

God's Gospel: God Reveals His Righteousness

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- [0 : 0 0] So welcome everyone. If there's some, there's a few new faces here. My name is BK. I have the pleasure of being one of the pastors here. And we are in the book of Romans.
- So please turn with me in your Bibles to Romans chapter 1. Romans chapter 1. We are actually in the verse which is not only the theme of Romans, but I would argue and I believe quite successfully, this is the theme of the Bible.
- Well, this is what sums up the message of the Bible. It is the message that launched the Presbyterian, or the Presbyterian, dare I say, forgive me for saying that, launched the Protestant church.
- It was the Lutheran church, but that's one another argument later. This is the text that led Martin Luther, a Catholic monk, to protest against the Roman church, which led to the birth of the Protestant church.
- This is the text that enslaved Martin Luther, and it was also the text that freed Martin Luther. The theme of these two verses is simply salvation.
- [1 : 1 3] Salvation, as we have defined it, is God's gift to us. It is man's greatest need. Only a fool, which is one who is great in his own eyes or her eyes, would recognize that they are in no need of salvation.
- But man clearly is. We need rescuing. Amen? This is what the Christmas season is truly all about.
- It is the beginning of God's rescue plan unfolding in human history. This plan that Paul teaches us here is God's gospel, and Paul loves this gospel.
- It is God's good news. So read along with me. It's Romans 1, verses 16 and 17. And while we go through, if you haven't been here for a while, I'll give you a little bit of background as we continue on.
- But this is the crux of his message, of why he is not ashamed of this gospel. This is why he glories in the gospel. The gospel is God's good news, God's way of salvation.
- [2 : 2 5] Let's take a look. It says, For, he's making an argument here. He goes, For, I am not ashamed of this gospel. Another way to read that is, For, I glory in the gospel.
- For, it is the power of God. It is the power of God on display for salvation to everyone who believes. To the Jew first and also to the Greek.
- For, in it, this gospel, in it, the righteousness of God is revealed. From faith, for faith, as it is written.
- The righteous shall live by faith. The salvation that God works in us is a total salvation.
- It is a complete salvation. This is what Paul taught leading up to here. It is a salvation that justifies us. And that is a theological, technical term. It's a legal term.
- [3 : 2 5] It means we have been declared right. We've been declared, not so much innocent, but not guilty. It is also a salvation that sanctifies us.
- It cleanses us as we live and we grow in the faith. God works in us to produce good works. And ultimately, this salvation glorifies us.

It is what helps us. It is what makes us escape the wrath of God, which will come upon this earth. It is the promise of God's eternity. It is the power of God that saves us.

It is a power that continues to save us. And it is a power that will save us. And this power guarantees our salvation to those who place their faith in Jesus Christ.

Last week, I asked, where does this power of God come from? How do we understand this power? And Paul talks about, it's in the Gospels, the power of God's word, working through the power of the Holy Spirit.

[4 : 31] We hear these words that are in God's word, and the power of the Spirit works with them that reveals their truth, which changes us, which gives us understanding into God's heart and his mind.

I'll just read you a couple of quotes from Paul in 1 Thessalonians. He says, And we also thank God constantly for this. He says that, when you receive the word of God, the Holy Scriptures, which you heard from us, that they were busy preaching God's word to them, you accepted it, not as the word of men, as what it really is, the word of God.

It wasn't just man speaking these truths, but people when they're listening, the Holy Spirit gives them an understanding that this is truly God's word. This is God the Creator communicating with us.

Let's be honest. When we're in our home, whose wisdom do we value more, our five-year-olds or our wives? Right? Let's be honest.

A lot of five- and six-year-olds have a lot of opinions. Right? Of course not. 1 Thessalonians 1, 5, For we know, brothers, who are loved by God, that he has chosen you, because our gospel came to you not only in word, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit with which full conviction.

[5 : 58] So when we hear this word of God, God's spirit working in that, it gives us this understanding. It's not some magical incantation of words, or it's not a certain order of words that if we use before God when we pray, that God listens to us.

That's not how it works. God's word, God's gospel, when we hear it, the Holy Spirit is a part of it, and it helps us understand that it is indeed God's word.

We need to listen to it. He is the one who created us, who made us, who knows us. Last week, I used the analogy of a prescription.

Doctor diagnoses you as being sick. Are you healed? No. The doctor then writes a prescription. You have this prescription. You understand that you're sick, and you know what the medicine is to save you.

Are you healed? No. You run down to the pharmacy. You give it to the pharmacist, and he gives you those pills, and you say, I've got these pills. I'm going to be healed. Are you healed?

[7 : 06] No. It's not until you open that cup, and you take the pills, you receive that gospel, does the healing begin.

And this word of God, alongside the power of the Holy Spirit, saves us. And we heard this wonderful news. This message just wasn't for the Jew, but it was for the Gentiles also.

So this morning, I want to focus on two very specific words with you this morning. The first word is the word reveal, and the second word that I want to speak to you about is righteousness.

Both of these words are found in verse 17. Let me read it again. It says, for in it, that it is referring to the gospel, God's gospel, the gospel that isn't about, simply about God.

It is God's message to us. The righteousness of God is revealed from faith. Now, it's a very interesting word that he uses, is reveal here.

[8 : 16] Reveal means to disclose, to divulge, to display. It means to uncover or expose. And what Paul is saying is, when he says that it's reveal, it's not just an introduction to a message.

It's almost like the message was under this blanket that we could have here. And by removing the blanket, it's now revealed. So there was a message.

This gospel was always there, but it's now being truly revealed in the person of Jesus Christ. So it's to reveal what is already there.

He's not introducing something new. So this gospel of God's righteousness is not a new message. This message has always existed.

And if you look at verse 4, or verse 2, notice he says, he's talking about God's gospel, which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures.

[9 : 24] What he's saying is, what I'm coming to you, and remember, he's running to a church in Rome, which is made up of very influential Jews and influential Gentiles. And in case you didn't know, when they heard the gospel coming in from Acts 2, they heard Peter preach.

Some of the people in Rome went back, preached in the synagogues. A lot of Jews got saved. And then the emperor got really mad at all the Jews and kicked them all out of Rome. And at that time, a lot of Gentiles were left over.

Then there started to be this more Gentile influence. So Paul, writing this letter, is at the end of his third missionary journey. And in those journeys, he's meeting all these people that are coming from Rome.

You guys know the name Aquila and Priscilla. If you're familiar, they were a missionary couple that traveled. He actually met them on their way out of Rome because they were kicked out. And these people were telling Paul about what was going on.

So he knows there's this confusion over the gospel. Because it was a Jewish gospel originally, it was preached by a Jew in the Jewish land, a lot of questions are, so for me to be Christian, do I need to be Gentile?

[10 : 32] Right? Do I need to become circumcised? Do I have to be more Jewish in order to be Christian? So all those questions, Paul is constantly dealing with.

But he's saying, first of all, right here, there is this righteousness of God, not only for the Jew, but for the Gentile as well. So now that we know that this message is clear, what makes it clear?

Did philosophy make this message of the gospel clear? Did historians through their work make this message of the gospel clear?

Did archaeology with their discoveries make this gospel clear? We've got books that talk about the quest for the historical Jesus.

Do those quests make the gospel clear? No. See, here's the thing.

[11 : 36] The gospel is not some kind of trek you go on. The gospel is not some kind of quest you go in order to find something.

The quest is not a journey. And listen, I know a lot of Christian people use that word journey. I have pet peeves. I do.

That's one of them. And I'll tell you why. Why I hate the journey analogy. Because it gives the idea that we're on the idea we're looking for something on our journey.

No, no. The gospel is the beginning. Right? We don't go on a journey to find the gospel. It begins with the gospel. Now that we understand the gospel, we now have a purpose in which to live.

We don't flutter and flutter through life. We've got, we're soldiers under God's command. God has given us the message. He's given us the commands. And there's no guessing to who or what we should be.

[12 : 39] He tells us exactly who we should be and how we should be. That's a whole other sermon right there. I might have you here for a couple of sermons. If you know Pilgrim's progress, that tells you a progress.

He's growing in that faith. That's the sanctification part. No, the gospel is a revelation. The gospel is an announcement. The gospel is a notification. The gospel is unfolding truth.

The gospel, my friends, is unveiling of truth. It's not an argument. It is not a debate. It is God's truth revealed.

And what is that gospel? The gospel is God's way of righteousness. The gospel is God's way of righteousness.

Notice what it says in verse 17. For the righteous will live by faith. What he's doing there, he's quoting from a prophet that existed a long time ago by the name of Habakkuk.

[13 : 51] Or Habakkuk. And found in 2.4. And he was a prophet that is known. I used to call him my favorite prophet because he was the prophet who had a question.

His whole ministry just seemed to be about questions. Just basically, Lord, help me understand. You see, God's righteousness is revealed, is made clear through faith, for faith.

So the key question is, has this always been there? I mean, was this righteousness always there for us to know? Later on, Paul will write for us in Romans 3.21.

He says, But now, the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law. Although the law and the prophets bear witness to it, the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe.

What Paul is communicating there, we all knew about the righteousness of God. You know where it was? It was in the law. The law actually taught about God's righteousness.

[14 : 58] So we knew there was this understanding. But now, God is making it clear. It was there, but it's just not seen as well as we see it in Jesus Christ.

Romans 4 tells us that this man Abraham, that God had called to be the father of his people, that Abraham's faith is the result of God's revealing to him his truth.

And Abraham believed, right? Abraham had no idea that he was going to have his faith. And you know what? To be saved, you've got to place your faith in Jesus Christ. Abraham didn't do that.

He didn't know who Jesus Christ was, but he knew that there was a promised Messiah. He believed in a God who told him, who essentially said, I will make all things right for you, Abraham.

I will answer every promise, every covenant I made with you. And the only thing you need to do is believe. You see, in the Old Testament, they looked forward to Jesus in the Old Testament or the New Testament, and now, we look back to the cross, right?

[16 : 15] They knew there was a cross. They didn't know it was going to look like a cross, but let's be honest, Isaiah talks about it quite a bit. We've got prophets who talk about it, but they just didn't quite get it.

Paul, and this is the verse that Dave read for us this morning in Ephesians 3. It says, how the mystery was made known to me by revelation.

That was Paul speaking when he was on the road to Damascus. God revealed himself to him through this revelation. And he says, I have written briefly, when you read this, you will perceive my insight into the mystery of Christ, which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed to the holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit.

This mystery is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

If you're familiar with the life of Jesus Christ and you're familiar with this time that he lived here on earth, the biggest dispute that he had with the Jewish leaders is no matter how many times he confronted them in their righteousness, they always said, hey, we're a seed of David.

[17 : 35] We're a seed of David. We're from Abraham's line, seed of Abraham. It's because I'm related, because I'm a Jew, I will go to heaven. So it doesn't matter all that other stuff you're talking about.

But Jesus kept confronting. It does. It's more than that. That's why when we read in the Old Testament, there's these incredible stories.

You guys all know the story of Jonah, Jonah and the whale. The biggest part of that story went to Nineveh, who were enemies of God, who God called them through Jonah to repent, and they did.

Then there's this interesting man named Naaman, a Syrian general who calls on the name of the Lord. When the Jews were in captivity, there's this king who is so pig-headed and so proud by the name of King Nebuchadnezzar.

When he declared he was the greatest man and he did all this work, God silenced him and made him like an animal for seven years. And when he was healed, he proclaimed the word of God.

[18 : 47] Rahab, there's a story of Ruth. Job, in case you did not know, is not a Jew. There were these stories of these Gentiles along the way that worshiped the king of kings.

1 Peter writes concerning this salvation. The prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be yours searched and inquired carefully, inquiring what person or time the spirit in Christ in them was indicating when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories.

It says, it was revealed to them that they were serving not themselves but you. So here these prophets are writing these prophecies in the Old Testament. We've got from Ezekiel to Isaiah and Jeremiah and they're writing about God's future going to save them, save them as a nation.

Is this for us, Lord? And the spirit was telling them this isn't for you. It is for you but there's going to be a church in the future who come after Jesus Christ and what you wrote is going to make perfect sense for them.

So you are writing it not for you but for them. It says, it was revealed to them that they were serving not themselves but you in the things that have now been announced to you, now the past, because these guys at Peter are after the cross, to you through those who preach the good news to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven.

[20 : 30] things into which angels long to look. The prophets wanted to understand but God said this isn't for you.

So that is what it means by reveal. He had always been revealing it. It's always been there. And we, my friends, through the power of the Holy Spirit get to rejoice in it.

Amen? We can see clearly the gospel. There is no guessing. It has been revealed in Jesus Christ. Now the second word that I want to focus on is the word righteousness.

As in the righteousness of God. For in it, the gospel, the righteousness of God is revealed.

The righteousness of God is revealed. It's disclosed. It's divulged. It's displayed, uncovered, and exposed. It's a righteousness that has always been there.

[21 : 35] The big question is what is the righteousness of God? My friends, if you do not understand what the righteousness of God is, some would argue you do not understand the Protestant faith.

I would say you do not understand Christianity. Christianity. That's how big it is for you to understand the righteousness of God. At the beginning of this sermon, you may have noted I used the word the Protestant Reformation.

I talked about a man named Martin Luther. And the best way I can probably describe the righteousness of God to you is I'm going to tell you a little story about a man named Martin Luther.

Martin Luther was an Augustinian monk who lived in a town of Wittenberg, Germany, and I'm sure he lived in a few towns, but he became very noteworthy in 1517 on August 31st, which we call Halloween night is actually, to those who know, Reformation Day.

He's a man who had been studying this book of Romans and he had been studying and languishing over this word, trying so hard to understand the righteousness of God.

[22 : 53] And the question he asked himself is, how do I earn this righteousness of God? How do I get this righteousness of God?

And it bothered him and he studied. And what he believed was that the righteousness of God was God who reveals himself to us.

He saw it as an attribute. It's like his holiness, his greatness, his justice. What he saw was the righteousness of God, that God is perfect and holy.

And you want to know something? God is perfect and holy. But what he did not understand because of God's righteousness, that God could not look down on us as we are.

Right? That God looked down on unholy man as a stern judge. He believed that God was looking down over mankind, waiting to get you for something.

[23 : 58] Right? And he catches you in a sin, there comes the thunderbolt of justice. I'm poor. Well, it's probably because you did something evil. You're sick.

You did something evil. And you know, sometimes life is tough. Just think about tough in the 1517s, right? So you're looking, he believed that God was looking for every act of disobedience in which to catch his kids with.

You who come from Catholic backgrounds know exactly what Luther was talking about. Right? We don't believe that God is joyful for our lives.

Catholic Church teaches that God, the God who sits on high, is waiting to smack on you for what you did wrong. So this passage, Luther considered to be horrible news.

In fact, he uses the word this is terrifying news. And the idea of being in the presence of God was the most unappealing thing to him.

[25 : 07] And in fact, it wasn't the most unappealing thing. It was the most terrifying thing for him. So he lived in this agony. And not only that, he wrote, he believed that the righteousness of God, get this, blocked his way to salvation.

He wanted to have salvation with God, but God, this righteousness was so great, he could not overcome it. Let me read to you an excerpt from one of his biographies.

I'm going to translate it from German to English for you, just for the benefit of you who do not speak German. He says, I tortured myself with prayer, fasting, vigils, and freezing.

the frost alone might have killed me. Notice that, right? I tortured myself. That's how he viewed God, right?

Trying to earn something. He goes, what else did I seek by doing this but God who was supposed to note, God was supposed to note my strict observance of the monastic order and my austere life.

[26 : 18] even though God was supposed to notice that he was such a great monk, he still was ravaged with this guilt. He said, I constantly walked in a dream and lived in real idolatry for I did not believe in Christ.

I regarded him only as a severe and terrible judge portrayed as seated on a rainbow. That God sat down in this really beautiful wonderful rainbow giving him smack downs.

When I was a monk, I wearied myself greatly for almost 15 years with daily sacrifice, tortured myself with these fastings, these vigils, these prayers, and other very righteous works.

And I earnestly thought to acquire righteousness by my works. In 1510, he was sent to Rome.

And while he was in Rome, he noted he found the Scala Sancta, a little bit of Italian, Latin, I guess. It was called the Holy Stairs. And the Holy Stairs, tradition tells us, were the stairs that Jesus himself climbed up to pilot.

[27 : 39] I actually stole two of the stairs when I was in Rome. They're right here for you. But they had this thing that they took these stairs to Rome. And they exist today.

I googled it yesterday and it said they were open so you could go. And there was 29 of these stairs. And on each stair you would crawl up on your knees, you'd kiss the step, and you'd say a prayer.

So you would start one step at a time, you'd pray, and at the end you were told that your sins would be forgiven.

So he did it 29 times, 29, our father's 29, kissing the steps of all the other pilgrims. And let's be honest, they didn't have paved roads then, by the way, people. Your feet covered in manure, you're with me on this one, right?

So it's not exactly the most sanitary of places. So anyhow, you'd be climbing up these steps, and then he said, at the top of the steps, he said, I felt no different.

[28 : 44] I did not feel any peace with God, the peace that I so desperately wanted. And the question that burned in Luther's mind was, how is a sinful man made right before a holy God?

See, the Catholic Church said, you can't know this, but you can hedge your bets, you can do good works, you could buy your freedom, and at that time, there was this man named Tetzel, who went around, and he would sell what was called indulgences.

And what it was, if you came and gave money, he would, and if it was so much money, he could write a writ, a statement that your sins were forgiven. Right?

Here you go, it's all forgiven. What? No, no, a little bit more coins in the coffers, please. All right, here you go. And they went around, and people desperately came and paid. And this enraged Luther.

And you guys have heard of the Crusades? The Crusades were usually funded by these indulgences. If you go and fight and throw out the Muslim out of Jerusalem, your sins will be saved.

[29 : 56] Why do you think so many soldiers lined up to fight? Because they had lived these lives outside. They knew you're fighting and the wars would have been grotesque and disgusting.

You would have been pillaging village and all sorts of evils. Did you want that off your conscience? Yes! They all wanted to be free. So when the Pope said, go to Jerusalem and fight, they did.

Because they so desperately wanted their conscience cleared. They wanted righteousness with God. God. So these poor people who aren't good enough to be soldiers, they would do that.

And if they regarded themselves good, you could write an indulgence for your relatives who were in purgatory. So Luther grew more and more angry, and that's the day.

And Halloween night in 1597, he posted 95 thesis on the door of his seminary challenging Rome to this teaching.

[31 : 06] Like I said, and I will quote from him again, he says, though I lived as a monk without reproach, I felt that I was a sinner before God with an extremely disturbed conscience. I could not believe that he was placated by my satisfaction.

What that means is all the works, all the good things he did. He said, at the end of the day, I don't believe God could be placated, but what I could do.

And he said this, he says, I did not love, no, I hated the righteous God who punishes sinners. And secretly, if not blasphemously, certainly murmuring greatly, I was angry with God.

And he said, as if indeed it is not enough that miserable sinners, eternally lost through original sin, are crushed by every kind of calamity, by the law of the Decalogue, we're talking the Ten Commandments, without having God add pain to pain by the gospel.

You know what he means by the gospel? Like when you read the Ten Commandments, do not steal, do not commit adultery, you know, you can kind of, man, Jay, I don't, I'm not, I didn't, you know what guys, I have never murdered anybody, never committed adultery, I don't know, is it theft at 12 years old when you steal a chocolate bar?

[32 : 32] It is, right? But you know, you can kind of make your way through. But as soon as you get to the New Testament, you hear Jesus talking about the Sermon on the Mount, and he says, you know, even if you have looked at a woman with wrong thoughts, guess what?

You've committed adultery. If you've lusted for something, it's like you've stolen someone. If you've hated someone, you've committed murder. Ah! Right?

Like, you're just more and more getting buried under all this unrighteousness, and he sees it so clearly.

He's eternally lost through original sin, which we've all inherited through Adam, are crushed by every kind of calamity by the law of the Decalogue, the Ten Commandments, and then the gospel, which is supposed to bring freedom, just brings more and more pain, because I know I cannot live like Jesus Christ.

And he says, also by the gospel threatening us with his righteousness and wrath. Then I raged with a fierce and troubled conscience. Nevertheless, I beat importunately upon Paul at that place, most ardently desiring to know what St. Paul wanted.

[33 : 48] At last, by the mercy of God, meditating day and night, I gave heed to the context of the words, namely, in it, the righteousness of God is revealed as it is written, he through faith is righteous shall live.

There I began to understand that the righteousness of God is by which the righteous lives by a gift of God which we acquire by faith.

And this is the meaning. The righteousness of God is revealed by the gospel, namely, the passive righteousness with which merciful God justifies us by faith, which means that we're justified means he makes us right.

It's like we're in a court of law and we're standing before him and we know we're a part of the original sin. We know the Ten Commandments.

We know all the stuff on the Sermon on the Mount and God still makes us right. And we're made right through faith. He goes, here I felt that I was altogether born again and had entered paradise itself through open gates.

[35 : 10] It was on that night he understood that salvation was a gift of God for the guilty, not a reward for the righteous. That he understood that salvation was a gift of God for the guilty, not a reward for the righteous.

You see, Luther was right about the righteousness of God. God had never required us to develop this righteousness in itself.

The fact of the matter is, God does demand conformity to him. God does demand conformity to his laws. God does demand conformity to his demands.

And it is only through the gospel of Jesus Christ can we meet all those demands. Romans. So what Paul is commuting here, and we're going to get into this later on in Romans, is does that mean the law is dead?

No, the law is not dead and the law serves a specific purpose. Let me give you an analogy that I think best describes what he's talking about here.

[36 : 26] You're in court. By a tragic happenstance of life, someone has killed your 15-year-old child. You're in the court and the judge and the person who's guilty as sin, the RCMP were all over it.

They got him. They nailed him. He was a mean and wicked person. And you're in that court and the judge looks over at the guilty and says, you're free to go.

I forgive you. How do you feel at that moment as these parents? You're mad. You understand at that point there's been a miscarriage of justice.

How could you let this guy go? And the judge says, eh, I'm just going to love. Right? We're all about love here. Right? We're just going to turn the other cheek. You're angry.

You're hurt. You're crying. How could this be? That is not Christianity. And a lot of people present Christianity that way. That is not Christianity. What happens with Christianity is that God says to that the one who's guilty, you are guilty and you're bound for eternal death.

[37 : 39] Bam comes the hammer. Now you're sitting there, you're relieved, right? It doesn't take away the pain of losing your child, but you know that justice hasn't been done.

The law has still been kept. But then the son, Jesus Christ at the back says, hey, I'll take that death penalty for him.

I'll die in that person's place so that they may be free with the hope that they're going to be saved. Right? And you're sitting there and you might disagree with it.

Like, how can you do it? I want him to die. But then at that point you're only dealing with your own hatred, your own anger. But the law has been satisfied.

Do you understand that? Because a lot of people present sin as nothing, the law as nothing, like God is some, just an old grandfather who winks at her sin. But if he did that, he's doing away with everything who he is.

[38 : 42] His righteousness is no good anymore. But God still has to be righteous and justice, and there can be no miscarriage of God's perfect justice.

So Jesus Christ does not do away with the law. Jesus Christ did meet its rightful demand. And Jesus Christ answers the question, how is a sinful man made right before a holy God?

The gospel. The gospel announces that God sent Jesus to die in our place. That God sent Jesus to earn the righteousness that Luther could never earn himself.

And the way we acquire that righteousness is through faith. It's to believe upon the name of Jesus Christ.

The truth of the matter is the gospel is powerful. the gospel does grant you forgiveness. The gospel does deliver you from hell. The gospel does bring us joy.

[39 : 55] The gospel does bring certain problems and troubles to bear in our life. The gospel has made meaningful changes to our marriages, our relationships.

For some, it's delivered us from addictions. But you know what the greatest thing to rejoice in the gospel is, my friends? You and I are now made right with God.

Not only are we accepted by God, but our relationship with God is restored. It is not an impersonable peace. It is a personal peace.

And there is never, ever a moment that you need to doubt that you are loved. My friends, the gospel is God's greatest way of saying, I love you.

I love you so much that we're going to start this Christmas tradition where I send my son to begin the rescue plan to make everything more clear that our brothers, the Old Testament saints, were confused about or they didn't see rightly that Jesus Christ was the answer for them and the answer for us.

[41 : 15] Let me conclude this sermon with the words of Paul found in Philippians 3.9. He simply says, Indeed, I count everything as loss 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 and 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 is what Paul and Luther struggled so much to understand. Paul preached with joy and Luther struggled with.

And then he says, That I may know him and the power of his resurrection and may share his sufferings becoming him like him in death that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

You know what the perfect imagery for this is? Baptism. So right now the worship team is going to come on and we're going to prepare and we're going to have a baptism.

[42 : 30] where we're going to have a member of our church share how he has been made right by the righteous works of Jesus Christ and that he had died with Jesus and he now lives with Jesus.