

# Gospel Meetings-Shannon Hills 05

by Worth Ellis

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*The Gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation, and salvation is available to all through faith in Jesus Christ.*

**Duration:** 52:29

**Scripture:** Matthew 6:33

**Topics:** "Gospel Preaching", "Faith Salvation"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher begins by describing a scene where Jesus sees his disciples struggling in a boat in the midst of a storm. This is compared to believers in the present world facing challenges. Jesus decides to rescue them and walks on water towards them. The preacher emphasizes the importance of gospel preaching, stating that the main duty of an evangelist is to clearly declare the gospel message of Jesus' death and resurrection for the forgiveness of sins. The sermon concludes by highlighting the simplicity of salvation through faith in Jesus, referencing verses such as John 3:16 and Romans 4:4.

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## Transcript

Now, tonight we're going to read from four different places in your Bible, and we're going to have what we call a little four-finger exercise. In order to read from one passage to another without the loss of time, I want you to find Hebrews, chapter 11, Ephesians, chapter 2, Romans, chapter 4, Romans, chapter 3. Now, you won't have much trouble in the last two because they're very close together. I'd like you to find Hebrews and leave a finger there, and turn over to Ephesians 2 and leave a finger there, and then turn to Romans, chapter 3, and we'll begin reading at the third chapter of the book of Romans.

Hebrews, chapter 11, Ephesians, chapter 2, Romans, chapter 3 and 4. As soon as the rustling of the leaves has ended, we'll know you're ready to go. We shall begin reading now in the third chapter of the book of Romans, verse 21. And shall we pray? Righteous Father, we thank Thee tonight that Thou hast in Thy condescending grace committed unto us this ministry of reconciliation.

We remember Thy word that said that Thou hast given to us this treasure in earthen vessels that the excellence of the power may be of God and in all of us. We grant that we beseech Thee, our Heavenly Father, for the Lord Jesus' sake. Amen.

But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets. Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that

believe, for there is no difference for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God has set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that have passed through the forbearance of God. To declare, I say it this time, His righteousness, that He might be just and that justified of him which believeth in Jesus.

Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? Nay, but by the law of faith. Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.

Now in Ephesians chapter 2, our second reading, second chapter of the book of Ephesians, we read here in verse 8. For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should burst. Now in Hebrews chapter 11, and I do hope you haven't lost Romans 4 now, because I forgot to read it as we were passing by. Hebrews chapter 11, verse 6. But without faith it is impossible to please God, or to please him, speaking of God of course, for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a reward of them that diligently seek him.

Now, just in the event you have your finger in the right place, Romans 4 and 4. Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. May God bless to us tonight the reading of his words.

The number one duty of the evangelist is not to entertain sinners, but to simply make a clear declaration of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is God's way of salvation. He is bound, if God has commissioned him to preach the gospel, to be clear and distinct in his enunciation of the principles of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. And in connection with this marvelous privilege that the Lord has afforded to us, he has not left us in doubt.

And I'm so blessedly thankful that where there may be many differences of opinion as to interpretations, so far as I have noticed, wherever you have a verse of scripture relative to the way of salvation, that particular verse will not allow of any interpretation. It's always a simple statement of facts. For God so loved the world, he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him shall not perish, but have everlasting life.

Now, if you can interpret that, you're a pretty good interpreter. To me, it's a simple statement of facts. Now, the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ is God's ordained way of salvation of poor sinners.

The great apostle very clearly set this forth in Romans chapter 1, in verse 16. For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. When writing his epistles to the Corinthians, the first one in the 15th chapter, in verses 1 through 3, he very clearly and distinctly sets forth the gospel by which people are saved.

Moreover, brethren, said he, I declare unto you that which first of all was delivered unto me, I received it of the Lord. Christ died for our sins, according to the scriptures. He was buried.

He arose again the third day, according to the scriptures. And he says in the second verse, 1 Corinthians 15, 2, This is the gospel by which ye are saved. Now, that's simple enough.

A man doesn't have to be an educated person, nor is he specially intellectual to understand such clear and simple language. I deliver unto you the gospel by which ye are saved consists of the fact that the Lord,

Jesus Christ, died for our sins. He was buried, and he was raised again.

And notice, this says he is according to the scriptures. Now, we're living in a world today that is characterized by a lot of new thought. But most new thought, to me, really began in the Garden.

They have some sort of pernicious doctrine that just sprung up recently down in the city of Durham. I don't even know how to pronounce the name of it. But I read one of their pamphlets, and it's a group of disgruntled people from every sort of religion you can think of who have sacrificed some of their outstanding principles, and now they call themselves something or other.

I can't even say their name, much less figure out what they believe. But in days like this, when practically every new man that arises on the scene, or every difference of opinion in the interpretation of a passage of scripture only gives rise to a new denomination or a new form of religion, we can thank God tonight, as evangelical believers, that we still have God's infallible word that says that Christ died for our sins, according to the scriptures, that he was buried and raised again the third day. And this is the gospel by which he was saved, the gospel of Christ as the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth.

And there you have the doctrine of election. I like that, you know. Well, you notice in that wonderful passage of scripture in Romans 1.16, that the gospel is very specifically the salvation of God to a certain class of people, and it's to those that believe.

I never will forget the story I heard of a doctor, I'm sorry to say a doctor, but I don't know any doctors except my medical doctor. But this doctor was preaching one time on the subject of election. And he says, you all know tonight, folks, he says, some of my brethren is awful confused on this subject of election.

But he said to me, it's one of the simplest doctrines in the whole Bible. He said, I remember one time we had an election. Well, that's what an election is, it's an election, you've got to have an election.

And he said, there was an election. Two thousand years ago, almost, said he, the Son of God died upon the cross. Satisfy the judgment of God against me, the relative to my sin, and the penalty thereof.

The wages of sin is death, but Jesus tasted death for me. Now, the Son of God died for me and arose from the dead and was alive in heaven to give me eternal life if I'll only believe in him. And so through his death and resurrection, the Lord Jesus voted for me to go to heaven.

Well, you know, Satan didn't exactly like the idea of this poor darky going to heaven. He wanted me to be lost forever in the pit for this weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth. And so Satan, he voted.

Well, quite naturally, he cast his vote against me, voted for me to go to hell. Now, there was only one other person voted in that election, and that was me. And I cast my vote with the Lord Jesus and we won the election.

And he says, Brethren, that's the doctrine of election. Now, bless your heart, that's all you've got to know about the election in order to be saved. That the Son of God elected in love for your soul to die upon the cross, and he's voted for you to go to heaven.

But never you forget for one moment that Satan has voted for you to go to hell. And if he can keep you from trusting Christ as your Savior, if he can confuse the simplicity of the salvation and get you all mixed up and be puzzled so you can't even figure it out and take you to hell all mixed up, then that's exactly what

he wants to do. But I want to tell you tonight as a poor sinner who has been saved by God's grace, you can make the way of salvation just as complicated as you want to until you have to hire every psychiatrist in the city of Greensboro, but God will have no part of it.

If you want to go to heaven, believe that Jesus died for you, was buried and raised again the third day, and God says the doors of heaven are wide open. Now, you can make that just as complicated as you want to, but bless God He's made it just that simple. The gospel of Christ is a power of God unto salvation.

Now, the burden of my message tonight is this. This salvation is bestowed upon the sinner by or on the principle of the grace of God. In Titus 2.11, the Bible says that the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared unto all men.

And so that's a very emphatic mistake that it's grace that brings salvation to us. It's grace, the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared unto all men. In Ephesians 2.8, we read by grace are ye saved.

So, eternal life, the forgiveness of sin, righteousness, reconciliation, justification, all are bestowed upon the believing sinner as a direct result of the unmerited favor of the Christ, holy God. As a matter of fact, it's not only unmerited favor, but it's favor over against what we really merit. I remember once hearing our brother Ernie Payton, who was here a little while ago, about a year or so now, and he told a story.

Well, he was driving through the countryside one time in Canada, and as he drove along, he saw two boys standing on the side of the shoulder and one lying along the shoulder. And they flagged him down and he says, oh my, something has happened. And so when he stopped, they helped this other boy up and put him in the backseat of the car, and he says, boys, which doctor, which hospital? They said, well, just go on down.

We'll think of that later. And as he made his way down the road, he looked up in the mirror and all three of them were literally convulsed and laughed up. They had taken him in.

Now he said, the moment I realized it and grasped the situation, the first thing crossed my mind was to stop the car and kick them in the seat of the pants as far as I could and thrust them out. But he said, on second thought, I think I'll just go ahead and take them in town and be a good sport. So he actually gave them favor over and against what they really merited.

And that is a picture of the grace of God. And eternal life, salvation and the forgiveness of sins, if you want to make it yours tonight, must be bestowed on the principle of God's unmerited favor, actually having God to give you as a free gift that which is absolutely opposed to what you really desire. That's the grace of God.

Now, it is bestowed on the principle of grace, but it is appropriated and enjoyed by the sinner on the principle of faith. And that's the burden of our message tonight. What is faith? Now, did you notice in all of our sections that we read from tonight, every one of them had the word faith in it.

We read that the righteousness of God in the epistle to Romans is by faith. We read in Romans chapter 3 that a man is justified by faith. We read in Romans 4 that Abraham's faith was counted unto him for righteousness.

And in Hebrews 11, we read, without faith, it is impossible to please God. Now, as I was looking through my concordance one day, I noticed that the word faith, strange to say, is only found two times in the entire

Old Testament. Once in the book of Deuteronomy, and again in the book of Habakkuk.

But when I turned to the New Testament, which is God's revelation, and all of it's full of the beauty of salvation through the person and work of His Son, I found the word faith 243 times in the New Testament. Think of that. And so I arrived at this conclusion.

I don't know what you would have done, logically speaking, but I arrived at this conclusion that whatever faith is, it is an indispensable ingredient to this thing called salvation. 243 times in the New Testament, the word faith is used. By grace are ye saved.

Notice, there is a bestowal, the appropriation through faith, and that not of yourselves. This salvation is a gift of God, not of one, lest any man should boast. Therefore, if we cannot possibly get to heaven without faith, what is it? What is faith? If I have to exercise faith in the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, what is the scriptural definition of faith? Last night, we sought to bring before you the absolute impossibility of being saved without repentance.

The Lord Jesus Christ said, Repent ye and believe the gospel, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. Now, tonight we discover that along with our repentance, we can't be saved without faith. And so we must turn away from all the books about the Bible and turn to the Bible and see what faith is.

And if the Lord tonight, in His marvelous mercy, will show you what faith is and show you how to believe and how to receive Christ and put your faith in the Son of God, you can leave that door or this one or this one, anywhere you care to go, with the absolute assurance that every one of your sins are completely forgiven. And that's the objective of these meetings. What is faith? Now, this may be a sneaky way to approach this problem.

But first of all, I'm going to say what it isn't. Now, I think this is very, very important because there are many things called faith which are absolutely spurious. For example, without a shadow of a doubt, that which causes more sinners, more confusion than any other false faith or thing in the world, is this horrible curse of feelings and emotionalism.

I never will forget, I was in the coal mining camp of Otsego, West Virginia. A little bitty hole in the wall. And this lady came out night after night and she heard the gospel.

And so one night, when I was waxing rather warm on the subject of faith in the Lord Jesus for salvation alone, I made this statement, and I'll make it again tonight, and I don't apologize for it because I'm right and you don't have to apologize when you're right. I said that night that you don't even have to pray to be saved. And right away, I could feel that somebody in the audience had been offended.

She didn't come back anymore, so we went to see her. And so I said to this dear lady, I said, I said, Madam, it's quite obvious that you've been upset by something we have said. Now what's the trouble? Well, she said, if there's no need to pray, there's no need of me going.

What use is there trying to be saved if you're not going to pray? And so she told me this story. Several years ago, a man came through this city, or this country here, this little mining town, and he pitched a tent, and he preached, and he was a great preacher, a grand preacher. He could move you.

And my, he was such an exciting speaker. And so she said, finally, one night, I got the feeling, and I went down to the front, and several other people were there with me, and some of them were rubbing me on the

head, and some were patting me on the back. And we all prayed, and she said, Oh, glory, I finally got it.

I said, You got what? She said, I got a wonderful feeling. Oh, I said. Well, where is it now? Oh, she said, that's the thing, but I've lost it.

You've lost it? What did you do with it? She said, I don't know. But she said, sometimes I can almost get it again, and then it, it just slips away from me. See? And there was a poor woman who was resting upon her feeling.

And just so long as she could have an emotional jag and stretch it out, say it there, and tie it onto another emotional jag, you see, she was on her way to hell. One emotional jag after another. And don't you think that one moment there are multiplied millions of sinners in the world today who are on their way to hell with emotional jags one after another.

One thing we must learn is this, that the faith that's saved is not feeling. Now, get that straight. Faith is not feeling.

A man can be saved with a feeling, or he can be saved without a feeling. I love to tell the story of Harold Hopper. I heard him speak one time about getting saved out on the street corner.

As a young man, he attended some gospel meetings somewhere out in the Midwest. He'd been under conviction, but he had been saved and he had fought. He had fought against the fears of God.

So one night in a terrific snowstorm, he made his way out of the meeting and went out on the street corner and under the street light there was snow falling. So I think he could hardly see the light. He said, I looked up and faced up to heaven and I said, O Lord Jesus Christ, if thou hast died for me and if your death alone will save me, I will this moment receive thee as my Savior.

He told of giving his testimony when Charmin, a dear lady, came up to him and sat next to him in the meeting and said, O Brother Harper, O Brother Harper, when it happened, she said, what did you feel? What did you feel, brother? He said, I felt a snowflake falling on my cheek. See? Now the great problem with people today is this. They think in order to be saved they've got to have a terrific feeling.

Now I would not give you a plug nickel for a conversion that doesn't produce a feeling of genuine relief from the burden of sin. I wouldn't give you a plug nickel for that. See? But I'm trying to tell you that if you wait for a feeling to be saved, you'll feel your way right into hell.

You're not saved by feeling, you're saved by faith. By grace are you saved through feeling. Is that what your Bible says? No.

By faith. You must remember, friend, when you're wrestling with the problem of salvation with a natural mind, you're like a bunch of hogs trying to place top value on a pearl and a handful of corn. They can't do it.

It's absolutely impossible. The natural man cannot perceive the things of the Spirit of God. Salvation is a revelation of the Holy Spirit operating through God's living and powerful and sharp two-edged sword, the Word of the living God.

Men are born again by the scriptures applied by the Holy Spirit of God to their heart, to their intellect, to their will, and to their conscience. But it's not feeling. Now, will you turn with me, please, to Genesis

chapter 27 for a moment? And I'll show you what the Bible means when it says in Romans 15 whatsoever things were written afore time were written for our learning.

In the 27th chapter of the book of Genesis, we have a remarkable illustration of the absolute, utter fallacy of feeling. And it's the story of Isaac and his two sons, Jacob and Esau, and his dear wife, Rebekah. The setting for this scene, sad to say, was a divided home.

In chapter 25 and verse 28, we read these words, And Isaac loved Esau, because indeed he was venison, but Rebekah loved Jacob. Jacob was mother's boy, Isaac was daddy's boy. And there was a four-lane highway right down the middle of the family, and it made for nothing but absolute confusion.

It brought nothing but untold sorrow into the life of Jacob, who went out expecting protection, never saw his dear mother again before his eyes. Now notice, here Isaac is about to die. It says in verse 1 of chapter 27, And it came to pass that when Isaac was old, his eyes were dimmed so that he could not see.

He called Esau his eldest son, and said unto him, My son. And he said unto him, Behold, here am I. And he said, Behold, now I am old, and know not the day of my death. Now therefore take, I pray thee, thy weapons, thy quiver, and thy bow, and go out to the field, and take me some venison.

Now notice verse 5. Now the reason he made this request, he wanted his son Esau, he said, You know how I love that venison stew, that deer stew. Go kill me a deer and make me some stew, but I'm about to die, and I'm going to bless you real good before I go. Going to pass a patriarchal blessing unto his eldest son.

But notice, his wife heard it, and in verse 5, Rebekah heard when Isaac spake to Esau his son, and Esau went to the field to hunt for venison, and Rebekah spake unto Jacob her son. Well, where in the world did he get that? They were both of them, weren't they? Didn't they belong to the two of them? You notice the root of this trouble in the home there? What a tragedy! Now Rebekah said to Jacob, I heard your father speak unto thy brother, and he's going out to get him some venison, and you're going to get the blessing. But now I'll tell you what you do.

Look, you run out into the yard, out in the barnyard now, and get me two good, very best kids of the goat, and we'll whip up a stew such as your father loved, and you'll take him in a bowl of that steaming goat stew, and give it to your father, and we'll skewer your brother's blessing while he's out trying to shoot the goat. Now Rebekah said to Jacob, I heard your father speak unto thy brother, and he's going out to get him some venison, and you're into the yard, out in the barnyard now, and we'll whip up Now, if we read the story on, you would see this, that immediately he went and got the two kids of the goat, he skinned them, and dressed them, and she made the stew. And in order to further deceive her poor old blind husband, she took the skin of the goat, and put it on the back of Jacob's hand, on the back of his neck.

I never forget one time when I saw a child introduced to a blind man. And this blind man said to this child as it was brought before him, come here and let me look at you. And you know what he did? He took the blind, this little child, by the hand, and he began to feel him, and he threw it on the back of his neck, and brought his hands around this way to see what the child looked like.

And get this picture now. In order to further carry out their deception, Jacob goes and he gets these two kids of the goat, and he brings the stew to his father with his own brother Esau's clothing upon him and the skin of the goat. And the horrible part about it all is when he came back his father said, who are you? He

says, I'm thy favorite son, Isaac.

Oh my boy, you really moved fast today. How did you get to me so quick? Oh, the Lord by God gave it to me. What a liar this man was.

The Lord by God gave it to me, he said. Now, I want you to notice the situation that we have in hand here. Now, as far as I can remember, and it's been a long time since I went to school, and I didn't go too far when I did go, but if memory serves me correctly, there are at least five senses that we have.

Is that correct? Smell, taste, and sight, touch, and hearing, basically speaking. Now, it's perfectly obvious that his smell was defective because he couldn't tell the difference in the smell of goat stew and deer meat. Secondly, the Bible says very distinctly in verse one that he was blind, and his taste was defective because he couldn't tell the difference between goat meat and deer meat.

But, he did have, regardless of this, two of his faculties were working. He could feel, and he could hear. Now, notice verse twenty-one.

Which one is he going to put his trust in? Is he going to put his trust in his feelings or what he hears with his ears? Now, notice in verse twenty-one, And Isaac said unto Jacob, Come near, I pray thee, that I may feel thee my son, whether thou be my buried son, Esau, or not. And Jacob went near unto Isaac his father, and he felt him. He's a poor old blind man.

With the aroma of that goat stew in his nostrils, and with his stomach and his senses of his flesh outweighing his spiritual perception, he felt of his son Jacob. Now, notice, he says in the latter part of verse twenty-two, The voice is Jacob, but the hands are the hands of Esau. And he discerned him not.

Rather than to trust his ears, he trusted his feelings, and he was utterly deceived. The Bible says, Speak, and it is by hearing, not by feeling. And any sinner who trusts his ears, when it comes to being saved, will be utterly deceived.

You get what I mean? See? There's a fallacy of feeling. Know, my beloved friend, if you insist on a feeling, remember this. Fast, feast, and dinner feeling.

But none necessarily the kind that makes you want to jump up and shout. So bless your heart if you get saved tonight and you want to shout. It's all right.

We're good at that, too. Now, shout with you. Be okay with me if you shout.

I'll tell you right now, I'd love to see you get saved tonight. What I'm trying to tell you is this. You don't have to have a feeling in order to be saved.

The feeling you're going to have when you really rest your full assurance and your soul's salvation upon the written Word of God is simply a feeling of a, boy, what a relief. There's a feeling you'll get when you're saved. See? Now, that's what we need to know.

And sinners need to know this. these things. You need to be warned.

Don't put too much emphasis on your feelings. You'll be hopelessly deceived. Now, I believe the second great stumbling block in the way of sinners in connection with faith is simply this, that many people today labor under the delusion that faith is ascent.

In other words, if they hear a preacher of the gospel stand up and tell you that Jesus Christ died for your sins and that you believe that, you believe everything he says, and you believe everything in the Bible, then that's faith. But that's not faith. That's simply agreeing with what you hear.

There's a vast difference in faith and a mental assent. Many a person in the world today believes the Bible from cover to cover, and the cover, too, who are on their way to an eternal hell. I don't know of a single place in the Bible that the Word of God tells me that by grace is a man saved through believing the Bible.

It's this. A man is saved by faith, and that faith must be put in the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ alone. Now, the biblical example, I think, the one that fits the picture best, is in Acts, chapter 26.

There you have Paul preaching the gospel message to Agrippa, and you'll notice sometimes that you'll learn that he preached two things to him, the death and the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Now, you remember this. Paul, our beloved brother, was so carried away in his love for this poor heathen king that he wanted to see him saved.

He said, "King Agrippa, believest thou the gospel? I know that thou believest." But what do you find that Agrippa got saved? "Believest thou? I know thou believest." Now, Agrippa believed the Bible. Judas Iscariot believed the Bible, what he had in his day. But there's not much change to a being in heaven, absolutely none.

So you see, dear friend, believing the Bible won't save you. Agreeing with what the preacher says won't save you, no. That's simply agreeing with what you hear.

And there's a vast difference in faith and giving a mental assent to the historical facts of the gospel. Now, on the positive side of the ledger, what is this thing called faith? Now, I want to give you three words, and I want you to get these down very clearly in your thinking tonight if you're an unsaved person. Three words.

The faith that's saved is composed of three elements. Number one, knowledge. Number two, belief.

Number three, trust. May I repeat those? There are three elements in faith that's saved. And if you're going to be saved tonight and leave this building knowing that every one of your sins are forgiven, these three things are definitely going to take a part in your conversion.

Number one is knowledge. Number two is belief. And the third one is trust.

There must, first of all, be knowledge, scriptural proof. Romans, chapter 10, please. The tenth chapter of the epistle to the Romans.

It is absolutely ridiculous to hear some people who speak about being saved in a vision, who speak about being saved in some sort of a characteristic experience when they didn't know whether they were in the body or out, only God knew. And they have all sorts of fantastic stories to tell and not one bit of knowledge or facts connected with their conversion. No, they're not saved.

I don't believe a word of it. The infallible word of God says that the first essential to faith that saves is knowledge. Now, I said a night or two ago that God places very little value upon your intellect or your wisdom.

But I venture to say there's a vast difference between knowledge and intellect. And I don't know how to explain the difference between the two. What I'm speaking about in the knowledge is not what you know,

but something that God reveals to you in the way of knowledge, and that is essential.

Now, notice, please, here in this marvelous chapter of Romans, verse 10, we have these two familiar verses. Verse 9, "...that if thou shall confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shall believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." Now, look at verse 13, "...for whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." How much simpler can God make it? Now, this kind of salvation, the Bible speaks of, is not when you get your foot caught sometime or turn your car over in a wreck and about to kill yourself, and you holler out, God have mercy on me. That's not calling on the Lord.

You're only looking upon God as an aspirin tablet, and when you get on your own feet again, you'll pay about as much attention to Him as you do the aspirin tablets in the medicine cabinet. That's not calling upon the Lord. Now, notice, "...whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall emphatically be saved." How shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? All right.

All right. "...whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." How shall they call upon Him in whom they have not believed? And how in the world can you believe in one of whom you haven't heard? Is that knowledge essential? Would you agree? If you won't, turn to John chapter 9. I noticed this one day, and I'll tell you. You know something? The ninth chapter of the gospel of John to me is one of the richest chapters in the whole Word of God.

I just love to sit down sometime and just burst my sides laughing at this poor blind man who put all the Sanhedrin and the Pharisees in the shade and made them look like a bunch of monkeys. He'd just gotten his eyes open, but all these doctors of the law didn't know the first thing about it, and I just revel in this chapter. Now, I want you to notice something.

The Pharisees, you know, they kind of got carried away with their situation, and like most religionists, when they get their back to the wall, they find their teeth sticking out. And here's what they said. They put him out of the synagogue.

Now, verse 34, they answered and said unto him of John chapter 9, Thou wast altogether born in sins, and dost thou teach us? And they cast him out. I understand the sense of the force of this passage is they literally took all of them and thrust them out of the synagogue. Well, bless your heart.

I know a lot of people have been thrust out of the synagogue, and they found the Lord Jesus waiting to take them in when they got kicked out. I'll tell you, it's a grand thing to get kicked out of the synagogue. Wonderful! Oftentimes leads to salvation.

But now notice this. The point we were trying to make a while ago is this technology is absolutely essential to salvation. Now, in verse 35.

Now, what's the beauty? Look at the beauty of this passage. Jesus heard that they had cast him out, and when he had found him, he said unto him, notice the question, Dost thou believe on the Son of God? That he said to the poor man who was born blind. And the man's answer was this, Who is it Lord that I might believe on him? See? And the Savior said to this poor man who was born blind, Dost thou believe on the Son of God? Paraphrasing it, Lord, I don't know who he is.

How can I believe on him? And notice what the Son of God said in the next verse, verse 37. And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee. And he said, Lord, I believe.

Now you see, he had to have the knowledge. Jesus said, Dost thou believe on the Son of God? He said, Look, poor blind man, the man that opened your eyes, he's the Son of God. O Lord, shall he I believe.

Now with this poor blind man, he might have gotten his eyes open, but do you think he'd ever believed if he had not known that Jesus was the Son of God? Knowledge! Not the kind you get by ranting around in the bowels of the earth and down in the stars and the moon and the sun and chanting the revelation of God unto your feet and on your way to hell. It's believing the record of the Word of God, and God reveals the knowledge of his Son as your Savior. And you must know that Jesus Christ is the Son of God whom he raised from the dead, and you must know that he died on the cross for your sins, and his death alone is sufficient to say that's knowledge.

You've got to know that. Now that's the first one. Now the second one is this.

There must also be belief. Now one must absolutely know the facts of the gospel in order to be saved, and then they must believe or give an assent to the facts of the gospel. But now here is a crucial point in connection with conversion, so far as I can see.

While many simply believe what they hear and accept the facts as being absolutely true, they forget that they're still one step further from the must put their trust, that's the third essential of faith, not in the facts alone, but in the man of whom the facts testify. For if you search your Bible in vain for the first shred of evidence that eternal life is in fact, this is the record that God has given to us, eternal life, 1 John 5, 11 and 12. This life is in his Son.

He that hath the Son hath life. John's gospel 1.12, To as many as received him, to them gave God the right to become the children of God. So look, now here is what I believe about gospel preaching, and I did not learn this at the seminary, but here is what I believe with all of my heart, that the whole burden of the gospel message is there.

It is a continuous repetition, indicted by the Holy Spirit of the facts of the gospel concerning the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, of God's acceptance of that death as complete payment for the sin of anyone who puts their trust in him. It is the continual repetition of these facts, owned and blessed of the Holy Ghost, that generates faith in the dead soul of a sinner and leads him to put his trust and confidence in the man of whom the facts testify, and the moment he receives the Son, he has life. Leave no man nor woman believing the facts of the gospel.

Leave them receiving the Son. That is salvation. Many a poor sinner hath believed all the gospel, but hath never received the Son.

Now listen, let me repeat that. The continual repetition of the facts of the gospel, blessed by the Holy Ghost, is a gain of the Lord to cause you not just to believe the facts, but to put your whole heart and unreserved trust in the man of whom the facts testify, for salvation is not in fact to send Jesus Christ, God's Son. Now, I only hope that is as clear to you as it is to me.

See? Not enough to believe just these facts, but you have got to believe your heart to put your trust in the Son of God. Now, here is something you need to know. The gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ is not to be believed only, but to be obeyed.

Remember that. We spoke last night as emphatically as we could that the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ is not only a proclamation and a declaration and an invitation, but it was very definitely and specifically a

command. And so when the Bible says, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved, it is not a matter of mental gymnastics, but it is the heart perception of a person, and it calls for obedience.

In the second epistle of Thessalonians, in chapter one, the judgment and the fire of God is to be revealed from heaven when the Lord Jesus comes with all of His holy angels against them that know not God and that obey not the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. See? To believe the gospel is to obey the gospel, and to obey the gospel is to receive the sign. Oh, sinner, that's the reason.

No matter which way we go, no matter how long it takes us to get there, no matter how much we ramble, we're going to get back to this place before it's over, where has there ever been a time in your life when you experienced a miracle? Now, you think of the number of things a man can do without doing that. He can pray. He can read his Bible from cover to cover.

He can believe every word of it. He can go off to seminary and come back to preach and be a Ph.D. and a D.D.D. and any kind of other degree he wants and never receive Jesus Christ. I was amazed at a little article I read in this magazine or paper that a brother Billy Graham puts out, and I thank God for my beloved brother Billy.

And he and a little gathering in Harvard University with the students, they're asking questions. You disagree with Dr. Reinhold Niebuhr. Niebuhr said he couldn't see that the virgin birth of Christ is essential.

See? Now, there's a man, Mr. Niebuhr, one of the most learned theologians, one of the most learned theologians in the world today. But if Mr. Niebuhr gets it, I don't care how many brains a man has got, if Jesus Christ was not conceived, if he was not begotten of the Holy Ghost and conceived of a virgin, he was a sinner like me and he couldn't die for my sins. And I've got to be ready to live the last couple of months.

Now, that's a sad tragic thing about brain worshipers like dear Mr. Niebuhr. I hate to say a man's going to hell, but if he misses it, you might as well do away with it and make a bolt iron out of it. And I don't apologize for that.

Jesus Christ would use worse language than that if he was there, stronger language. Of course, he'd have more authority. He might do it a little more lovingly than I do.

I'm sick and tired of these men who will disgrace the Son of God that died on a shameful cross to save this wretched soul from hell. And I don't like it. Now, a man can believe all this word and never be saved.

Now, notice, let's get one thing clear as nobody here but us. Now, you relax, and I'll try to relax, and let's get this down straight. To believe the gospel is to obey the gospel.

And to obey the gospel is to receive the Son. And when you receive the Son, the Holy Spirit of God comes into your body and lives, and that's regeneration. And you're fit for heaven.

That's the gospel of Jesus Christ. Now, would you carry with me, please, in closing, through the gospel according to Matthew, chapter 14. In Hebrews chapter 11, verse one, we would read these words, faith is a substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen.

But, to me, that's an abstract definition. That's words without an illustration. As I said last night in our subject on repentance, if we could see repentance in action, then we could understand what repentance

is.

And I believe we did understand what repentance is, well, last night, as we considered it. Now, when you read from Hebrews 11, one, that faith is a substance of things hoped for, that's hard to lay hold of because that's theory and that's words. See? That's abstract.

But, if you can find a man who exercised faith and see how he did it in the result, I believe the Holy Ghost will show you what saving faith is and I'm going to take my beloved brother Peter and bless his heart. He didn't like me. Now, here we have the story of the Lord Jesus Christ feeding the multitude, remember? And that's a picture of His breaking His bread, that body of His upon the cross to feed the world.

After that, He went up into Ohio Mountain Park, and that's a picture of His priestly minister on our behalf now. And when He did, He saw His disciples in the water rowing in their little boat and they were toiling and they were rowing, and that's a picture of you and me in this godless world today. But He had His eyes on them, He had His eyes on us.

Thank God for that. But now, He saw them and He thought it was about time that He should go to their rescue. Now, notice in verse 24, But the ship was now in the midst of the sea and tossed with waves, for the wind was contrary.

Matthew 14, 24 And in the fourth watch of the night, Jesus went unto them walking on the sea, and when the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit. And they cried out for fear. But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer.

It is I. Be not afraid. And Peter answered Him and said, Lord, now watch. Here was something on the water, or something, and I personally believe it was sort of like an apparition, a ghost, a spirit of some kind, and they didn't know for sure who it was.

But the Savior said, Be of good cheer. It is I now. Be not afraid.

But Peter wanted facts. Remember, the first element to faith? Knowledge. And so he says to them, he says, Lord, look at this lovely statement.

Lord, in verse 28, If it be Thou, if it's really You, Lord, bid me come. Bid me come to you on the water. And verse 28, the Lord said one word, Come.

Now, Peter wanted knowledge, and the Son of God gave him facts. This is me, says he. Notice? Now watch.

And immediately, when the Lord Jesus said to Peter, Come, Peter stepped down out of the ship, and he walked on the water to go to Jesus. Now, I am perfectly aware that in verse 31, immediately Jesus stretched forth His hand and said, and caught him and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt? And that does not mess up my story at all, because to me, the illustration is still here. O thou of little faith.

It's not much faith that saves you, but it's little faith in the great Savior. Now watch. Peter needed, first of all, the assurance and knowledge that this man who told him to come to him on the water was the Lord Jesus Christ.

And so he said, Come, and that proves it was He. The moment Peter had the knowledge, he believed that it was Jesus Christ, and his belief led him to put his trust in the person, and he stepped overboard. Now watch.

I contend that the moment Simon Peter got both his feet out of the boat onto the water, that it was absolutely impossible for him to ever touch the bottom. Do you think the Lord Jesus Christ would have invited Peter out of the boat that drowned him in the ocean? No! No! A thousand times no. He did not.

Peter had the fact that it was Jesus, and he believed Him, and he stepped overboard. See? That, to me, is a perfect picture of faith in spite of the Holy Ghost. Now what if he did when he got his eyes off of the Lord and the waves were boisterous and he started to sing? Notice.

Immediately he cried out, Lord, save me! The Son of God stretched forth His hand and grasped them. And I'll tell you this, the moment a poor sinner would take both of his feet out of his own mouth, the Holy Ghost would come to him and say, Lord Jesus, come tonight and believe with all your heart that He died on the cross to save you from an eternal hell. Say, sinner, if you would just lay aside all of your own imagination and opinion and your own doings and come to me and put your trust in me alone, I'll never leave you nor forsake you.

Do you think the Son of God would invite you to turn loose of everything you've ever put your trust in and just put your faith in Him alone and then let you go to hell? No. Absolutely not. See? Now look, I want to ask you a question tonight, friend, without Christ.

That old vote of yours is sort of really mocking, isn't it? Think of the misery and the unhappiness in that soul of yours. You may have religion, you may be baptized, you may be a tither, but your vote is mocking. Really, on the verge of being swamped, your heart is filled with nothing but misery and disappointment.

Jesus says, Come. And if you will, tonight, with all of your heart, put your trust and confidence alone in the death of Jesus Christ and step out of your vote and quit trying to row your own boat, realizing your helplessness, and place your faith firmly and squarely upon the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ for eternal life and receive Him by faith as a living person, from that day on, it's the sole responsibility of Jesus Christ. you get to heaven.

See? The moment he invited Peter out of the warden, the moment he got both his feet on the water, it was the sole responsibility of the Lord Jesus to see that he didn't drown. And that, to me, is what faith is. If you will step out of your vote like Peter stepped out of his, the boisterous winds and the waves of unbelief and doubt and fear may be rolling around your head.

Say, Lord, if it be Thou, if it's really true what this man is saying, that just through faith and thy death I can have eternal life, if it be Thou, Lord, if it's all true, if that's all I have to do, Lord, bid me come to thee. Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, says the Son of God, and I will give you rest. See? All that the Father giveth to me shall come to me, and him that cometh to me I shall in no wise turn away.

Have you ever come to Christ? You see what I mean? Oh, may God bless you tonight. I hope you understand what faith is now, and if you're not clear on it, don't you mind coming to me after the meetings over and say, What? I didn't understand this little form. And we'll take it up further.

I want you to understand these things. I believe there's a great problem in connection with people getting saved today. They don't know what belief means.

They don't know how to receive Christ. They don't know how to put their trust in him. And if you need any further help, you stay behind.

Father, we thank thee tonight for the Lord Jesus Christ, our Savior, who died upon the cross to put our sins away, and who lives in the heavens in the power of an endless life. And thou hast given him authority over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. We pray that tonight we shall have the joy of rejoicing at seeing this blessed Son of God that does not give eternal life to sinners in this very building.

God grant it for Jesus' sake. Amen. My brother Dick will lead us in a moment.

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