

The Best News EVER!

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Preacher: Pastor David

[0 : 00] We're continuing in the book of Romans.

If you are going to use one of the Bibles that's in front of you, it's still page 944. It's kind of nice going this slow. I don't have to look every week.

I just know it's still page 944. So you can turn there, or if you have your own Bible, turn to Romans chapter 8. We're going to start with verse 14, which is the last verse that Pastor Saul covered two weeks ago.

And we're going to start with that. We're going to read verses 14 through 17. Verses 14 through 17. Romans 8, 14 through 17. And you can follow along while I read.

It reads, For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear.

[1 : 08] But you have received the spirit of adoption as sons by whom we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God.

And if children, then heirs, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him, in order that we may also be glorified with him.

And we're going to take it kind of from the center and work our way out. Okay? We're going to take it from the center and work our way out. Basically, we're going to start at the end of verse 15.

At the end of verse 15. And the first point is that you are a child of the Most High God. You are a child of the Most High God.

Nobody said amen. Let me try again. You are a child of the Most High God. Amen. Okay. We'll work on it. Now, let me just start with a disclaimer.

[2 : 12] Okay? That is not true for everyone in this room. Okay? It's not true for everyone in this room. But it can be.

It can be. Before you leave today, it can be true. Look at John 1, verse 12. John 1, verse 12. It says, All who did receive him, and the him is Jesus, All who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.

Notice a couple things. Okay? First is all. All. This offer is open to everyone. Everyone in this room, if not yet, can leave here a child of God.

Everyone. It's open to all. Notice the next section here talks about receiving him. Receiving him. And that concept is that we're entering into a relationship with Jesus.

So, everyone can enter into a relationship with Jesus. That's the offer. It's the offer on the table. Today. Okay?

[3 : 29] Everyone can enter into a relationship with Jesus. But look at the third thing. Believed on his name. Believed in his name. And notice, okay, the notes here.

It says, It's an acceptance of Jesus and of what he claims to be and a commitment of your life to him. You know, when we talk about believing in his name, that's the concept.

Okay? That's what we mean. And you may not know a lot about Jesus yet. We can take care of that. But the understanding is, believing in his name, is we believe that he is who he says he is.

And that, by itself, requires us to commit ourselves to him. Okay? So, in summary, so, I think I did a summary. Did I do a summary? I did a summary. Anyone who is willing to enter into a relationship with Jesus on his terms can become children of God.

So, it may not be true of everyone in this room yet, but it can be today before you leave. You can be a child of God. Now, as we go through the rest of this message, if you do not have a relationship with Jesus yet, let me encourage you to think of this as a commercial.

[4 : 46] Think about all that's being offered to you today as a child of God. God. And, hopefully, by the end, you will be ready to make that commitment.

So, you are a child of the Most High God. Okay? That's the first point. You are a child of the Most High God. And we're going to look at five things.

You got, if you have your bulletin, you see the blanks. Five things. And because someone liked the last time I did a little anacronym, I did child this time. Don't get used to it. It takes a lot of work.

Okay? Okay? But, five things. And this isn't everything that we get by being a child of God. But these are five that are important that we need to keep in mind.

And I hope that you will see are worth meditating on. Okay? So, the first is C. And it changes everything. It changes everything.

[5 : 43] I want to tell you a story. This past Sunday night, those of you that came to the water night, Sunday night in the park, we had slip and slides everywhere.

Kids flying this way and that way. And as it was all ending up, I was cleaning up one of the slip and slides. And Nate Hayes came up to me.

Now, I don't know. I know some of you are guests. But Aaron and Andy Hayes adopted two children from Brundi just over a year ago. Right? Just barely more than a year ago.

And Nate is the youngest and smallest of them. Which is good. Just so you know, I remembered in the beginning because Nate is shorter than Jonas. The words. So, just in case you need help with that.

And so, that's how I kept it straight. But anyway, Nate walked up to me. And I see Nate all the time. And I say, hey, how you doing? And what's going on? And good morning. And, you know, he doesn't acknowledge my existence.

[6 : 41] Okay? But I'm okay with that. But Sunday night, I'm working on this. He walks up to me by himself. He looks up at me and says, what you doing? And I kind of am starting to have like this out of body experience.

I'm like, I'm flipping this slip and slide over. He says, why? I said, I need to clean the back of it. He said, okay.

And he walks away. And I know that seems unimpressive to you. But what impacted me in studying this is how much their lives have changed in a year.

And those of you that have been here that have walked through this process with the Hayes family knows it was a bumpy start. We'll come back to that later in the sermon. Don't worry.

But they've changed so much. Everything about them has changed. I mean, they're speaking English. I had a conversation with him. I mean, it wasn't a long conversation. It was long enough for me.

[7 : 48] I couldn't hardly bear it. I was so shocked. But we had a conversation. His language has changed. How they dress has changed.

Where they go has changed. What they like has changed. What they love has changed. What they don't want has changed. How they treat each other has changed.

Their relationships with everyone and everything has changed because they were adopted into the Hayes family. Do you get it? We're adopted into God's family.

It changes everything or it should change everything. If you are really adopted, it will change everything in your life. It will change how you talk, how you dress, where you go, what you like, what you love.

Everything changes. 2 Corinthians 5.17 says it this way. Adoption. Oh, wrong line. It says this. This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person.

[8 : 49] The old life is gone. A new life has begun. Y'all aren't very excited about this. Maybe you just need to, you know, let it soak a little bit.

This afternoon, you'll be shouting hallelujah and everybody won't know why. But, you know, being adopted, being the child of the Most High God changes everything. Okay, consider this.

We've been here now a little bit longer than Nate and Jonas. But you guys, I'm sure, have seen my daughter Abby. She'll run up to me and she'll hug me.

We're a very touchy family. So, that's a very common occurrence. And she calls me daddy. Okay? Now, if Tim Jones starts calling me daddy, it's going to be a little awkward.

Right? There's just that relationship's not quite there. I love Tim Jones. Nothing against Tim. I'm just saying it would be awkward. Right? Because my daughter has a special place in my heart.

[9 : 48] There's this connection. There's this intimacy that's different than anyone else. My heart is towards her. My eyes are on her. I'm watching what's going on. I'm committed to protect her.

I'm committed to provide for her. I'm committed to teach her. I'm committed to do whatever is necessary for her good. That's the kind of picture we have here. When it talks about the spirit of adoption, us being able to cry, Abba, Father.

There's this intimacy that is new. It's brand new. It's unbelievable. The God of all creation. The God who spoke everything into existence. The God who holds all things together in his hand.

Allows you to call him daddy. That's what I'm talking about. Man, how glorious it is. To have everything changed.

To be a child of the most high God. We've got to keep going. I haven't run through this sermon. Just so you know, like I usually do. We may be here until two. That's when my battery goes out, Mike said. Okay.

[10 : 53] So. Number two. H. Help is always available. Help is always available.

Do you realize being the child of the most high God means that you can go to him with any need. Look at Hebrews chapter 4 verses 14 through 16.

It says this. Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens. Jesus, the son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weakness.

But one who in every respect has been tempted as we are. Yet without sin. Verse 16. Look at this. Verse 16. If you don't have this memorized, memorize this. Let us then with confidence.

Let us boldly draw near to the throne of grace. That we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. Okay. Let me tell you another story.

- [11 : 50] Just happened this morning. Okay. It's going to make me cry too. I'm going to cry a lot today. I'm sitting at my desk. Being angsty about my sermon. And my son texts me.
- And he says. On the way to church. I was praying. I was praying. Lord, please let them have something cold to drink at church today. My throat is kind of itchy.
- And I just was praying. God, please let there be something cold to drink. And he sent me a picture of a cup of lemonade. He said. Dad, I've gone here two years. And they've never had anything cold to drink.
- When you get here in the morning. Never. And this morning I showed up. And there was lemonade. And I went. Lord. How glorious you are.
- You see. Whatever's going on in your life. Whatever struggle it is. Big or small. As a child of God. You have access to help. It's there. The throne room of grace is open to you.
- [12 : 50] So whether you're struggling. Whether you're suffering. Whether you're facing problems that are insurmountable. Or demands that you can't meet. Whatever it is. Whatever your need is. At any moment. At any time.
- Even lemonade. God. God. Opens up the throne room. And says. Come in. Tell me what you need son. Tell me what you need daughter. How glorious is that?
- Or children. The most high God. It changes everything. And help is always available. Y'all aren't excited enough. Come on. I. I. Inheritance.
- We have an inheritance. Beyond imagination. An inheritance beyond imagination. Not only do we have all that we need here. But there's something more than here.
- Right? There's something more than now. There's something more than this life. We have something that we're looking forward to. Look. Here's some summaries of some verses. 1 Peter 1.4. Talks about our inheritance.
- [13 : 48] As imperishable. Undeified. Unfading. Philippians 3.21. Talks about our new bodies. Hallelujah. Who wants a new body? Our lowly body will be transformed.
- It will be like his glorious body. Revelation 21. 3.3. 3.4. We will dwell with God. He'll wipe away our tears. There will be no more death. Or sadness. Or crying.
- Or pain. If you were at last Sunday night. You heard Andy talk about that. And Revelation 21. 18. Through 21. Talks about the beauties of heaven. Streets of gold. Walls made of gems. How glorious our inheritance is.
- We are bound for much more than this. Amen? Amen. We have an inheritance. Because we're a child of the most high God.
- L. Love without conditions. Love without conditions. Let's look at some verses. Ephesians 1.3-5. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- [14 : 49] Who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places. Even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world. That we should be holy and blameless before him.
- In love he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ. According to the purpose of his will. Before the world was made. Before anything was in existence.
- God had already set his heart to adopt you. Love without conditions. Look at this. Romans 5.6-8. For while we were still weak at the right time.
- Christ died for the ungodly. For one will scarcely die for a righteous person. Though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die. But God shows his love for us.
- In that while we were still sinners. While we were in rebellion. While we were his enemies. While we were against him. Christ died for us. 1 John 4.9-10.

- [15 : 48] God showed us how much he loved us. By sending his one and only son into the world. So that we might have eternal life through him. This is real love. Not that we loved God. But that he loved us and sent his son as a sacrifice to take away our sins. Love without condition. That's the kind of love God pours out on you.
- You know think about it like this. Okay. I was talking to Andy the other night. And he said something like this to me. If I misquote him. It's my fault. Not his fault. But he said. Aaron and I.
- Aaron can tell me if this is right. Aaron and I have thought many times. If we had to go for a week and come home. Would we have been able to go back and get the boys? The first week was rough.
- Okay. You know they signed up. They paid the money. They signed on the dotted line. Knowing nothing about what they were getting. I mean they read some books. They knew things could be rough. But it didn't even compare to what happened.
- [16 : 46] Right. Now. God. God. Looks. At you. God. Chose you. God. Adopted you. Knowing. Everything. You would ever. Do wrong. In the past. In the future. From this point on. God knew. It would be like. If Andy and Aaron. Had known. Every time.
- Those kids were going to break something. Throw something away. Pee on the carpet. Spit. The list is really long. We won't keep going. But if they knew. Even what was going to happen.
- The first month. We would be missing. Nate and Jonas. But God knows. God knows you. He loves you. Unconditionally. Not because he's ignorant. But because he's not ignorant. He chose you. In your condition. Without any ignorance at all.
- [17 : 42] Amen. We're a child. Of the most high God. Okay D. You gotta keep moving. You're late already. Discipline out of love. Some of you are going. Wait. I don't want to talk about this one.
- This doesn't sound good. Let's look at Hebrews 12. 5 through 11. And you have forgotten. The encouraging words. God spoke to you. As his children.
- He said. My child. Don't make light. Of the Lord's discipline. Don't give up. When he corrects you. For the Lord. Disciplines. Those he loves. And he punishes. Each one.
- He accepts. As his child. As you endure. This divine discipline. Remember. That God is treating you. As his own children. Whoever heard of a child.
- Who is never disciplined. By its father. In verse 8. If God doesn't discipline you. As he does. All of his children. It means. You are illegitimate.
- [18 : 37] And not really. His children at all. Since we respected. Our earthly fathers. Who disciplined us. Shouldn't we submit. Even more. To the discipline. Of the father.
- Of our spirits. And live forever. For our earthly fathers. Disciplined us. For a few years. Doing the best. They knew how. But God's discipline. Is always good for us. So that we might share.
- In his holiness. Verse 11. No discipline. Is enjoyable. While it's happening. It's painful. But afterward. There will be a peaceful. A peaceful harvest.
- Of right living. For those who are trained. In this way. You know. Discipline is not. A negative thing. It may be an unpleasant thing. But it's not. A negative thing.
- Right. We started by talking about. How being a child of God. Changes everything. We talked about. Nate and Jonas. How much they've changed. I assure you. Much of that change. Has been through. Discipline.

- [19 : 32] Right. The change we long for. In our lives. What we truly desire. What we want. More than anything. Most often. God brings. Through the process of discipline.
- But the good news is. It's discipline. Out of love. It's discipline. Out of love. And that's so important.
- It's so important. You're a child. Of the most high God. Okay. You're a child. Of the most high God. Changes everything. Helps always avail.
- Inheritance beyond imagination. Love without condition. Discipline. Out of love. Now that leads us to a question. Why are you afraid? Why are you afraid?
- Now I know. You might be thinking. Well. Okay. I could see how. Being a child of the most high God. Impacts. Our fear. You know. We. It's true. Being God's child.
- [20 : 29] Should impact. Just our general fears. Right. Spiders. Spiders is big. But. Impacts. Spiders. Or our fear of others. Or. Even after.
- Things are happening this weekend. Our fear of active shooters. All of that should be. Impacted. In knowing that we're God's child. It says. In Psalm 56. 9 through 11.
- Then my enemies will turn back in the day when I call. This I know. That God is for me. In God whose word I praise. In the Lord whose word I praise. I. In trust.
- In God I trust. I shall not be afraid. What can man do to me? So. Being a child of God. Should impact our fears. And we could talk about that extensively.
- I actually had a whole sermon on that. That's what I thought we were going to talk about. But we're not. So. Surprised. To both of us. But. But what we really need to look at.
- [21 : 23] Is verse 15 again. Okay. Verse 15. Romans 8. 15. Says. For you did not receive the spirit of slavery. To fall back into fear.
- You did not receive the spirit of slavery. To fall back into fear. But. You received the spirit of adoption. As sons. By whom we cry. Abba. Father. And you notice. As we've been going through.
- Romans chapter 8. Time and again. We see the parallels. Happening in Paul's writing. Right. And we see it again here. We see that there's a spirit of slavery. Compared to the spirit of adoption.
- We see this. This sense of fear. Compared to this. Abba. Father. And. And. And. And so. The question is. Why are you afraid. If you're the child of God. And maybe you're saying to yourself.
- Well. You know. Doesn't the Bible say. We're supposed to be afraid of God. You know. Fear God. There's lots of fear God verses. Aren't we supposed to fear God? The answer is yes. Because the Bible's always right. So if it says it.
- [22 : 19] You should do it. Fear God. But what I would say to you is this. There's a big difference. Between fear as a slave. And fear as a son. Okay.
- There's a huge difference. Between fear as a slave. Versus fear as a son. My children. My children. All fear me. They do.
- They know when to fear me more than other times. But none of them have ever feared me as a slave. Even when I discipline them. They never doubt.
- My love for them. They're never afraid to come to me. They're not even afraid to come to me. And tell me they've done things wrong. Because there's a difference in fear as a slave.
- And fear as a son. And I think that's the beauty of how God puts it in this verse. He specifies clearly. Now the problem in that is this.
- [23 : 17] The problem in that is this. Because so often we slip back into fearing as slaves.

We slip back into fearing as slaves. I think we can see this in the story that you're all very familiar with. The story of the prodigal son. From Luke chapter 15.

And in case you don't know it. Let me just give you a summary. Okay. There are two sons. They have a father. And they're. I don't know. They're rich. I don't know. So the one son. The prodigal son.

Which if you don't know prodigal. It means somebody that's frivolous in how they spend money. Okay. So the prodigal son comes to the father. And you remember he says. Hey you know. I'd like to go ahead and get my share of the inheritance.

Now. You know. Which just in case you don't know. That's basically like saying. Dad I wish you were dead already. But since you're not. Can I. Can I have my part of the money? Okay. And so the father gives it to him.

[24 : 16] And you remember what happens. He goes off to a far away land. And he's prodigal. He spends it frivolously. On all kinds of terrible things. Right. And so.

He has all these parties. Does all this stuff. Until the money's gone. You remember. He ends up then broke. And none of his friends want to hang out there anymore. Because after all. He's broke now. And who likes to go to a broke party.

So. He's alone. Feeding pigs to survive. Right. You remember the story. Right. You with me. And that's where this picks up. Okay. In verse 17.

He says. But when he came to himself. He said. How many of my father's hired servants. Have more than enough bread. But I perish here with hunger. I will arise.

And go to my father. I will say to him. Father. I have sinned against heaven. And before you. I'm no longer worthy to be called your son. Treat me as one of your hired servants.

[25 : 15] Now. Brothers and sisters. Let me ask you this. How often do we get stuck. At this place in the story. How often do we get stuck.

At this place in the story. Afraid of getting what you deserve. And so when I ask you. Why are you afraid. That's what I'm really asking you. Why are you afraid of getting what you deserve.

Now. Let's be honest. Okay. Let's be honest. I have to read this. Because I extensively wrote down my honesty list here. The truth is. This is a room full of children.

Of the most high God. But. Every one of us is a failure. We've failed at keeping our eyes. Our minds. And our mouths. Pure.

We have failed at loving others. We have failed at being generous. We've failed at our relationships. And our friendships. We've failed in our singleness. We've failed in our marriages.

[26 : 11] We've failed in our parenting. We've failed in our grandparenting. And if there's any great grandparents. Just add that on there. Okay. We are alcoholics. And drug addicts. We're homosexuals.

And adulterers. We've been sexually unfaithful. In our singleness. And in our marriages. We are hateful. And spiteful. And gossips. And slanderers. We are greedy.

And selfish. And materialistic. We're willing to steal. And cheat. And lie. We're willing to turn a blind eye. To other people's suffering. We worship comfort.

And pleasure. And indulgence. And novelty. We are prideful. And we blame our faults and failures. On everyone but ourselves. Or else we just justify them away.

We know our own hearts. Right? We know our own hearts. We know our own minds. We know our own pasts. Our history. We know our own sin.

[27 : 14] And so easily. Because of that. We can slip into thinking. Like the prodigal son. We begin to see this sense of.

I'm no longer to be worthy to call your son or daughter. Just treat me as one of your hired servants. Treat me as a slave. And so we live in fear. Fear.

We live in fear. Waiting for the hammer to fall. We're expecting something terrible to happen. As a judgment for our past sins.

Or in retribution. For not making as much progress in holy living as we should. We imagine in some way that God's waiting with a big stick to whack us every time we fail.

We live as slaves. Driven by fear. Insecurity. Uncertainty. We begin to doubt God's love.

[28 : 09] God's grace. God's mercy. Now we don't doubt it towards others. After all. We realize they're probably better than us anyway. But we doubt it towards us. So we try to work harder.

We decide we'll do better. We commit to be good enough. Yet deep down inside. We're afraid. Sooner or later. We will get what we deserve. And the worst part about this subtle.

Maybe even unconscious fear. Is it begins to eat away at our intimacy with the Father. Whatever intimacy we have. When we begin to think this way.

When we begin to take this stance. And function as slaves instead of sons. That intimacy begins to be broken apart. And not just with our Father.

But with each other. Right? We know how we are. And because of that. We push away. We feel a need to be isolated.

[29 : 08] We don't want people to really know us. We have to put on this facade. We can't be real. We can't talk about our struggles. We can't talk about our brokenness. We can't talk about our families. Because we give in to this sense.

That we're just not good enough. We treat each other like slaves too. And so how does somebody run. To a Father that they just expect.

Is going to whack them back down. So we continue to go through all the motions. Right? We still do all the right things.

We say all the right stuff. We check off all the right boxes. But we feel isolated. We feel disconnected. We feel alone. Knowing something is right. I mean something isn't right.

But not sure how to fix it. Look at 1 John 4. 1 John 4. 16 through 19. 1 John 4. 16 through 19. So we have come to know.

[30 : 05] And to believe. The love. That God has for us. God is love. And whoever abides in love. Abides in God. And God abides in him.

By this is love perfected with us. So that we may have confidence. For the day of judgment. Because as he is. So also are we. In this world.

There is no fear in love. But perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment. Whoever fears has not been perfected in love.

We love. Because he first loved us. Notice the underlined part of that passage. He is.

As he is. So also are we in this world. Brothers and sisters. You are a child of the most high God. The standing that Jesus has. Before the father.

[31 : 02] Is the same standing that you have. Not that you deserve. Praise the Lord. But it's the one you have. As he is. So also are we in this world. Jesus doesn't have to be afraid.

To approach the father. No matter what. He doesn't have to cower. He doesn't have to be concerned. He doesn't have to withdraw. Because his relationship is right. And that's the relationship that you have.

In Jesus Christ. Amen. Look at the ending. To the prodigal son story. You guys know this. But let's look at it. It says. And he rose.

And came to his father. But while he was still a long way off. His father saw him. And felt compassion. And ran.

And embraced him. And kissed him. And the son. You're so dumb. Isn't he? The son says. He's got this speech. He's been practicing. For however many miles he's been walking.

[31 : 58] Father. I have sinned against heaven. And before you. I'm no longer worthy. To be called your son. And the father's not even listening to him. Right? I mean. He's like. He's. I know. I got this.

Okay. I'm going to do my presentation. The father's calling to his servants. Bring quickly. The best robe. And put it on him. Bring a ring. Put a ring on his hand.

And shoes on his feet. Bring the fattened calf. And kill it. Let us eat. And celebrate. Imagine how different things would have been.

For the prodigal son. If he had only. Known. What was going to happen. When he went home. I mean. How long did he stand there. Feeding pigs. Right?

How long did he wallow. In his own misery. His own brokenness. His own failure. His own abilities. To be a slave. And not to imagine. That the father still saw him.

[32 : 55] As a son. If only he had known. How quickly would he have gone home. How much would he have run. Into his father's arms. Why are you afraid?

Why are you afraid? Why are you afraid? Romans 8.15. You did not receive the spirit of slavery.

To fall back into fear. But you have received the spirit of adoption as sons. By whom we cry. Abba. Father. Daddy. Whatever you've done. Whatever you're still doing.

Whatever you're ashamed of. Whatever seems not good enough. Throw it all aside. Run into the arms of the one who loves you. Crying out. Daddy. Daddy.

Daddy. Don't wait. Why are you waiting? Don't keep living as a slave. When you're already a child of the most high God. And you know.

[33 : 50] It's like an interesting cycle. Because once you do that. As you begin to run more consistently to your father. Not away from your father. We see verse 16 become more and more evident in our lives.

The spirit himself bears witness with our spirit. That we are children of God. The spirit bears witness by verse 15. Pouring out that love for God in our lives.

A growing love. That's a witness. And in verse 13. The pastor Saul talked about. We see it. Because we see a growing hatred for sin growing in our lives. We're putting to death those things.

And so. As we run to God. Out of love. And we stop fearing him. And stop treating him as our slave owner. We see this change in us. Our lives are being transformed by his love.

Everything is changed. That leads to a question.

[34 : 51] Let's look at verse 17. Will you suffer to be with Jesus? Will you suffer to be with Jesus? Verse 17 says.

If children then heirs. Heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ. Provided we suffer with him. In order that we may also be glorified with him. Now the truth is.

If you do not understand. And experience God's love for you. As his child. If you do not cast aside. That slavish fear. You will never be able to answer this question yes.

Only by living in his great and glorious love. Only by experiencing life as a child of the most high God. Will you be willing to do whatever it takes to be close to Jesus.

Paul expresses it this way. A passage you might be familiar with. Philippians 3. 8 through 14. It says. Indeed. I count everything as loss.

- [35 : 56] Because of the surpassing worth. Of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake. I have suffered the loss of all things. And count them as rubbish. In order that I may gain Christ. Be found in him. Not having a righteousness of my own. That comes from the law. But that which comes through faith in Christ. The righteousness from God that depends on faith. That I may know him. And the power of his resurrection. And share in his sufferings. Becoming like him in his death. That by any means possible. I may attain the resurrection from the dead. Not that I've already obtained it. But I press on. Are you willing to suffer the loss of all things? Count them as rubbish. Are you willing to share in Jesus' suffering? Become like him in his death. In order to know by any means possible. The resurrection from the dead. To be with him forever.
- [36 : 54] Are you willing to give away your car? Maybe take a homeless person into your home. Give up eating so others can eat. Give up coffee, chocolate, pizza. I didn't list tater tots on there. Lose your job. Become homeless. Leave your family and friends. Are you willing to move around the world? Or adopt a child? Or two, send your child off to a dangerous place. Bury a child. Care for a special needs child. Live with chronic pain. Have cancer. Develop a disability. Etc. Are you willing to suffer with Christ. In whatever way he chooses. In order to be with him. Now let me ask you this. I hope you didn't have lunch plans. When you hear a list like that. How do you feel? Are you scared? Are you offended? Do you begin making excuses? Do you hear in it only the giving up. And not the getting.
- [37 : 54] The rich young ruler. You guys are familiar with this. Let's look at this. Let me give you a little background. Rich young ruler. Comes to Jesus. Says what do I have to do to receive eternal life? He says okay well. How about you know. Do this. Do this. Do this. Do this. You guys says no problem. I got that down. Okay. And then verse 21. Okay. Says. And Jesus looking at him. Loved him. And said to him. You lack one thing. Go sell all that you have. And give to the poor. You will have treasure in heaven. Come follow me. It says. He was disheartened by the saying. And he went away sorrowful. For he had great possessions. You see. When he heard that. All he heard was go and sell. He didn't hear. Come and follow. You know. He heard God. Jesus. Placing on him. This list of requirements. Okay. If you want eternal life.
- [38 : 50] You got to do this. You got to do this. You got to do this. And then hey. You know what. Let's just top it off. Make things a little challenging. Sell everything you got. And that's as far as he got. He walked away. He missed the fact that Jesus loved him. And Jesus was saying. Okay. You know what. Put aside your old life. And come be with me. There was an invitation. Jesus was inviting him. Give that up. So you can be with me. Do you hear the come and follow? Will you suffer to be with Jesus? If you answer yes. I have good news. Kind of. It's only for a little while. It's only for a little while. If you're willing to suffer to be with Jesus. No matter how hard it is. How painful. How challenging. No matter what it costs you. The longest it can last. Is for a lifetime. And that's not that long.
- [39 : 47] Let's look at 2 Corinthians. 2 Corinthians 4. 8-12 says. We are afflicted. Paul's writing. We are afflicted in every way.

But not crushed. Perplexed. But not driven to despair. Persecuted. But not forsaken. Struck down. But not destroyed. Always carrying in the body.

The death of Jesus. So that the life of Jesus. May also be manifested in our bodies. So people can see it. For we who live. Are always being given over to death.

For Jesus sake. So that the life of Jesus. May be seen in our mortal flesh. So death is at work in us. But life in you. Then it continues. In verse 15.

It says. For it is all for your sake. So that as grace extends to more and more people. It may increase thanksgiving to the glory of God. So we do not lose heart.

[40 : 43] Though our outer self is wasting away. Our inner self is being renewed day by day. Verse 17. For this light momentary affliction.

Is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory. Beyond all comparison. Not worthy to be compared. 18.

As we look not to the things that are seen. But to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient. But the things that are unseen are eternal. I mean you understand in that passage.

Paul just talks about being crushed. And being. You know. If you read 2nd Corinthians. Which I highly recommend. It's one of my favorite books. With the other 66. But the other 65 I guess.

If you read 2nd Corinthians to this point. Paul's talked about. Being at the point where he. He wishes he was going to die. If you read past this. It talks about all the things that he's gone through.

[41 : 38] And then he says. This light momentary affliction. But the good news is. He realized. The worse it can be is for a lifetime.

But being with Jesus was going to be forever. So. You're a child of the most high God. Why are you afraid? Will you suffer. To be with Jesus.

Let's pray. Let's pray. Let's pray.