

## The Good News

Good morning family. I just want to take a moment to thank the leadership for inviting me back as well as to honor them for all they do in the community and your love for those in need. It is an honor and a privilege to be back. Last time we were together we talked about obedience and I shared with you how the power of the Holy Spirit can work in our lives and help us to be obedient to God's Word. In fact, I even mentioned that at Salvation the Holy Spirit indwells us.

But what is salvation, what is this Good news that we hear about. God Himself, became human to show us what it is like to walk in perfect obedience to the Father. Jesus paid our sin debt, was crucified, rose from the dead and now is seated with the Father. In His place He sent the Holy Spirit, another like him, exactly like Him to comfort us and lead us and indwell us. Now we get to go to heaven when our earthly bodies die. The Son of God was crucified, His blood allows for the forgiven of our sin so that man's relationship with God could be reconciled. That's God news!

Let me show you, **(Slide) Rom. 5:8-11, "8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. 9 Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him. 10 For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. 11 And not only this, but we also celebrate in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation."**

Why did God feel a need to reconcile us to Him? Because sin separates us from God. If you remember in the Old Testament yearly sacrifices had to be made in order for sin to be covered. It was the shedding of blood that was the covering for sin and allowed for forgiveness. **(Slide) Heb 9:22 states, "In fact, the law requires that nearly everything be cleansed with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness."** The reason being was because the penalty for sin is death, **(Slide) Rom.**

**6:23, “For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.** The death that Paul speaks about in this verse is not a physical death but what is commonly referred to as the second death, eternal separation from God. Rev. 20:14-15, states, **(slide) “14 Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. 15 And if anyone’s name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.”**

The ten commandments were given out of love, it was the way that God allowed us to know we needed a Savior. No one with the exception of Jesus has been able to keep these ten commandments perfectly. But now through Holy Spirit because of our Salvation we can say NO to sin. We could not do that before Salvation just look at John 8:44

Jesus became the once and for all perfect sacrifice, the blood of Jesus did not cover sin, it destroyed it, completely removed it. He paid our sin debt in full, a debt we could not repay on our own.

Here is some of that good news, Jesus died for all. **(Slide) John 3:16, “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him will not perish, but have eternal life.”**

**(Slide) 2 Peter 3:9, “The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.**

Paul tells us in Romans we have all sinned and come short of the glory of God and that there is no one righteous not one (Rom 3:10/3:23). We know there is a sin problem because we were born into a fallen world. Paul also reminded us that the penalty for sin is death, so now what, well, here is the good news. There is a provision for the sin and that provision is Jesus Christ. **While we were still sinners** He died for us. He paid our sin debt and atoned for our sin. **(Slide) 1 John 2:2 states, “and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.”** Did you get that, for the sin of the whole world, not just a few.

But how do you get saved. Now some of you may be saying, I don't need to be hearing this I'm already saved, perhaps. But what if I told you, you may be the one who helps bring someone to salvation. How do you do that, how do you lay those seeds down? Because God does the saving and the Holy Spirit draw them, but Jesus told his disciples, that's us, to go to all the world and share the Gospel. What I am sharing with you today are tools that will equip you to share the gospel.

You cannot assume people are saved. Not every one is going to heaven. **(slide) Matt 7:21-23, "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter. 22 Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?' 23 And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; leave Me, you who practice lawlessness.'"**

This is very sobering to me because we know from our reading of 2 Peter that God wants no one to perish, yet we can make our own choices. We have the free will to say, "no" to the Holy Spirit. Perhaps the Holy Spirit was drawing someone in 20 years ago but it doesn't necessarily mean that they were ready to accept Christ as savior 20 years ago and perhaps said "No," at the Alter Call. But now it's 20 years later and the Holy Spirit has been drawing them this whole time, maybe today is the day for Salvation and we miss leading someone to Christ because we did not step out or did not know how. Perhaps, it is even your day for salvation today.

Do you know without a doubt you are going to heaven? In our reading Mathew 7, how do you know if someone is saved? The truth is that no one knows another person's heart but God. However, there are diagnostic ways that we can communicate with the person to see if they understand the Gospel. **(slide) Eph. 2:8, "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not a result of works, so that no one may boast."**

You see salvation is nothing that can be earned. It is a gift of grace from God. If we could earn salvation on our own merit then God would have been cruel to allow His own Son to be crucified for our salvation if we could accomplish it ourselves. Works and religious “duties,” if you will, do not get us into heaven. You do not get into heaven by being a good person. If we are depending on our good acts and good works to get us into heaven then we are depending on ourselves and not what Jesus accomplished at the cross. Those who say they are going to heaven because they are good, who are they comparing themselves to?

Is your comparison to a person that seems more reachable or to a holy God? If you are comparing yourself to someone like Jeffery Dahmer who was a murder and then ate his victims then yes you can say you are a good person compared to him. But can you stand before a Holy God and compare yourself to Him with a lifetime of sin that has not been repented for yet.

Allow me to give you an example to put it into perspective, If I were to ask a random man on the street, have you ever lied, they would say yes, then if I were to ask him have you ever looked at woman and had a lustful thought, chances are he will say yes and then I ask have you ever been dishonored your parents, and before you say no, think about your teenage years. They will likely say yes.

By their admission they are liars, adulterers because Jesus said if you have looked with lust you have already committed adultery and by their own admission they already have broken a third of the commandments. I guarantee you if I go down the list they would have broken every one of the commandments just as we have. So now imagine the guy we are talking to is 30 years old. And lets say this person does three sins a day; one lie, one lustful thought and disrespects or covets another persons property, any sin really. Three sins a day is conservative considering studies have shown that the average person lies up to 200 times a day. that two hundred times the person sins a day. This is why I said 3 is conservative.

So 3 sins a day times 365 days in a year is 1095 sins a year now multiply that by the 30 years they have been alive and that is 32,850 sins. Can you stand before a holy God with over 30,000 sins and expect to go into heaven? Suppose you are 60 years old and you haven't repented of your sin, that is 65,700 sins and again that is if you only sin 3 times a day. Do you see the importance of repentance? Do you see why our only comparison should be to a holy God and not another person.

Did you know you can be unsaved and be kind, why because we are all made in the image of God. We share in his commutable attributes. But being kind is not going to get you to heaven.

You are not saved because you go to church every week and you're not saved because your parents are saved. Why, because what is need for salvation is faith and repentance. Faith that Jesus is the son of God, died for your sin, rose again on the third day and is seated next to the father, and repentance. It is something that has to come from you. You can't be saved off someone else's salvation experience. What is repentance, in its most basic meaning it is changing your mind. You repent, you change your mind that you could live without a savior and now you know you need one.

If you think you can earn your way into heaven or buy your way into heaven, repent, change your mind, and believe the truth, the only way to heaven is through Jesus Christ and it is a free gift of grace so that no man can boast as Paul tells us.

If you died today and Jesus asked, why should I let you into my heaven what would you say? Would you say because I'm a good person, would you say, because I was an elder at a church? Do you know if you are going to heaven?

The scripture tells us that when we believe with our hearts and confess with our lips that Jesus is Lord then nothing can separate us from the love of God. We can give what we call salvation prayers but the truth is that the prayer is there as a way of acknowledging with our lips and confirming the understanding that you need a savior.

Please do not say to someone, "Jesus loves you" and then walk away. Yes, Jesus loves them, but you are only sharing half a truth, tell them the demonstration the love, that He died for their sin debt in their place as them. Because if all you only tell them is that Jesus loves them and they get hit by a bus and die that night, what then?

Lets Pray, with your head bowed and your eyes closed, Pray this, Father, I know I am a sinner in need of a savior. I repent of all my sin even those I don't remember. I acknowledge Jesus is the son of God died for my sin and rose again. And I submit my life to Jesus as my Lord and savior.

If you prayed that prayer today for the first with your heads still bowed and your eyes closed raise your hand.

{Ending prayer}

Father, I pray in the name of Jesus, that each one of us would have the boldness to preach Gospel and to love one another as Christ has loved us. May the he Lord bless you and keep you; May The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; May Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace." I pray this in Jesus, name,

Amen