospel was to turn from this kingdom and be a citizen of that kingdom and we looked at what that all entailed. So tonight we're going to go through just three and it should be shorter than this afternoon.

So let's look at number 12. Number 12 is a revelation of the responsibility of man. A revelation of the responsibility of man and once we've went through this progression that I just spoke about, then we see

the need for us to respond to God and it's very important to note that the creator of this universe has given each one of us a free will and he's made us in such a way where we have the power to choose and the reason he's made us this way is he doesn't desire a bunch of robots in his kingdom just worshipping him.

He wants people that have chosen to be there because they love him and it's in the same way with marriage. You wouldn't want to be married to someone that was forced to be married to you. It wouldn't be love and God's the same way.

He's preparing a kingdom for them that love him and love is a choice that you have to make and you can choose not to love him or you can choose to love him and this is an important aspect of the gospel that we see and that when we're presenting it, we present it to people that man has a responsibility. God has provided the means, but he offers it as a gift and we have to respond and we see this all over the scripture. Let's turn to Jeremiah chapter 6. We sang this song Friday night, but let's just look at some of these verses.

Jeremiah chapter 6 and verse 16. Thus sayeth the Lord, stand ye in the ways and see and ask for the old paths. Where is the good way? And walk therein and you shall find rest to your soul.

There's a lot of new paths today. There's a lot of churches that are coming up with fads and psychology and different ideas of how to reach people and he's saying, no, let's go back to the old paths and that's how we're going to find rest for our souls. But look what it says, but they said we will not walk therein.

See, it's a choice. Verse 17. Also, I set watchmen over you saying, hearken to the sound of the trumpet, but they said we will not hearken.

Again, it's a choice. Therefore, hear you nations and know, O congregation, what is among them. Hear, O earth, behold, I will bring evil upon this people, even the fruit of their thoughts, because they have not hearkened unto my words nor to my law, but rejected it.

See, we have a choice. We can listen to what God is saying. You know, the most repeated verse in the entire Bible that I've found is this, he that has ears to hear, let him hear.

I think it's something like 16 times in the Bible and it's all over. He that has ears to hear, let him hear. And later on in this chapter, it says, behold, their ear is uncircumcised.

So people make a choice to not listen to what God is saying. And that is an intricate part of the gospel, that man's responsibility to respond to God once he has seen all of these things that we've been speaking about. See, man is stubborn and man just refuses to respond to God.

And God keeps reaching out, keeps reaching out, and man keeps refusing. Let's look at Deuteronomy 30. And notice that God is reaching out to man not because he's some jerk and he's trying to get man to be miserable.

He's reaching out in love. He's saying, I want to help you. I want to have a relationship with you.

I want you to know me. I'm the one that made you. I know what will give you life.

I know what will give you peace. I know what will give you rest. And he's reaching out.

I remember one time there was a thunderstorm and some stray cat had gotten stuck under my porch. And I remember I was reaching for this cat to try to help it. It was like, meow, you know, really loud and just real late at night.

And I'm reaching for this cat, trying to grab it to help it. And it's like, you know, a coward in the corner, you know, just leave me alone. And I'm like, no, I'm trying to help you.

And that's the way the Lord is. He's trying to help us, but we're just stubborn and we won't submit to him. And Deuteronomy chapter 30 here, verse 19, he says, I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing.

Therefore, choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live. God sets before us life and death, and it's a choice, you know. And there's many Christians that say, well, it's not a choice.

You know, God has predestined some to heaven and some to hell, and they don't even have a choice. And sincere good people have, you know, kind of capitulated to that doctrine in an attempt to get away from people that are preaching works righteousness. But as we look at the scripture, there is a very important ingredient in this gospel, and that is the responsibility of man.

We cannot throw that ingredient out. Look at Isaiah chapter 30. And I mean, just for sake of time, I'm just going over a few of these.

But there are dozens and dozens all over the Bible, and there are different concepts behind each. There are so many different concepts that insinuate choice when you think about obedience versus disobedience. You think about belief and love.

All these different concepts insinuate someone making a choice, someone responding. And Isaiah chapter 30, verse 15, he says, This is what the Sovereign Lord, the Holy One of Israel says, In repentance and rest is your salvation, in quietness and trust is your strength, but you would have none of it. So, so many books out there, so many psychologists and psychiatrists and so many different seminars and Opa Winfrey and Dr. Phil and all this billions of dollars industry every year of people trying to get peace, trying to get rest, taking sleeping pills and all kinds of depression pills and this massive thrust that is trying to fill the need of millions and millions of people that ultimately don't have rest, they don't have peace.

And amongst all of the books and seminars and people that teach and stuff, there's this verse. It's like this little gold nugget hid. And here's the secret to life.

Do you want to have rest? Do you want to have peace? What is it in? What's the secret? It says, In repentance and rest is your salvation, in quietness and trust is your strength. But notice the last part of the verse and that's what I want to focus on. But you would have none of it.

See, it's a choice. God's offering it. He's saying, You can have peace.

You can have rest. Just repent. And they're saying, We don't want it.

And it's all over. Let's look at Luke chapter 13. Jesus presented the gospel in such a way that he forced people to make a choice either to accept or reject what he was saying.

Luke chapter 13 verse 34. He's just crying. He's crying out in compassion.

Oh, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which kills the prophets and stones them which are sent unto you. How often would I have gathered thy children together as a hen does gather her chickens under her wings, but you would not. I wanted to help you, but you would not.

It's a choice. And I'll just read this first for sake of time. Revelation 22 verse 17.

And the spirit and the bride say come and let him that is that hears come and let him that is a thirst come and whosoever will let him take of the water of life freely. So it's the message of the gospel is offered to all. Christ died for all men.

God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. He's offering it. He's saying come come and people are saying no and it's a choice and man is responsible if they reject that free gift.

They're responsible thereafter. In fact, when you look at the book of Acts when Paul would present the gospel at the end, a lot of times he would say see that my hands are clean of your blood because he believed that he had, you know, the blood of innocent people on him and by preaching the gospel, he had thus given them a chance to repent and if they rejected it, then their blood was on their own hands and not his. So we have to present the gospel like this and I want to make it clear.

I'm not talking about decisionism. Some people say well, what's decisionism? Decisionism is, you know, a lot of churches will kind of try to pressure you into saying a prayer and you know, if you died today, would you go to heaven? You need to get saved today and you need to say this prayer and come down to the altar and get saved. That's not what I'm speaking about and we looked at that this afternoon.

It's a counting of the cost. It's seeing this world and seeing his kingdom and in me counting the cost, do I really want to die to self? Do I want to take up my cross and follow him? So it's not just a one-time decision. That's not what I'm speaking about but I am speaking about this reality that I do have to respond to this God that's out there, this creator and you know, I want to say that just to make sure that people understand the balance because there are two extremes in the gospel.

There's this extreme of man's response or you could say man's responsibility and then there's this other extreme of God's grace and oftentimes what happens in this area of the gospel is people either cling to one side or the other and they try to reconcile them and they can't reconcile them and they try to balance them out and they can't balance them out so they just say, well, it's all God's grace. I didn't have anything to do with it and then other people say, no, it's man's choice and they kind of gravitate towards a works righteousness and if you look at the scripture, you just have to, when you get to a verse that talks about God's grace, you believe it. When you get to a verse that talks about man's responsibility, you believe it and you don't have to reconcile them together.

I mean, the Bible is God's word to us. It's not a math book. It's not 1 plus 1 equals 2, 2 plus 2 equals 4, 4 plus 4 equals 5. It's not something that we have to reconcile.

We just believe it. That's what it says and I believe it. If it said that Jonah swallowed a whale, I don't have to try to understand that.

I can just believe it. I just believe what it says and when you see some of these verses about grace, they're true and I believe them and you see some of these other verses about man's responsibility, they're just as true. So, we hold both extremes at the same time simultaneously.

We hold them both. I believe them both and that way, I haven't disregarded an ingredient. You see, a lot of people, they have taken one of the ingredients out because they can't reconcile it and thus they've perverted the gospel of Christ.

So, there is a responsibility of man and I want to just go through some scriptures here and just show you them. Let's look at Luke chapter 9. We looked at this on Friday night but it's good to look at again. This is how Jesus preached the gospel.

Luke chapter 9 verse 23. Then he said unto them all, If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself, take up his cross daily and follow me. That's how Jesus presented the gospel.

Notice he didn't come to people and say, Do you realize you're a sinner? Yeah. Do you realize you've broken the law? Yeah. Say this prayer.

He didn't present it like that. He's coming. He's saying if you want to follow me, it's daily taking your cross and following me and the reason of showing that verse is it's a verse that shows it's a responsibility.

We have to make that choice. Jesus is like that light. He's saying follow me, take up your cross, which is a picture of death to my own desires, my self-will.

So, he presents the gospel to me. If you want to follow me, take up your cross daily and I have to choose. Do I want to do that or do I want to continue to live for self? Let's look at this verse in 2 Corinthians.

This is another verse that kind of shows the responsibility of man. 2 Corinthians 5:8 We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord. Wherefore, we labor that whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him.

For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ and everyone will receive the things done in his body according that he has done, whether it be good or bad, knowing therefore the terror of the Lord. We persuade men, but we are made manifest unto God, and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences. But notice in verse 9, he says, Wherefore, we labor that whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him.

See, that's man's responsibility. And he's not laboring to pay for his own sins or to atone his own sins. Salvation is not by works.

But he's going through here and he's seeing, have I repented? Am I yielded to this creator? Or have I kicked him off of the throne in my heart and have I sat back on? Am I doing my own thing? Yeah, maybe five years ago, I repented and he got on the throne, but now I'm just kind of sitting back on the throne, living life, doing what I want to do. And it's a constant examining of yourselves. Work out your salvation with fear and trembling.

And as we said last night, when is the last time you actually were trembling before a holy God? Some people say, well, when I got saved, you know, 20 years ago I did. But Paul's writing that to Christians. He's saying, Christians, work out your salvation with fear and trembling because deception is everywhere.

The devil is trying to deceive me. False prophets are trying to deceive me. My own flesh is trying to deceive me.

There's so many voices out there trying to deceive me. And there's the possibility that I could be deceived. So I'm laboring like he's saying here, Lord, I want to know you.

I don't want to be deceived in any area of my life. I don't want to be unchrist-like in any area of my life. Father, I want to know you.

And he's laboring. Why? Look at the rest of the verse. That we may be accepted of him.

What do you mean accepted of him, Paul? I thought you were saved 20 years earlier. What do you mean you're laboring to be accepted? And that's what's wrong with this sign-sealed and delivered message of the gospel in America. You get saved and it's a one-time transaction and it can never be reversed.

You're going to heaven no matter what. And try to explain that to Paul. Because after salvation, he's laboring.

He's saying, I'm going to stand before God someday and I want to be sure that I know him. I don't want to be like those people at the end of Matthew that he says, I never knew you. Or the bride, you know, the five virgins.

He's laboring to be accepted. And then notice in verse 11, he says, knowing the terror of the Lord, we persuade men. So he's not only re-examining and making sure that he knows the Father, but he's going out and he's persuading other people.

Listen, there is a terror of the Lord and he's trying to persuade other people. Make sure you know Jesus, the real Jesus. Make sure that you haven't stepped back onto the throne and kicked him off the throne.

Make sure that you're repentant before him and not living in an unyielded state. So this is a responsibility that a sovereign God, in his sovereignty, has delegated to us because he wants to prepare a place for those that love him. Look at Revelation chapter 16.

Revelation chapter 16 verse 15. This is another verse that speaks of the responsibility of man. Behold, I come like a thief.

Blessed is he who stays awake and keeps his clothes with him so that he may not be naked and be shamefully exposed. Whose responsibility is it for me to stay awake spiritually? It's my responsibility. And as we look around in Christianity, I'm sure everyone here knows people that four or five years ago or ten years ago were passionately in love with Jesus and they've just kind of fallen asleep.

You know how when you're reading at night, it's late at night, and you just start to fall asleep and you're sitting there reading and all of a sudden you fall asleep and then you wake up and you're like, huh, five minutes went by. And then you start to read again and then you fall asleep. Ten minutes went by and you're like, okay, I need to go lay down in bed.

That's what's happening all around us. It's happened to me so many times in my life. I've fallen asleep spiritually and three months goes by and I'm like, whoa, what happened? I've been sleeping for three months.

And Jesus is saying, listen, he's saying, watch, stay awake. And look at the rest of the verse. Keep your clothes white or keep your clothes on.

This garment, it talks about in Jude, people's garments have been defiled that this righteousness of Christ that he's clothed us with, we've defiled it. We've fallen asleep and we've defiled that pure white garment with the sins of this nation. And he's saying, stay awake.

And that's man's responsibility. And look at the last part of the verse. So that you may not go naked and be shamefully exposed.

What is that? Anybody have a King James? Anybody here have a King James? Yeah, could you read the last part of that verse out of the King James? Yeah, okay. Yeah, yeah. So, I mean, some people that were in Jesus Christ that were legitimately born again, they knew him, they walked with him, they fell asleep.

In the day of judgment, they're going to be naked. They're not going to be clothed in the righteousness of Christ. Let's look at just a couple other verses here for sake of time.

Colossians chapter 3. I'll just read it for sake of time. It says, Mortify therefore the members of your body. Mortify the members of your body.

Whose responsibility is it for me to mortify the members of my body? Jesus says, if you look at a woman with the intent of lusting after her, you've committed adultery. He says, if your eye is causing you to sin, pluck it out. If your hand is causing you to sin sexually, cut it off.

This mortifying of the flesh, we see our sinful nature and we hate it so much that he's saying that there's such a hatred for sin that we need to put the death, the deeds of the flesh. And God's not going to do that for me automatically. It's my responsibility.

And we'll see later on that I can only do it through his grace. But it is important to hold both of these extremes. Simultaneously.

So let's look here at just a couple more points on this and then we'll move on. I want to make sure that people understand that I'm not talking about work salvation. I'm not talking about this isn't something that you can do in of yourself.

The whole purpose of the law was given to show self-righteous man that he cannot keep the law. When you read the Sermon on the Mount, the Sermon on the Mount is kind of the cornerstone of Jesus' teachings. The conclusion that you must come to when you read the Sermon on the Mount is that this is impossible.

I can't live this way. It's totally impossible. And what it does is it drives you.

It drives you to Jesus. You're driven to Jesus saying, Lord, I see what you're wanting me to live like in the law, in the Sermon on the Mount, and I can't do it. And that's where the next step comes in.

That's where faith comes in. Let's look at that. Number 12 is a revelation of the need for faith.

Number 12 is a revelation of the need for faith. Let's look at Galatians 3. So as we see this progression, we see our need for Him, we see the means of salvation, we see that we must respond. And then what is our response? It's repentance, and then the next element is faith.

And it's important to rightly define faith. When I speak about faith, I'm not speaking about believing there is a God. You know, we all know the verse in James, the devil believes there's a God, and he even trembles,

but he won't obey Him.

When I speak about faith, I'm speaking about total dependence, helpless dependence upon God. You know, I'm sitting on this chair here. I would not be sitting on this chair if I didn't trust that it would hold me up.

I'm depending completely on this chair to hold me up. When I get in a car, I'm depending on the brakes in that car to work. And when someone sees all of these points that we've been seeing, they have a fear of God and a reality of death, and they're going to stand before God, and they see their need to respond to God, and they see how holy God is.

The faith that the Scripture is speaking of is a dependence. They go to Him and they say, Lord, I can't do this. I see that this is what You require, and I can't do it, so I'm trusting that You're going to do it.

I'm putting my trust in You to do it. And that's what the word faith means. And that is what makes someone righteous.

This verse here in Galatians 3, verse 8, it says, And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, And thee shall all the nations be blessed. So how are the heathen or lost souls going to be justified? Through faith. So it's extremely important that as we emphasize the responsibility of man, that we also emphasize it's through faith.

It's only through faith in Jesus Christ. That is how a man is justified. Look at Romans chapter 3. Romans chapter 3, verse 22.

It says, Even the righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all that believe. So the righteousness of God is by faith in Jesus Christ. So I see I'm a sinner.

I see that I'm condemned to eternal separation from God. I see Jesus is the only way. I see the means of salvation, the death, burial and resurrection.

And I repent of my sins. I come to him. And I say, I need you to save me.

And that is what makes me righteous. Look down at verse 28. It says, Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.

So it's not by my performance. It's not by some religious activities that I'm doing. I'm going to mosque.

I'm going to temple. I'm praying. It's by faith that I'm justified before God.

And we don't ever want to get away with that. But unfortunately, a lot of people have taken this legitimate message of justification by faith and they've used it as a way of justifying a self-willed life. And so there's millions of people in this country that say, I believe in Jesus.

And you go out and you talk to people about Jesus and you say, Do you know Jesus? Oh yeah. I got saved when I was in youth group. I was 13 years old at a camp.

A guy preached a gospel. I got saved. I'm going to heaven.

And yet their lives are summarized by either total gross sin or just outright selfishness and self-centeredness. No passion for Jesus. No love for his people.

No holiness. Just I'm going to do what I want to do. And when you challenge people, Hey, this isn't biblical Christianity.

This isn't what Jesus is talking about. And you're in danger of being judged by God. They'll say, Hey, I'm not going to be judged by God.

I believed in Jesus. And I believe in Jesus. And that's what makes me righteous.

And some people will go so far in churches as to say, God cannot see my sin. Because I'm saved, because I believe in Jesus, I can sin all I want and God can't even see it. He's not even able to see it.

And that verse in Revelation we saw, he said, You'll be naked. So, I mean, God will be able to see your sin if you fall asleep. But they've taken this legitimate ingredient of justification by faith and they've used it as a way of justifying a sinful life.

And so that's why some people have taken this aspect of faith and they've swung over here to works. And they said, Well, that's a bunch of garbage, so it must be by works. So we have to hold both of these at the same time and not take one or the other out.

This is the paradox of the gospel. It's a paradox. We don't have to understand it, we just believe it.

I mean, I am justified completely by faith in Jesus Christ. Okay? But that faith also has a responsibility and that's for me to love him and to follow him and to obey him. Let's look at another verse, Hebrews chapter 5. Hebrews chapter 5, verse 9. And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all that obey him.

Notice it doesn't say unto all that believe in him or trust in him. It says all that obey him. So you see the paradox.

It's not a contradiction. I'm justified by faith, but salvation is only for who? Those that obey him. They're both true.

I believe them both. And that's the gospel. Faith in Jesus Christ justifies, but man is also responsible.

And here's the thing. How can I obey a holy God? I can't. I cannot do it.

And that brings me to my next ingredients, if you will, the next revelation, number 14. A revelation of the need for grace. So I need the blood, I need the death, burial, and resurrection.

I repent. I forsake all. I turn to Christ, and in faith I cry out to him and say I can't obey you.

I can't. I have addictions. I have lust.

I'm defeated by sin. And I come to him, and I cry out. And what I'm crying out for is his grace.

And this is what must be emphasized when we're preaching the gospel, and even after. This must be emphasized to people that have been Christians for 50 years. You know, there was a book written hundreds of years ago called The Imitation of Christ by Thomas Akempis, who was a Catholic.

And it's a famous book, and a lot of people like it. Oh, it's such a good book. We need to imitate Christ.

But it's really important to note that no matter how much you try, you cannot imitate Jesus Christ. I could try to imitate an airplane. I really want to be like an airplane.

I want to be able to fly. But no matter how hard I try, I'm never going to be able to fly. I may like dolphins and want to be able to swim under the water like a dolphin and come out really powerful out of the water.

But no matter how much I try to swim like a dolphin, I can't because my nature is different than that of a dolphin. And it's the same thing spiritually. I may really want to be like Jesus, is different than that of Jesus.

And you look at some really sincere Roman Catholics hundreds of years back, and even about a year ago, some writings from Mother Teresa came out where she was very doubtful of all kinds of things. It was very revealing writings about Mother Teresa where she got to the point where she was doubting some very, very important things. Because a lot of people, they read the Bible, they see these truths, and they try to live like it.

And they may have way more character than someone like me, and they may try successfully for many years, but they ultimately fail because they miss the important truth that it's not by my character or my trying to imitate Jesus, it's by His grace. That's the only way that I'm going to imitate Jesus. His grace comes into me, and it changes me, and it makes me like Him.

There's a verse that says, in Philippians, it is God that works in you to will and to do His good pleasure. Now, it doesn't say He works in you the willing and the doing. Okay? That's how a lot of people read that verse.

But it says He works in you to will and to do. And so it's really important that we understand this word grace. A lot of people think that the word grace means mercy.

And you'll hear someone say, you know, hey, have some grace on me, or give me some grace, or your credit card company, your payments are late, they have a grace period. And sometimes it does mean mercy, but in the New Testament, it says Jesus Christ came. Moses brought the law.

Jesus Christ brought grace and truth. So what does this word grace mean? And I'd like to define it this way. The definition, as you look at the word in the Greek, and you study it throughout the New Testament, the definition of the word grace is God supernaturally giving me the ability to do His will.

And this is the fundamental difference between the Old Testament and the New Testament. And this is the fundamental difference between the New Testament and all the other religions of the world. All the religions, you know, speak of morality and character, but they don't empower you to do it.

Okay? But Jesus brought grace. He brought power. He's saying, this is the way I want you to live, and I don't want you to live this way because I'm some jerk that just wants to heap rules upon you.

This is where life is. This is where peace is. This is where death is.

This is where emptiness is. This is how I've created you to live. Okay? This is my word.

And if you put your trust in me and cry out to me for grace, I will supernaturally give you the ability to do my will. And so the word is power. It's almost like you could put the word power in there.

It's like the Energizer Bunny, you know, he's going around. He's got that battery in him. And if you took that battery out, he would not be able to do anything.

Without the grace of God, I would be given totally to my natural man. And my natural man might manifest himself different than yours. Some people are more prone to sexual sin.

Some people are more prone to self-righteousness. Some people are prone to love of money. Some people are prone to just zone out and just indulge in drugs.

People have an emptiness in their heart. They're trying to fill that emptiness with all different things. And it's ultimately just sin.

And at salvation, what we're getting is God coming inside of me, changing my nature, and now giving me power to obey him and to follow him. And this has to be emphasized in salvation. When we're telling someone the good news, this is the good news.

You can't obey God. You're a total loser. I'm a loser.

We're all sinners. We can't obey God. But God will come into you and change you, and he will give you power to do his will.

And this is why we have to preach it this way. Grace is not mercy. They're different things.

Look at Hebrews here. This verse kind of shows that they're two different things. Hebrews 4. Hebrews 4, verse 16.

It says, Let us then approach the throne of grace that we may find confidence and boldness and receive mercy and grace to help in time of need. So if grace and mercy were the same thing, he would be saying something redundantly, that we may receive mercy and mercy in our time of need. They're two different things.

We need mercy. We need tons of mercy because we're total losers and we're constantly disobeying God. But what's the point of a message of the gospel if all it is is mercy? And as Zach Poonen says, if they have an insane asylum somewhere, and one of the ways that they test people in this insane asylum to see if they're ready to get out is they put them in a room and all that's in that room is a faucet, and they'll turn that faucet on just a little bit to where it's trickling, and the water will come running down and get on the floor, and they'll put a mop in there with a bucket that you strain the mop in.

And if the person in that room just keeps mopping up the water and putting it in the bucket, then they know they're still crazy and they need to stay in the insane asylum. But if they turn the faucet off, then they realize that their sense is enough to leave. And see, the message a lot of times in Christianity is it's mercy, mercy.

We just need mercy. You need the blood, brother. That's what you need in all kinds of songs.

Praise God for the blood, and we need the blood. And that's great, and we need the blood, and we need mercy, and I'm not downplaying any of that, but if that's where the gospel stopped, it'd be pretty pitiful that I just am going to get saved, and then I'm just going to be the same person the rest of my life, defeated by lust, defeated by sin, defeated by greed, and just depression and loneliness, and my life is just going to stink, but I'm always going to be able to ask for forgiveness. That's not the message of the New

Testament.

The message of the New Testament is that God is going to come in me, and He's going to give me grace to obey Him, and that's biblical grace, and that's an element that's been taken out in many places of the gospel. Look at Romans 6. Romans 6, verse 14. He says, For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under the law, but under grace.

If I'm defeated by sin, that means that at that time, I had reverted back to the law, and I had gotten away from a moment-by-moment dependence upon Jesus for His grace. Grace is like an umbrella, and it's raining sin, and as long as I'm under that umbrella, I'm not being affected by it, but whenever I get outside of that umbrella, I'm getting nailed by sin. That's what grace is, and God wants to bring us to the point where we realize that we're absolutely nothing.

We can't do anything. The Bible says, Exhort one another daily, lest you be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. Daily.

So it says, lest you be hardened. That means within a 24-hour period, my heart today, I could be, yeah, I want to know Jesus. I could be totally passionate.

Within 24 hours from now, my heart could be hard, and I could be deceived by sin. 24 hours from now. Do you realize 24 hours from now, you could be indulging in some gross sin that you never thought you would ever indulge in.

24 hours from now, if you let your heart get hard. Just 24 hours from now. And that is why God is bringing us to this point where we say, God, I can't go another 60 seconds without you.

I'm totally undone. I need you, Jesus. I need your grace.

Give me power. You're driving down the road. You see a pretty girl at a gas station.

God, give me grace. I don't want to look. You're tempted to say something to somebody.

Please, God, give me grace. And you're just constantly crying out for grace. And that's the gospel.

It's not me gritting my teeth through self-effort, you know. Oh, I'm not going to sin. It's, God, I need grace here, Lord.

Give me grace. And then all of a sudden, hey, it's been two weeks since I did that sin. It's been six months.

Wow, it's been 14 years, you know. I think my greatest addiction was marijuana. I was totally addicted in high school.

And let's see. I'm so old now. It's been... Let's see, I can't remember because it was marijuana.

It's been 15 years, I think, 15 years since I smoked pot. 16 years since I smoked pot. And I was so addicted that there was no way in my mind I was ever going to be able to stop.

It was... You know that feeling when somebody puts you underwater, like you're in high school with your buddies and you're swimming and they dunk you and you're kind of laughing for the first couple of seconds. And then it's like, okay, dude, let me up, you know. And they're not letting you up and you're just like, ah, freaking out.

Like, I gotta go, you know. And then you finally get up and you're like punching them. Dude, you dunked me, you know.

That's how addicted I was to pot. If I didn't have it, I was going to freak out and die. And there was no way in my mind I was ever going to be able to stop.

And God's grace took that away from me. And almost as much as I was addicted to marijuana, I was addicted to lust growing up my whole life, being allowed to watch any kind of movie I wanted in the home that I was in, completely given to lust. And so many times God has taken me from one addiction to another and from one sin that I've struggled with and he's delivered me.

It's totally not me. I've not done anything but said, I can't do it. That's what I've done.

And in fact, that's what faith is. Faith is attempting to do something so impossible that unless God intervenes, you're bound to fail. So it's like me jumping off a cliff and saying, okay, God, well, there's a story about that, actually.

A man's hanging on a cliff and God says, here, give me your hand. I'll save you. And he's hanging on that cliff and he says, okay, God, save me.

And God says, no, no, no. You have to totally let go and then I'll grab you and save you. And see, that man has a dilemma.

With one hand, he can grab God, but if for some reason God lets go, he still has this other hand. But see, faith is total dependence on God. I'm depending on you totally to save me from this sin, God.

I'm depending totally on you to save me from your eternal judgment. And that's the message of grace. And I think if there is one verse that reconciles faith and man's responsibility together, it's this.

Look at Romans chapter 8. Romans chapter 8, verse 13. It says, For if you live after the flesh, you shall die. But if you, through the Spirit, do mortify the deeds of the body, you shall live.

So see how it has them both there. I have to mortify the deeds of the body. It's my responsibility.

But how am I able to do it? Anybody? By the Spirit. It's not by my own ability. By the Spirit.

So I see this sin in me. I see all the tendencies that I have, all the addictions that I have, and I come to the Father and I say, I want to change. Change me.

Like the song tonight. Change me. Rearrange me.

And I can't do it, Father. Give me your grace. Give me your Spirit.

And then through that, through that grace, through that Spirit, I'm able to obey Him. And it's just so important to realize this. This dependence upon God.

You know, Paul had this eye problem, and he would go blind periodically. And he said, I sought the Lord about it, and the Lord showed him that He allowed this messenger of Satan to come because Paul would be tempted to be proud because of all the things that he was going through and being used by God so much. And he says, Lord, take this away from me three different times.

And God says, My grace is what you need. My grace is sufficient for you. It's like a mountain.

And he's saying, Okay, Lord, there's this mountain. Please move this mountain. And God's saying, No, I'm not going to move the mountain.

I'll give you the ability to get over the mountain. And by getting over that mountain, you're going to grow in grace. So Paul has this sickness, and God says, I'm not going to take the sickness away.

What I'm going to do is I'm going to pour out grace in you. And through this trial, you're going to grow in grace. And you're going to have more power.

And that's what he's constantly bringing us to before salvation and even after. Constantly reminding us that without Him, we're nothing. We cannot do anything.

We need Him. And that's what pride is. Pride is the opposite of that.

A lot of people just think pride is somebody that's just got an arrogant attitude or they're stuck up or something. No, pride is someone that's just really busy, and they're just going throughout their day, and they're not constantly communing with God. I need you, Jesus.

I need you every hour. Please help me. Help me.

We were talking about this last night with work. Help me to be responsible. Help me in this, Lord, and help me with that.

Just in humility, constantly throwing ourselves on the Father for help in every single area of our life. Pride is the opposite of that. No, I can kind of just do things on my own.

And it says, God resists the proud, but He gives grace to the humble. So anytime that we fall into sin, anytime, that means we got out from underneath that umbrella of grace. And why did we get out from underneath it? Because at some point prior in the day, we had gotten in pride.

May not have even known it. We had gotten in pride. God resisted us.

We had gotten outside of that umbrella, and then we sinned. And then we were like, Man, I was having such a good day, and then I just totally sinned. What happened? And God says, Four hours ago, you had just started chugging along, going through the motions, and you broke fellowship with me.

And you just thought you could kind of do things on your own. And then we humble ourselves. We repent.

Okay, God. And we get back under grace, and wow, we have victory. And this is the battle that we're constantly going through.

And so what happens is the temptation comes, and it's this constant war all day long. The temptation comes. And what do we do? We can't overcome this temptation.

Let's look at this in Hebrews chapter 4, and we'll close with just a couple verses here. Hebrews 4, verse 16. Temptation comes to me.

I failed at this temptation 10,000 times. I'm going to fail again. What am I supposed to do? Hebrews 4, verse 16.

Let us come boldly under the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. God, the God of this universe, the almighty, all-powerful God of the vast galaxies, the one that's created everything, gives me permission to boldly come before his throne and ask for grace. That is the good news of the gospel right there.

You know, I can't just call up Bush or a month from now Obama, you know, hey, I need help. You know, I can't do that. But I can call up God anytime I want.

Please, I need your grace. And he's doing 10 million things, and he says, okay, what do you need, son? I need your grace. Okay.

And it says he will give it. I mean, isn't that awesome that I'm tempted to sin and I can go before God at that moment and he'll impart some grace to me. And anytime that we sin, that nobody has ever sinned under the grace of God.

For some reason we had gotten out from that umbrella, that battery was taken out and we sinned on our own. So the message of the gospel is to stay under grace, to not revert back to the law, to not revert to self-righteousness or independence, thinking that we can do it by ourselves, but to constantly be in the state of meeting Jesus Christ. And look at this, you know, in 1 Corinthians.

Paul understood this more than anybody else. 1 Corinthians chapter 15. You know, Paul was so evil before he came to Christ, he would come into meetings like this and arrest women and children, you know, and have them killed.

He had people killed. He had Stephen killed. You know, he had a pretty wicked past, not in a gross sin way as far as what we think of drunkenness or whatever, but he had people killed.

And then he says here in 1 Corinthians 15 verse 9, For I am least of the apostles, and I'm not even meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God, I am what I am. And by His grace, which was bestowed upon me, it was not in vain, but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God that was in me.

And see, this is that paradox again. Like Paul, he got saved and he just took off. You know, and he's kind of like trying to stir up the other apostles, you know.

And he's just, you know, Paul and Stephen, you see these guys come to Christ and they're just like, they're just flowing more than the other people, but yet it wasn't them. It was the grace of God. You see the paradox there.

And did Paul have anything to do with that? Or was Paul just a robot? You know, he had nothing to do with that. He's just totally flowing. He's got the anointing.

Well, he depended upon Christ for that grace. And then Christ gave that grace. So he labored more than they all, yet not him, but the grace of God.

And that is the point that God wants to bring all of us to is that we need his grace and we're only going to be able to do this through his grace. And notice something that he says in the middle of that verse there. He says, I am what I am and his grace, which was bestowed upon me, was not in vain.

This teaches us that God could give his grace to people in vain. And vain means, you know, suppose Alan pays me to paint this room and I paint the room and it was the wrong color. And he says, sorry, you got to paint the room all over again.

It's the wrong color. Well, that means all the time that I spent here, all the labor was in vain. I might as well never even have done it.

And that's what God gives his grace to some people in vain, meaning they end up in hell because it was bestowed upon them and they didn't stay dependent upon God. They departed from that. And that's what it says.

Look at chapter 6 of 2 Corinthians. 2 Corinthians 6, verse 1. It says, We then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that you receive not the grace of God in vain. So this word beseech, it's a passionate word.

And he's talking to believers. He's talking to a church. He's saying, I'm beseeching you.

Please don't receive this grace in vain. And as I said earlier, each one of us knows so many people that loved Jesus just a few years ago or maybe a few months ago and they've departed from that. And Paul's pleading, don't receive this power that God will give you to overcome sin.

Don't receive it in vain. Tap into it so that you can have victory over sin. Look at this interesting verse in Romans 5. Romans 5. And this verse shows how important this grace is.

Romans 5, verse 2, it says, By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand and rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. So grace is kind of like this light, the light that's being shown down here. And by faith, I have access to grace.

It's by faith. And if I quit putting my faith in that grace, then I no longer have access to it and then I'm kind of like a circle. I'm outside of that circle.

And so then I get defeated by sin. And then by faith, I get access to it and I get victory. And so the message of the gospel, as we're going to see tomorrow, it's a continuing in the grace of God.

Not by my own works. Romans 11 says, let's look at that real quick. Romans 11, verse 6. It says, And if by grace, then it's no more works.

Otherwise, grace is no more grace. But if it be by works, then it is no more grace. Otherwise, work is no more work.

You could actually paraphrase that verse because it's kind of like, huh, what's it saying? You could kind of paraphrase it like this. If salvation is by God giving you the power to do his will, then it is no more by you trying in your own power to do his will. But if salvation is by your ability to overcome sin, then it is no more by God giving you the power to do his will.

So it's kind of redundant, but he's saying salvation is not by your ability to overcome sin. It's by God giving you the power to overcome sin. And we can never get away from that.

But a lot of people have taken this awesome message of grace, this awesome message that it's by faith, it's by grace, and they've taken it and they have turned it into a way to live a lifestyle of sin. And they've

taken this message of grace and they've perverted it. I'll just read this verse for sake of time.

Very familiar verse. Titus 2, it says, For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world. Anybody that teaches the grace of God and however they're teaching it, if it doesn't bring people to live soberly, righteously, and godly, then it's not the true grace of God.

It's another grace. It's a grace that allows worldliness, unrighteousness, and godlessness. And unfortunately, there are a lot of people teaching a grace like that.

Look at this here in Hebrews 10. Very important verse. Hebrews 10, verse 29.

He says, Of how much more sore punishment, suppose you, that he shall be thought worthy who hath trodden underfoot the Son of God and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and he's done despite unto the Spirit of grace. Notice this person. They've trodden under the foot the Son of God and they have counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith they were sanctified.

He was sanctified. This person was set apart, holy. They've counted it an unholy thing and they've done despite the Spirit of grace.

So that Spirit was coming to them and saying, don't give in to the sin. I'll give you grace. I'll give you grace.

And they've said no. And they've said no, no, no. And they've gotten to the point where they've ultimately made a decision, I'm not going to listen to the Spirit of grace.

It's a progression. The Bible says, Grieve not the Spirit of God. Grieving, you know, like when my child obeys me, it makes me happy when they disobey me.

It kind of grieves me. And then the next part of that progression, it says, Quench not the Spirit. You think of when you're thirsty and you drink Gatorade and it quenches your thirst, that means your thirst is gone.

Some people grieve the Spirit, grieve the Spirit, grieve the Spirit, and it gets to the point where they quench the Spirit. That grace is gone and they find themselves completely given over to sin because there's no grace now to hold them back. And that's what it means here.

Look at a couple chapters after that, Hebrews 12. That's what it means when it talks about how the grace of God can be failed. We already saw how we can receive it in vain.

Hebrews 12, verse 15 says, Looking diligently, lest any man fail of the grace of God, lest any root of bitterness that is springing up trouble you and thereby many be defiled. God has given me this grace. It's a free gift.

It's accessed by repentance and faith. And I can walk in it for many years, but if I let bitterness and I let things defile me and I quit accessing that grace, it can actually be failed. Lest any man fail of the grace of God.

And last verse, we'll close. Jude chapter one. Jude chapter one, verse four.

Very, very important book in the last days to read is Jude. For there are certain men crept in unawares who were before ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness. Anybody have an NIV? What does the NIV say? Turning the grace of God into sensuality.

Sensual, fleshly. They've taken this beautiful concept of grace, which teaches us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts and live soberly and righteously in this present world. They've taken this teaching of grace and they've turned it into a way to justify a sensual lifestyle.

And sensual meaning I'm driven by my senses. Greed, money, sex. Just this last week, some famous pastor in Houston preached to his church, we're going to have couples in our church have sex for a week straight.

And people will be so happy and it'll bring a revival type thing. And you'll see how great your marriage is if you have sex for seven days straight. Having sex with your wife for seven days straight is not going to make your marriage better.

I mean, sex is a good thing and it's legitimate within the marriage bed, but my relationship with my wife is a lot more deep than her and I having sex for seven days straight. But see, the sensuality, all the emphasis on physical pleasure. And they've turned the grace of God into that.

And they thus have taken this ingredient out of the gospel and perverted it. So in closing, I just want to challenge you. Maybe you're here, you've been here this weekend, you've heard a lot of these different aspects of the gospel.

And maybe you realize, man, I have received a counterfeit gospel. The gospel that I received was nothing like this. I don't even know if I'm in Christ.

I don't know if I've truly forsaken all. I don't know if I've truly repented. I'm defeated by sin.

So I don't know if I'm walking in this type of a grace. You know, you're defeated, you're depressed, you're lonely. My encouragement is turn to Him and helplessly throw yourself on Him in prayer and just cry out to Him and say, I can't do it.

I'm trusting in you to give me the supernatural ability to be like Jesus. That's the gospel. And as we just spend some time here, maybe in some quiet reflection and prayer, just cry out to Him for that.

And maybe after a time of quietness, we'll close in this song.

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