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Preacher: Christopher Baker

[0 : 00] Thank you very much, Sarah, for sharing that. Not just with the kids, but with all of us this morning. How many of you like cleaning mirrors off?

I don't know. I never do it. They just magically get cleaned off once in a while. Not quite sure how that works out. But what a wonderful reminder to each one of us that there's only one person that can make us clean, and that is Jesus Christ.

And the sacrifice that He made for us. And thank you, Sarah, for that amazing reminder of that this morning. All right. If you have your Bibles, get them out.

And I encourage you always to bring your Bible. And I don't really care whether it's on your phone or on your iPad or whether you bring a Bible. God's Word is God's Word. It's not the pages that make it powerful.

It's the fact that it's God's message. So get out your Bible. If you ever forget your Bible, there's a whole rack of them in the back. If you know somebody that doesn't own a Bible, take it and give it to them. So turn to Romans.

[1 : 03] We are in Romans once again this morning. We are in Romans chapter 3. So I encourage you to turn there this morning. Romans chapter 3, beginning in verse 9.

And once you've found that, I'm going to ask if you are able, if you would stand as we read God's Word this morning. Romans chapter 3, beginning in verse 9.

And this is what God's Word shares. What then? Are we better than they? No, and no wise. For we have before proved, both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin.

As it is written, there is none righteous, no, not one. There is none that understands. There is none that seeks after God. They are all gone out of the way. They are together become unprofitable.

There is none that does good. No, not one. And then jump down to verse 19. Now we know that what things whatsoever the law says, it says to them who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.

[2 : 15] Therefore, by the deeds of the law, there shall no flesh be justified in His sight. For by the law is the knowledge of sin. But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and prophets, even the righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ, to 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 are passed through the forbearance of God, to declare, I say, at this time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of him which believes in Jesus.

Let's bow our heads as we pray together. Lord God, once again, we thank You for this morning. We thank You for each thing that's been said and done and shared this morning. We thank You that we can take the time to share our requests with each other and with You, that we can lift them up to You in prayer, that we can have the children come and be dedicated and learn more about You.

We thank You that we can sing songs of praise to You and songs that talk about Your righteousness and Your goodness and Your gifts to us. And now, Lord, we thank You for this time that we have to hear from Your Word.

Remind us that it is Your message to us, that what we hear is not for the person beside us or behind us, not for our spouse or our children, it's for each one of us. So, Lord, help us to have ears that are open and ears that are ready to hear the message that You have for us.

[4 : 04] And we ask and pray these things in the name of Jesus Christ and all God's people said, Amen. You can be seated. Before we get into Romans chapter 3, we're going to look at a verse

again in Romans chapter 1.

We did this last week and I said we're going to do it every week for a little while. And that is Romans chapter 1 verse 16. Because we're going to go through this verse Sunday after Sunday, not to be annoying.

Why do you think we're going to do it? So that you begin to memorize it, so that it begins to sink and soak into your heart. You know that when you hear something once, does it always stick with you? Absolutely not. You teachers that are out there, if you tell a student something one time, does it stick with them? How about the second time? Or spouses. How about the second time?

Third time? Maybe? The more you say it, the more it starts to sink in. And the truth of this verse is the exact same thing. You know, as God inspired Paul to write those very words, He said, I am not ashamed of the gospel.

[5 : 25] Do you think that needs to be our message today? Our thought today in our minds? Here's the question. Are you ever ashamed of the gospel? Okay. If you're not ashamed of it, then what do you do with it?

Actually, I think we should take it a step further. From not being ashamed, what's kind of the opposite of being ashamed of something? That you're proud of something.

You know, for you that are grandparents, or even parents, when you have it, we're talking about children a lot this morning, but when you have a child, what do you do? Do you keep it secret? What do you do?

You share it, don't you? I remember when I had my children, certainly with my grandchildren. Do you know how many pictures of all of them I have on this thing? I don't know.

It's in the thousands. And I keep taking them. Why? Because I'm proud of them. And you know what I do with those pictures? Yeah, I show them to people, whether they want to see them or not.

[6 : 26] That's what you do with something that you are proud of. And you know, the gospel is no different. When we're ashamed of something, we try to hide it. And it says we're not ashamed. That means we should want to share it with the world around us.

We should not be ashamed of the gospel. It should be something we want to share with everybody we come in contact with. Because it says it is the power of God to salvation. It is the way to be saved.

So I hope that that verse is starting to stick in your mind to where you can't get it out of your mind during the week. That's what I'm after. And I think that's what God is after. So now back to Romans chapter 3.

And I kind of feel like maybe I don't need to say a whole lot because Sarah covered it all. And you know, she's my daughter-in-law, but we did not talk about what she was going to share this morning in her kid's corner.

I had no idea. But what was the main thing in the kid's corner that Sarah was sharing about? About Jesus, but before that.

[7 : 23] What was that mirror like? It was dirty. That is us. Look at what these first few verses say that we read in Romans chapter 3, beginning in verse 9.

What then? Are we better than they? No, in no way. For we have before proved, Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin. When he uses the word all, who does that include?

I mean, he uses two different groups that he's talking about because Jews and Gentiles, there was a wide difference between the two. And, you know, Paul was talking primarily to those two different groups.

But when he says all, that means all. And he says that they are all under sin. And that includes us. When you have something in common with everybody else, it kind of binds you together, doesn't it? It gives you some similarity. And here is what it says. We are all under sin. But what does it start with? Are we better than they? So are we any better than the world around us?

[8 : 26] Are we any better than the sinners around us? Do we ever begin to think that we are? I mean, let's be honest. How often do we get...

There's a fine line there because we can get aggravated with sinful behavior, can't we? And we can think, well, how do they not see the truth? And that's okay to have those feelings and those thoughts.

But when we take that next step and begin to think that we are better than them, that's where I think we begin to err. Because look at what Paul says.

Are we better than they? He answers the question. He asks the question. Then he gives the answer. What's his answer? No. No, we are not. And I think this has done a lot of damage to Christianity because a lot of times people that aren't Christians think, oh, that group of Christians, they just think they're...

You can finish that sentence, can't you? They think they are better than everyone else. Well, it answers that question, are we? No. We are not because we're all sinners.

[9 : 33] It says that about as clearly as possible. As it is written in verse 10, there is how many righteous? No, not one. There is none that understands.

There is none that seeks after God. They're all gone out of the way. They're all together become unprofitable. There is none that does good. No, not one. You know what? In God's eyes, without Jesus Christ, apart from Him, what are we?

What is our righteousness? The Bible tells us. It's like dirty rags. It's what the Bible says. You got any dirty rags at home? Smelly ones? Greasy ones?

Grimy ones? I should have brought some this morning. I always got some of those in the garage. What do you think about those? Filthy rags.

What do you do with them? Do you wash your face with them in the morning? You wash them. Or throw them away.

[10 : 34] Aren't you glad God doesn't throw us away? Our righteousness is like filthy rags. And that's what it's saying here. There is none good. No, not one. There are none righteous in God's eyes apart from Jesus Christ.

You know, you think all through the Bible, there's evidence of that. You know, Adam and Eve, as Sarah was sharing in the very beginning, God's creation. He put them in a perfect place in the Garden of Eden. Can you imagine living in the Garden of Eden?

I mean, what did they have to worry about? For you farmers that are taking off the harvest, were there weeds in the Garden of Eden that they had to worry about? No, it was when they got kicked out.

God says, you're going to work by the sweat of your brow and there are going to be weeds in the field. And, you know, before that, it was a perfect place that God put them in. And yet, what did they do? Folks, you know the story.

What did they do? They sinned. They messed up. There was only two people that God created to have a perfect relationship with Him. And guess what they did? They messed it up. Were they righteous? No.

[11 : 32] You can move on down through the Bible. You think of Noah. And everyone on the face of the earth, other than Noah and his family, how many of them were righteous? And there are estimates that there were tens of thousands, perhaps millions of people on the planet at that point in time.

How many of them were righteous? Noah and his family, the only ones that were spared in the flood. You move on down, you think of Abraham.

And this story always, you know, just sticks in my mind. And with the town of Sodom, and God told Abraham that He was going to destroy it. And Abraham started his little bit of a bargaining with God. Do we ever try to do that? And he says, well, Lord, what if I can find 50 righteous people in this city? Will you destroy it? What did God say? No.

You find 50, I won't destroy it. But do you think, you know, I think Abraham was thinking, well, I might not be able to find 50. So what did he say to God? What if I'm just five short of that?

[12 : 33] How about 45? If I can find 45, will you spare it? God said yes. Do you think Abraham was satisfied with that?

No, he was nervous. He's like, I don't know if I can find that many. How about 40, God? What if I just find 40 righteous people in this city? Will you destroy it? God said, no, if you find 40, I won't. Abraham's not done. It's kind of a long little account there. He goes on, well, what about 30 people? What if I just find 30? And God says, well, then I won't destroy it. Abraham knew that was kind of a tall ask in the city of Sodom.

So he went on down. What about 20? God said, no, I won't destroy it. What about 10? Abraham got him all the way down to 10. God said, okay, you find 10 people.

I won't destroy it. Guess what? There weren't 10 people there that were righteous. And you know what happened to Sodom? You do know, right?

[13 : 35] Sodom and Gomorrah. God destroyed it. Why? Weren't any righteous there. All through the Bible, we see man's unrighteousness in God's eyes.

And that story continues all the way down. Guess what? To us. To you and I. Why? In God's eyes, apart from Jesus Christ, are we righteous? Okay.

The answer is no. Say no. Apart from Jesus Christ, we are not. There are so many ideas. And I know I'm not telling you things you might not already know, but I think we need to remind it of it because there are so many thoughts in this world that, you know what, if you just do enough good in your life, you'll be fine.

That God has this scale that He balances things out on. And if your good outweighs the bad, you're going to be just fine. Folks, that's not the way it is. It's not about the good outweighing the bad. It's all about one thing, and that's whether you have Jesus Christ in your heart and in your life. Paul said, I am not ashamed of the gospel. And if we are not ashamed of the gospel, that is the gospel that we need to understand.

[14 : 40] It is all about Jesus. And we are no better than anyone else. We are just as sinful. It says there is none that is without sin. Look down in verse 19 in Romans chapter 3.

Now we know that what things soever the law says, it says to them that are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped and that all the world may become what before God?

Guilty. You're guilty. Guilty. Did you know that? When you're in a court and if the judge says you are guilty, what feeling would you have?

A sinking feeling? Oh no. Wouldn't you? Bible says we're guilty.

Isn't that what it says? Turn to the person next to you. Tell them they're guilty. Tell them nicely, but tell them the truth. I'll give you time. Go ahead.

[15 : 43] It's not me saying that. It's the Bible. And it includes us. I don't know how you couldn't think it includes us.

Because it says all the world may become guilty before God. But then you get down to verse 21. But now.

That means there's a change. But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the prophets. Even the righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ, to all and upon all them that believe.

For there is no difference. Where does that righteousness come from? From God through Jesus Christ.

Folks, that is the only answer. This gospel of Jesus Christ that we're supposed to not be ashamed of, that we're supposed to be sharing, it is not complicated. Do we understand that? It is not.

[16 : 50] It is all about one thing and that is Jesus Christ. And sometimes we can make it much more complicated. And I know there's big words that we can use. We look in the next couple of verses. Starting in verse 24, there's some bigger words there.

And sometimes we think it's complicated, but it's not. It says, being justified freely by His grace. What does justified mean? For us, I, is like your explanation.

You always say it. Just as if I'd never sinned. Is that hard to understand? You're guilty. But through Jesus Christ, you can be like you had never sinned.

That's what justified is. It's not complicated. Justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ. What is redemption all about? When something is redeemed, what does that mean?

Again, big word, but it's not hard to understand. What's being redeemed? Our lives. Our lives. What does it mean to be redeemed? Okay, think of a coupon.

[17 : 55] You ever use any coupons? And it talks about you can redeem this coupon when you buy this item. That coupon, what is it? It's just a piece of paper, right? Any value in that piece of paper?

Not until you redeem it, right? That piece of paper is just a piece of paper until you trade it in, until you redeem it for something of value.

That's what it's talking about. Our lives without Jesus were lost. But then we are redeemed when we accept Jesus Christ. Redemption that is in Christ Jesus, who God set forth, here's another big word, to be a propitiation through faith in His blood.

What's propitiation? It's a substitute. That's an easier word, isn't it? It's a substitute. Jesus became our substitute.

Any of you that have ever played sports, you ever have a sub come in? Brady, you play basketball. Ever have somebody sub in for you? Why?

[19 : 06] Because you get tired. And you need somebody that you're getting tired, and maybe you can't do the job. You need somebody to come in that is fresh and that can do the job. Jesus was the substitution for us.

We couldn't do it. We weren't strong enough. We weren't good enough. Jesus was the substitution. He came in for us.

And He took the penalty of that sin on the cross. That's all that propitiation means. Propitiation through faith in His blood, in verse 25.

To declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past. Remission. There's another last big word in these verses. What does remission mean? Folks, it's talking about forgiveness. That we have forgiveness for that guilt that we have. For that sin that we have in our life. And folks, how much do we need that forgiveness? And Sarah was exactly right.

[20 : 12] Even though we're a Christian, and I think Colton said it, that does not make us perfect, does it? We continue to need that forgiveness every day because we fall short. Do you fall short? Are you always what God wants you to be?

Do you always do what God wants you to do? I don't. I'd like to say I do. But I don't. We have things like pastor appreciation.

You know what? I often think about that. I'm not worthy of that. I have too many faults. I have too many areas I fall short. But then I'm encouraged when I look to God's Word.

To know that I'm forgiven because of what Jesus Christ did for me. And folks, that's the gospel that we need to carry to the world around us. There's too many people that I hear when I talk to them, I've gone too far, I've done too much, I'm too far, I can never come back.

No, you're not. This forgiveness that it talks about, this remission of sins, God is always ready to forgive, isn't He? All we need is to go to Him.

[21 : 16] Put our faith and trust in Jesus Christ. It's what it talks about. Believing in Him and having faith in Him. And it all comes down to one thing. Look again in verse 25.

Whom God has set forth to be a propitiation or a substitute for us through faith in what? His blood. This morning, in just a moment, we're going to take communion together.

And it's all about the blood of Jesus, His body and His blood that He allowed to be sacrificed for us. He was willing to do that for someone who was guilty and didn't deserve it.

Guess who that person is? You and me. Did you deserve it? Say, I didn't deserve it. Go ahead and say that. Because you don't. I didn't deserve it either.

Did Christ do it anyway? That's what we celebrate when we take communion. The fact that Jesus Christ was willing to shed His blood and have His body broken and go to the cross for people who didn't deserve it, and that is us.

[22 : 20] And we celebrate that fact together. But before we take communion and we talk about the blood, and I know often talking about blood is uncomfortable, but folks, without the blood, we wouldn't be forgiven.

I want to read from 1 Corinthians 11. It says, For as often as ye eat the bread and drink the cup, ye show the Lord's death until He returns.

We're remembering His death until He comes back. It says, Wherefore, whosoever shall eat of this bread and drink of this cup unworthily is guilty. There's that word guilt again, of the body and blood of the Lord.

But let a man examine himself and then let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup. Now, I'm going to ask right now if you just bow your heads, close your eyes. And it says, Let a man examine himself.

That means look inside and see what's there. Are there things there that God would not be pleased with? Are there things there that should have changed and yet they haven't?

[23 : 19] Are there sins there that you know you need to ask forgiveness for and you haven't? This is the time to do that. If you've never asked Jesus into your heart, now's the time to do that too. Just ask Him to forgive your sins and help Him to live for you.

It's simple. But you have to do it with sincerity. But I encourage you to take a moment and examine your heart in life. Bring it before the Father and make sure your heart is right with Him.

Take a moment and talk with God. God, we thank you for this morning that you've given us.

And Lord, we realize that every one of us falls short. That we still sin. As Paul often or would also share, the flesh is willing, the body is weak.

Often we don't do the things we want to do and do the things we know we shouldn't do. But Lord, we know that you're a God that is ready to forgive and we thank you for that. Right now, Lord, we just bring our sin before you and we ask for your forgiveness through the blood of Jesus Christ.

[24 : 27] That you would forgive us and help us to be righteous in your eyes. Lord, we know that we'll fall short again. But Lord, we thank you that your grace extends far beyond what our sin does.

That you say you'll separate us from our sin as far as the east is from the west. That you'll blot it out. And Lord, we thank you for that. So Lord, just forgive us in those areas that we need forgiven, which are many. Thank you for the sacrifice of Jesus Christ so that we can find that forgiveness.

And it's in his name that we pray. And all God's people said. I'm going to ask the deacons if they would come forward at this time. Have them go ahead and begin to pass the bread.

And I would just encourage you, if you'd like to take communion this morning, to take a piece of bread and just hold it in your hand. And again, if your life is not right with Jesus Christ, I encourage you to just let the plate pass on by.

Make sure your heart is right with Jesus if you're going to take communion this morning. But I'd encourage you just to hold that bread in your hand. And as the bread is being passed, I want to remind us what this bread represents.

[25 : 39] You know, the Bible talks a whole lot about bread. Jesus said, I am the bread of life. And the bread that we hold symbolizes Jesus Christ and his body.

And you know, it's an amazing thing to think that Jesus Christ took on a body to begin with. If you're like me, and as you get older, you know what?

Things hurt sometimes, don't they? You fall down, does it hurt? I know Dave's not here to ask this morning. I'm guessing when he fell, it probably hurt, didn't it? When we get sick, does it hurt?

When we have things go wrong with our bodies, does it hurt? And you know, the reality is Jesus was willing to leave his home in heaven where there is no pain, there's no any of that.

And he was willing to come down and take on a physical body here on this earth. And when he was in that physical body, you know what he experienced? Pain.

[26 : 38] Hurts. Jesus was perfect spiritually, but you know what? His body was still a human body. I imagine if he walked too far, he might have got blisters. I imagine if he fell down, it hurt just like it would for you and I.

But he was willing to take on that body, that human form for us. He didn't have to. And then he was willing to let that body be found guilty in man's eyes.

He was willing to let that body be whipped and beaten, it says beyond the recognition of a man. He was willing to allow that body to be spit upon. If you're spit on, how do you feel?

Angry? Revengeful? Jesus was spit on him. You know what? He allowed it to happen. He allowed that crown of thorns to be placed on his head.

Would have been painful. He was made to carry his own cross. He couldn't carry it all the way. He'd been beaten too much. Too much weakness. He allowed himself to be nailed to that cross.

[27 : 48] In his feet and in his hands. Do you know what he would have experienced at that time? Pain. Pain. Sometimes when we experience pain, especially if it's for somebody else, you know what?

We can get angry. If someone else has caused us pain. We caused Jesus that pain because of our sin. But did he get angry? No, he took it.

He took it. Because he loves us that much. He allowed his body to be broken for you. And he allowed his body to be broken for me.

That bread that you hold represents the body of Christ. Phyllis, did you get one?

Represents his body. And in Corinthians, when it talks about Jesus, when he was together with his disciples, they broke bread.

[28 : 50] And it says that Jesus gave thanks for the bread. And let's bow our heads as we give thanks for this bread that we hold. Lord God, we thank you for this bread that we hold in our hand as we understand it symbolizes the body of Jesus Christ.

It was broken for us. We just ask your blessings upon this bread and that you would remind us what it stands for always. that we would remember as we do this that it represents and shows the Lord's death till he returns.

Remind us of the sacrifice out of love that was made because of our guilt. In the name of Jesus, we pray. Amen. And after he had blessed the bread, he said, Take and eat.

This is my body, which is broken for you. Do this in remembrance of me. Let's remember him as we eat the bread together this morning. The deacons are now going to go ahead and pass the cup.

And as the cup is passed, again, it represents something. Represents the blood of Jesus.

[30 : 23] We read about that blood already. It says it's through that blood and faith in Jesus Christ that our forgiveness comes. And again, blood is something that we don't like to talk about.

We don't like to think about. I know I have a lot of medical type people in my family and they talk about it and they don't even mind seeing it. I want it to be inside, not come on the outside.

I don't want to see it. But blood is what gives us life, isn't it? Without it, we do not have life. It carries the oxygen, all the nutrients, everything to every part of our body.

And without it, we die. This represents the blood of Jesus Christ. That physical body that he was in, that he allowed his blood to be spilled for us.

You think back to the Old Testament and the only way to have sin forgiven was to sacrifice an animal. And you know what? They had to do that over and over and over again until God provided another way.

[31 : 38] But that other way was a difficult one. It required the Son of God who lived a perfect life to be nailed to that tree.

It required his blood to be shed for you and for me. Someone who was not guilty was sentenced to death and died on the cross for us so that our sins could be forgiven.

So even though we don't like talking about the blood, without the blood, we don't have forgiveness, folks. So that blood, you know what it makes it? It makes it precious. And as we hold that cup in our hand and understand it symbolizes the blood of Christ, I want you to know that that is a very precious thing.

I pray that we understand that this morning. And we're just going to have a few moments of silence until they finish passing the cup. And I encourage you, just as you hold this in your hand, to think about the fact that Christ loved you enough to let his blood be shed for your sin, for your guilt.

That's how much he loves you. Just take time and consider that. Bluetooth Bluetooth Bluetooth

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Bluetooth Bluetooth and again Christ when he was with his disciples it says that after the same manner he took the cup and blessed it let's ask his blessing upon this cup that we hold

[33 : 48] Lord God again we thank you for this day that you've given us and we thank you for what this cup we hold what it represents and that's the blood of Jesus Christ through which we can find

forgiveness we thank you for the love that Christ had for us that he was willing to go to the cross that he was willing to allow his blood to be shed for us Lord that makes us a very precious thing and I pray Lord that we would not quickly forget that that each and every day we would be reminded of the sacrifice Jesus made for us so bless this cup what it represents and help us to remember that sacrifice in Christ's name we pray amen and then Jesus shared these words this is the cup of the New Testament in my blood this do you as often as you drink it in remembrance of me let's remember his sacrifice as we drink the cup you know often we use the expression when we take communion that we celebrate communion and yes it is a very solemn thing but is it also a reason to celebrate absolutely because it means new life for us it means a fresh start it means that guilt that we have in our lives is taken away that we have freedom from sin is that something to celebrate is that something to celebrate all right let's just say praise God together praise God all right

I'm going to ask if you'd stand this morning as we close in prayer Lord God thank you again for this day that you've given us and we thank you that we could take communion together today that we would consider and remember the sacrifice that Jesus Christ made for us and Lord that is what the gospel message is truly all about how mankind can have their sins forgiven so that they can have that relationship restored with their God and Lord I pray that that is the gospel that we would not be ashamed of that we would carry that message out to the world around us that all the world is guilty but there is a remedy for that guilt and that is Jesus Christ help that to be the message that is always on our tongue that we always have a desire to share watch over each one Lord and help us to remember Christ's sacrifice each and every day of our life help us to be thankful for it and to celebrate it because of the forgiveness and the new life that it brings thank you again Lord for your presence in this place and in our lives and it is in the name of Jesus Christ we pray and all God's family said

Amen God bless you and I pray that you have a wonderful week just hold on to your cup and there will be a trash can at the back as you leave just place it in that thank you