

# The Death of Our Boasting: The Cross of Jesus Christ

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[ 0 : 00 ] We knew there'd be a few glitches, and the glitches with me today. Forgot the offering, so let's just pray. Dear Lord, Heavenly Father, we thank you for this opportunity. That we get to worship just by freely giving of what you have given to us, oh Father.

You've given us the stewardship over, actually, it's not our resources, it is your resources. And Father, just as we come to build into this church and build into the ministries that are supported here, we give you thanks for this opportunity to do so, oh Lord.

So I pray for your hand of blessing, and I continue to pray for hearts that are generous, hearts that are seeking to give to you, oh Lord.

We ask these things in your most precious and holy name. Amen. As I said, please turn to Romans chapter 3. Romans chapter 3.

If you are new and do not know who I am, my name is BK. I'm the pleasure of being one of the pastors here at this incredible church. One of the things that we like to do is we like to preach expositively through different books of the Bible.

[ 1 : 15 ] We've made a decision to go through the book of Romans. For those of you who are new, have been recently attending, excuse me, I'd like to tell you something about this incredible book.

Of the books that we find in Scripture, the book of Romans stands out as the Mount Everest in the New Testament.

For over 2,000 years, God has used this letter to ignite spiritual revivals. One of the early church fathers and probably one of the most influential thinkers in Christianity.

In around 380 BC, or AD, sorry. He was actually a man by the name of Augustine, was actually converted to Christ as he read Romans 13.

Later on, a Roman Catholic monk named Martin Luther discovered the gospel in Romans 117 and then launched the Reformation and birthed the Protestant church.

[ 2 : 26 ] John Bunyan, the author of Pilgrim's Progress, found assurance of salvation as he read Romans 8.

He learned that nothing could separate him from the love of God. And if you know the story of John Bunyan, how important that would have been as he, a faithful pastor spent many years in prison for preaching the gospel.

Here's the thing. This book of Romans just isn't for scholars. It isn't for just reformers or church fathers. Romans is for you and Romans is for me.

The fact is, Romans is God's truth to ordinary Christians. It's God's truth for people who are struggling with life.

Romans is for people who struggle to understand life. It is God's truth for people who have questions and God's truth for people who need answers.

[ 3 : 32 ] In this book, Paul answers some of the most pressing questions of life. The type of questions every human being asks sooner or later.

You may not phrase them the same way Paul does, but you know these questions. This morning, I'm just going to cover them briefly for you. The five questions that the book of Romans adjusts is the first question is, what's wrong with this world?

What's wrong with this world? And by extension, what's wrong with me? We've all asked that at some point. Everyone here knows that how, even how good, and here's a quick story.

I was golfing with this man the other day and he comes from a country where there's a lot of turmoil going on. And I just simply ask him, how are you dealing with that? And he just simply says, I've

been here for eight years.

I just golf and ski and I don't think anything about it. Right? He's here to escape. But the reality, he knows there's mayhem going back in his home country.

[ 4 : 40 ] We live in a world that is broken. There's wars, corruption, disease, injustice. Just several weeks ago, a Christian man named Charlie Kirk was assassinated.

And whether you argue whether he was assassinated for his political opinions or religious opinions, it does not matter. The fact of the matter is that a man was assassinated for having an opinion. And if you were paying attention to social media, people were cheering that he said he deserved death. There should be a thunderclap at that.

Just having this idea. In England now, if you post something that the government doesn't like on social media, the penalties are greater than if you were to sexually assault a woman.

This is a mixed up world. Now here's the thing. When we start looking at this world, we start pointing fingers. What's wrong with that world?

[ 5 : 49 ] Romans begins with what's in here. The problem is I'm a part of this world. I am the problem. Paul tells us clearly that all have sinned.

All stand guilty before a just and holy God. So the question that flows from that is the second question. How on earth can I be made right with God?

If I am guilty and I'm a part of the problem, how can I be made right with God? How can a holy God declare me the ungodly righteous?

Paul's answer is stunning. He says simply, through Jesus Christ, whom God put forward as a sacrifice for your sin. That's how you were made clean.

The guilty are declared. Because Jesus Christ bore their guilt at the cross. This is the beautiful truth that Martin Luther learned.

[ 6 : 52 ] He says that we are justified by faith. Justified means made right with God. It's actually a legal term. We're legally made right with God because of our faith in Jesus Christ.

Almost 40 years ago, a British pastor named John Stott, he's one of the most respected Christian voices of the last century, and he wrote a book. And I would call on every Christian to read this book.

It's called The Cross of Christ. And he said something 40 years ago that explains much of the turmoil that we see in the world today. He wrote that much of the stress and anxiety that people carry from the collision between conscience and culture.

Right? There's this stress, this anxiety that our people feel today. And it's this collision going on between what's going on in their conscience and what's going on in their culture.

Our conscience clearly tells us that we are guilty before God. That's what Romans 1 was all about. We are without excuse. Our conscience speaks out against us.

[ 8 : 07 ] But we have this culture that keeps whispering, you're fine. You're fine. You're okay.

You deserve this. You're enough. And when these two voices clash, the result, obviously, is this inner turmoil.

This is why the book of Romans is so important. Because Paul tells us quite clearly the truth. We really are guilty.

No matter what this culture says, we really are guilty before a holy God. But the gospel that he brings us has a greater truth.

That at the cross, our guilt and shame and sin is dealt with once for all. And that's why pride dies. That's the place where pride dies and peace begins.

[ 9 : 10 ] From Jesus Christ. The third question that Paul answers in the book of Romans is, can I really change? And what does a changed life look like?

That I know I might be forgiven, but does it actually change who I am? We're going to learn that the gospel actually does. It actually changes who you are. Not only are you freed from sin's slavery, you are now empowered by the Holy Spirit and destined to bring glory for God.

How's that for a transfiguration, right? You go from sin who curses God to one who brings glory to God. The fourth question, which is a hot topic today is, has God failed his promises to Israel?

If you grew up outside of the church, you might be wondering, what is that even about? Well, the Old Testament tells us the story about the Jews and Israel and how God elected his people.

And from this people, the Redeemer would come. That is Jesus Christ. So Israel's always been at the forefront of God's plan. However, in the New Testament, we read that the Gentiles, that is those

of us, and some of you may not, some of you may be Jewish, but Gentiles is another word for non-Jew, someone who's outside the Jewish faith, that we now are on equal spiritual footing with the Jew.

[10:39] Gentiles are being presented in the New Testament as equal spiritual footing with God. What happened? The question is, if Gentiles are seen as equal partakers with Israel, what happens to all those promises that God made to Israel in the Old Testament?

For some of you who have a theological bent, you know exactly what I'm talking about, and those are very specific questions. But the question is, can God be trusted to grant those promises? Will God remember Israel?

Paul says yes and yes. God's plan for Israel and the nations will unfold just as God intended to, and His promises will never fail.

Listen, since most of us have been alive, since the creation of Israel in 1948, Israel has always been at the forefront of the news. I do not believe that is by accident.

And ultimately, the fifth question that Romans answers for us is, how do I live in light of the gospel? Basically, what does it mean to be a Canadian? To live in light of the gospel?

[11:52] Or what does it mean to be from wherever you are? How do you live this life, wherever God has planted you on this earth? Romans tells us about how we're to live our lives as living sacrifices, how to love our enemies, how to submit to authorities.

And I'm not talking to the ones we agree with. And how do we as churches stay unified? These five questions form the outline of Romans.

Romans. So now, we're actually in the second question. How does God make us right? How does God make us right?

The good news we read is in Romans 3.21. It says, but now, the righteousness of God has been manifested, has been demonstrated, has been shown to us that we are not saved by the law, but that we are saved by faith.

All have sinned, all are guilty, but God in His grace justifies the ungodly. And He did it through His Son, Jesus Christ.

[13:01] What's interesting, it's the imagery of God, the Holy God, the judge sitting over us, judges us guilty. He knows we cannot pay the penalty for those sins, so He walks off, takes off His judge's robe, and He literally climbs up on a cross, and says, I will pay the penalty that you can't pay, so you can be right with my Father God.

That is what happens. That is where we left off in June. So now we pick things up. Paul has announced the good news that God justifies sinners through the blood of Jesus Christ.

And this justification is received by faith. But Paul does something interesting in this text. And the reason he does something interesting is because Paul knows something that might not be as intuitive to us because a lot of people ask, why is Paul talking about these sins we read from verses 27 to 31?

Now to understand Paul, Paul was a missionary. Paul made three missionary journeys throughout Macedonia, and that's parts of Europe, parts of Asia.

And during that time, we know he had personal relationships with at least 20 churches. These are 20 elders. Some churches stayed for three years, sometimes several months.

[14:37] So he was well known. He was writing. And then, while he was doing this ministry, other people would come to him with church issues, and he would write letters to them.

So the book of Colossians, that we have in our New Testament, Paul never visited them, but the leaders from Colossae went to Ephesus where he was. So we can say that Paul safely had knowledge into 50 to 60 of the first churches in all of the New Testament.

You with me on that? Intimately related. So he's got this unique experience. And this experience tells him that whenever the gospel of Jesus Christ, the gospel of grace, that means the gospel of unmerited favor is proclaimed, pride always lurks in the background.

All right? You with me on this? Because if you notice, this is actually the third time Paul's bringing up this issue. But earlier on, and I was thinking of an example, when you call someone out for being a liar, they know that they're a liar because they lie.

You can call out the adulterer for being adulterer. Hey, yeah, I'm an adulterer. You can make those kind of statements. You get it. That's why Jesus Christ worked so easily with those people that were tax collectors, prostitutes, and those who were open about their sin.

[16:10] They were honest. They didn't argue with who they are. But there's certain sins that permeate our lives, which constantly rip at us.

And these are three of the sins that we're going to address today. Pride whispers in our background, Yes, Jesus saved me, but I brought something to the table too.

Jesus saved me, but I brought something to the table. Yes, I love grace, but let's be honest. I didn't need as much grace as that guy over there.

Right? Praise the Lord. I only needed a little grace. Right? What a mess that guy was. What a fool. And we judge that person who perhaps lived in the turmoil of their sin.

And yes, they were forgiven much. That's why Jesus says, those who love Jesus and who were in the greatest amount of sin, they just love Jesus because they know what they've been redeemed from. Because even in loving grace, they think in the background that they are a little bit more worthy than you.

[17:29] And the third point of pride that gets into our hearts is yes, I have faith.

And look how much I have done with that faith. Oh, I have a mighty faith. I have a faith that I can trust anything that I do because I have faith.

Well, I'm going to tell you the good news about the gospel. Not only does the gospel save us from God's wrath, the gospel saves us from our pride.

The gospel saves us from our pride. In fact, we're going to learn that the gospel actually slams the door on our boasting. So this morning, in Romans 3, 27 to 31, this is what it's all about.

It's Paul anticipating objections to the wonderful words of grace that he has preached. And he's going to speak specifically to three types of pride that the cross of Jesus Christ crushes.

[18:41] This is the prides that the cross of Jesus Christ crushes. So let's look in our text. Verse 27, the first pride, the cross of Jesus Christ crushes, is my religious pride.

It is my religious pride. Notice, then, what becomes of our boasting? So there's this question that he anticipates, then, talking to the preceding passage, where he presents the gospel.

We've heard the gospel, and the person might be saying, well, what about my boasting? What should I, what about my, what I'm proud about? Is it excluded? By what kind of law?

By a law of works? No, but by the law of faith. For we hold that one is justified by faith apart from works of the law.

Now, let's understand Paul here. Paul just finished declaring that God justifies the ungodly through the blood of Jesus Christ. And then he immediately asked, then what becomes of our boasting?

[19:40] That tells us, that communicates how quickly that temptation enters into the heart of the believer. It's there.

It's like waiting at that door. Grace, boom, pride. You see, if salvation is by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone, then what happens to our human pride?

Paul answers with this decisive word, it is excluded. This word excluded is a vivid term. It means to shut out, to lock out, to bar the way.

It's like we're in a courtroom and this guy, this lawyer, is coming up with his defense and the judge just slams the door. You're not even allowed into this courtroom.

You're excluded. I don't want to hear those excuses. That's what Paul says happens to boasting. It has absolutely no standing in God's courtroom.

[20:44] But then the person from outside the door is like yelling, what law says that? What rule says that I'm not allowed to boast, right?

And he's saying, Paul says, there actually is no law. There's no law that speaks about it, of works, but there's this law of faith that speaks about it.

You see, faith by its very nature kills boasting. Faith by its very nature kills boasting. Because here's the thing about faith.

Faith is not a work. Faith is not a work. Faith is not an achievement. Faith is not something you earn or build.

Faith is simply the empty hand stretched out to take what God gives. You with me on that? Faith is the empty hand that holds out, stretched out, to receive what God gives.

[22:00] Faith by its essence says, I can't. Christ did. Sadly, I've met many Christians who believe that they are saved because of their faith.

They believe that that strength, and by the way, we're gonna dig into this. There was like, I could do a whole couple of sermons on this one issue, but I would be taken away from the later arguments

that are gonna happen.

But there's this distinction. We're not saved, we're saved by faith. I'm gonna get, I'm getting ahead, sorry. You see, a lot of people believe that they are saved because of their faith.

They believe that they were smart enough. They believe that they were clever enough. They believe they were humble enough to understand the gospel. That's not the faith that Jesus Christ talks to.

See, here's the thing. We are not saved because of our faith as though faith itself were the thing that makes God accept us. You with me? You know how we're saved?

[ 23 : 03 ] We're saved by the work of Jesus Christ on the cross. We're saved because Jesus lived a perfect life for 30 years. We are saved because Jesus went on that cross and died for us.

And that three days later, he rose again. Because he did that, we were saved. My faith has got nothing to do with that.

But we are saved by faith because faith is the empty hand that takes hold of Christ. You see, it's not the strength of the faith that saves you.

It's the strength of our Savior that you trust. You with me? What saves you is Jesus Christ dying for your sins.

Verse 28, For we hold that one is justified by faith apart from the works of the law. That word apart is critical. It can mean apart from the law, disconnected from the law, independent of the law.

[ 24 : 09 ] It's like oil and water. You cannot put works and faith together. They do not mix. You cannot add words to faith without nullifying grace.

That's why Jesus Christ tells us over and over in the words of Scripture that salvation is a free gift of God. Amen? It is a free gift of God.

Justification, our rightful, legal place with God, comes by faith apart from works of the law. So here's the truth.

Faith slams the door on pride. Faith slams the door on pride. Just picture a man standing at the gates of heaven holding out his resume. He's got all the right religious accomplishments.

I went to church. I read the Bible. I prayed. I gave to the poor. I served in the nursery. I volunteered at youth camp. Good Lord, I even was a youth leader. Right? I was a good father, a good mother.

[ 25 : 13 ] I was a moral person. I was better than most. He hands the resume to the gatekeeper of heaven and yet the door remains shut.

Because none of those things can open heaven. Religious pride always says, look what I've done. The gospel says, look what Jesus Christ did.

So that's the difference. Pride says, look what I've done. The gospel says, look at what Jesus Christ has done. And here's the thing.

Faith is not a contribution. Faith is an admission. Faith doesn't say, I did my part. Faith says, Christ did it all. As one author simply says, faith doesn't boast.

Faith bows. So why does this matter to us? For the lifelong church grower. Perhaps you've been to church your whole life.

[ 26 : 17 ] You know the songs, the verses, the doctrines. And if you're honest, sometimes you rest in that. You think I'm good with God because I'm around this stuff for years.

Hear me, please. Your resume won't save you. Your knowledge won't save you. Your attendance won't save you.

Paul says here, boasting is excluded. It's shut out. The door has slammed.

Salvation is only by faith in Jesus Christ. Now perhaps you're a new believer. You haven't been around the Christian faith or you're seeking.

Someone asked you to come visit and you're, hey, let's check out this Christianity thing. I guarantee you've been thinking that there must be some work that you can do to be better.

[ 27 : 20 ] if I just clean up my life, if I try a little harder, if I get the right counseling, it might be simple as I need to recycle more.

It might be just you have something in your idea that you believe that you can claim a little bit more righteousness than the other person. If I just do a little better, God will accept me.

Paul has just said he closes the door on that. That's not how it works. Christianity isn't about stacking up good works to impress God.

Christianity is simply about collapsing on your knees and accepting the free love that Jesus Christ gives you. For every Christian today, even after salvation, like I said, pride always creeps in.

You've heard me use this analogy. Luther said that a Christian life is trying to ride a horse drunk. Right? You always go to one side or the other. It's hard to stay straight and right before God. [ 28 : 37 ] Because we're so stuck on comparing ourselves with others that at least I'm more disciplined than her. At least I'm more committed than him. At least I'm doing better than that family over there.

My friends, that is called boasting in disguise. Kill it. Faith excludes it. Paul's words for us are pride dies at the foot of the cross. And this point is never more graphically seen than in Luke 18.

Many of you know this story. It's the two men that went up to the temple to pray. One, a Pharisee, a religious ruler of the day. He actually would wear clothes that demonstrated the greatness of his faith.

He was revered in his time. He stood tall and he prayed, God, I thank you that I'm not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector.

[ 29 : 49 ] I fast twice a week. I give tithes to all that I get. That is the picture of boasting. That is religious pride.

Pride. But the tax collector stood far off. Tax collector couldn't even lift his eyes to heaven. His beat, his chest, and said, God, have mercy on me, a sinner.

And Jesus simply said, I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted. Do you see it? The Pharisee trusted his resume. The tax collector trusted God's mercy. And Jesus Christ said only one of them was justified.

That is exactly what Paul is telling us in this passage. The second pride that the cross crushes, the cross of Christ crushes is our cultural identity.

[ 31 : 00 ] It is our cultural identity. We see this in Romans 3, verse 29. He says, or is God the God of Jews only?

Is he not? Excuse me. The God of Gentiles also? Yes, of Gentiles also. Since God is one who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith.

Now, let's understand this passage. After slamming the door on religious pride, Paul moves to cultural pride. That is getting back to one's cultural identity.

The question he asks is pointed, or is God the God of all of Jews only? Now, this isn't just a side note. This is a dagger in the heart of Jewish exclusionism because the Jews thought that they were the only ones that could be right before God.

Many Jews of Paul's day saw God as their God in a way that excluded others. They had the covenants, the temple, the prophets. Why not, right? The promises.

[ 32 : 11 ] They would have thought favored and they were right. They were favored that God chose to reveal himself to them first, but that did not mean they were favored in such a way that he was the only God.

Paul reminds them of something far more fundamental. God is one. There's only one God. If you were a Jew, you knew the Shema of Deuteronomy 6.4 says, See, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one.

Every devout Jew recited this daily. Paul simply says, If God is one, then he has to be the God of all peoples. See, monotheism demands universality, which means one God means one humanity and one humanity means one way of salvation.

Amen? That's why Christianity works in every country of the world. It's not ethically based. You'll notice a lot of how many people here are, we see it right here in our city.

How many people are saved to Sikhism? It doesn't happen. They have their own God that exists in their own country. Our God, the one true God is everywhere.

[ 33 : 30 ] Amen? He's the God of all people and he saves all people. He says, and that one way in is not circumcision. It's not heritage.

It's not cultural privilege. It is always and always has been by faith. Jew and Gentile, religious insider, pagan outsider, the moralist, the rebel, all are justified the same way through faith in Jesus Christ.

So Paul, in these two short verses, demolishes cultural pride. There is no spiritual categories, no spiritual VIPs.

There is one God and there is one way of salvation. So here's the truth claim from this point. God doesn't play favorites. God doesn't play favorites.

Think about it. If there's only one God, that there can only be one way of salvation. We know that God is not a tribal deity. He is not a local idol. He is the creator of all, the judge of all, and the savior of all who believe.

[ 34 : 40 ] So that idea of cultural pride, ethnic pride, national pride, all these things are shattered at the cross.

You don't get a closer seat to God because of your family, your passport, your skin color, or your heritage. And I know that doesn't really slam us too much in the faith now, but if you thought you were a Christian nation, this would affect you.

And I'm talking about today. You see, the Jews of Paul's day boasted in their circumcision that they were children of Abraham. Today, we boast in, I grew up in the Christian family.

I've been in church for decades. My family has always been religious. My culture is more Christian than theirs. I listen to so-and-so.

I must have a better understanding than who they're listening to. Paul simply says, no. God justifies Jews and Gentiles the very same way.

[ 35 : 55 ] He saves the circumcised and the uncircumcised the same way. God justifies insiders and outsiders the exact same way.

And that way is faith. And this is why we say at the cross, the ground is level. Nobody has a head start. No one has a higher claim.

No one has an inside track. So, where are we to see this lived out? I'm going to give you three quick answers. One, it has to mean that there has to be unity in the church.

If we really own this, we really understand this, there has to be unity in the church. If God saves Jews and Gentiles by the same faith, then the church must not divide amongst cultural, ethnic, or class lines.

The fact is, pride builds walls, the gospel tears them down. Amen? Amen? In a world filled with racial tension and cultural superiority, the church is called to be the one place where Christ unites all people.

[ 37 : 01 ] Two, how does this matter in our lives? It should give us humility in our evangelism. If God is the God of all, then we cannot treat anyone as beyond his reach.

The atheist, the addict, the immigrant, the neighbor, the co-worker, all stand before the same God and all need the same gospel. Amen? Man, but I, you know, there's an exclusion.

You don't know my neighbor two doors down, man. That guy needs a lot more than normal, I tell you, man. He mows his lawn at 10 at night. You know, he's always posted on Facebook everybody who forgot to lock their garbage and the bears got into it.

You know, they're one of those neighbors. We call them Karens. No. They're saved by the same way. See, our pride dies when we realize we were no more savable than they were.

And three, this is hope for the outsider. If you feel like an outsider, like you don't belong in church, like you don't measure up to good Christians, hear this.

[ 38 : 13 ] the same God who saves the religious insider saves you too. I was the first person at my church, or my mom, I should say, that came to church without a husband.

My dad had left us. We were in the Roman Catholic faith. Dad took off. We didn't know what to do. And a Christian family invited us to a Christian children's club where I first heard the gospel that I recognized that I did not need to go see a priest to confess my sins, that I was to confess my sins to those I had sinned against.

And I brought it to God and I could live forever knowing that I was forgiving and acceptable even at that young age of 10, 11 years old. I knew that truth and I longed that truth to know that I could be saved.

But I went to that church where we came from outside and it took years for me to feel like I was normal because I was the only one there without a parent. Now that's kind of the theme of the day. Many of us come from broken homes, single families. So Paul has killed religious pride, killed the idea of boasting in works.

[ 39 : 29 ] He has shattered cultural pride, those who boast in who we are, our identity. But there's one more form of pride that lingers and it simply says salvation is by faith.

Then the law doesn't matter. That means I can live however I want. But Paul, as we see, says no. Faith doesn't nullify the law.

It puts the law in its proper place. Let's take a look at verse 31, which is the third point of the cross of Christ that crushes my autonomous spirit or my autonomous pride.

Text simply says, do we then overthrow the law by this faith? By no means. On the contrary, we uphold the law. See, Paul knows how people think.

He has just said we are justified by faith apart from the works of the law because they knew they had the law of the Old Testament and now that they were free of that grace, hey, hey, there's no room for that grace.

[ 40 : 31 ] I've been free by Christ. I can live how I want and if you wonder if there's people who are into that, yes, there is. I've got a lot of friends that have grown up through different ministries and some of them live this life.

What's interesting, Romans 3 talks about how they leave a path of misery and destruction in their freedom.

I'm just thinking of one pastor who continued to tell people that you did not have to live by the works of the law.

You could live how you wanted to live and it's finally come out that he was having multiple affairs with people that he was counseling and in his congregation. Of course, he talked about that freedom so much.

There's another man who is very well known. His father, grandfather, is probably the most famous Christian in all the world and he believed that, hey, my grace covers all and he had a big following and then it came up again that he had cheated multiple times on his wife.

[ 41 : 40 ] Notice how Paul says by no means. This is actually a very strong term. It says absolutely not. God forbid that you would even think this way.

far from overthrowing the law, faith establishes it and that's how it does it. It goes, one, Christ fulfills the law's demand. By Jesus Christ, he kept the law perfect, he bore its curse at the cross and he satisfied its justice.

So that's why at the cross, Jesus essentially exchanged his life for ours. He takes our sin. We get his perfect life and he lived it perfectly by the law.

Number two, faith embraces the law's witness. Paul already said in verse 321 that the law and the prophets bear witness to the righteousness of God in Christ.

Faith always sees that the law points to Jesus. And number three, the spirit empowers obedience. Faith leads to a new life in the spirit so that the righteous requirement of the law is fulfilled in us.

[ 42 : 52 ] So put it in another way, salvation, the justification by faith doesn't abolish the law, it redirects the law. The law is no longer a ladder to climb for salvation but it's the path we walk in gratitude to Jesus Christ.

Amen? Here's the truth. Pride in freedom is a lie. Pride in freedom is a lie.

Autonomous pride says if I'm saved by faith then I'm free to live however I want. But Paul says no, faith doesn't destroy the law. It finally puts the law in its rightful place.

Because we know before Christ the law was a heavy yoke yoke we could not carry. It crushed us. It made us realize we needed a savior. But Christ in Christ the burden is lifted.

Now by the spirit the law becomes a guide not for earning salvation but for expressing love. And here's the thing this is where another area that Christians get talked into.

[ 44 : 06 ] Hey, hey man I'm doing this because I love God. You know what they start thinking? You don't have the same conviction? Then they start thinking they don't love God as much as they do. You understand?

That's a danger. That happens in every single Christian. We're called to have convictions. And our hearts might be motivated by that. But that doesn't mean God has led them to that same conviction. There are liberties in Jesus Christ. Some churches firmly believe and I hear you there that drums are satanic and they should never be in church.

Ever. Gotta have the holy organ. Some don't even want musical instruments in church. Right? We all have these different convictions.

But we need to understand that there's a freedom in there but anytime we start judging someone's belief to be inferior or less than ours guess what we got?

[ 45 : 06 ] Pride. The same pride that we need to nail to the cross. So by the spirit the law is a guide not for earning salvation but for expressing love.

So beware of the counterfeit freedom of pride. True freedom isn't doing whatever you want. True freedom is finally being able to want what God commands.

Amen? So where does this hit us? One, it protects us from lawlessness. Some in our culture say God loves me as I am, I don't need to change.

That's pride disguised as freedom. But Paul says faith doesn't nullify the law. If your faith makes you careless about obedience, you're looking at someone who does not have biblical faith.

number two, it guides us in true humility or true obedience. You see, faith just doesn't forgive, it transforms. The same gospel that declares you right empowers you to live righteously.

[ 46 : 16 ] So obedience is no longer slavery, it's worship. And the third thing for assurance, and think of the John Bunyan example.

if you know the story of John Bunyan, spent many years in prison, and we know that these giants when they go into prison, they must have been so holy there, you know, they wrote these great books, they did great things.

I'm going to tell you right now, they were filled with just as many doubts as we would be during our hard times. And he would have been thinking, have I lost my salvation?

Have I lost my blessing? Did God forget me? And then he found out that nothing can separate us from the love of God, and that's what he clings to in the prison.

You see, we obey from, we rest in Christ, not for acceptance in Christ. We don't keep the law to earn salvation, we keep it because salvation has already been given and we love God.

[ 47 : 22 ] So here's the final fact of the day. There is no room for pride at the cross. There is no room for pride at the cross.

Pride in my religion, dead. Pride in my identity, it's shattered. Pride in my freedom, it's redirected. You see, the truth is the cross is God's wrecking ball. At the cross, God is swinging his wrecking ball on our pride.

The voice that says, I've done enough, I'm good enough, I'm better than this, it's crushed. That voice that says, I can live however I want, God will understand, crushed.

And in the rubble of your pride, one thing remains, faith in Jesus Christ. Christ. Maybe you're here today and you've been trying to earn your way to God.

[ 48 : 29 ] You've been adding up your good deeds, hoping the scales will somehow tip in your favor. Let me tell you right now, the scales are broken.

They've been set against you. There will never be enough works that you can do. You see, the law condemns and your works cannot save.

But the gospel announces something better. The gospel is that Jesus Christ lived the life that you cannot live. It died the death that you deserve to die and rose to give you his righteousness.

So if you're a seeker or a skeptic, I ask you to stop boasting, stop striving, stop trusting in yourself. I simply ask you to put your faith in Jesus so that God will declare you righteous today. Now for those of you who have given your life to Christ, maybe you've already trusted him.

[ 49 : 48 ] But as I said, pride still creeps in. Sometimes it's pride in how long you've been a Christian, pride in knowledge of the Bible, pride in how you compare to others, pride that you've figured out Christianity.

My friends, my advice is repent. Repent of it. Repent of it. Repent of it. The fact of the matter is pride has no place in the Christian life.

It's interesting, sometimes we as pastors when we're talking to people, someone will say, a long-time Christian, man, they're so much better than me. No, they're not better than you. They've just got a different experience than you.

They're just at a different place in life where God is growing them. Yes, they're more mature, but they're not perfect. But sometimes we get this idea in our heads that they must be better than us because I'm struggling with this and they don't.

That's not how it works. Do you understand that? So often we always use, well, that's good or that's bad. No, it's just life.

[ 50 : 55 ] And we need to manage it in the best way possible. And just because we struggle doesn't mean we're evil. Sometimes we just need to grow in that area more.

Then we need to just trust God in that area more. let the cross humble you again.

Let the one who boasts, boasts in the Lord. So here's my invitation to you. Lay down your pride. Lay down your boasting.

Lay down your self-reliance and take up the humble faith of Jesus Christ. let it not be said that you walked out of here saying because of my faith.

Let it be heard that when you walked out of here you said by faith in Christ alone. Don't walk out saying look at me. Walk out saying look at him.

[ 52 : 01 ] Don't walk out clinging to pride. My prayer is that you will walk out clinging to the cross of Jesus Christ. Christ. Because the good news is Jesus Christ destroys pride and leaves only humble faith.

Let's pray. God you were a good God. And it's such a little bit of an awkward passage, awkward grammar.

Some of us I'm sure have read it over dozens if not hundreds of times in our daily readings. but it confronts us even though we know the good news of Jesus Christ we still struggle with pride.

I still struggle with pride. I've been known to compare myself to other preachers to whether it be out of vanity or to improve it's still a realization of pride.

sometimes we boast in our family how good we have it. Sometimes we boast in our health how healthy we are. Father forgive us for such things.

[ 53 : 18 ] Father let us be thankful not just for the work you have done but the God that you are. That you are long suffering with us. You're patient with us.

You guard our hearts. You sustain us. Even in those weak times we somehow make it through not understanding how do we get there. And we figure out it was you who held us there the whole time.

Never forgetting and never letting us go. Thank you for being a God that is full of love and that calls sinners to repentance. That calls sinners to the knowledge of the true God.

So Father we ask these things. Your most holy and precious name. Amen.