

# Grace or Works?

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 04 August 2013

[ 0 : 00 ] This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfred, Georgia. It is our prayer that you will be blessed by the preaching of God's Word. Take your Bibles, if you would, and turn with me to Romans chapter 11 and verse 6.

Romans chapter 11 and verse 6. We have worked our way through the book of Romans, verse by verse. We're in Romans 11. I gave a great overview, or like a big picture. I don't mean like it was a great overview that I did, but I did a big picture overview of the book of Romans.

And today we're going to nail in on one of the key verses, one of the most exciting verses in the Bible, Romans chapter 11 and verse 6. We're going to look at that verse. So if you'll open your Bible there, we'll read Romans chapter 11 and verse 6.

The Bible says, And if by grace, then it is no more works. Otherwise, grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then it's no more grace.

Otherwise, work is no more work. Now that is one of those confusing verses. How about reading that out loud with me? I think I would like to see you get your tongue as twisted as I just got mine.

[ 1 : 02 ] So would you read with me? Are you ready? Here's what the Bible says. And if by grace, then it is no more of otherwise. It's no more. But if it be of that is no more otherwise work.

It's no more work. Father, I pray now that you make this wonderful truth come alive to your people. I thank you, Lord, for what you've done. And I pray, God, that you'd bless your people and wake them up to what your great grace has done.

Help us to realize that we can be eternally secure in what Jesus did on the cross at Calvary. We can know that we're saved. We can know that we're born again. We can know that we're going to heaven.

We can know that our sins are forgiven. And I pray, God, that you do a work in that. And I'll give you praise for it in Jesus' name. Amen. Being chosen to be used of God is not about how good you are, but about how good His grace is.

Romans 9, 10, 11 is about how God chose to use the nation of Israel. And then one day, He decided to set Israel aside and to use the church. And He put the church in place.

[ 2 : 06 ] And the Israelites said, I don't get it. We're good. They're not good. And why would that happen? And God said, I do the choosing. I pick who I'll use and who I won't use. The Bible says in Deuteronomy chapter 7 and verse 7, He was talking to the Israelites.

And He wanted them to know that He never used them because of how good they were. He said, the Lord did not set His love upon you, nor choose you because you were more in number than any people.

For you were the fewest of all people. So God didn't choose them because of how big they were, how mighty they were, how many people there were in their group. And in the New Testament, you're taught very clearly.

God doesn't choose to use us because of our goodness either. The Bible says in 1 Corinthians chapter 1 and verse 27, God had chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise.

And God had chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty and base things of the world. Things which are despised have God chosen. Yea, and things which are not to bring to naught things that are.

[ 3 : 04 ] That no flesh should glory in His presence. So here's an overall theme of Romans chapter 9, 10, and 11. It's definitely what Romans 11, 6 is saying.

And that is, nobody brags when you're around God. Nobody says, hey, I'm somebody. I did this. I earned this. I deserve this. I was put in a ministry as a pastor and as a servant.

But not because I'm any better than anyone else. Actually, God wants to choose people and groups that show how strong He is and how good He is. And not how strong or good the people of the groups are that He uses.

Fact is, He says some things in the Bible that are just confusing to us. Because somewhere along the way, you really begin to think it's because of me and how good I am. And how I keep all the rules and how I do all the stuff.

And that's why you think God uses you. But in Ecclesiastes 9, 11, He said, I returned and saw unto the sun that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favor to men of skill, but time and chance happens to them all.

[ 4 : 13 ] It's not like you think, I got the fastest legs. I got the smartest brain. I'm the hardest working man. I have it coming. He said, no, no, no, no. And here's what He's going to say in the New Testament. It's grace.

Not works. It's grace. This today is a lesson of grace and works, also in how it applies to your salvation. It takes salvation out of our hands and puts it into His hands.

Two things ought to characterize any Christian. One is a profound sense of his personal sin and unworthiness. The other is an overwhelming awareness of the grace of God.

You should realize, man, I'm a sinner. You should look around this room and think, I'm probably the worst guy in this room. You should have in your mind, I have failed Almighty God.

That's the first thing a Christian has. And the second thing he has is, man, God is good. To save somebody like me and to love me in spite of who I am, what a great and wonderful God.

[ 5 : 11 ] Without a proper sense of sin, we never appreciate grace. Grace and works are two different things. You can't mix them. That's why if you have grace and you have works, it's not grace.

And if you have works and you have grace, it's not works. So grace and works don't mix. Grace and works. I'd like to show you, as we get into this, we're going to read through three things you'll go home with.

I'd like to kind of show you how that works in a way I think you'll understand. So I'd like to ask Chuck to come up here. He is a, he is a, he gets loans for people. And I'd just like to show you, you can sit down here at your bank if you'd like there, Chuck.

And can I get a microphone for him, Ed? Right here, okay, right here at your office there, if you would there, Chuck. Now watch this. When I go in, when I go in to get a loan, there's a, the situation is really based on my goodness.

It's really based on my credit. It's based on my character. It's based on their confidence that I will fulfill things. How many of you have ever gotten a loan? Do you remember how they, how little these people make you feel?

[ 6 : 21 ] I mean, you know, you go in there and it's like, bring me the last 3,000 years of your history. I want to know if you ever had a check to bounce.

And so I would just like to go with him. I want you to realize the pressure is going to be on me when I talk to this guy. And the glory will go to me if I get the loan. And I'm going to thank him for helping me get the loan.

But the truth of the matter is, it's pretty much on me. Can you get me a loan if I have really, really, really, really bad credit? No. And what if I have, what if I, what if I just don't pay my bills?

Can I get a loan? That's not good either. Okay. Not good? No. Okay. And all right. What do we need to do here for me to get a loan? Two things I look for. I look for, I look for good credit. I look where you put a lot of money. I don't really have a good credit.

You see, I haven't been paying my water bill because Betty thinks to me showers. Right. Right. That could cause a problem. It could cause a problem. Okay. What else are you looking for?

[ 7 : 18 ] I'm looking for consistent employment. Whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa. I work for Vision Baptist Church. Okay. That's not the best. So you probably don't have sufficient income.

Okay. I'm glad you mentioned that being a deacon here. That's a good deal. I think I'm on a roll right now. Okay. Now, let's just pretend, Ed, would you come up here?

Ed, let's see if you can get a loan. Let's see if you can give Ed a loan there. Ed, how's your credit, buddy? I don't have credit. You don't have credit. Okay. How's your, do you work for Living?

You got consistent employment? Yeah. Friday and Saturday, I work at Carcadero. Okay. All right. All right. That's a start. It is a start. I think so.

Okay. Thank you. Now, let me just ask a question. Suppose I were to get this loan, what would I have to do here? Okay. First thing you've got to be willing to do, I know you've thanked me before, but to pay this debt off, you've got to continue to work hard, and you've got to pay this note and pay your payments on time.

[ 8 : 21 ] And that's up to you. Well, what if I'm, it's up to me. Exactly. Well, what if my boss lays me off? I mean, you know the deacons at Vision Baptist, don't you? You know, it lies on your shoulders. When you sign this note, you're totally responsible.

You're saying that you're going to put in the effort and the work to pay this debt. All right. Let's suppose I've got everything done and I'm ready to sign. I mean, I should thank you for being so good to me and give me that loan.

I appreciate you thanking me, but it's not up to me. It's up to you. You've got to work to pay this note and this debt. Okay. Thank you very much. You may leave. Now, I didn't get a loan.

Now, let me show you something real quick. That's how you think salvation works. You think, well, Chuck will help me get the loan, but I've got to keep it up on my end. You think, Chuck will help me get the loan, but I've got to keep it up on my end.

You think if I go in and I present the right paperwork, I know the right people, I do the right stuff, it'll work out for me. But the pressure's on you. But let me explain to you, in the Bible you have a completely opposite.

[ 9 : 24 ] I've got three other guys that are going to help me if I can get them to come real quickly. And you see, in the Bible you're told that it's a gift. And so I'm going to offer a free gift to some guys here.

Now, when you give a gift, there are no conditions but the willingness to believe that I'm giving you a gift and accept it. And the glory of a gift goes to the giver and the gift, not to the person getting the gift.

No bragging rights for being the receiver of a gift offered to everyone. No pressure to perform because the giver does it all. And so I would like to offer you guys, I've got a gift here, and I'd like to offer it to you.

Would you like to take the gift? I'm not really sure what's in the box. It's a gift. It's free. I know. I promise you it's a good thing. I know, but I'm good.

I really want to give you the gift. Please take the gift. I appreciate it. I'm all right. You don't think I'd give you a good gift? No, you probably would, but I just, you know, we've got a whole lot of stuff. That's how some of you are acting this morning about salvation.

[ 10 : 25 ] All right. I'd like to give you a gift. I really deserve this. You do? You do? It's been a long time. What did you do to deserve getting this gift? Well, I've worked hard.

You ought to give me a gift for working. Okay, you can have the gift. Thanks. Now, is that the attitude of a gift? Here's another gift.

I'd like to give you a gift. Thank you very much. I don't really deserve this, though. You sure don't. Yeah, I really don't. I know you don't. But, I mean, he brags about the gift and thinks he's something else.

What do you think? I don't think I deserve this, but I'm really grateful and thankful for this. Who's the good guy here, me or you? You are. Say that again. You are. He's a deacon around here.

I'm just checking. Thank you. All right, y'all can have a seat. And leave your gifts. And the mics. Now, take your Bible. Go back with me to Romans chapter 11 and verse 6. That's just to get you set so you can walk your way through Romans 11.

[ 11 : 25 ] Six of me. And three things I want you to learn this morning. Three things I want you to take home. That is a picture of salvation. Salvation in the average person's mind is a contract between you and God. God, you started it off.

You paid the debt. You got me in. I'll work it out. I'll do all the stuff I've got to do. Now I've got to get baptized. I've got to speak in tongues. I can't eat pork. I've got to give up shrimp. I've got to go knock on some doors.

I've got to. I've got to. I've got to. I've got to. I've got to. I've got to. I've got to. I've got to. And most of us have an I've got to business relationship with God. And it's really frustrating because you can really do good for a week or a month or a year or two years or five years.

And then you just mess up and you don't understand. You know, it's just like buying a house. I won't ask this question, but how many of you have ever lost something you bought or you have a friend who has lost something they bought because it got taken away from them?

I was pastoring in my very first church. I was young and I didn't know much. I'd already been an assistant pastor two churches. I was 23 years old and I was out knocking on doors. I pulled up to a family member, a church member's house.

[ 12 : 28 ] And when I pulled up, they had the furniture truck outside their house. And I was like, praise God, man, they're getting new furniture. And I went and I said, hey, how y'all doing? I'm excited for you getting all the new furniture.

He said, preacher, they're not bringing. They're taking. I said, oh, excuse me. Was a little different spirit in the house than I expected. Usually when you get new furniture, you're pretty happy.

Amen. But usually you're not that happy when they take it back. Salvation is a gift from God. The Bible says in Romans 6, 23, for the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life.

Now, if you would look with me at Romans chapter 11 and verse 6, Romans chapter 11 and verse 6. Now, this is straight out of the Bible. You cannot deny what it says.

And there's going to be a dozen verses that are going to help you get this straight in your head. The Bible says if salvation or whatever is by grace, then no works.

[ 13 : 26 ] Otherwise, if you were to add some works, grace wouldn't be grace. And works is not grace. Otherwise, work wouldn't be work. So let me go through some things with you that you might ought to write down.

Number one, grace and works are utterly opposed. Grace and works are completely opposite. Grace and works are totally opposite. There's a different spirit down at the loan office than the Christmas tree.

How many of you would agree with that? Say amen. You ever watch a kid come out on a Christmas morning? I mean, the most exciting thing about Christmas is not buying the gifts, not wrapping the gifts.

It's watching that little kid come running out of there knowing good night under that Christmas tree. There is a bunch of junk and I'm getting to get into it. But when you go in to get a loan, I'm sure some of you walk in there like, I own the world and ain't got a thing to worry about.

I got the best credit and 20 million bucks in the bank and I'm only going to ask for \$100,000. It's not going to be a problem. But when I got my loan, I was like, what else do I need? Any paper I need?

[ 14 : 31 ] What else do I need to sign? You need some blood? What do you need? You tell me. I'll just do it. I'd just like to buy a house if it was any way possible. And then they whopped out this big old HOA piece of paper.

There's a book about 10,000 pages long. It said, sign every page saying that you're going to live right and do right and cut your grass right and all that. Too many weeds grow. And I was like, does everybody do this? They said, yeah. I said, okay. I found out that was a lie.

Well, they'll tell you anything. But anyway, look at Romans 4, 4 with me. So, grace and works are utterly opposed. If you work for your salvation, then you owe for your salvation.

So, some of you in this room have an attitude of, I need to work. I need to do good stuff. I need to do certain things to be saved. But if you work for it, you owe it. Owe for it.

Romans 4, 4 says, now to him that worketh is the reward, not reckoned of grace, but of debt. If you work for it, now it's not a reward.

[ 15 : 28 ] It's not a gift. Now it is a debt you owe. So, you choose. You come into this relationship saying, God, I know you did all the work and you're given a gift, a reward, and I'll take it.

Verse 5 says, to him that worketh not, Romans 4, 5, to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.

He justifies. He makes right. He saves. He cleans up and perfects and makes new ungodly people. Some of you have the attitude, I come to God and I'm a good guy and I kind of deserve it.

Kind of like number two up here. He was like, I deserve it. I've been working for it. I earn it. You ought to give me a gift. And that's how you came. But the Bible says he justifies the ungodly.

He makes right the ungodly. Those that are wrong, he makes right. Verse 6 says, even as David also described the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth not righteousness without works.

[ 16 : 26 ] To who God says, I'll make you right without you doing anything. I'll make you right without you doing anything. In verse 7, he said, blessed are those whose iniquities are forgiven. Now listen to what I'm going to tell you.

You've got to get this. Jesus Christ is of no value to you if you want to accomplish any part of your own salvation. Jesus Christ is of no value to you according to the Bible if you want to accomplish any part of your salvation.

You would be insulting them to try to pay. I lived for 18 years in a foreign country where people were often very poor and they would give me gifts. And I just want you to know they'd fix me something, they'd bring me something, and if I'd ever reached in my pocket and pulled out money and said, I'll pay you for that, it would have been an extreme insult.

You don't pay for a gift. And some of you are trying to pay. In Galatians chapter 5 and verse 4, the Bible says, Christ has become of no effect unto you.

Whosoever of you are justified by the law, you are fallen from grace. If you think keeping rules is getting you saved, no grace for you. If you think coming to church faithfully, if you think giving money, if you think getting baptized, if you think whatever, no grace, no gifts, no mercy.

[ 17 : 46 ] Just do what you're supposed to do. Kind of like Chuck said, Chuck can get me the loan, but it's up to me, buddy. And so if that's where you want to be. Galatians 2.21, the Bible says, I do not frustrate the grace of God, for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.

If there's a way you can get saved and go to heaven by doing anything, Jesus died for nothing. No reason.

He died for nothing. The Bible says in Romans 3.28 that we are saved without the deeds of the law. Therefore, we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.

If you're going to keep the law, work, or do anything good, you can't fail at all. I just want, I need to rush a little bit, but let me explain something to you. Here's what he said. He said, I'll give it all to you or you'll pay it all.

You choose. I'll give it all to you as a free gift or you'll pay for it all. That's the way it's going to work. And if you decide to pay, you'll pay all of it and you won't mess up on any of it.

[ 18 : 50 ] The Bible says in Galatians chapter three and verse 10, he said, actually, if you're trying to keep the rules and do all the stuff, you're under a curse, you're under a curse. He said, if you don't continue in all the things, keep every letter of the law, keep every rule.

You can't get 99 and pass. You can't get 90 and pass. This is a pass, fail test. You either get it all or you flunk. You get a hundred or you flunk.

In James chapter two and verse 10, he said, whosoever shall keep the whole law. If you obey all the law and you offend in one point, if you could take all of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy and all the rules that God made and you kept every one of them, but one little mistake, you're dead.

Bible says grace, not works, grace, not works or works and not grace, your choice. If it's grace, you do not deserve it.

If it is grace, you do not deserve it. The Bible says in John chapter three and verse 18 that we are condemned already. Listen to what the Bible says in John chapter three, the gospel of John chapter three.

[ 20 : 06 ] The Holy Spirit inspired John to write, he that believeth on him is not condemned, but he that believeth not is condemned already. We're not waiting to find out what's going to happen to you.

We're not waiting for you to get to heaven and God to send them away. They're good and they're bad and see which one turns out. No, you're already a loser. You're already on death row. You're already condemned because you have not believed in the name of the only begotten son of God.

And this is the condemnation that lights come into the world. And men, you love darkness rather than light because your deeds are evil. And everyone that does evil hates the light and neither comes the light.

The Bible says man is a man's dead and he's a child of wrath before Christ. Man is dead and he's a child of wrath or anger before Christ.

Before you get saved, Ephesians 2, 1, and you hath he quickened, you hath he made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sin. In time past you were working the same things as the children of disobedience.

[ 21 : 12 ] The Bible says where in time past you walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of power of the air, the spirit that works in the children of disobedience, among whom also we had our conversation in times past, lust of the flesh.

And you were by nature the children of wrath by nature. So Mr. Human Being, if you don't know Jesus as your personal Savior, you're a child of wrath.

You are condemned already. You do wrong and you like wrong and no matter how much you shellack it, no matter how much you paint it up, no matter how much you try to put on makeup, no matter how much you try to cover up your pimples, they're still there.

You are still a wicked sinner. That's what the Bible says about us. In Romans chapter 3 and verse 10, the Bible says there is none righteous. Nobody right, nobody perfect, not a one.

Verse 11 said none understand, none seek after God. Verse 12 says they've all gone out of the way. They've all become unprofitable. There's none that do with good, not a one.

[ 22 : 11 ] Verse 18 says they have no fear of God, no respect for God, no real reverence for God in their eyes. And he said, I've written a Bible so I can shut your big mouth.

You see what the Bible is about? The Bible is about, here's what we do. Hey, I deserve that gift. I deserve that gift. Give me that gift. Give me that gift. I deserve that gift. I'm a good guy. You don't know who I am. I mean, I go to church all the time.

I give money all the time. I evangelize. I do everything I'm supposed to do. I treat my wife right. I deserve that gift. I deserve that gift. He said, well, let's go over the rules. And he names everything off so that you'll end up going, there ain't nothing I can say.

I'm shut up. My mouth is stopped. I am guilty before God. And he ends that passage of Scripture saying all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.

So the first thing I want you to see about works and grace is this. It's either all grace or it's all your work. It can't be both.

[ 23 : 11 ] They're opposed. The second thing I want you to see is this. Grace removes all boasting or bragging. Grace removes all boasting or bragging.

Boy, churches are so full of people that think they're good. They think they've done good. They think they do good. The Bible says in Ephesians chapter 2 and verse 8, For by grace are you saved through faith.

And that not of yourselves. It's a gift of God. Not of works, lest any man should boast. You know what God was saying? He's saying, I don't want you getting that. Can you imagine a bunch of egotistical, super hubris people in heaven walking around thinking, Hey, I got here because I am such a stinking good guy.

I am the best. The other guy walks up and says, You ain't the best. I'm here too. I'm just as good a guy as you are. Let's talk about what you did. I'll talk about what I did. Let's figure out who's the best here. Because we both got here because we're good. He said, No, no, no, no, no, no.

For by grace are you saved. By mercy, by what you don't deserve. By faith that you didn't even have on your own. For by grace are you saved through faith. And that not of yourselves.

[ 24 : 16 ] You didn't even have the faith. I gave you the faith. For by grace are you saved through faith. And that not of yourselves. It's a gift of God. God. So nobody gets to brag. Heaven won't be a place of a bunch of braggadocious, proud, arrogant, vain people walking around and talking about how good they are.

It'll be a place of a bunch of people saying, Man, I didn't deserve it. In Romans chapter 3 and verse 24, the Bible says, Being justified freely by His grace. We are justified freely by His grace.

So I didn't pay. I didn't pay. You remember the story of the Apostle Paul. He was getting a beating. And he was about to get a beating. And the guy's about to take the whip and give him a beating.

And Paul looks at him and says, You're going to whip a Roman soldier? You plan on whipping a Roman citizen without checking his passport? You plan on whipping a Roman citizen without taking him to court and proving you can?

And the guy drops the whip back and says, Oh, I can't do that. He said, Hey, it cost me a lot to become a Roman. And Paul looked at him and said, I was born Roman, boy. Bragging rights.

[ 25 : 22 ] But you are justified freely. The Bible says in Romans 4, 16, Therefore it is of faith that might be by grace to the end of the promise, that it might be sure to all see.

Now listen to this. Let me show you something. How many of you know you're going to get... How many of you still owe on your house? Hold your hand up. Okay, how many of you know that you'll always be able to pay your debt?

You'll always be able to pay that. You'll never have a problem. You could never get sick enough. You could never have cancer. You could never die. Money could never fail. You will always be able to pay. You don't have to worry about it.

You know. You know you can always take care of things. Would you hold your hand up if you think you're that arrogant to say, I know I'll never have a problem. See, we can't raise our hands. We can't raise our hands.

No, I'm pretty sure I can make my payment. I mean, honestly, we got it down. It's pretty good. It's about the size of a rent payment. But I'm sure there's some people walking on the sides of the road right now that are homeless and thought they could too.

[ 26 : 23 ] You can't be sure of that. But what you can be sure of is this. If you work for salvation, you will mess up. If you try to do good stuff to go to heaven, you will mess up.

You can be the best guy 99 days out of 100. You can be the best guy 99 days and 23 hours out of 100. But in that last hour, you can mess up and blow it all.

Because you've got to do it all right. You've got to do it all right. But if somebody gives you a gift, you don't have to worry about it. If somebody gives you a gift, you can walk away with it. It's yours. Signed, paid for, sealed and delivered.

It's yours. You can keep it. 1 Chronicles 17 and verse 16 ought to be our attitude. David said to the Lord, he said, God, who am I? Who am I and who is my house?

What is my house that you have brought me so far? Why are you so good to me? I can't imagine how good you are to me. See, that's the attitude of salvation. The attitude of salvation is I don't deserve it.

[ 27 : 24 ] God's good. God's good. That's why when we sing, we sing the songs from our hearts saying, I love you, God. I thank you, God. It's not because I'm good. There was a Pharisee that goes down to pray and a publican that goes to pray, a tax collector.

And they walk in and one guy raises his hand and said, I'm a Baptist. You know, I do everything good. You know, I pay my tithes. Hey, you know, you know, I'm a good guy. You know, I pay my bills. You know, I'm a good guy. Hey, I'm not like this guy.

I mean, I am not like this guy. And the other guy bowed his head, smote his chest and walked out. And Jesus said, the second guy went down justified. And the first guy left the same way he came.

And that's how we've come. Third thing I want you to get. First thing, grace and works are completely opposite. Second thing, grace removes all bragging. No bragging. I mean, men love to measure everything.

How much money you got in your account? How much money you got in your 401k? How big is your house? How big is your car? How new is your car? How good is your golf game? How good is this? How good is that? We love.

[ 28 : 26 ] I mean, we are pretty arrogant. But grace says, just admit it, you don't deserve anything. You don't deserve anything. The third thing is grace guarantees your salvation.

Grace gives eternal security. The Bible says eternal security found in grace. The Bible says in John 15, 16, you've not chosen me. I've chosen you.

And I ordained you. That was for service and ministry. He chose them. In John chapter 5 and verse 24, it says this, Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that hears my word and believes on him that sent me has everlasting life.

Now, we should open your Bible there and circle it. It's hath. It's has. It's now. It's present. I'm not going to get it. I already got it. So he did it. If I would just listen and believe, I already have it.

And it says, I shall not come into condemnation. Don't worry. You're not going to get into condemnation. But it's past from death to life.

[ 29 : 29 ] He gives eternal life as a gift. The Bible says in John 10, 27, my sheep hear my voice and I know them and they follow me. Listen to this. Jesus talking.

I give unto them eternal life. I wish you'd underline, I give unto them. It's not I pay unto them. It's not they earn. It's I give.

That's gift giving word. I give unto them eternal life. Eternal life. Eternal means forever life. Forever life. And they shall never perish.

Neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. He said, I give it to them. They're mine. I give it to them. And nobody get them out of my hand. And my hand's in the Father's hand.

And he's greater than me. And you ain't never getting out. I got you. It's all my doings. Believers never die. John chapter 11 and verse 26. Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.

[ 30 : 25 ] Romans 8, 34. We went through this. We don't have time to go through the whole thing again today. But we've been going verse by verse. So you've already been to Romans chapter 8. You know what it said? Paul starts off and he says, guys, let me tell you, you're saved by grace.

You're saved by what God did. And he said, let me end this chapter by saying this. What could ever separate you from the love of God? And then he starts doing this right here. This can't, nor this, nor this, nor this, nor this, nor this, nor this.

None of that can separate you. None of it shall be able to separate you from the love of God that's in Christ Jesus. If you get saved, it will not be because of what you started.

It will be because of what he started. The Bible says in Philippians chapter 1, 6, he that began a good work in you. He that began a good work in you will fulfill it. You realize what happened? There was a day in your life when you realized you had sinned against the holy God.

Inside of your heart you said, man, I have failed God. You realize in your heart I've got. He had to convict you because in your pride you would never admit it. In your pride you would never acknowledge you'd failed God.

[ 31 : 24 ] In your pride you would say, I'm not like other people. I'm better than most people. But somewhere along the way you got convicted and you realize, man, I am not the good guy. And he started something in you.

And he says that he will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. Last verse. First, if you're saved, you are kept by his power.

1 Peter 1, 5. You are kept by his power. It's not what you did. It's what he did. It's not what you do. It's what he does. It's not what you will do.

It's what he will do. What he has already done. We're saved. So let's go back to the verse. Would you look here for a second? I'm through. Listen to me. If it's grace, it's not works. If it's works, it's not grace.

It's all God or it's all you. If you got your choice, you can sit down with Chuck right here and write out a contract and say, Chuck, I will be at church every service unless I'm deathly ill.

[ 32 : 22 ] I will raise my children right. I will handle my marriage right. I will pay my tithes. I will. I will. I will. I just married somebody yesterday. And it's really funny. You know what you do when you're married? You go, will you?

Yep. Will you? Yep. Yep. Will you? Yep. Yep. Will you? Yep. Will you? Yep. Yep. Yep. Yep. Okay. You will. And then I looked at it. I said, you sure I've made a lot of promises today. You made a lot of promises today.

Well, you know, when you get saved, the only promises given is this one. I will give you eternal life and I won't mess up. And you just go, thank you. That's what salvation is.

So you can have the thing and you can come over and say, all right, Chuck. And by the way, he only brought a handful of papers up here. You ever seen those applications you fill out? You ever seen them? You ever seen your file when a guy like that?

I mean, they know what size underwear you wear. I mean, they need Snowden to tell them what they, the only person that knows is Snowden to find out what else they don't know about you.

[ 33 : 21 ] But the other one was this. The other one was, here's a gift I bought, I paid for, and all you have to do is take it. For the wages of sin is death.

But the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. I took a gift. I accepted a gift.

I believed him and I accepted a gift. So this morning I challenge you. Do you know that you're saved? The Bible says it's either grace or it's works and it can't be both. Either you're doing stuff to get there or you're just trusting God.

You know what causes all these arrogant, smart-aleck, head-held-high Pharisee, acting-critical, judgmental Christians? They think they did something. They walk around thinking, check me out.

I'm a member of the first Baptist church. I go down to the Vision Baptist church at the warehouse. I have paid my money. I have done my stuff. I am the stuff. And God looks at me and says, you make me want to puke.

[ 34 : 28 ] Because the real Christian says this, I don't deserve anything. But a good God became man and died on a cross and paid my sin debt, took my sins on him, paid for my sins, was buried for three days, and rose again literally and physically and said, Austin, it's finished.

I paid for it and it's yours if you'll just believe me. Father in heaven, I trust you'll work today. I trust that you'll cause people to see the truth. I pray that you'd wake men and women up.

And I pray that those that don't know you as their personal Savior today would. And I pray, dear God, that those that do know you today would put their trust even more in you knowing it's not about them. That they would develop a humble spirit because they realized you did it.

And I'll give you praise.