

Authentically Casting Our Vision Upon Christ Through Grace

by Jeremy Strang

Our greatest problem is that God is just and holy, and we are guilty before Him, but we can be made right through faith in Jesus Christ.

Duration: 47:31

Scripture: Exodus 34:6, Matthew 6:33, Romans 3:23, 2 Timothy 3:16, Titus 2:11-14, Hebrews 2:1, 1 Peter 1:14

Topics: "Vision"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of not expecting any abatements in the preaching of the word of God. He highlights the idea that if God does not spare others, He will not spare us either. The preacher also discusses the concept of grace and how believers should continuously repent and strive to be right by the grace of Christ. He encourages the audience to examine themselves and respond to the conviction of God by becoming doers of the word. The sermon concludes by emphasizing the need to understand and appreciate the unfathomable nature of grace, and how it is manifested through Jesus' birth, sinless life, death, burial, and resurrection.

Transcript

What is your greatest problem? What is the problem? What is that which you cannot fix or solve? What is your greatest problem? Now, go to Exodus, like I said, Exodus 34. We're going to be in there briefly. Exodus 34.

Now, just to give a quick context, Moses, they're leading the children of Israel out of Egypt. That's Exodus, hence the name. And he's already gone up to Mount Sinai.

And he's been given all the rules. The Lord gave him the commandments on the stones. And then the Lord tells Moses, ah, go back to your people.

Go see what they have done. And Aaron, of course, they take all the gold. Out came a calf, of course fashioned by Aaron.

And now, what we have in this section we're about to read here is that Moses has gone back up the mountain. And now the Lord makes him carve out the Ten Commandments. And this is where we're at.

So that's just briefly where we're at. So we're down in verse 6. Exodus 34.6. It says, The Lord passed before him and proclaimed, The Lord, the Lord, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, in abounding and steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgressions and sin. But, underline that word, highlight it, who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers and the children and the children's children to the third and fourth generation.

Stop there. We'll hit the rest of Exodus in a minute. Today, in much of our Christianity that we have, especially in our culture, I do some work with, a little bit of work with some missions in Kenya.

I have a close brother in Christ there. He's a pastor and has some orphanages and things like that. If you ever want to know more, let me know.

We're actually planning a missions trip to Kenya to do some different things this next year. But, Kenya has been overrun with really bad Christianity. And it all came from the United States.

And so part of this Christianity that has become very, very weak and powerless and twisted has led even us, even me, to bypass things easily. The old men would take the scriptures and just rip it apart. And they said, Lord, what is this saying? Well, I want you to go down to verse 7 for a second, where I said, but, that big but there, where God says, who will by no means clear the guilty.

Isn't this a contradiction? God just says he's, he's what, merciful, gracious, slow to anger, steadfast love and faithfulness, and he's going to forgive the iniquity and transgressions, but, he's by no means going to clear the guilty. These people are guilty. We are guilty.

We have a problem. We have a problem because this is an apparent contradiction in God's word. But what is the problem we're having here? What is our greatest problem? Is it really because I can't balance my checkbook? Is it because my wife doesn't do what I want her to do? Is it because I'm having problems at work, or my kids don't obey, or this, that, or the other, and my car doesn't work? Or could it possibly be that but, where God says, I will by no means clear the guilty.

You say, well, how can that be a problem? Well, it's an obvious contradiction here. But let's go somewhere else real quick. And I'm going to, you just listen along.

Excuse me. Proverbs 17, 15. I'm going to read that if you want to turn it, that's fine.

Because we have to reconcile some things. Now remember, this is the word of God. This is his word, it's not ours.

We didn't write it. It's inspired by him. And if we're believers, we have to take all of his word.

So in Proverbs 17, 15, keeping in mind what we just read, he said he is these things, but yet he's not going to clear the guilty. In Proverbs 17, 15, he says, He who justifies the wicked and he who condemns the righteous are both alike an abomination to the Lord. Now, can you think, at least in Christianity's terms, who has cleared the guilty? And who has condemned the righteous? Don't we have a righteous one that was born as a baby yesterday? Isn't that what we celebrate? Was he not righteous? Yet, what happened to him? And who did it to him? It was the Lord who said these words.

This could be termed the great Christian dilemma. If there isn't any dilemma in all the scriptures, this could be it. So let's answer the question of the first point.

What is your greatest problem? Your greatest problem is that God is just, and he is righteous, and he is holy, and he will by no means clear the guilty. So how do we get here today? Well, let's take this a bit more personal. I want us to go a bit farther into this.

For us to authentically, and in some depth of reality, focus our attention on Christ in the coming year and the days before us, we must see what makes for grace that is the gospel of Christ, and what makes it so scandalous. You see, grace is something that has to be given to us under what seems to us to be the most impossible of problems. And so what is the most impossible problem you have? It's that God is righteous, and he is just, and he is holy.

And if he is just, he will not clear the guilty. And therefore, if we are guilty, which not everybody believes that we, me, I, Jeremy, am guilty before God, under his justice it demands a verdict. And that verdict is, I pay for my guilt, my sin.

But you say, I'm really not that bad of a person, I'm not that guilty, there's no guilt before me. Point number two, or question number two, what is your greatest malady? Now I like using that word because we don't use it anymore. But malady, let's make it a real simple definition, is it is a deep-seated disease.

That's what malady means. So I don't know, let's take this a step deeper than just saying, what is your greatest problem? Let's go deeper. What is your greatest malady? You say, well I don't have a malady.

Is cancer as bad as it is? Really? It's gonna be short, it's in the flesh, right? And I work in the medical field, I see all kinds of death. I've seen it all. There's probably very little I haven't seen.

But the interesting thing is, is I find about that, I've seen people who have been tremendously impacted, with no hope, suffering in their, whatever disease they have, and I've seen those who are truly sad, truly believers, whose hope is set on Christ, and their disease can't stop them. They testify and are a testimony to people about the hope and the truth and the grace of Christ. We still haven't answered what grace is, and we will, but let me think about that.

What is your deep-seated disease, that incurable human condition? You say, well I don't have an incurable human condition, I've not done anything that bad. I've never murdered, or I've never killed, or I've never committed adultery. And I'm sure you've never lusted after another woman or man, and I'm sure you've never told a lie, because God says you break one of the laws, you broke them all.

But what is that? Well, let's look. Let's look here. So God responds to those who say, well, I'm just not that bad.

And isn't this, you know, this is the message after Christmas, shouldn't this be a moment of uplifting? Well, don't worry, it will be. Maybe. For some.

So God responds. He says, you thought I was one like yourself, but now I rebuke you and lay the charge before you. That's what it says in Psalms 50.

Again, the Lord responds, for the Lord sees not as a man sees. Man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart. The Lord's not done yet, and there's tons more verses, but he says this, he says, all the ways of a man are pure in his own eyes, but the Lord weighs the spirit.

For you and I must be aware of merely examining and treating this as an outward thing only. This is a deep-seated problem. Sin is not merely what you do.

That's a manifestation. Sin is who we are apart from Christ. We are nothing but sin.

I can give you countless stories of how I used to sin, and I know people in this room who knows how I used to sin. And I'm gonna actually share some of that tonight with anybody who wants to come, and I know the youth will be here. Let's look at what James says.

But each person, when he is tempted, he is lured and enticed by his own desire. Then desire, when it is conceived, gives birth to sin, and sin, when it's fully grown, brings forth death. Again, James says, what causes quarrels and fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you? You desire, and you do not have, so you murder.

You covet, and you cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel. You do not have, because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend a dime yourselves.

Is there anybody in here who's been praying and wanting answers from God, and you're not getting answers? Check your motives. Now, some may still yet say, ah, but, you see, that is not me. I profess Jesus.

I go to church. I tithe. I give.

I lead worship. I prayed the prayer. I walked down the aisle.

I got on my knees. I'm an elder. I'm a deacon.

I'm a pastor. I'm not a murderer. I do not covet, fight, quarrel.

I, I, I. Hmm. We're going to leave Exodus for a moment, and we're going to turn to our primary text in Romans chapter 3. You can just turn there. But I want to remind you, do you really believe this? That God's word was breathed out by him? It was profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness? That the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work? Do you really believe that? Yes.

And we have to say that the Bible is inspired, and that it's sufficient, and that God's word stands forth. And so, is that being practiced in the seclusion, in the quietness of your lives? So Romans 3.23, I'm going to start there, even though that's not my main, it's in my main text, says, for all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. How many people know that so well? They use it in their evangelism all the time.

It's in the middle of what we call the Romans Road, where they've got all these verses in Romans, we're supposed to lead somebody down, and we tell them to look at these things, say yes, and now you're saved. Or has Romans Road only become a cliché that we use on others, and then we forget about having any effect on us, because once again, I already prayed that prayer. You see, God says our very best works, our very best works, in trying to justify ourselves to God, that could even mean coming to church on Christmas time, and saying, I did my duty, there you go, God.

Anything that we stand upon in ourselves to try to make ourselves right with God, or appease our conscience, God says, it's nothing but a filthy rag in comparison to Christ. It's nothing. It's nothing to Him.

Ah! But some say, well, let's back up for just a second. What about Romans 3.10, where it says, none is righteous, no, not one. Has that become, once again, just something we have glided over in Christendom? Now, I want to back up, because some are saying, well, I'm just not that bad.

I am not that bad. I am not that person. I really don't understand all of this in the first place.

Well, let's go back. In Genesis chapter 6, you don't have to go there, but it's in 6.5, God has something to say, and He says that He saw the wickedness of man was great upon the earth, and every intention of the thoughts of His heart was only evil continually. So what's He do? Floods the earth, right? And actually, that's not just a cute little children's story.

We really have made that wrong. It's not a cute little children's story. God kills everything, but two of every kind, and no one.

Now, with the miraculous part of that, we can look at lots of little pieces of what represents Christ there, and all these different things we can pull out theologically. You know what's so amazing about that story? It's the fact that God didn't kill Noah and his family with Him. So, flood happens, they get out of the boat, set up an altar, and guess what God has to say? He's wiped out all of mankind, and here's what He says in Genesis 8. For the intention, for the intentions of man's heart is evil from his youth.

He says, I'll no longer flood the earth again because of that. Fire's coming next, but that's yet to come. Ah, but some are still saying, hey, I don't really believe that I inherited sin from Adam.

I'm not that bad. I have no sin nature. There's no reason for me to be right.

I've done nothing wrong. And I say, well, okay. In that case, you can leave because you also can't believe that Jesus Christ atoned for anything.

If we don't believe that we have a sin nature, we can't believe that Christ is anything. And so we really need to check that, but God did come. Christ did come.

And it says, for if, because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, Adam, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ. Now, some of the youth here may be saying, or the younger adults here may be saying, hey, this can't include me. I'm a youth.

I've done nothing. Well, then I'd say, if you're a professing believer, let me ask you, how is your obedience to your parents? Just something to think about. You see, sin is not determined by man's opinion, nor interpretation, nor mere externals.

Rather, sin is inherited, a malady deep-seated, and determined to be such by God, who is holy, just, and righteous. So, let's backtrack a second. Number one, what is your greatest problem? Is it the same thing you thought of? Or can you see that God, what's He going on? There's an apparent contradiction going on here.

Number two, what is our greatest malady? What is your greatest malady? What is going to be done about this, and how is it going to be done? Go back a second to Exodus. Because this is cool. So God just says, He says what is going on here, and it brings us to point number three, question number three, how can we be made right? If this is the case, if we indeed do have a great problem before us, that we, God, He's

really our problem.

Because how is He going to do this? Because see, with God, all things are possible. And if we have this malady, we have this sin condition, that we are sin. It's not that we sin, it's that we are nothing but sin from birth.

What's going to be done about this? How can it be done? Well, let's go back to Exodus. We're going to pick up at verse eight. That's right where we left off.

And it says, And Moses quickly bowed his head towards the earth and worshipped. What a response. Humility.

He's just on his face, and he's worshipping God, saying, Oh my God, you're this way, but now you're not going to set us free. But what audacity you see out of him next. Because in verse nine it says, And he said, If now I have found favor in your sight, how could you even ask that when you found out that the Lord's not going to clear the guilty? And he goes on and says, Oh Lord, please let us, let the Lord go in the midst of us, for it is a stiff-necked people, and pardon our iniquity and our sin, and take us for your inheritance.

What would God want with a bunch of rebels? What does he want with us? One of the most difficult things to get over, at least was for me, is that God doesn't need me at all. He doesn't need me. He doesn't need me to do anything.

He doesn't need me at all. Which brings up a lot more questions in my mind, is why am I here? Exactly why am I here? But when you can get through that, you're just now at the base of starting to understand this grace that we're going to unpack. So God goes on in verse ten, let's read down through ten, I think it's just verse ten.

He says, and he said, so God said, Behold, that means pay attention, listen up, here's what I've got to tell you. I am making a covenant before all your people I will do marvels such has not been created in all the earth or in any nation. And all the people among whom you are shall see the work of the Lord.

For it is an awesome thing that I will do with you. God says it is an awesome thing I'm going to do. Doesn't say how yet.

Well let's find out how. How is he going to do this? How is he going to justify the wicked when he says he's not going to? He's, remember, just and righteous and holy. How is he going to do it? This is how, when I say we've got to understand grace, it's so unfathomable.

It's not just this gift. What is the gift that was given? Jesus. Okay, Jesus was given to you.

What does the gospel mean? Well, he was born of a virgin and he lived a sinless life and he died on the cross and he was dead and buried for three days and was raised in the right hand of the Father. How? Where's that? Where was grace at? Beyond that. Where was the transition? Where was the transaction of my iniquities and his righteousness? Where did that intersect? Let's look at that.

Let's go to our text. Now, back to Romans 3. Sorry I got you all over the place. So Romans 3. We're going to start in verse 21 and I'm going to take this piece by piece and when we're done we'll read through it.

A little bit different than normal. I'm sure you're not quite used to it this way. Verse 21 it says, But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law although the law and the prophets bear witness to it.

God had to do this in such a way that it only it's outside of the law yet fulfilled the law. He has to do this in such a way that even though we think it's an apparent contradiction, it's not an apparent contradiction at all to him. And within this few verses you're going to see the righteousness of God mentioned four times.

Our greatest problem was that God was righteous and just. Now God's going to tell you how he's going to do it. And in this we have grace.

Go down to verse 22. It says, There it is a second time. Through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe.

Why Jesus Christ? Well number one, he was the word that became flesh. He was the logos. It was written. He had already been. He was with the Father. It was written and he became flesh.

What did we celebrate Friday? He became flesh. He dwelt among us. He was the fulfillment of the law and the prophets.

Everything written in the law and of the prophets, all prophesy of him. It's him and him alone. Because he made him to be sin who knew no sin.

I want you to listen to this quote by Lorraine Boehner. It says, In all the history of the world, Jesus emerges as the only expected person. No one was looking for such a person as Julius Caesar or Napoleon or Washington or Lincoln to appear at the time and place in which they did appear.

No other person has had his course foretold or his work laid out for him centuries before he was born. But the coming of the Messiah has been predicted for centuries. In fact, the first promise of his coming was given to Adam and Eve soon after their fall into sin.

As time went on, various details concerning his person and work were revealed through the prophets. And at that time, Jesus was born there. It was a general expectation through the Jewish world that the Messiah was soon to appear.

Even the manner of his birth and the town in which he would have, uh, back up, the town in which it would occur, having been clearly indicated, there's no man prophesied like Christ. None. Zero.

You can look at all the religions of the world that were all made by men. None of them contain grace. None of them contain the prophecy of the one who would lead that church because they're all false.

So we can see that Jesus, he says he's the only way, the truth, and the light. He is the perfect pardon. But what, where is grace become grace? Where is it this transaction occurs? How does this happen? Well, let's read on.

Let's go down to, uh, uh, in Romans, uh, back to verse 22. I'm gonna start from the beginning again at verse 22. It says, Romans 3, 22, The righteousness of God through faith in Christ Jesus for all who believe.

For there is no distinction for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. Now we see that little verse that we use in Romans Road, middle of that, but it also shows something. When it says for there is no distinction, that's everyone.

Every person that walked the planet. For all have sinned because all were made sin because of Adam and Eve. We inherit sin.

Let's go farther. Because good news is coming. That we fall short of the glory of God.

In verse 24, it says, and are justified by what? His grace. That free gift, that's what justifies us. But we still haven't answered what is the empowerment of grace.

And it says, justified as by His grace as a gift through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. It is through Him and Him alone. Let's carry on for a moment.

It says, whom God put forward as a propitiation. That is my favorite word in all the scriptures. And it is the word most people have no clue what it means, and it took me forever to be able to say it.

I love that word because that is the transaction where God Himself, Christ, takes our law place. That law place that we were standing guilty before God. Christ takes that law seat for us.

By becoming sin. Not sin in His nature, but He bears the sin. And we're going to see that here in just a second.

Beginning 25, for whom God put forward as a propitiation by His blood to be received by faith. It's faith. Faith.

This was to show God's righteousness because in the divine forbearance He had passed over former sins. This is how people before Christ were saved. Through faith in what Christ was going to do.

It was to show His righteousness at the present time so that He might be the just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus. How is God going to do this? He's going to do it through His Son. And He becomes the just and the justifier of our faith.

He appeases His own wrath, His own justice by sending forth His Son who is perfect. Now, I want you to think for a second. The righteousness of God has been manifested.

Righteousness of God through faith in Christ put forward as a propitiation so that He might be the just and justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus. In 1 Peter 2-24 it says, He Himself bore our sins in His body on a tree that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By His wounds you have been healed.

Sin has been atoned for. Isaiah 52 says, Behold, my servant shall act wisely. His appearance was so marred beyond human semblance.

But is that it? Was that all that grace is? They beat Jesus and threw Him on the cross? Or is there more? I'm going to read part of Isaiah 53 here. I would highly encourage you to read all of Isaiah 53, but I'm just going to read Isaiah 53-10. It says, Yet it was the will of the Lord to crush Him and to put Him to grief.

Jesus was on the cross and He said, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani. It means, My God, my God, why have you forsaken Me? What most people don't realize is that He is not only is He on the cross suffering, and He's

bearing the weight of the wrath of His Father. He is also fully God still in flesh.

And He is quoting the beginning of Psalm 22. Psalm 22 starts off by going, My God, my God, why have you forsaken Me? And it goes down through Psalm 22, and it begins to say, I am but a worm. That worm there, if you study it, was a worm they used back in the day to make purple dye, the most expensive of colors.

And they would crush and grind the worm. And it would have this purple dye to it, and they would make clothing out of it. Jesus is saying, I am that worm.

I have become that for you. My God, my God, why have you forsaken Me? And back then they didn't have Bibles and papers and all these things that the followers of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, they would memorize sections, and they would memorize the beginning so they would know where they were at. So when Jesus is sitting on the cross, My God, my God, why have you forsaken Me? Yes, He's crying out for multiple of other reasons we can talk about, but He's also fulfilling the Scriptures.

And He's saying, I am the fulfillment of the prophecy in front of you. He goes on in Psalm 22 to say this, many bulls encompass me. He's talking about the priests, the Levites, He's actually talking about the Pharisees just circling Him and surrounding Him like bulls, casting and spinning and saying all these things.

And He says, that's you. I'm fulfilling the Scriptures. I'm becoming the worm, the most precious of colors, of dyes, of the blood that's going to overflow upon you to save you.

And He says, and you're the bulls encircling Me. He says, I am poured out like water for dogs encompass Me. They shall come and proclaim His righteousness to the people yet unborn that He has done it.

Then in Psalm 23, so there's no no, God's never accidental in what He does with His Word. Psalm 22, my God, my God, what have you forsaken Me? He fulfills all of that. All of Psalm 22, in front of their eyes, before He says, it is finished and He yields up His Spirit.

Psalm 23, who walked through the valley of the shadow of death prior? It wasn't you, it was Him. He walked through the valley of the shadow of death. Oh, and then we get to Psalm 24.

Psalm 24, I'm only reading part. Who shall ascend the hill of the Lord? Who shall stand in His holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart. Who is that? It's Jesus alone.

It's Jesus alone. No man can take that place. How's God going to do this? Back in Proverbs, it says, what? Who is an abomination to the Lord? He who justifies the wicked and condemns the righteous, both alike, are an abomination to the Lord.

Yet it is the Lord who takes His Son, His Holy One, and He does this work. Again, in Psalm 24, it says this. Lift up your heads, O gates, and be lifted up, O ancient doors, that the King of Glory may come in.

Who is this King of Glory? You can imagine the angels standing there. Who is this King of Glory? Who's going to come in this door? No one comes in this door. No man enters this door.

The angels are standing there saying this. The Lord, strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle. Lift up your heads, O gates, and lift them up, O ancient doors, that the King of Glory may come in.

Who is this King of Glory? The Lord of hosts. He is the King of Glory. Read Psalm 22, 23, and 24 together once and see what you see.

Jesus Christ alone makes for propitiation. He makes the place where He bytakes me and moves me to the side, stands in my law place, taking my guilt and wrath upon the cross because justice demands a verdict. God's justice, He is just and it has to be paid.

Sin must be atoned for, but if you don't believe that you're in sin, I tell you what, you're not a believer. You cannot believe that Jesus did anything for you neither. If you don't believe in the inherence of depravity, of sin being given to us by Adam, you cannot believe in the adoption of Christ.

For Christ is the end of the law for everyone and to everyone who believes. You don't have to work no more to get your salvation. You don't have to be under false condemnations.

You don't have to try to go to church to appease this conscience in you. Christ has paid it. You're just asked to receive it.

How? Repenting and believing. Now, so our third point was, how can we be made right? By grace. What is grace? That Christ absorbed the wrath of His Father.

The punishment that we delivered. I want you to think of something. I want to read this.

I apologize, I couldn't have any books here because it's been quite crazy. I literally closed on my house a day and a half prior to coming here. Half of it's still in storage, so I did not get a chance to get books, but we're going to have a sign-up sheet out there if anybody wants one.

I have this quote in one of my books, and I want to read it. It's from John Flable, and it's actually become known as the Father's Bargain. This is a word picture between God the Father and Jesus prior to Him coming to the earth of what would it be like, what would their conversation be like, of what has to be done for man.

So it's just a word picture, so this is not something you can say, well, the Bible didn't say that. Well, you're right, but it's just a thought process, so I want you to listen. Here you may suppose the Father to say, when driving His bargain for Christ for you, my son, here, and this is the Father, my son, here is a company of poor, miserable souls that have utterly undone themselves, and now lie open to my justice.

Justice demands satisfaction for them, or will satisfy itself in the eternal ruin of them. What shall be done for these souls when Christ returns? And this is the son, oh my Father, such is my love to and pity for them, that rather than they should perish eternally, I will be responsible for them as their surety. Bring in all thy bills, that I may see what they owe thee.

Lord, bring them all in, that there may be no after reckonings with them. At my hand shall thou require it. I will rather choose to suffer thy wrath than they should suffer it.

Upon me, my Father, upon me be all their debt. The Father responds to the son. But, son, but my son, if thou undertake it for them, thou must reckon to pay the last might.

Expect no abatements. If I spare them, I will not spare thee. Son, content Father, let it be so.

Charge it all upon me. I am able to discharge it, and though it prove a kind of undoing to me, though it impoverish all my riches, empty all my treasures, and so it did, says in 2 Corinthians, though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor, yet I am content to undertake it. For the believer, there should be no condemnation.

Now, that doesn't mean we don't have to repent continually. Sometimes we get sidetracked, we fall into sin. Once again, I'm not talking about sinless perfection.

So, answer number three, how can we be made right? By the grace of Christ. By the grace of Christ. The last two points are very short, and very pretty simple.

Number four, how are you going to respond? Now, I could call you forward and say, let's raise your hand, let's come forward. I'm not going to do that today. This is between you and God.

If you're serious, go find Him. He promises, that if you seek Him, you'll find Him. If you're not serious, well then you can let it all go, and then you will go to hell.

Hell is not a place you party, it is a place of eternal torment, and it is a place that isn't necessarily built for us, it was built for Satan, and his fallen angels, but that's where we will go, and if a perfect, holy God creates it, you can bet that torment is perfect and holy. And you'll cry out, the Bible says, every day, for a drop of water, and you'll never get it. You'll see no other, you'll see nothing.

You'll be crying out, day and night. That's what the Bible says. So my question isn't, I'm not up here to scare you into anything, my question is, how are you going to respond to the Word of God? Now you have to take what I've said today and see if it's true.

If you're concerned, you'll do that. And I'll provide all the notes, I'll be free, all the verses, all the links. Shall we answer God's Word by willful neglect, thinking we are good? Shall we justify ourselves by claiming a grace that has never transformed the depths of our inner man at all? I'm saved by grace.

He did it. I believe in him. So I'm going to go live like hell.

Paul says, oh no, never. Grace is not an excuse to sin. Or, shall we respond to God, God's grace and faith, entrusting upon Christ with eyes fixed on him, admitting that we may very well be true that we are not in Christ? Shall we repent and believe the Gospel? I encourage you to read Titus 2. By the way, the book I, this is not a promo for this, by the way, but this is all on Titus 2, 11 through 14.

This entire book, and it's not really hard to read or anything, but it's all about the authenticities and realities of grace. Because grace never leaves you to wander. It trains you.

Even you guys sung about it today, Amazing Grace. The second stanza was all about what it is teaching us and training us. So let me ask, with a verse, I'm going to read Hebrews 2, 1. It says, therefore, we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it.

A couple more verses, and I'm going to almost hit the last point. We'll close up from there. 1 Peter, chapter 1, verse 14 says, As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance.

You've been told what the Word is, you've been told what grace is, now what shall you do with it? That is the question at hand. What shall we do with it? But he tells us, verse 15, but as he who has called you to be holy, you also be holy in all your conduct. All your conduct.

If church is nothing more than an hour or two sitting here on a Sunday, you've got nothing. Sorry. Hope is in Christ, not in the building.

And let me just say this, I've been to a lot of churches, some smaller than this, some bigger than this, different sorts of buildings, a building doesn't mean anything. And sometimes, sometimes we grow the most when we're under the most pressure. Just like a diamond.

It's put under tremendous pressure. But if it's never, that coal's never put under any pressure, it never becomes anything beautiful. I'll let you guys, I'll provide the notes with that part.

So will we merely hear, or respond to the conviction of God in becoming a doer of the word, not just a hearer? Paul tells, tells us that we ought to examine ourselves in Lamentations, it says, let us examine ourselves, test ourselves, and return to the Lord. Grace can't be grace if you don't see the need. As believers, you should be able to look back, not longing for your past, but look back and see how God's saved you, what he's done.

I'm going to share a whole bunch tonight just in Rio, we're not going to be preaching like this, we're just going to be down to earth, and I'm going to share my testimony in a little bit, and intermix it with grace. So fifth point, last point, what is authentically or truly the center theme of your life? What is it? What is your hope? What is it you talk about or think about most? Because that's your God. I'm not saying you can't enjoy things.

I'm not saying you can't have things. It's not about legalism. But I can guarantee you, your thoughts are put somewhere else, and I'm not talking for times and seasons, you know, we went through a season of trying to sell this house, I had a lot of work to do.

I had a thought process that had to be done, and we went through closing that was twelve weeks late, and went through multiple things, and prayed and prayed and prayed, the only Lord to keep, I mean the story in itself is amazing, how we got out of there is amazing. But what is it we think about most? A couple verses as we close, Jeremiah 9, 23, my kids, my two children back there should be able to be perked up in their ears, this has been the central theme of our homeschooling this year. Because I'm challenging them to say, Jeremiah 9, 23, is this your boast? Can you claim this? And here's what it says, it says, thus says the Lord, let not the wise man boast in his wisdom.

Oops, there goes all of our good mental ascent. He says, not let the mighty man boast in his might. Well, there goes the man who thinks he's strong, and has big muscles, or can do certain things.

It says, let not the rich man boast in his riches. Well, there goes all that too. So pretty much the Lord strips us right there, and he says this, but let him who boasts, boast in this, that he understands and knows me, that I am the Lord who practices steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth.

For in these things I delight, declares the Lord. Our greatest problem is God's justice and righteousness and holiness. He delights in these things, because he makes a way for us.

The only way, the only religion, quote-unquote, that has any truth or bearing to it is the religion of grace, that is Christianity at its core. And don't get me wrong, there's a lot of false Christianity out there. There's a lot that would deter a lot of people.

But there is true grace. There is truly Christ. I'm gonna close a couple verses here.

At the end of John chapter 2, and this is the part, this is for my last two points again, how are you gonna respond, and what is the central theme to your life? At the end of John chapter 2, there's three verses. And he's talking about many were seeing all these works he was doing, and he says, many believed in his name. You would think, my goodness, what good evangelism is going on.

Many are believing in his name. It says so. But here's what Jesus says, and did.

It says, Jesus on his part did not entrust himself to them. He'd have nothing to do with them. Wait a minute.

They're believing in him. Why is he having nothing to do with them? Because he understands man's heart. That's the business you have to do with the Lord.

I have to do with the Lord. Motivations. Realities.

Matthew 7, 21 through 23, very popular these days. Many will say to me on that day, Lord, Lord, a double emphasis, of course, in the Greek means these are people who are really following after Jesus. They're professing Jesus.

They're doing mighty works. They're casting out demons even. They got authority over demons.

Anybody in here done that recently? They're doing mighty miracles in his name. And they're coming to him saying, Lord, Lord, on that day, what day? Judgment day. So these are not people outside of Christianity.

These are people who are claiming to be Christians. And they're going to Jesus. And they're saying, Lord, Lord.

And he says, be away from me. I never knew you. You workers of iniquity.

You workers of sin. Did you see their profession? Their profession was on themselves. But we did this and we did that.

It wasn't on what he did. There's the difference. If you're about any hope of the flesh today, any arm of the strength is in yourself or in what you've done in your Christian life.

That is not hope. That is not faith. I'm going to pray us out.

I know I went a little long here. Father God, I thank you. Thank you for your salvation.

Thank you mighty God.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/28/SID28285.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/jeremy-strang/authentically-casting-our-vision-upon-christ-through-grace/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net