No Confidence in the Flesh

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: 22 October 2023

Preacher: John Lowrie

[0:00] Thank you very much, Paul, for leading our worship this morning, and to everyone who helped us sing, helped us pray, helped us praise the Lord this morning. Turn with me, please, to Philippians chapter 3. We're beginning to crack on through this. It's only taken us six months nearly to do two chapters, so we're going to move a wee bit faster, certainly through the first part of chapter 3. So, we're up to chapter 3, and this morning we're looking at the first nine verses of Philippians chapter 3. We're continuing a series of studies in the book of Philippians. We've entitled it Shining Like Stars, as we seek to live out the life that the Lord has created in us to a world in darkness, that we are that impressive community.

So, Philippians chapter 3, we'll read from verse 1. Further, my brothers and sisters, rejoice in the Lord. It is no trouble for me to write the same things to you again, and it is a safeguard for you. Watch out for those dogs, those evildoers, those mutilators of the flesh. For it is we who are the circumcision, we who serve God by His Spirit, who boast in Christ Jesus, and who put no confidence in the flesh. Though I myself have reasons for such confidence, if someone else thinks that they have reasons to put confidence in the flesh, I have more. Circumcised on the eighth day of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews, in regard to the law, a Pharisee. As for zeal, persecuting the church.
As for righteousness, based on the law, faultless. But whatever were gains to me, I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. What is more, I consider everything a loss, because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things.
I consider them garbage, 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 is through faith in Christ, a righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith. We'll end our reading at the end of this lofty portion of God's Word as we deal with the gospel, as we deal with how we are made right before God. Let's come before God. Let's ask for His help as we seek to understand this together. Our loving Heavenly Father, we thank You for Your Word to us. Lord, we've been singing much about Your glory and Your praise and Your honor, and Lord, that is right and that is proper. We thank You, Lord, that You are a loving and a gracious and a merciful God. We thank You for Your great plan of salvation, drawn up before the foundation of the world. We thank You, Lord, that we see it outworked, Lord, in the Old Testament and in the New, down throughout history. And Father, we gather this morning as Your people, as those who have been born again, made alive by the Holy Spirit. Lord, we have been changed inwardly and in our standing before You.
Lord, as we consider the gospel afresh this morning, we pray that we might understand and that we might rejoice if we are Christians this morning, that we might rejoice in the hope that we have in Christ.
[3:45] So, Father, just bless us. Lord, help us to understand Your Word above all else, that this is not just a teaching of the teaching of the Apostle Paul. He has been led by the Holy Spirit to write these things and other things. And we thank You for Your Word. We thank You that You have not left us in the dark, but Lord, You have taught us and continue to teach us. So, teach us now, we pray. We ask these things in Jesus' name. Amen. You'd be forgiven in 2023, especially if you're a Christian and you know something about the holiness of God, the righteousness of God. When you look at our world, that you'd come to the conclusion almost everybody is pagan in some way. They're just so anti-God, not religious, don't really care. But in the world today, there are many, many religions represented in this image here. Many millions of people throughout the world who do believe in a God.

God. And their desire is to please that God, to understand who that God would be and how they might be made right with Him. And whether you would call them religious, most of these people

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host - 2026-10-14 22:54:51

would be religious. There would be other people who have a belief system, even the man in the street.
You often hear of this belief at funerals and so forth. They might not go to church. They wouldn't call themselves religious, but they might believe in God. And they believe that God's looked over them. They believe when they die, perhaps, that maybe they've done enough good deeds to get them into heaven. Whatever that belief system is, whether it's been well thought out or it's just something they've picked up from their parents, from culture round about them, they've adopted this.
So, in other words, there are many, many millions, and there are many tens of thousands, I'm sure, in Edinburgh, who might not call themselves religious, but they have a belief system in God, if there is a God. And that's what we're looking at this morning. We're looking at the topic, a big topic, of how we know that we can be made right with God. You have a belief system. If you're a Christian here this morning, you will know, hopefully, how we are made right with God. And that's what we're going to be looking at in this passage before us, how we can be made right. It's to do with the topic of righteousness being pronounced right in God's presence. So, we're continuing a series of studies in the book of Philippians on how to shine like stars in the universe, chapter 2, verse 15 and 16. We have considered what that looks like if you're a Christian. What does it mean to shine in the world, to be different from the world? We have looked at the importance of standing firm on the gospel, what we believe, what we know, standing firm on these things. We are told to live a life worthy of the gospel. We are told how we can do that. We are God's workmanship, created in Christ [6:53] Jesus for good works, which God has prepared beforehand. We are to walk humbly with God. We are to consider others better than ourselves, looking after the interests of others. These are all part of what it means to shine. And over the past two weeks, we have looked at two examples of two godly men, Timothy and Epaphroditus, two people who were evidently God's workmanship and how they showed this in their interest especially towards others and their service towards God. Now, when you come to chapter 3, you have a strange transition. Paul suddenly goes all theological on us. Up to then, it's very accessible. Timothy and Epaphroditus, two guys, and what they did, and they cared for his needs and so forth. And then, when you come to verse 3, there seems to be a change in his topic, certainly. It becomes heavier, shall we say. He becomes more theological. He begins chapter 3 with the word further, or depending on what version you're using, finally. It's interesting that it comes halfway through.

That usually is what preachers do, isn't it? Finally. It doesn't actually mean anything whatsoever. It just gives you hope that maybe the sermon is coming to an end. I don't think that's what Paul is meaning here. Finally. What does he mean by finally when he begins this new chapter? Finally. And what he's basically doing, he wants them to rejoice. He says, finally, my brothers and sisters, rejoice in the Lord. In other words, he's taken us back to what he had said originally in chapter 2, verse 17 and 18. He's talking about the gospel. He's talking about his life maybe ebbing away. And he says, I am glad and rejoice with you. You should be glad and rejoice with me. He started then, a few sentences ago, to talking about rejoicing. He's given them reasons to rejoice. They are God's workmanship. God is doing a work. They will persevere, standing firm in the faith. Rejoice, therefore, as a Christian. And this is him coming right back full circle to that topic of rejoicing. Finally. Finally. Rejoice. And this serves as a catalyst for what he's about to speak about next. Finally. Rejoice. Look at verse 1. Further, my brothers and sisters, rejoice in the Lord. And he's going to give them good reason to rejoice. He's already given them reasons, but he will mention something else, and it's basically the gospel. And then he says, it is no trouble for me to write the same things to you again. It is a safeguard for you. In other words, Paul says, I really don't mind reminding you of all of these things, because it does two things. One, it causes you to rejoice, and I'll give you a reason in a minute why you should rejoice, as I have done before. But I am also, it's, the act is, my teaching acts as a safeguard to you. And that word triggers something that they need to be wary of. And he mentions this, liberal commentators, when they look at this, they think, well, this couldn't have been written by Paul. The transition's too weird. He's talking personally. [10:17] Now he comes all theological. It must have been written by somebody else. But not at all. He's wanting them to rejoice, but he's wanting them to also be aware of the dangers that lie ahead, something that would rob them of their joy of being a Christian. And that's what he mentions here.

And then he comes in verse 2. He mentions a specific threat, a threat that was very real in the church in those days. Watch out for those dogs, those evildoers, those mutilators of the flesh.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host - 2026-10-14 22:54:51

His language becomes incredibly strong. I don't know about you, but I mean, sometimes I meet folk that maybe disagree with what I believe, but I've never called them dogs and evildoers. But Paul does not mince his words here. And therefore, what he's about to say is very serious. And therefore, we study it in that way as well, as well as seeing it as the source of our joy. This was basically a group of Jews, possibly Jewish Christians, who believed possibly that Jesus himself was the Messiah.
But that a Gentile believer, to receive the benefits and to be really welcome before God, did not just have to receive Jesus, they had to receive circumcision. They had to be come into the Jewish hold, as it were, and to become a Jew and to receive all the blessings of the Messiah, of Jesus even. And basically, they're saying, if you would be right with God, you need Jesus plus something else.
This aspect of Judaism to come in and to be part of God's people in that way. Jesus himself was not enough. And that is why Paul uses such strong language. It is not just saved through Jesus, it's Jesus and something else. And that's what we're going to look at. That's why his language is so strong. Because if there is a good news and something comes along which is less than good, it threatens what the good news is. It doesn't add to Jesus, it actually removes from Jesus what he has done. That is the seriousness when we try to add to the work of Jesus by way of salvation. Instead of adding to it, we actually diminish it. We harm what he has done. And that's why Paul uses such strong language. And we'll look at this in a minute. So, first of all then, this is dealing with the topic of a righteousness before God, being right before God. In the world today, many people who might believe in God, other religions, other beliefs, they might think that they are right before God. This is the $64,000 question that Paul is answering here. How can we be right before God? Where does our righteousness lie? That righteousness that we need when we stand before God, that we, he will accept us. That is the size of the topic that Paul is dealing with in these first nine verses. He says it very plainly, his confidence, hear this loud and clear, his confidence is not in the flesh. It is not in works, it is not in anything that he can do or anyone else can do. If there's a message that the world needs to hear, it is that. You cannot save yourself by your own efforts. And that's what Paul says. So, I'm going to call this no confidence in the flesh. That's what this is about. In fact, I'm just looking at the head in my Bible, it says no confidence in the flesh. That's what this is to do with. If we are to be right before God, it cannot rely on what we can do. So, first of all then, let's look at a few things that Paul mentions, not in the flesh. He wants them to rejoice in the good news. He wants them to rejoice in what God has done. But he does this by warning them about a false understanding of God's plan of salvation. It's that, a false understanding. And he says here, it's no trouble for me to write these things to you against. A safeguard for you, watch out for the dogs, these evildoers, these mutilators of the flesh. And as I said, this is a group of Jewish believers, possibly, believe Jesus was the
[14:48] Messiah. But to accept, to become accepted before God, you have to become a Jew first, and to accept circumcision. And in other words, Christianity was basically Judaism plus a wee bit extra, and almost a sect within Judaism. The Galatian churches, this was a major teaching in the churches in those days, as the gospel's just being discovered, as it's all new, as it's based on the Old Testament, and links very much in with the Old Testament. It's the fulfillment of the Old Testament. Other churches were being confused by this. The Galatian churches fell to this. Let me remind you, Galatians 1, right at the very start, I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you to live in the grace of Christ, are turning to a different gospel, which is really no gospel at all, Paul says. Evidently, some people are throwing you into confusion and trying to pervert the gospel of Christ. But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach a gospel other than the one we preached, let him be under God's curse. Paul sees this as very serious.

Something that attacks what God has done, his plan of salvation, that fails to understand this, really is a very dangerous thing. For Paul, there's only one gospel. There's only one good news.
It's not the gospel of works. It is a gospel of grace. We cannot save ourselves. There is no religious duty that we can do to do away with all our sins. So, for Paul, Paul says, if it was down to works, if it was down to good religious credentials, he would say, I have every confidence. I should be the most confident person alive. And he mentions his credentials here. Look at verse 4. I myself have reasons for such confidence. If someone thinks they have reason to put confidence in the flesh, I have more. And then he mentions what they are.
And he mentions his religious or Jewish credentials. They are very impressive. He was circumcised on the eighth day. In other words, Paul was done. He was done on the eighth day. Some people

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host - 2026-10-14 22:54:51

rely on their baptism, their christening or whatever. Yeah, I was done when I was five. And they live a godless life.
And they think when they die that, yeah, that doesn't matter. I was christened or whatever. And they're relying on deeds. Paul was a full-blooded Jew, he says. He was circumcised on the eighth day, covenantally belonging to the people of Israel. He was of the people of Israel, God's chosen people.
[17:46] He was of the tribe of Benjamin, one of only two tribes that didn't rebel against the dynasty of David, looking forward to the Messiah, a good tribe in that way. He was a Hebrew of Hebrews.

He was born in Tarsus. He was culturally clued up in Greco-Roman culture and educated in Jerusalem. He had a very impressive pedigree. With regard to the law, he was a Pharisee, the strict sect within Judaism, strict Pharisee, disciplined, respected. He was a religious giant, you could say. With regard to zeal, he persecuted the church. He was saying, was I half-hearted? Not at all. Look at how I lived my life. With righteousness, he says, coming to the main thing. With regard to righteousness based on the law, faultless. Doesn't mean he was perfect. The law had ways of dealing with sin in those days.
But in terms of being a religious Jew, he was faultless. But Paul came to the conclusion, there was one time he would have wore this like a badge. This is who I am. Circumcised, Hebrew of Hebrews. If anybody was religious and could get into heaven, it was him. He could have done this. He could have earned his way into heaven. But Paul, and it's great that Paul was this type of person, wasn't it? This is not some drug dealing kind of crackhead that's standing up saying, and I used to be this person. This is somebody who ticked all the boxes, ticked all the boxes that the world are trying to tick. Religious, faithful, zealous. And you think, wow, if he can't get into heaven, who can? Paul, at one time, would have worn this like a badge. But now, he's come to realize that that's not what it's all about, that they do not make us righteous before God.
Indeed, they are dangerous, because they lull us into a false sense of security. They think, I'm okay. I don't need Jesus. I don't need to hear the gospel. My belief system tells me that I'm doing okay. I'm not a bad person. I don't murder. I've never really done much. I might have told a lie or been angry with people or be jealous. But that's not bad. I'm okay, Paul would have thought, especially, he was okay, of the people of Israel. He thought he was fine. But Paul says that these things are dangerous. And that's why he talks in such strong language, dogs, evildoers, mutilators of the flesh. So, this begs the question, what is it all about? How can we be made right before God?
Secondly, knowing Christ. Paul looks at his religious life, compares that to knowing Jesus, to knowing the gospel, and he comes to this conclusion in verse 7, whatever were gains to me, whatever ticked all the boxes, I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. And in case you—he's not driven this home with enough force—he mentions, look at what he says in verse 8, what is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage. You would never think that if you mentioned to the man in the street the word garbage is in the Bible. Other versions have the word dung, I think, depending on what version you're using. He's always trying to watch what he's saying here, but using as strong a language as he can. He says, compared to knowing Jesus and being made right in him, everything else is garbage. It is rubbish. And yet, the world is holding on to garbage and thinking, this is what we need. This is what will save me. And Paul says, compared to knowing Jesus, not just knowing him as a person, but what—who he is and what he has achieved. And that is why Paul says, I consider them garbage that I may gain Christ. Strong words, indeed. Everything is garbage compared to knowing Christ. There was a time when Paul didn't know Jesus. He didn't know him. He was a devout Jew, serving the Pharisees, religious leaders, persecuting Christians, until on the road to Damascus,
[22:40] Jesus revealed himself to Paul. And he says, who are you persecuting? Who—why do you persecute me? And this blinding light changed everything for Paul. He began to understand who Jesus was, why he came, what he achieved. He began to understand this new religious leader that the Christians were following.

He began to know that Jesus is God's plan of salvation. He is the Messiah. He is the Savior of the world. And to know Jesus is to know what it means to have eternal life, to accept God's plan of salvation.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host - 2026-10-14 22:54:51

Jesus said this in John 17, now this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent. You want to know eternal life? Jesus tells us. You need to know the only true God and Jesus whom he has sent. It's as clear as that. There is no eternal life through works or through deeds. And therefore, to be accepted by God and gain eternal life, it's based on knowing Jesus, who he is, and why he came. And when you understand the gospel—and many of you, if not all of you, if not all of you are Christians this morning—you know what that means, the joy of being saved by grace and who Jesus is and what he has achieved. So, what does it mean to know Jesus, especially in this context here? For Paul, Jesus is not an addition to the Old Testament. The Jews at that time, Christian Jews, well, you've got Jesus, but you've still got the Old Testament, you've got all the law, all the sacrifices, all the things that you need to do, but you can bolt Jesus on. That's basically what they were doing. Keep the religion as a devout Jew and just bolt Jesus on. And Paul is basically saying, to understand your own religion, you need to understand that Jesus is the fulfillment of the whole of the Old Testament. He is the end of all these things. He is the temple. He is the meeting place between God and man. He fulfills the temple. He is the sacrifice, the once for all sacrifice that does away with all our sins. Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

He is the fulfillment. He is the high priest. He is, let me read to you Hebrews, unlike the other high priests, he does not need to offer sacrifices day after day, first for his own sins, then for the sins of the people. He sacrificed for their sins once for all when he offered himself. He did not enter by means of blood of goats and calves, but he entered the most holy place once for all by his own blood, so obtaining eternal redemption. Jesus fulfills all of the Old Testament. And therefore, to understand, to know Jesus, is to see him as the fulfillment of everything that has come before. And the true people of God recognize this. They recognize who Jesus is. Their eyes have been opened to see this.

Peter says this, once you were not a people. You were a guy from Glasgow. That's all you were. Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God. Just let that wash over you this morning on the 22nd of October. The weather's a bit better today than it's been the past few days, but that would cheer you up. That should cheer you up in your life. Once you were not the people of God, you looked at others who claimed to be the people of God in that sense, but not the true people of God in the sense that their eyes have been opened. But now you are the people of God. Once you did not receive mercy, but now you have received mercy. All true people have had their hearts circumcised, not their flesh. Even in the Old Testament, circumcision was always to be of the heart and not of the flesh. Deuteronomy 30, the Lord your God will circumcise your hearts and the hearts of your descendants so that they may love him with all your heart, with all your soul, and live. In other words, to live is to have your hearts circumcised. And that is what Paul is wanting to communicate here.

[27:39] Having your flesh circumcised does not save you. Having your heart circumcised does. When God does a work in you, Jeremiah 9, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will punish all who are circumcised only in the flesh. If you think circumcision in the flesh is going to save you, it doesn't. It cannot.

It is not enough. Circumcision is of the heart. That is why in Romans 2, Paul says, No, a person is a Jew who is one inwardly. He calls me a Jew. You are a Jew who is one inwardly.

And circumcision is circumcision of the heart by the Spirit, not by the written code. Such a person's praise is not from other people, but from God. God, when he circumcises your heart, when you come in repentance and faith and your heart is circumcised, you get praise from God. That is some, not the praise from others. And that is quite something. And that's whole point, Paul's whole point here. Watch out for those evildoers, those mutilators of the flesh, because he's speaking as a conservative Jew, but he recognizes that when the Jews in that day, what we're calling themselves, the true circumcised of God, and Gentiles were dogs, Paul's actually saying it's the other way around. They are dogs, and you are the true circumcised. That's what he's saying here. His language is very strong, and we need to hear that.

We need to know the grounds upon which someone is accepted before God. For Paul, he says, they don't really know who Jesus is. And to not know who Jesus is, and to preach another gospel, no wonder he uses the word evildoers. Anyone who preaches another gospel apart from Jesus hinders throat from coming to the kingdom. It just can't be. And no wonder we stand against this. That's why Paul says, when you understand the gospel and knowing Jesus, he calls knowing Jesus

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host - 2026-10-14 22:54:51

the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus as his Lord. Everything else is rubbish. So, that's where it begins. It begins, if you are to be made right before God, we need to know who Jesus is, knowing Jesus. Everything else is rubbish. It can be compared with the gospel. The gospel is good news. I always think that's the greatest understatement ever. It's great news. It's amazing news. It just blows your mind that God can make sinners right in his presence, not through works, but through faith. That should really, really thrill you. That's why he says, everything else, works, is just, you're just going to come a cropper. It's where it begins. But it's not just knowing Jesus. It's about gaining Jesus. So, thirdly, gaining Jesus. What does it mean to gain Jesus? If we know him, how do we gain him?

Paul says, it's not ultimately by good deeds. Paul realized that the good things he cherished and strophed weren't gains at all. He says this, that he considered some losses. If you've got a gains and a losses column, bank balance, ins and outs. He thought all these good things were to his credit, and he suddenly realizes he's moved them into the loss column, and the gains now, there's just one name, Jesus Christ. That is all his gains. Everything he has is based on him. And that is why he says that the things he had before, they're dangerous in the sense that they can bankrupt him in his faith, because he relies on them. He trusts in these things. And Paul says, it's not what it's about.

[31:57] Everything in the Old Testament points to Jesus and having gained him. Look at what it says here. What is more, I consider, verse 8, everything a loss compared to the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus, my Lord, that I may gain Christ, and then he explains what it means, and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith, the righteousness that comes from God. That is the thing. It's not any old righteousness.

God doesn't say, well, as long as you get 90% righteousness, that's okay. We need God's own righteousness, and that is what's offered to us in the gospel. It is not by human effort, even our own righteousness, is as a menstrual cloth. That is not just filthy rags. That is what it means in Isaiah. Something that you do not hold up and show and boast about. The Bible's very graphic, almost goes out its way to shock us, to say, do not think you will parade your own righteousness. Whatever that is before me, it is not enough. And that is what's happening here. I was watching the TV this week, and I was, I always channel hop. So I can, if you tell me you were watching, so I've probably seen it as well for five minutes at least. There was a program on this week called Scotland's Sacred Islands. I don't know if you've seen that. It was Ben Fogle, I think, that was doing it. I caught literally five minutes. It was in Isle of Arran, or the wee island just off Arran, Holy Isle. And there was this Buddhist community there. And he was saying, well, I never thought I'd see this in Scotland. It was just something. There was all the wee statues and stuff. And they went to this cave, and this high religious person, shall we call them, spent 10 years basically in this cave, in the wee stream of water, to get close to God through nature. And when I heard that, I thought, what a complete waste of time that was, 10 years stuck in a cave. And the problem with this is, there are many people who think, as long as I am devout, doesn't matter whether it's true or not, as long as I have the warm fuzzies in my heart for God, and just hug a tree, that'll be fine.

The problem with that, it doesn't take sin seriously. It thinks that God will just somehow accept you just based on your sincerity. That is why if that man, the cave, 10-year-old cave dweller guy became a Christian, he would turn around, look Paul, and say, what I consider gains, I now consider loss, compared to knowing Jesus. And if you're a Christian here, you may have been a church goer for many years. And if you're a Christian and you know the ground upon which you stand, it's only Jesus. You can say with Paul, what I used to think was to my credit was actually to my loss, because I was relying on it, and it was sending me to hell. I needed a better righteousness.

[35:11] I needed God's righteousness, which he offers to us in Jesus. So, that was the purpose of the law. The purpose of the law in Galatians that Paul has to, if you want to see the whole argument, read the book of Galatians. He says, before the coming of this faith, Galatians 3, we were held in custody under the law, locked up, he says, until faith that was to come should be revealed.

So, the law was our guardian, our teacher, our schoolmaster, until Christ came, that we might be justified by faith. In other words, the law was never, ever meant to justify us. It was only there to show us our sin, and every time you see the law, and every time you look at the Ten Commandments, it just locks you further into a prison. That's its purpose. That's, so it makes you

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host - 2026-10-14 22:54:51

cry out, O wretched man that I am, who will save me from this body of sin and death? That's the purpose of the law. And yet, sad to say, there are people in Westerhales, probably people in your family.
I've been at the graves, at the bedside of many non-Christian people, and the basic belief system is they're about to die, and they really think that they're not that bad, and that somehow God will just accept them. Some are not bothered, some don't care whether there's a God or not, they really, they die as rebellious as they live their life. But others are in a dangerous position, because they think, I've done okay, and the law was never given for that purpose. So, there's a gift of righteousness that God gives us. It's very impressive. Look at verse 9. He's not interested in his righteousness that comes from the law, his own righteousness, but a righteousness, a better righteousness that comes from God. Jesus said that. Unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and the Pharisees, of the best religious leaders of the day, you won't enter into heaven. How do you get that righteousness? It's God's righteousness, which is better than the religious leaders of the day. How do we get this? We get this through faith. Through faith alone. Not faith in Jesus plus works, whether it's circumcision or whatever. And Paul has this whole argument, as you know, in Romans. It was always to be that way. Remember, Abraham was pronounced righteous. How was he pronounced righteous? Was it after he became a
Jew? It was before he became a Jew? It was before circumcision? He was pronounced righteous before he was circumcised. You and I can be pronounced righteous without being circumcised. That is the whole point.
We do not need to go down that route. I don't have time. I'm looking at the clock. I was going to read to you the whole Romans, the whole argument. But now that faith has come, we do not need to be circumcised.
[38:14] We don't need to bolt anything on. And Paul sums up this in Romans. I think I mentioned this, Romans 1.17. For in the gospel, the righteousness of God is revealed, a righteousness which is by faith.

From first to last, just as it is written, the righteous will live by faith. It's the same faith that Abraham had. It's the same faith that saves us. We become descendants of Abraham, children of Abraham. This was always God's plan. It was always to be that way. It's quite something. I was reading just recently, reminded of 1 Corinthians chapter 1 verse 21 about the foolishness of the gospel. Jews look after signs, look for signs. Gentiles look for wisdom. Jews look after signs. They want power. They want a physical conqueror to come, and they could do with it today, that's for sure, to come to sort out their enemies. Gentiles, we like wisdom. We like to weigh it all up. We're very clever. We're very, if it makes sense, I'll believe it. God has frustrated the wisdom of the wise. He's chosen the foolish.
Why? Because in Christ, we get wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. We get all of that in Jesus, not through works. And he's chosen you, the weak and the foolish, the best, the immoral, and you are given all of this. Why? So that you cannot boast. This is the problem when you go through life, and you get something right. You can boast. But what happens when you get something wrong?
You become guilty. In the gospel, there's no need for guilt. You're saved once and for all. And that should cause us to rejoice. If it was works, your works would be like this. One Sunday, you'd be, John, I've had a great week. I feel really righteous. Next week, I feel like rubbish, like garbage. I feel righteous. Your whole religious life would be like this. Whereas, when you come to trust in Jesus as your Savior alone, you have the righteousness of God forever.
[40:32] You're pronounced justified once and for all. Even though your sanctification might be like this, and you feel useless, you're loved by God. You're accepted by God all the time. That's what makes all the difference. Lastly, serving and boasting. It is we—look at verse 3—it is we who are the circumcised, we who serve God by His Spirit, we who boast in Christ Jesus, and it's us who put no confidence in the flesh. It is quite something. We are the servants of God. We are those who boast.

That's what we're singing, isn't it? We're singing songs that boast about Jesus. They don't boast about us. We boast about Him, and we come to Him in faith. We do not put any confidence in the flesh. We cannot save ourself, but we trust only in Him. Does all of that make sense to you this morning? Does that cause you to rejoice? Finally, rejoice in the Lord. If you're not rejoicing in the Lord, maybe most of us have just bounced off that clock at the back and just come back. But if

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host - 2026-10-14 22:54:51

you're a Christian, rejoice that you are saved. No matter what your life is like between now and the grave, it's well with your soul. If it was works, boy, I would—I'd be—I'd be in my way to the place down under.

But because of Christ, He is my Savior. He is my Lord. I rejoice in Him. I don't need anything else to bolt on. I don't need to be a church member. I don't even need to be baptized. I am saved because I trust in Him and pronounce righteous by faith in who God has provided, the only Savior for the world.

Let's stand, and we'll sing together, All I Once Held Dear. This is a testimony of every Christian. Paul would certainly sing that. This is a testimony of the biblical fact that you have projets are millionaires in worth, things like to know in Giantisions.

I would think men are mangled by therianism of beastly for the greatest so that it should have been disciplined by the maith perfect love and it's called as I called this in Amen. Thank you folks. [43:27] Thank you.

Thank you.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host - 2026-10-14 22:54:51