

Christ in 08 in Romans

by Jim Flanigan

Jim Flanigan's sermon explores the foundational truths of the gospel as presented in the Epistle to the Romans, emphasizing Christ's dual nature and His significance for believers.

Duration: 53:56

Scripture: Romans 1:3-4, Romans 8:31-33, Romans 8:35

Topics: "Christ Centrality", "Eternal Security"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of preaching the Gospel and focusing on Jesus Christ as the heart of the message. He highlights that Jesus is the Son of God and also descended from the lineage of David. The preacher mentions that some believers struggle to fully grasp the truth of eternal security despite the clear scriptures on the matter. The sermon concludes by reminding listeners that there will be a time of review and accountability for our work and service, urging them to live faithfully in the meantime. Throughout the sermon, the preacher emphasizes the centrality of Christ in the Gospel message.

Transcript

...to the epistle to the Romans and I think just a little reading from chapter 1 and then from chapter 8. First from chapter 1, the Romans chapter 1. Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called an apostle separated unto the gospel of God, which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures concerning his son, Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh and declared to be the Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness by the resurrection from the dead. Now to chapter 8 please, to another very familiar portion of this epistle. Chapter 8 and we'll read toward the end of the chapter at verse 31.

Verse 31. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own son, but delivered him up for us all. How shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth.

Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died. Yea, rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, for thy sake we are killed all the day long.

We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

And the Lord will bless that familiar reading from his word. Now tonight we come to one of these two great basic epistles in the New Testament. And the epistle to the Romans and the epistle to the Hebrews, they must share equal honors in the great exposition of the gospel.

They are very fundamental and very basic epistles. We'll see tomorrow evening how the epistle to the Hebrews differs from the epistle to the Romans, but is equally profitable, of course, in the exposition of the message and in the presentation of Christ. And in this respect, before we come to look at the text of the Romans this evening, I thought it might be profitable to look at the order of the books of the New Testament, like as we looked one evening at the divine arrangement of the books of the Old.

We saw, I trust we are all happy about it, that the books of the Old Testament were not just haphazardly put together. They were not just drawn together in any old fashion indiscriminately, but we saw that there was indeed a divine order that cannot be improved upon. And we found that there were books historical and books prophetic, and in the midst of those there were five books of poetry.

We found that the two seventeens of books at the beginning and the end were again divided very, very beautifully, but we didn't go into that in great detail anyway, sufficient to know that there is a divine arrangement in the ordering of the books. Now, if that be so in the Old Testament, it is equally so and very beautifully so in the New Testament. And I trust that very, very early in your Christian experience that everybody has learned the books of the New Testament from memory, that you can quote them because it's a great handicap in later life if you can't remember the order of the books of the Bible.

And I'm sure the young people have this great advantage that with minds that are simple and tender, they can get the books, the names of the books into their minds very quickly. At any rate, they are again in a very beautiful order, and I don't know anything that brings out that order more interestingly than the suggestion of someone that in fact they are like a kind of an archway of inspiration. It has been suggested that if you take these books of the New Testament, you can arrange them into a kind of an archway of inspiration, and this invites you actually in through into God's revelation of himself.

Now, the suggestion is this, and once you see it like this, I think it would help you to remember the order of these books that we're speaking about. Now, to build an archway, of course, you need a foundation, and we've got the foundation. We'll see that in a moment.

And then you need two columns, and then you need to put something across the top, and that completes your archway. And this can very easily be done with the books just in order almost as we have them. Now, the foundations that you lay for this archway are what we might call historical foundations, and there are five books which are historical in our New Testament.

They're right at the very beginning, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, and the book of the Acts. These are purely historical. We don't build a lot of doctrine there.

I know that there are the bases of doctrines there, but generally, we go to the epistles for our doctrine and our teaching, but nevertheless, the historical foundations are in those first five books of the New

Testament. Now, if you're going to build a couple of columns, it might be that you'll want another foundation for this column and another foundation for the other column to put upon the great basic foundation of the archway. And so what you do now is this.

For this column over here, you put the foundation of the epistle to the Romans, and then you begin to build upon that. And for the other column, you put the foundation of the epistle to the Hebrews, and you begin to build upon that. And you'll find that if you build upon the epistles of the Romans, the epistles, the great general epistles that follow, or the church epistles, then that means that you'll build 1st and 2nd Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and the two letters to the Thessalonians, you'll put those on top of the epistles of the Romans.

Now, you'll find that those epistles have a very special characteristic, that they were written to include Gentiles, and they take great notice of Gentiles and Gentile background. I don't mean that they exclude Jews who are saved, but they do have a very much a Gentile bearing, and when we want an exposition of the gospel that has reached us, it is usually to these epistles that we go. So what you have done then, you have put down the epistle to the Romans as a great basic epistle, and then you have built 8 epistles on top of that, just as they come in the New Testament.

Now, when you come to the epistles of the Hebrews, of course, immediately you notice that there's a difference in the character and the tone of the Hebrew letter. And I remember our dear old brother, Mr. Tommy Little, who was a good friend of mine, and he used to say that when you were reading the epistles of the Hebrews, that you had to wear Hebrew spectacles, and you had to imagine that you were looking at this epistle through the eyes of a Hebrew, and there were many things that just could not be properly understood if you didn't remember that. But when you look at the epistle through Hebrew spectacles, and take the place of a Hebrew, a saved Hebrew, now, reading that epistle, well, things take on a new and a very interesting meaning.

The epistle of the Hebrews is obviously different to the epistle to the Romans. Now, the interesting thing then is that you begin to build upon the epistle of the Hebrews this other column, and so you build the little epistle of James, you build 1 and 2 Peter, you build 1 and 2 and 3 John, and the epistle of Jude, and then the book of the Revelation, and again you'll find that although you cannot put that into a watertight compartment in any way, or exclude Gentiles from it, nevertheless, you'll find there's something different here, and there seems to be a kind of a Hebrew flavor of all of these books that we have mentioned. Some have called them then the Hebrew Christian writings, and those are the books that you build upon the letter to the Hebrews.

That means now that you have led the historical foundations of the Gospels and the Acts, you have led the epistle to the Romans and the epistle to the Hebrews, and you have built up eight epistles, or eight books if you like, on top of each of these two, and now you want something for the top. Well, having put eight here on one and eight over here on the Hebrews, it means in fact that you are left with four epistles, and these again are obviously different, because these are what are called the pastoral epistles. They're not written to churches at all, they're written to individuals, and we've got first Timothy, second Timothy, the epistle to Titus, and the little epistle to Philemon, and we call those the pastoral epistles, and you just put those four little letters across the top, and that means that your archway of inspiration is complete.

Now, I trust that you do it on paper, that you draw your archway and put the names in, and you'll see that it's right, as I've said, and there's a very lovely and interesting order here in the books of the Bible. So, the

epistle to the Romans then is very, very important, and very foundational, and very basic, and it actually becomes the foundation for all these other letters, as we have said. Now, we want to come to the epistle to the Romans then, and of course we are still looking for the Lord Jesus night by night, and in the epistle to the Romans, there is so much of Christ that, well, it's just hard to know now what to look at and what to leave out.

I thought that I would try to gather together some of the very interesting scriptures in the Roman epistle that deal with the Savior in different connections, and I want to look at him, first of all, as we might say, in relation to the world. We'll see how he is brought out in the gospel for men, how that he is brought out to the world in the gospel that we preach, and right at the very beginning in those verses in chapter 1, we have several things that link our Lord Jesus with the gospel, and sort of expound the gospel, the great fundamentals of the gospel in the opening verses, so it's Christ in relation to the world, the gospel that is presented to the world, and the Lord Jesus is presented to the world in a very special and particular way. Now, after that, I want to go to another passage that we did not read over to chapter 9, perhaps, and chapter 10, and I want to see him in relation to Israel, to see just what the connection is now with the nation of Israel, and then after that, I want to come back to the believer, or if you like, to the church, and to see him in relation to the believer, and to see the great things tonight that we have in Christ.

And I speak very specially for those that are younger in the faith, and I trust that we'll be well grounded this evening in great fundamental truths of the gospel connected with the person of the Lord Jesus. Now, the Apostle Paul, there doesn't seem to be any doubt about the authorship of the Romans, and right away the Apostle Paul presents himself as a servant and an apostle, and then he shows that from the very beginning he was separated. He was marked out for a purpose, and he was separated by God for the purpose of preaching this gospel.

Now he says, I want to tell you about this gospel. He says it's the gospel of God. He gives us the origin of it right away, what a gospel it is.

It is born in the very heart of God. If it ever had a beginning, if it ever had an origin, then its origin was in the heart of God. Now, having marked very early its origin, its divine birth in the heart of God, then immediately he'll begin to tell us what the gospel is all about.

And if you want to sum it up just in a word or two, then this gospel concerns his son. It is as simple as that. And for those of us that preach the gospel, we must constantly remember this, that there are many things that we could preach, and if we don't preach his son, we have missed the mark.

We have missed the point. And so right away, the apostle expounds simply that what is the very heart of the gospel, it is a person. And then he goes on to show us what kind of person he is who is at the heart of the gospel.

Now, he tells us, I think, at least three things in that early part of the first chapter. And I want to just note these very simply and leave them, because they are truths that we have noted on other nights from other scriptures. Now, the first thing he says is that he is the son of God.

It's concerning God's son, his son, the son of God. But he's not only the son of God, but when he came down, he was made of the seed of David. And you've got to see this glorious person of the gospel, you've got to see him in a double way.

You've got to look at him according to the flesh. And you've got to look at him according to that spirit of essential holiness, which I understand to be actually his divine relationship, his relationship, his link with divine persons. And what the apostle is saying is this, that you've got to see him one way as the son of God, but you've got to see him another way as the seed of David.

And both of those are true and equally important, and both must be preached. And here is the content of our gospel in a word. It is just the deity and the real humanity of Jesus over again.

We saw that in the offerings. We saw that in the tabernacle. I think we must have seen that from the prophecy of Isaiah.

I trust that we have seen it somewhere every night. We saw it again in the little song of Solomon. I suggest that there are very few places where Christ is presented, where that double aspect of his person is not somehow recognized.

And right away then at the beginning of the epistle that expounds the gospel, the apostle shows that as far as the world is concerned, this is the one whom we preach, divine and human, the son of God, but of the seed of David. And both are true. And when you grasp the greatness of his person, then he becomes in the same chapter the salvation of God to Jew and Greek alike, Jew and Gentile alike are sharing in what has been provided in our Lord Jesus in the gospel.

And then before he leaves the opening passage, you get into chapter 2, and before you leave that great introduction to the gospel, he has actually presented the Lord Jesus also as the future judge of men. So he is the son of God. He is the seed of David.

He's the salvation to Jew and Greek alike. And eventually he will be the future judge. And here it would seem to me are the very bases and fundamentals of the gospel that we preach.

Now the Lord Jesus is the son of God. I think one afternoon, perhaps some time ago, in this very hall, we looked at the Lord Jesus as being the son in a variety of ways. And we found that there were at least 10 different ways, maybe 11 ways in which the Lord Jesus was viewed as the son.

We found that he was not only the son of God, but he was the son of the father, and he was the son of the highest and the son of the blessed. And those four titles linked him with heaven, linked him with God, linked him, if you like, with his father, the son of God, the son of the father, the son of the blessed and the son of the highest. We found then that he who was all that became in wondrous grace, the son of Mary.

And he was also called the son of Joseph, not naturally, but in the genealogy, legally, he was the son of Joseph. And not only the son of Joseph, but a little different view of that same relationship, he was called the son of the carpenter. And then we found, too, that he was called the son of Abraham, and the son of David, and the son of man.

And in another passage, he is called the son of his love. And in all of those different relationships, the sonship of the Lord Jesus is brought out. Now, one very interesting thing about this title, the son of God, there are some dear brethren, and they believe that this title implies a kind of an inferiority to the father.

And for that reason, they suggest that our Lord Jesus became the son at his incarnation, and that that relationship did not exist beforehand. Now, whoever believes that, I can tell you categorically that the Jews certainly did not believe that. They did not accept that at all.

And when once our Lord Jesus claimed that he was the son of God, they immediately said, he makes himself equal with God. And as far as they were concerned, there was no inferiority in sonship. It was rather equality, and they saw in that that he was actually making himself a divine person on equal terms with God.

That's what they saw in it, and I can tell you, too, that that is exactly what the Muslim would see in it, even to this present time. Some time ago, I had a very interesting conversation with a Muslim, a very intelligent man he was, and he came to the gospel meeting, which was quite a miracle. And then afterwards, we had a long conversation with him.

And later on in the conversation, I said to him, I said, tell me, what really do you think of Jesus of Nazareth? I said, what is your real thought concerning Jesus of Nazareth that we've been talking about? Well, he said he was a good man. And I said, is that all that you're prepared to say about him, that he was a good man? Well, he said he was a great man. He said, we believe he was a great man.

And I said, is that all that you're prepared to say about him, that he was a good man, he was a great man? Well, he said, we actually believe that he was a prophet. Well, I said, now that's good. And does that know as far as you go? Well, he said, if you like, he was a great prophet, one of the greatest of the prophets.

And I said, is that now all that you can say? Well, he said, actually, he said, when you press me, he said, we believe that he was the greatest of the prophets until Muhammad came. And I said, what now, then, is that as far as you go? Well, he said, now, I've said a lot, haven't I? I've said that he was a good man, a great man, a prophet, a great prophet, the greatest of the prophets until Muhammad came. He said, what more do you want me to say? I said, tell me, what do you think of his claims that he was the son of God? Well, he said, I don't believe that.

I said, you don't believe what now? You don't believe that he was the son of God? Or you don't believe that he claimed to be the son of God? He said, I don't believe that he claimed to be the son of God. Well, I said, he did, you know. And together, we went to the gospel by John, and it's very easy to prove from there that the Lord Jesus presented himself as the son of God, and that Muslim immediately reacted by seeing that as a claim to deity.

Now, that's interesting that some brethren read this and say, well, of course, that is inferiority, sonship, and it must only have begun in the days of his flesh. He couldn't have been inferior in eternity. Neither Jew nor Muslim will accept that.

And as soon as the Lord Jesus said that he was the son of God, immediately they reckoned that equality with God. He was presenting himself a divine person. There's absolutely no doubt about that.

Well, I said to this Muslim, I said, you now, I said, you are in what we would call a predicament. He was from another country, and he didn't know what a predicament was. And I said, you might call it a quandary, but he didn't know what a quandary was either.

I said, look, it was very simple. You've got a problem, big problem. He said, what do you mean? Have I got a problem? Well, I said, you know, until tonight, you have believed that Jesus of Nazareth was a good man.

I said, you can't believe that anymore. He said, why not? Well, I said, you have seen very clearly that he claimed to be the son of God. And of course, you recognize that as being a claim to deity.

And you don't believe that. You don't believe that he was God. No, he said.

Well, I said, if he's not God, then he can hardly be a good man, can he? Because he claimed to be God. Wouldn't be a good man and claim to be God if he was not God. I said, you have got a problem.

You've got to change all your thinking with regard to Jesus of Nazareth. He is either a good man and God or else he is neither. And the point of it and the value of it to me was this, that here was a Muslim.

And I'm looking at the Lord Jesus, looking at the claims of the Lord from the viewpoint, the standpoint of a Muslim. He could see very clearly that when the Lord Jesus presented himself as the son of God, he was claiming deity and equality with God. Now, that's exactly what Paul is preaching in the gospel.

He says, according to the flesh, he's of the seed of David. No problem there. He was born of the tribe of Judah, as we all know, and of the seed of David he was.

And in David's town, in fact, he was born in Bethlehem. So there's no problem there of the seed of David he was born. But that's according to the flesh, according to this spirit of holiness.

What is he? He's the son of God. And chapter 1 says he has been powerfully declared to be the son of God because that word power there is linked with the declaration. It's not the son of God with power, but it is declared with power to be the son of God.

Powerfully declared to be the son of God by what I take to be his own resurrection from among the dead. Now, here is the point. He claimed to be the son.

The Jews rejected that claim. They came to Pilate. They say, we've got a law.

According to our law, he ought to die because he makes himself the son of God. And with that charge against him of blasphemy, claiming to be the son, they crucified him and he died. Well, what will God do now? And the very simple truth of Romans 1 is this.

That God has vindicated the claims that he made. And if the nation puts him to death for claiming that he was the son, which they do not believe, says God, I'll raise him from the dead and vindicate his claim and prove that he is the son. And so God raises him.

And what God is doing, he's actually reversing the verdict of the nation and showing in vindication of his son that all these claims were right and true and proper. And when we come to preach the gospel, we have dignity in the gospel. We have a glorious gospel, brethren.

Is it any wonder that another passage calls it the gospel of the glory of the blessed God? And here's what it is all about. It preaches one who is, according to the flesh, the seed of David, but according to the spirit of holiness, the son of God, and that proven by his resurrection from among the dead. The Lord help us to examine our gospel preaching.

And the Lord help us that we don't preach experiences and other rather shallow things, which will sometimes, I think, never help men to Christ. Here is the purpose of our gospel, that we should present a man, a person, and that the hearts of needy sinners might be drawn out to the person. And so this is where the apostle begins.

And in relation to the world, here he is. We preach him in his deity. We preach him in his true humanity.

And we present him as a full savior to the world in such a gospel. Because of that, the apostle says, and it's every right to say, he says, I'm ready to preach the gospel to you that are at home. And he says, I'm not ashamed of the gospel, because it's the power of God unto salvation to every one that believe it.

And whether they be Jew or Gentile, it doesn't matter. It's the same glorious person. So Christ, in relation to the world, is the Christ of the gospel.

And if men reject that, then one day the very man who would be the savior becomes the judge. And God has already committed all judgment into the hands of his son. So that is Christ in relation to the world in the gospel.

And a very full and wonderful gospel it is. The Lord helped us to retain the dignity of that message as we preach it from week to week. Now, when you leave the world generally, and you come to Israel particularly, and you know, of course, that there are three great chapters here that are what are sometimes called dispensational chapters, 9, 10, and 11 of the Roman Epistle, and very difficult chapters they are.

But there is much about Israel in these chapters, and we've got to see what the Lord Jesus is, what Christ is in relation to the nation. Now, sadly, he is this. He is a stumbling block, a stumbling stone.

The nation couldn't understand it. They stumbled over it. And we get this quoted in Peter's Epistle, and it comes from the prophecy of Isaiah, that the Lord Jesus is a stumbling stone, a stumbling block.

And again, we get it in 1 Corinthians. You can imagine what these early preachers were up against. They went out and preached to the nation the very same thing, that Christ had died.

And that through the death and the blood shedding of the Nazarene, and his being raised from the dead, there was salvation. Well, the Jews rejected the idea that he was risen from the dead. And when once a man rejects that, what value is there in the blood of Christ? And after all, in the minds of many Jews, he was but an imposter.

He was an imposter, claiming to be what he was not, presenting himself as what he was not. And they rejected him. And for generations afterwards into this present time, they reject the claims of the Nazarene, and they stumble over the gospel that preaches Christ.

Now, I repeat again, it's very important that the apostle never adapted his gospel just because a man thought this or that. And we must be very careful that we don't give up the gospel for topical lectures and for something that sort of fits in with the thinking of men. If you want to see your friends saved, then eventually what will save them is this very same gospel.

And I don't know that we are obliged to change our language or to change our mode of presentation of the method to suit anyone, because eventually, after all, these are claims that we are making. The claims of the gospel. And you know that through the acts of the apostles, it is God now commanded.

My dear brethren, we are not just appealing to men as if God were under some obligation to men. Oh no, it is men that are under obligation to God. And so we bring out the message in all its dignity, and we preach it.

And to Israel, it was a stumbling stone. And Christ, a stumbling block. And many of them stumbled over Him.

And to this very day, they do it. But we can't change the message. You can't change the message.

The Jew today will hardly read Isaiah 53. They refer to that as the forbidden chapter because they haven't got an answer to it. Or some of the rabbis have a kind of an interpretation of it that, well, makes it a little bit palatable.

But the forbidden chapter, that's what they call it. Discouraged from the reading of Isaiah 53. For what reason? For simply because it presents the death of the Nazarene.

And that has ever been a stumbling block to the nation. And so at the end of that chapter 9, He is the stumbling block. But if any Jew is interested now, well, then the apostle goes on into chapter 10.

And the same Lord Jesus, who is a stumbling stone to many, to most, in fact, there's another tremendous thing now about Him. He's the end of the law. What a tremendous thing this is.

But one of the saddest things, I think, even in Israel today, to this very day, is this ceremony, this ritual of being bound by the law. And you don't need to go to Israel to see it. You can see it in our synagogues here in the synagogue in Belfast.

You'll see it even yet. And they bind themselves with what the Gospels call the phylacteries. Now, it's a very interesting thing to see.

And what they do is this. They have a strap. And the Pharisees made theirs very broad.

And they made the little boxes which held the scriptures. They made them very big. They wanted everybody to see.

And the Lord Jesus charged them with making broad their phylacteries. But what was happening is this. And you see them doing it.

They hold out, I think it is the left arm, they hold out. And they bind it. They bind it all around with this leather strap.

And then, at the end of the strap, there's a little black box. And in this little box, there are scriptures. Scriptures from the old Torah, from the old law, from the Pentateuch.

Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord. Scriptures like that from the old Pentateuch. And then, that's not the end of it.

But now, they bind the forehead. They bind the head as well. They shut it with the same little black box here, right on the forehead.

And in that again, quotations from the law from the same Torah. And here is a man standing, going through the ceremony. And what he does, what he does in his arm.

You see, this is what he does. And what he thinks, this is his mind, his forehead. What he does and what he thinks, the man himself is actually in bondage to the law.

Bound by the law. And this is a ceremony to this present day with the nation of Israel. Oh, says the Apostle Luke.

He says, the Christ that we preach, you know, he's the end of the law. He's the end of the law. This old law, you know, there are three things about it as far as Christ is concerned.

Three ways in which he is the end of the law. For one thing, all the precepts of the law have been exemplified in him. He has lived them out.

If you want to see the law lived out, there's only one man to whom you can look. And that's himself. And he lived unfailingly.

He lived spotlessly for all those years. And he actually exemplified every precept of the law. So you see, that's the end of the law now.

Christ has exemplified it. And if you want to preach the law now, preach Christ. That's really what it is.

And Christ has exemplified the precepts of the law. Because of that, he has fulfilled the purposes of the law. All that the law ever required in a man, he fulfilled those purposes.

He lived out its precepts. And so he fulfilled its purposes. And no other man has ever done that.

Only himself. And then, of course, he went to Golgotha. And at Golgotha, he bore the penalties of the law.

So the penalties of the law have been exacted in the Lord Jesus. That means that he has accounted for its precepts, its purposes, its penalties, and any promises that were ever linked with it. They've all been completely fulfilled in him.

And Christ is the end of the law. And I know that some brethren debate about it. But I think it is a fact that we today have no relationship with the law.

We have been completely divorced from it. We have nothing to do with it. We are married to another to Christ.

And we have nothing at all to do with the law. And in no sense are we under the law. Now, some brethren make an artificial distinction.

I say artificial because it's not a scriptural distinction. And they talk about a moral law and a ceremonial law. And they say the ceremonial law has been abolished.

But the moral law has been established. Now, you have no authority for dividing the law like that. In the Old Testament, there is one law.

And Christ is the end of it. And that's that. Oh, you say, what now then? Do we live as we like? Do we do what we like? You know, don't misunderstand me.

But in some senses, that really is how we should live. But, of course, our likes are different now. You see, we are indwelt now by the Spirit.

And we desire to live to please the Lord. And what we like now should be different to what we used to like. And the way that we live now is that we might please Him.

Now, you're a Christian. And you don't steal. I hope you don't.

You don't steal. Why do you not steal? Because the law says thou shalt not steal? No, no, no. That's not why you don't steal.

The law says thou shalt not kill. Why do you not kill? Because the law says thou shalt not... No, no, no. That's not why.

You don't go in for things like that. The reason why you live as you live is this. That that is instinctively now the way that you live.

Because you are a partaker of the divine nature. And what it is actually, it is the righteousness of the law. What the law required being fulfilled in us now.

Because we are indwelt by the Spirit of God. But the things that we do or don't do today, not because the law says thou shalt or thou shalt not. We do.

We live as we do. And we refrain from things because, well, it's pleasing or not pleasing to him. But the believer is not under law.

Now that must have been a big thing for the Jew to have heard. A very big thing for him to understand. That the old law had been abolished.

It was gone now. But it's a very glorious truth. And I trust that we rejoice in it.

Sadly, there are some believers that would put themselves back under that old law. I know that we're under law to Christ. That's a different thing altogether.

But this old mosaic law, we have finished with it. And to hear people in what we call Christendom, Lord's Day after Lord's Day, chanting together, incline our hearts to keep thy law. Well, you know, that shows a sad misunderstanding of the gospel.

And of the word of God. And of the deliverance, the emancipation that there is in Christ. So he was a stumbling block when they preached his death to the nation.

But he was the end of the law for anybody that was interested in being saved. And how, then, does a Jew, or anyone else for that matter, come into the blessing of all that? Well, says the apostle, because, you know, there's not really much to be done. And if you want to do anything, he said, you don't need to go down into the depths to bring Christ up.

And you don't need to go up into the heights to bring Christ down. He said, the word is nigh thee, even in thy heart and in thy mouth. That is the word of faith that we preach.

Not the law, but the word of faith that we preach. And what he preached to Israel and to all, in fact, was this. That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, Jesus as Lord.

Oh, but there's the stumbling block again. But if thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in thine heart that he rose from the dead. No, no, no, no.

Not in Romans 10 and 9. In Romans 10 and 9, it is believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead. That's a different thing. I know that he rose from the dead.

But what we preach in the gospel is that God raised him from the dead. And why would God raise him from the dead? Just simply because God is satisfied. And if I believe in mine heart that God hath raised him from the dead and acknowledge him as Lord, says the apostle, thou shalt be saved.

And that was the gospel for Israel. And of course, it is the gospel for the Gentile as well. So in relation to Israel, he is the stumbling stone.

He is the end of that old law. And he has been exalted and become Lord of all. And that was a big thing for any Israelite to have to acknowledge that.

But says some young believer, that's all right. I see him preached like that in the gospel to the world. I can see him in relation to Israel and what that meant to a Jew, that presentation of Christ.

But what is he to me? Well, now, this epistle to the Romans presents him, first of all, as my substitute. And you remember that substitution is a very delicate doctrine to preach in the gospel. And you must be very careful how you preach it.

You can't just tell every and any man that Christ is his substitute. You need to be very careful about your language. Because you see, if I tell a man that Christ is his substitute.

Well, it would be nice to see that man coming into the truth of that, wouldn't it? But what happens if that man rejects it and dies in his sins and goes down to hell? What was Christ then not his substitute? We need to be careful. The believer comes into the great truth of substitution. But preaching substitution in that direct way in the gospel to every man is a very delicate business, and we must be very careful about it.

But what I see in chapter 5 is this, that Christ has died for me. I know that. He has died for me.

And it's a great truth, substitution. And we enter into the joy of it. Just be careful of the language when we're preaching it to other people.

And you know, of course, the background and the setting. And there wouldn't be time now. But the background is, of course, that it is a court scene in the Epistles of the Romans.

And the persons are brought into the dock and the case is carried through. And the prisoner, the accused person, he stands in the dock and I stand here and I'm the accused person. And God is the judge and he's on the bench and all the witnesses are brought and the prosecution's here.

There aren't any defense counsel. But the counsel for the prosecution are here. And the whole case has gone through until you come to chapter 5. And then when you come to chapter 5, the one who could be my substitute, he enters the court.

And this is the great background of the Roman Epistle. And what happens now is that if I am happy about it, if I am prepared to receive it, I can actually step out of the dock and see him stepping into my place. And I can see my sentence from the bench being pronounced upon him.

And then he leaves the dock and goes out to Golgotha. And I follow him out to Golgotha and I see him die for me. And he's my substitute.

He dies for me, takes my place. But just to tell every man that Christ has borne his sins is maybe not intelligent language. And so we need to be very careful about it.

I know you'll not misunderstand me, but there is an intelligent way of presenting the truth of substitution. Now, he is not only my substitute. But when we come to chapter 8, from which we have read, he is my security.

He's my security. I don't understand anyone who enters into the joy of salvation in the Roman Epistle and then reads on and still rejects the truth of eternal security. Can't understand that.

Hard to understand a believer really appreciating the truth of the Romans and not believing in eternal security. And yet there are those who have not entered into the joy of it. I don't know what they do with scriptures like these.

The cry goes out for four people actually are called here at the end of chapter 8 and leaving the first one. There are three persons who are called for in the divine court and they don't make an appearance. You know, sometimes in a courtroom, in a court scene, the call goes out for someone, for some witness, for someone to take part in the proceedings.

And they don't make an appearance. And the cry goes out again. The name is called and then someone calls the name out into the fire.

And in the fire, the name is called again and called all around the precincts of the court. And very often after all of that calling, there are still people who don't appear. Well, now, here are three people who don't appear in the divine court.

Here's the first person that's called for. Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? Who? And there's no response. There's no one that can come and lay anything to the charge of God's elect.

And if anybody dares make a move before you move, remember this, that God has justified. And if God has justified the man, who shall lay anything to that man's charge? Now, if you don't believe in eternal security, I don't know what you make of that verse. Here's a cry that goes out through the universe.

Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? And before you move, remember it's God that has justified. And if God has justified a man, who can lay anything to that man's charge? Ah, but you say that's all right. That's my sins, you know, up until the night that I was saved.

Oh, I don't understand that. When Christ died, all my sins were future. All of them.

And when the Lord Jesus died and took my sins upon Him, I judge that He took every sin that ever would be linked with my name. And that immediately gives the lie to the denial of eternal security. Here is one who has taken all my sins upon Him.

And because of that, God has justified me. And if God has justified me, who then is the man to lay anything to my charge? There's no one. No.

So nobody appears. Then the call goes out again. I want to change the meaning of this slightly to the way that we usually see it.

Who is he that condemneth? And our usual interpretation is that, I suppose, that little verse of the hymn gives it well. Who shall condemn us now, since Christ has died and risen and gone above? That's what we sing. And that's how we usually understand it.

I would like to change that and make another suggestion. Who is he that condemneth? And I think that rather, this is not someone to condemn the sinner. Not someone to condemn me.

But this is someone who is liable to condemn God and criticize the whole scheme of things for what God has done. After all, God has labored in the early part of this epistle to prove me guilty. And now what has he done? He has pronounced me just.

And I tell you, there must be many that would move and criticize God for justifying me, having proved me guilty. Because justification, you know, this is even more fool than forgiveness. Forgiveness of sins at least remembers that I was a sinner, but my sins are forgiven.

But justification doesn't even remember that I'm a sinner. Justification is pronouncing me just. And here I stand tonight, just and righteous in the sight of God.

And God has pronounced me so. My, but you would think that from the ranks of men and demons too, and from the mouth of the devil himself, there would be condemnation of God for doing any such thing. How can God consistently do it, labor to prove a man guilty, and in the very next breath pronounce that man just? Well, who is he that condemneth? And before you make a move to say anything, remember this.

Christ has died. That makes all the difference. Christ has died.

And there's not one, neither men nor demons, not the devil himself, that can raise a finger or a tongue against God and say, well, this is not righteous. You can't do that. Because God remains righteous, remains just, and at the same time is the justifier of everyone that believes in Jesus who has died.

Not only died, but says the apostle, Yea, rather, that is risen again, risen again, and is even at the right hand of God, and maketh intercession for us. And with all that, who is he that condemneth? And who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? Now, as if that were not enough, and some people perhaps might still doubt my eternal security, then, says the apostle, as he cries out for another witness, for another person, who shall separate us from the love of Christ? And then he begins to taunt. Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? And then he goes on down, and he says, what about death, or life, or angels, principalities, powers, things present, things to come, height, or depth, or have I forgotten anything, he says, or any other creature? Can any of these separate us from the love of God which is in Christ? And the court scene is complete.

God is on the bench. The prosecution is here with all their evidence, apparently, and their witness against me. There's no defense over here, but the whole case has gone through in an intelligent, reasoned fashion, and I am proven guilty.

But now, I forfeit the dock. My substitute takes my place, and he bears my judgment instead of me. And there's no one to lay anything to my charge, because God is justified.

And there's nobody to condemn, because God has a right to do that, if Christ has died. And there's no one who can separate me from the love of Christ. And the whole thing is absolutely, eternally secure.

That's what Christ is to me now. One day, he will become a judge at the Bema, and that is what we might have read, had there been time, from chapter 14. And we must remember, from those later chapters, that while there is not a thing to our charge, nevertheless, as servants, we shall be examined at the Bema, at the judgment seat of Christ.

And we shall stand there to have our work and our service reviewed. And the time has gone, and there is so much that might be said about it, but I trust that in view of all that has been accomplished for us, and in view of what there is to be at the Bema, that we shall live faithfully, and live true to him in the meantime, and in the interim period. So, this great foundational gospel, an exposition of the Roman epistle, is really an exposition of the gospel.

And this great basic epistle must, of necessity, be filled with Christ. Whether you see him in relation to the gospel for the world, in relation to the message that Israel has rejected, or in relation to the gospel that we have believed, in relation to us as believers, well, it is Christ all the time. And the Lord help those of us who try to preach the gospel, that we shall preach more of Christ as we do it.

May the Lord bless our meditation. Shall we pray?

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