

Romans 3

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Tape #8120
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Now Paul the Apostle in chapter one, showed that the Gentile world was guilty before God. God had revealed Himself in nature, but man rejected the revelation of God. In fact he made such a foolish error he began to worship and serve the creature or the creation rather than the Creator. And we are surely at that point again today where the worship of mother earth, the worship of nature, rather than the Creator.

In chapter two, he showed how that the Jews who were resting in the law, making their boast of God, were no better off than the Gentiles, who were guilty before God. Because though they boasted in the fact that they had the law, they weren't keeping the law. And if you don't keep the law, then there is no value to the law. They had the ordinances of God. They had that seal of circumcision, which would indicate that they were to be a people that would live after the spirit and not after the flesh. A Godly heritage, spiritual people. But that the circumcision did not make them spiritual. Being spiritual is something within the heart of a person. It isn't an outward kind of ritual or ordinance. So showing that the law had no value, as far as making them righteous, just having the law didn't give them special privileges. Showing that circumcision, unless it really follows that in the heart, they were living after the spirit, the ritual itself did nothing, would naturally bring up the question that Paul begins with chapter three.

What advantage then has the Jew, or what is the profit of circumcision? What's the advantage of being a Jew? What's the advantage of being circumcised? Paul's answer is ²*Much in every way!* There are advantages.

But Paul said, *Chiefly because to them were committed the oracles of God.* They were people of special privilege. God had revealed His word to them. We are people of special privilege in that God has given us His word. Tonight we are here to study the Word of God. And that is a tremendous advantage to have the Word of God! An advantage if you keep the Word of God and live by the Word of God. But if you don't keep the Word of God, if you don't live by the Word, then having the Word itself is not an advantage. But in reality, a responsibility. And you have a greater responsibility, knowing the will of God than a person who has never known the will of God or the Word of God.

So then Paul declares, ³*For what if some did not believe?* Or what if they didn't keep His word? *Will their unbelief make the faithfulness of God without effect?* Here is an interesting concept. If I say but I don't believe that. Does that make it then not so? If I say, I don't believe that two plus two equals four. And you give me two apples and two more apples and I count them. But I say, I don't believe it! Does that mean that two plus two doesn't equal four, because I don't believe it? Of course not! It only proves that I'm a fool. So the fool has said in his heart, there is no God. I don't believe in God! Does that mean that God doesn't exist because he doesn't believe in God? Of course not. I don't believe that this is the Word of God. Does that mean that this isn't the Word of God? Of course not. And so because some do not believe, does that make the faithfulness of God of no effect? Of course not! It doesn't alter the fact at all. What is, is! Facts are facts, whether you believe them or not does not alter one iota the truth of God's Word. So what if some did not believe? Shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? Does that mean that there is no real power then in believing in God?

This word in the old King James, God forbid, is literally the word, perish the thought or banish the thought. The word God isn't in there but it just, God forbid. It is used several times through Romans here, but in the Greek, it is just, banish the thought! Ridiculous! ⁴*Certainly not! Indeed, let God be true but every man a liar.* God's truth stands. Believe it or not. And whether you believe it or not, let God be true. Let the truth of God stand. And if nobody believes it, it is still true because it is God's Word.

As it is written:

"That You may be justified (Speaking of God here, as it is written, that you might be justified)*in Your words,*

And may overcome (or prevail) when You are judged." Now this is quoted from Psalm 51. When David had been faced with his sin with Bathsheeba. And David prayed to God for forgiveness. You remember that prayer, "Have mercy upon me, Oh God, and according to the abundance of Thy tender mercies, blot out my transgressions. For against Thee and Thee only, have I sinned and done this great wickedness in Thy sight." And here is where it says then, that you might be justified in your sayings or righteous in your sayings and you might overcome or prevail when you are judged. Now what he is saying here is that God is justified in what He had said. And men oftentimes challenge then, what God has said about heaven. What God has said about hell. What God has said about the judgment of sinners. And many times people challenge the justice or the fairness of God. You hear it all the time. How could a God of love allow a child to be born without an arm, with a physical impairment? Why would a God of love, and it's always the challenging by man of the fairness or the justice of God? There are so many factors that we don't take into consideration when we bring up these kinds of issues. It's interesting how that we want to blame God for every calamity. Even hurricanes are called acts of God. Things that are destructive, we say well, God did it! And we blame God falsely. We are living in a world that is in rebellion against God. We are living in a world that is suffering the consequences of those rebellions. Prior to the flood, there were no hurricanes. There were no violent types of tornadoes that were destructive. The earth was surrounded and encompassed in a cloud or a vapor, that shielded out much of the ultraviolet rays. They didn't know what skin cancer was. They lived to be nine hundred years old. They had a nice environment. But when God saw that the wickedness of man was exceedingly great and the thoughts and the imaginations of his heart were only evil continually, God brought the judgment of the flood. He removed this water protection barrier from the heaven, the great world wide flood that followed. But with it followed dramatic climatic changes and with it the sudden shortening of man's live span. No longer living to be close to a millennium, a thousand years old. It's interesting when you think of man's history, that Noah lived almost one sixth of the history of mankind. It's almost sort of frightening to realize that I've lived over one one hundredth of the history of mankind. But man's historic existence hasn't been that long. And his lifespan was dramatically cut off right after the flood. Why? Because his protection, this blanket around the earth, was removed. And now we are exposed to more of the ultraviolet rays of the sun and the cosmic radiation, getting through to the earth, creating the mutation of our cells. And the quicker breakdown and a faster aging process and man's dying at a much younger age than they did previously. But that is result from sin! Now God warned of the consequences of sin. He said if you do this, this is what is going to happen. Man did it and then when it happened, he wants to blame God!

If you jump off of our offices next door, go upon the roof and try to fly, jump off, I can tell you that if you survive, you are going to be hurting bad. That is just the law of gravity. Now, if you go up and jump off, you can't really blame me because you are hurting so bad. Because I said if you jump off that, you are going to really hurt. So in all of your pain, you can't say, why did you hurt me? Why did you say that? You see, I'm not to blame because I warned you of what would be the consequences of a particular action. Even so God is not to be blamed because He knows that certain actions are going to bring certain results in your life. Pain, suffering, sorrow and yet we go ahead and do these things. And then we want to blame God for the consequences. Wrong! And so man is wrong in judging God.

And so he is speaking of that here in verse four, that you might prevail when you are judged. I have a hard time understanding the mind set of a man who would challenge God or who would judge God. Who am I to challenge the justice of God or the fairness of God? And yet we find people doing that, but He prevails.

Now here is their argument. ⁵*But if our unrighteousness demonstrates the righteousness of God, what shall we say? Is God unjust who inflicts wrath? (I speak as a man.)* ⁶*Certainly not! For then how will God judge the world?* But our disobedience, our unrighteousness has commended the righteousness of God. God did not destroy us. We as the Jews still exist and our unrighteousness and look at their history, always turning away from God, and God would bring them into judgment. God led them into captivity. They suffered a lot of pain. They suffered a lot of sorrow because of their disobedience to God. But they said it commends the righteousness of God. God didn't destroy us. So you see, they say, well why weren't they destroyed? Because they are God's people. So our unrighteousness commended the righteousness of God. Therefore why should God judge us for being unrighteous? Actually we only proved that He was true! God said that we were going to turn away. God

said that we were going to go into captivity. So that we are only proving that God's word is true! And thus because we proved that the word of God is true, God really shouldn't judge us for our unrighteousness. He's unfair to take vengeance. And again Paul uses this phrase, perish the thought! Ridiculous. Because how could God then judge the world.

But then they say ⁷*For if the truth of God has increased through my lie to His glory, why am I also still judged as a sinner?* I told this whopping lie of how God was with me. And God revealed Himself and God led me through these difficult circumstances. And people were praising God and saying oh bless God for that glorious thing. It's was a big lie, a big whopper, but oh it got the people all excited, praising God! And so because so many people were blessed, even people got saved, why should God judge me? You know actually God ought to pin a badge on me for telling such a great lie that convinced so many people that God was wonderful! Crazy kind of irrational logic that people concoct. Why am I also still judged as a sinner?

As Paul said ⁸*And why not say, "Let us do evil that good may come"?--as we are slanderously reported and as some affirm that we say. Their condemnation is just.* Paul said, I've never said anything like that. Now God's grace and God's love and God's justification is a glorious thing. The redemption through Jesus Christ is wonderful. And it's especially glorious when a person whose life has been so totally destroyed by sin, they are really at the bottom of the barrel. It's glorious to see the grace of God extended to such a person and their lives transformed miraculously. It's wonderful to see God take someone whose life is worthless according to the world's standards and make of them an instrument of His glory. We sort of call them trophies of grace. And we look to what God has wrought and we rejoice together. We see so many of our pastors of Calvary Chapels who God rescued from the junk heap. And God has raised them up and is using them mightily now in ministering the gospel around the world. And we see these men whom the grace of God has just been magnified because they were so low and God has lifted them from the pit, the miry clay. And has established their feet upon the Rock and now they are being such a power for God! Does that mean that I should go out and just really destroy my life in sin and take all of the drugs that I can get hold of and all? So that then I can be saved and then God's grace might be demonstrated. Oh praise God, look at what he did for that poor soul! And so people will glorify God because His grace is sort of exalted in that He reached to the depths....No, no, no. But you see this is the kind of foolish reasoning that sometimes people have. Paul is saying, "Let us do evil that good may come." Some are saying that I'm am saying that. He said, "Their condemnation is just."

So the question again, another question, ⁹*What then? Are we better than they?* (That is are we Jews better than the Gentiles? No.) *Not at all. For we have previously charged both Jews and Greeks that they are all under sin.* (Now the Jews had the advantage of receiving the oracles of God. God gave them His law. And God told them what He would do for them if they kept His law. And God told them what the consequences would be if they broke the law of God. They broke the law of God and God's word true and those consequences of which God warned, came upon them. So we've proved that God's word is true. But the advantage then is gone. It's only if you keep the word of God that it is the advantage to you. And so the Jews are not better than the Gentiles. Paul said we've proved both Jew and Gentile that they are all under sin.

¹⁰*As it is written:*

"There is none righteous, no, not one;

¹¹*There is none who understands;*

There is none who seeks after God.

¹²*They have all turned aside;*

They have together become unprofitable;

There is none who does good, no, not one." So Paul begins to make this indictment against both Jew and Gentile. We are all of us guilty before God. There are none of us who are righteous before God. Not one! And none that understand. And there are none who are seeking after God in the natural state. But we've all gone out of the way.

But then he begins to describe them, ¹³*"Their throat is an open tomb;*

With their tongues they have practiced deceit";

"The poison of asps is under their lips"; The mouth speaks blasphemous things. Death proceeds. Poison. With their tongues they have used deceit.

¹⁴"Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness."

¹⁵"Their feet are swift to shed blood;

¹⁶Destruction and misery are in their ways;

¹⁷And the way of peace they have not known." (Feet carrying us to mischief, to bloody acts.)

¹⁸"There is no fear of God before their eyes."

¹⁹Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. The law or keeping rules, cannot make you righteous. As I was growing up in church as a young fellow, we had pledge cards that we signed each year at summer camp, the final night. We were to carry these pledge cards in our wallet, which I did. In which I pledged to keep my body pure. Not to smoke. Not to drink. I pledged not to go to dances. Not to use any foul language. And I kept that pledge card in my wallet. And I did my best to keep that pledge. I didn't go to shows. I didn't go to dances. I didn't drink. I didn't smoke. I kept my body pure. But I was looking at that as the basis for my righteousness. And I felt that I am righteous because I don't go to shows and I don't go to dances and I don't drink and I don't smoke. And that was the basis of my righteousness. I prayed so many hours a week and read so many chapters of the Bible. That was the basis of my righteousness. It was a righteousness of rules that I was keeping. But the keeping of rules cannot give you a righteous standing before God. And that was my big mistake. I thought that the teaching of the rules gave me a righteous standing before God. Now not to imply that I was perfect, not by a long shot. There were times when I would get angry. And in a fit of temple, I would swear. And for a week I would feel horribly guilty. I would pray. I would wait for Sunday night so I could get saved again. And I would feel this horrible guilt. And I would renew my vow to God, asking His forgiveness. But the whole while feeling, I really have no right to ask God for anything or to expect anything from God for how I have failed. I've failed God and thus I have no right to ask God for anything. Because I was looking for God to bless me on the basis of my righteousness, which was predicated upon my not drinking, my not smoking, this kind of thing. The rules that I was keeping.

Now Paul is here talking about what the law says. It says to those that are under the law that every mouth may be stopped and the whole world may become guilty before God. Because you see if you keep the whole law and you violate in one point, you are guilty of all. It doesn't matter which point you have violated, you're guilty! Now though I never did smoke and never did, you know, drink or whatever, yet I did sneak off once in high school and went to a show. So I was guilty of breaking this pledge card that I had in my pocket as I was sitting in the show. And I still remember that miserable night! It was in the Broadway Theater there in Santa Ana on Broadway. Stars and Stripes Forever. And the whole while I was sitting there I was praying my heart out. I didn't really see the picture, my eyes were closed. I was praying, Lord, don't come for the church now. Wait until Sunday night when I can repent and get saved again. The law cannot make you righteous. All the law can do is point out your guilt. It makes us guilty before God. That was the purpose and the intention of the law, to show us guilty before God. So that we would not be trusting in our own righteousness but we would be casting ourselves upon the mercy of God.

As Jesus was saying about the two men who went into the temple. The Pharisee who said, Father, I thank You that I am not like other men. But I do all of these good things. I pay tithes and so forth. And I do all these wonderful things. Jesus said this poor old publican over here wouldn't even lift his head up but just was beating on his chest and said, "Oh God have mercy upon me, a sinner." But Jesus said, he went home justified. Why? Because he cast himself upon the mercies of God. He wasn't looking at his own righteousness, which as a Pharisee, came from his misinterpreting of the law. He had interpreted the law so that he in his mind fulfilling the law when in reality he had broken the law, but his misinterpretation made him very self righteous. Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.

²⁰*Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.* All that the law can do is show you what sin is. But in seeing what sin is it should then drive me to God for help and forgiveness. The law reveals the fact that I am a sinner. And when it has done that it fulfills its purpose. And so it is a mistake to think that you can set a bunch of rules and live by those rules and be righteous. Not so! And this is the principle of law. It isn't just the Ten Commandments. It's the principle of rules. So many churches have made the mistake of setting up rules for righteousness within the church. And all that develops is self righteousness, which will not save.

But in contrast now, ²¹*But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets,* ²²*even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ,* In the next chapter, Paul is going to use as a classic example of righteousness by faith, the man Abraham. Which say the Scriptures, Abraham believed God and it was accounted to him for righteousness? What? His belief in God. But what did he believe? Where does it say that? God took Abraham outdoors. He said look up into the heavens, Abraham. Now you are talking pre smog days. You're talking desert skies. You're talking pre light pollution days. No light pollution. The strongest lights were candles and little lanterns. You're talking about a man standing out there in the desert. Clear, clear, crystal clear, desert air. Looking up into the heavens and seeing the Milky Way and the myriads of stars. And God said to Abraham, who at this point was still without his promised son. Even as the stars up there are innumerable, so shall thy seed be. And Abraham believed God and his belief was accounted for righteousness. God said, "Righteous man." Because he believed God.

But just a minute. Who shall thy seed be? Abraham understood that God was promising the Messiah, Jesus Christ, would come from Abraham's seed. That he would be a descendant of Abraham. For as Paul rightly commentaries on this passage in Galatians 3:16, Paul points out that it was unto his seed, singular, as of one, not seeds plural as of many, for that seed is Jesus Christ. So Abraham believed in Jesus Christ. As Paul said here, the righteousness of God which is by faith in Jesus Christ *to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference;* So it's what righteousness apart from the law, being witnessed by the law. Thus in the first book of the Bible, one of the books of the law, here is Abraham believing God and his faith being imputed by God for righteousness. His believing that God would send the Messiah, Jesus Christ, through him. So this righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ. That is unto all and upon all of them that believe for there is no difference.

²³*for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,* For when you talk about sinners, we're all on the same level. We are all guilty. We have all sinned and have come short of the glory of God. That is almost a redundant statement because the definition of sin, missing the mark, is the same idea as coming short. We haven't lived up to the mark. We've come short of the glory of God. Now, some people are better than others, admittedly. They are not nearly as mean and cantankerous. They have a much sweeter nature. They're not always flying off at every little thing. They're not always cursing people and just living a miserable life. There are some people who by nature are quite kind, quite considerate. They are wonderful to be around. With some people I'd rather not even be around. And so there are people that come closer to the mark. But we've all come short. And to miss the mark is to miss the mark.

But, I almost hit it! But you missed man. I came close. Yes, but you missed. It's like we are going from here to Catalina. Half way across the channel we sprung a leak and the boat went down. We all started swimming toward Catalina. Because I'm so out of shape, I only get a hundred yards from where the spot where the boat went down and I go down. But you keep stroking away. You are in good shape. You get within a mile of Catalina and you can see Avalon. And you can see the boats and the people, but you're just totally exhausted and you go down. Well you came closer, but we both were down. So you see, the fact that the consequences are the same. We're sinners. And as sinners, we are then under the judgment of God against sin. Oh, but I'm a pretty good sinner. That's your problem! We've all sinned and have come short of the glory of God.

But ²⁴*being justified freely by His grace* The word grace means undeserved or unmerited favor. It is giving to me something that I do not deserve at all! We have three words that are sort of associated. The one is justice. We're getting that here in the text. And the word, justice, means getting what you deserve. And there is something in us that sort of loves justice. We sort of delight in it. He's got what he had coming. Good! It's getting what you deserve.

Mercy. That's not getting what you deserve. When Napoleon was marching through Paris on one of his victory marches, a young girl broke from the crowd and came up crying, "Mercy, Sire, mercy for my father." He said who is your father? And she named him. And he said your father is a traitor to France. He deserves to die. She said, I didn't say justice, Sire. I said mercy! Yes he deserved to die but mercy! It's not getting what you deserve.

Grace is getting what you don't deserve! I don't deserve the forgiveness of sin. I don't deserve heaven. I deserve hell! And if justice was served, I would go to hell. But God who is merciful with His great love where with He loved us. The grace of God! Not only is it that I don't go to hell, but I'm going to spend eternity in heaven! That's grace! God's grace. He gives me that which I could not earn. That which I do not deserve and yet God gives to me and bestows upon me His love, His goodness, His blessing and the eternal benefit of the heavenly kingdom.

So justified freely. Now the word justified, you need to sort of break that up to get the understanding. Just as if, I had never sinned! And that is how God treats my sin. It's just as though I had never been guilty. And God has justified me freely through His grace!

through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, (Through the fact that Jesus paid the price for me. He died in my stead.) ²⁵*whom God (that is Jesus Christ) set forth (Whom? Jesus Christ. God has set forth to be.) as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed,* The judgment of God that had been pronounced against sinning man. This sentence that was already given. The soul that sinneth shall die. The wages of sin is death. That sentence that had been declared, righteously declared by God against sinning man. The righteousness of God had been propitiated through the death of Jesus Christ. Through faith in the blood. The blood that Jesus Christ shed speaks of a life that has been poured out. The life of the flesh is in the blood. And so the shedding of the blood of Jesus Christ signifies the giving of His life. Now the sentence of sin is death. Jesus gave His life. Shed His blood. The righteousness of God that demanded the judgment on my sin was satisfied through the death of Christ. He is propitiated or the satisfaction given, through the fact that Jesus did die and thus the sins have meted or they have experienced then their consequences in Jesus Christ.

Now as Isaiah the prophet said, Paul said these things were testified in the law and the prophets, Isaiah said, "All of us like sheep have gone astray. We turned everyone of us to our own way. But God laid on Him the iniquity of us all. So He was wounded for our transgressions. He was bruised for our iniquities. God said for the transgressions of My people He was smitten." So Jesus Christ, God incarnate, took upon Himself my guilt.

Now in the Old Testament when you had sinned you would bring a sin offering to the priest. You would bring a goat or a lamb. You would lay your hands on the head of the goat. You would confess your sin. That's in a symbolic sense transferring your sins over unto the goat. And as soon as you did, the priest would slit its throat, catch the blood in the basin, and put it on the altar. And that goat or that lamb died as a substitute for you. The blood was shed instead of your blood. And there was made then this covering for your sin. So Jesus Christ came as my sin offering and God laid on Him all of my sin, all of my guilt and then He died for me. Thus the righteousness of God is satisfied in that there has been death for sin. But because of the grace of God, I didn't die for my sin but Jesus died for my sin. So God freely declares me innocent of all the charges because they have been paid for in the death of Jesus Christ.

²⁶*to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.* The righteous demands of God have been satisfied. And God can now declare me innocent. He exonerates me because of my faith in Jesus Christ.

²⁷*Where is boasting then?* Can I go around and tell you how good I am. Let me just take a few hours and tell you how wonderful a person I am. All I can say is that I'm a poor, wretched, miserable, sinner, but Jesus died for me. He paid it all. All to Him I owe. Sin had left a crimson stain, but He washed it white as snow. The boasting is eliminated because it is not by my righteousness that I am saved. It's not by my good works. I am saved by my simple faith and trust in Jesus Christ, clinging to Him and His works. God said, "Exonerated." Paul in writing to the Ephesians said, "For by grace are you saved through faith and that not of yourselves. It is a gift of God and not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are His workmanship." I'm so glad for that. For when we get to heaven, we are not going to have to sit around and listen to one another brag over all that they did to get

there. All the sacrifices that I made and all the things that I did. Ooooh, no. When we get there, we are all going to be surprised. We're just going to sit there and say, wow, isn't Jesus wonderful? He took all of my sin. He took my guilt. He took my trash. He took my junk. And he died for me! And now by my trust in Him, God has exonerated me and brought me into His presence that I might be here in the kingdom of God forever. Oh praise the name of Jesus! And all the glory and praise will be going to Jesus when we are there and not bragging and boasting.

Where is boasting? *It is excluded. By what law? Of works?* (Oh, no, no, no. If I were saved by works then boasting is there.) *No, but by the law of faith.* It's by the law of faith. Because it's not what I have done but what I believe that God accounted me righteous.

²⁸*Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law.* Without rules and regulation.

²⁹*Or is He the God of the Jews only? Is He not also the God of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also,*
³⁰*since there is one God who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith.* ³¹*Do we then make void the law through faith? Certainly not* (God forbid! Or perish the thought! *On the contrary, we establish the law.* No, we don't negate the law of God. We establish the law of God. It was the thing that showed us our helplessness. It was the thing that revealed to us that we couldn't do it on our own, that we needed to reach outside of ourselves with the help of Jesus Christ. And it was the law that drove me to Jesus Christ. To cause me to put my trust and faith in Him because I realized that I couldn't keep the law. So I've established the law. It's validity in fulfilling the purpose for which God gave it and that is to reveal what sin is to me so that I might know that I am guilty and I need God's help. And thus seeking the help of God, believing in Jesus Christ, I'm justified apart from the works of the law or apart from certain rules that would make me feel, well, I'm righteous because I do this and I do that. I am righteous because I believe in Jesus Christ.

Oh, but aren't you opening the door then for me to do anything? Well, I do anything I want. But what I want is to please Him more than anything else! I'm now bound by another law, not of rules and regulations, but the law of love. For the love of Christ, Paul said, constrains me. That's the thing that pressures me to live the right life. I love Him so much and He loves me so much, that I don't want anything to come between us. I want to do those things that please Him. I don't want to do those things that would be distasteful or displeasing to Him. And so it is the love of Christ that draws me. And I live actually by a much higher standard than I would if I were under rules. Because it is interesting, the human nature being such as it is, if there are rules by which I am regulated and held in check, I'm always going to find a way to bend the rules. To push the limit. You know, you can't, you are always doing that, pushing the limits. How far can I go? And that's the way it is when you are under the law. You are always pushing the limits. But when you are under this bondage of love, oh man, it's not how close can I live to the world and still be a Christian but how close can I live to Jesus. Held by the bonds of love. A great place to be. And when you know and discover the grace of God which we will be discovering more and more as we continue on in Romans, your love for the Lord is just going to increase as you realize what God by grace has wrought for you, has done for you and what He is planning to do for you who by simple faith in Jesus Christ have come to trust in Him.

Father, we thank You for Your word and for, oh, this wonderful position that is ours now. Justified freely by Your grace through our faith in Jesus Christ. Lord, we pray that You will teach us more and more about the wonderful plan of salvation. The grace of God, the justification, the sanctification and that glorification. Draw us, Lord, unto Yourself and unto that great love. Bring us into a richer appreciation. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.