

How To Be Right With God

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[0 : 00] Open your Bibles to Luke chapter 18. Luke chapter 18.

I'll begin reading at verse 9. Before sharing this story, Jesus actually reveals to us his reason for telling this story.

Luke 18 verse 9. God, I thank you that I am not like all other men, robbers, evildoers, adulterers, or even like this tax collector.

I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get. But the tax collector stood at a distance.

He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, God, have mercy on me, a sinner.

[1 : 35] I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.

Let's hear God's word. This morning I want to preach on the topic how to be right with God.

How can I, a sinner, and I mean that, me, a sinner, who's offended God by breaking his laws and deserve the punishment of hell.

How can I, a sinner, be right with a holy God, save from God's wrath, and go to heaven? How can I know God is my best friend and not my worst enemy?

He's one or the other to all of us here this morning. So there could be no more important matter for us to consider how to be right with God.

[2 : 50] It's the greatest problem we all have, whether we've recognized that or not. And the fact that there is an answer is an amazing mercy.

God didn't need to save us, but He has offered us a way of salvation. Now you need to know that not all are in agreement as to how to answer this question, how to get right with God.

Some say one thing, some say another. And contrary to the big lie, not all of these ways lead to heaven. Not all the Bible scholars, not all the preachers, not all the professing Christians and churches agree on the answer.

So how in the world are we to make our way through the minefield of religious teaching on this subject and to be sure that we get it right because we only get one chance in this life to get it right.

Our eternal destiny is at stake. So what if the Holy God Himself came down from heaven, became one of us, and taught us how to be right with Him?

[4 : 06] Well, in fact, that is what has happened, you see. We are in the midst of a study on the Pharisees on Sunday mornings, a religious party within first century Judaism.

And they studied the Old Testament Scriptures. And so they were the experts and they provided most of the teachers of the law in Israel for the whole nation of the Jews.

They were highly revered by the Jews and were considered the most righteous people in the land. And though they might have started out well and good intention, with good intentions, by the time of our Lord's birth, they had drifted so far from the truth of God that instead of leading others to heaven as they claimed, they were actually blind leaders leading the whole nation to hell with their teaching.

Now, by the way, Satan doesn't care whether he gets people to hell by gross immorality or by false religion.

Either one serves his damning purposes. Indeed, the latter is often far more effective because it's easier to deceive religious people into thinking that they're going to heaven than it is some slave to a gross immorality.

[5 : 29] And this was the religion of the Pharisees. Jesus' last words to the crowds before his crucifixion was to expose the Pharisees, to expose their hypocrisy and their false religion.

And he did it out of love to the masses that they'd not follow the Pharisees to hell, but that they listened to the good shepherd who would lead them to heaven and save them from deception.

And since this yeast of the Pharisee, this teaching and hypocrisy of the Pharisees' religion is still with us, Jesus has included in his book these warnings against the Pharisees in order to instruct us in the true gospel, the only way that sinners can be right with God.

Well, there never has been a teacher like the Lord Jesus Christ. Indeed, it was the answer of the guards who were sent to arrest him when they came back empty-handed and the religious leader says, why haven't you brought him in?

And they said, no one has ever spoken like this man speaks. And he was especially powerful in his parables.

[6 : 47] These stories that he came up with that drove home an important lesson. And that's what we have in our text today here in Luke 18, 19 to 14.

And as Stan said in verse 9, Luke sets up the parable by telling us why Jesus told this story. The issue that Jesus is addressing.

So, this verse 9 acts as a guiding principle to our interpretation of the parable. To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everybody else, Jesus told this parable.

Any guesses as to who this might be that he's talking about? The target of this parable? Well, we don't need to guess because Jesus deliberately writes them into his story.

and he calls them out by name. Indeed, one of the main characters is called a Pharisee. Indeed, they are the ones of whom these two things are true.

[7 : 58] First of all, they were confident of their own righteousness. That means they were convinced that they're right with God. They don't need to get right with God. They are right with God. There's nothing wrong between them and God.

And this right standing before God has been achieved by their own good works, their own righteousness. You know, that remains one of the most popular answers to this very day, to the question, how do you get right with God?

Well, you earn it by how righteous you are. The kind of life you live determines whether you're good enough to get into heaven. Heaven is the reward that is earned by the way that we live.

And the Pharisees believed that their righteousness merited a place in heaven for them. This was no hope-so thing with them. Not at all.

They were sure of it. They were confident that they were right with God. The second thing we notice about them is that their self-righteous confidence is the cause of something else.

[9 : 05] What is it? They look down their noses on everybody else. Now that's the inevitable effect of self-righteousness.

Those who are high in their own eyes, who think they are holier than thou, look down their noses on others beneath them as nobodies.

And that's physically true. Just physically true. If I'm down here, I'm not looking down on you at all. I'm on your level, eyeball to eyeball.

If I stand up, now I'm looking down a bit on you. And if I'm up here, well now I'm really looking down on you. And what's true physically and spatially is true spiritually.

And with regard to our opinions of ourselves and others. my view of myself affects my view of you.

[10 : 09] And the higher I think myself to be, the more I am looking down on everybody else with contempt and disdain. And so as Jesus went about preaching and teaching throughout Judea, he bumped into people like this.

And that's why he writes such a one into his story and he names him a Pharisee. And he exposes his faulty view of himself and his false religion.

So verse 10 tells us, Jesus told this parable, two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. Notice in the first place, two men.

First, the Pharisee. Again, we've seen they're the self-righteous religionists, the holier than thou's. No doubt this man was a regular at the temple. After all, everything he did in religion was for men to see.

So what's the use of praying at home? Now I'm going to go where the people are. And here he is in the temple to pray. He didn't overlook this opportunity to impress the people.

[11 : 27] He's here. The other man is a tax collector. And he is as purposefully selected by Jesus as the Pharisee in his story.

And we'll see the importance of that, why he chose a tax collector to be juxtaposed alongside of this Pharisee.

Now, the tax collector was as much despised by the people as the Pharisee was honored by the people. The tax collector was regarded as a traitor.

He was a Jew collecting taxes from his fellow Jews to pay to the occupying Romans whose heel was over them.

And so he was known to be a traitor to the Jews. Also known to be a thief because everybody knew that they were charging more taxes of the people than what were really owed and they just put the extra in their own pockets and became rich at the expense of the people.

[12 : 36] These were the ones that the self-righteous crowd looked down on as the scum of the earth, unworthy of salvation, unworthy of their concern.

They were despised as the deplorables, the worst of sinners on a level with adulterers, prostitutes, and robbers. Now this man, the tax collector, probably hadn't darkened the door of the temple for a long time if ever.

And yet on this day, here he is in the temple to pray. Isn't Jesus the master storyteller in setting up this situation?

One man on the top of the social ladder of respectability and the other man on the lowest rung of all. A Pharisee and a tax collector brought together in the temple to pray.

Well notice there are two prayers next. And first we're given the prayer of the Pharisee if we can even call it a prayer. Verse 11, the Pharisee stood up and prayed about himself.

[13 : 49] Another translation could be prayed to himself, prayed with himself. Now, it's by listening to his prayer that we can learn how it is that this Pharisee came to have such a high view of himself.

Why has he got himself up on a pedestal on which to look down on everyone? Well, just listen to him. He'll tell you. First of all, he stood up so everybody else could see him and hear him.

And he prayed about himself. And his self-righteous confidence is all based on what he did not do and what he did do.

Starts with what he didn't do. God, I thank you that I'm not like other men, robbers, evildoers, adulterers, or even like this tax collector nodding with his head if not pointing with his very finger.

Can you hear the scorn in his voice? This tax collector? What's he doing here anyway? This is a place for holy people.

[15 : 02] He doesn't belong here. You know, if we want to feel better about ourselves, we can always find someone who's worse than us. And that's what feeds this man's self-righteousness.

He's better than others after all. Better than these moral low-lifers. He's more righteous. Are you impressed yet?

Well, there's more. He's just getting started. There's more to his self-righteousness. Not only the things he's not done. He's not like other men. But there's the things that he has done.

And notice his litany. Verse 12. I fast twice a week and give a tithe of all I get. You see, I say it's hardly a prayer. It's more like a recital of his spiritual accomplishments.

He's preening himself before men. And yes, before God. This man's righteousness. Wow. It is just way over the top.

[16 : 04] Not just fasting when the occasion calls for it. No, I fast twice a week whether the occasion calls for it or not. It's just part of my religious calendar.

Wow. But wait, there's even more. I give a tenth of all I get. We saw last week how the Pharisees even tithe their garden herbs.

One for God. Nine for me. Are you impressed yet with his righteousness? He is. But their fasting, it just amounted to not eating until sundown and then porking out.

And tithing mint leaves, that was hardly costly to them. None of their supposed righteousness required any grace to accomplish.

Nevertheless, they were trusting in such religious acts as if they were good enough to get them into heaven. And they were confident their own righteousness was enough to make them right with God.

[17 : 17] So that's the prayer, quote unquote, of the Pharisee. Now we come to the prayer of the tax collector. Verse 13. But the tax collector stood at a distance.

He would not even look up to heaven but beat his breast and said, God have mercy on me, a sinner. What a contrast.

His prayer is much shorter, isn't it? But even as Jesus sets up the prayer, we notice a contrast. This man's standing at a distance and he doesn't even feel like he can look God in the eye.

You know when you're ashamed and you feel guilty in the presence of someone you've sinned against, it's hard to look him in the eye. This man can't even look God in the eye so he will not lift up his face to heaven but beats upon his breast.

The word has to do with continually beating on his breast. self-accusation for his guilt and cries out, God be merciful to me, the sinner.

- [18 : 26] In contrast with the Pharisee, he doesn't have one good thing to say for himself, does he? And in contrast with the Pharisee, he owns himself as a sinner deserving of God's wrath but pleading for his mercy.

Begging for God not to give him what he deserves for his deeds but to give him what he doesn't deserve. Mercy, pardon, forgiveness, peace. You don't owe me mercy.

You don't owe me anything but hell. But God, be merciful to me, a sinner. That's his prayer. Two men, two prayers.

Which man do you think went home right with God? And I'm sure the audience expected Jesus to say, the religious Pharisee. I mean, look what he is and what he's done.

And look at this guy. What's he even doing here? They expected the Pharisee. They had a proverb if only two men made it to heaven, one would surely be a Pharisee.

- [19 : 37] But Jesus now gives the shocking result. I tell you that this man, the tax collector, and not the other went home justified before God.

For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled and whoever humbles himself will be exalted. Now this was certainly a different message than the crowd was used to hearing from their teachers of the law, the Pharisees.

And it shattered their dearly held idea that heaven was earned by the way that you lived. That just doesn't compute here. Because the religionist, surely he lived a better life than this low-down, thieving tax collector.

And yet Jesus says, this man, not that one, went home right with God. Declared righteous. Righteous. Now to be justified is a legal term.

It's the term of the courtroom. And it means to be declared righteous. Right before the law. It's the favorable verdict of the judge. He hears the case, he examines the evidence, and he brings down the gavel.

- [20 : 56] And he declares the defendant justified. In the right. Nothing wrong between him and me and the law books.

He's good with the law. He's good with me. That's what it means to be justified. Declared righteous. Right. Now Jesus here is not talking about the courts of men though.

That is a term used in the courts. But men don't always get the verdict right, do they? He's referring to being justified in the court of God.

Having the all-knowing God examine the evidence. Everything about you. What you've done. What you've left undone. What you've thought. What you've desired.

Everything. And then declaring you righteous. There's nothing in my law books that you are wrong with.

- [21 : 58] There's nothing here to condemn you. You're right. You're righteous. Now it's one thing to be confident of your own righteousness. It's altogether another thing to have God declare you righteous.

righteous. So let's interview the Pharisee who is so confident of his own righteousness and if we hurry we can catch him on his way home from the temple and we say Mr. Pharisee we'd like to ask you a few questions.

And number one is are you going to heaven? For sure. I'm a bit offended that you would have asked. And why do you say that you're going to heaven?

Well because I deserve to go to heaven. I'm righteous. I'm not like other sinners. I obey God's law.

I do many holy things. I fast and talk. Did you hear me praying in there? He's trusting in himself. He's confident in his own righteousness qualifying him for heaven.

[23 : 09] But Jesus says otherwise. Jesus says he's not right with God. For all that he claims and is sure of it was the other man that went home justified.

He went home as he came condemned as guilty before God. So the self-righteous are self-deceived. They think they're going to heaven sure enough but they're only deceiving themselves.

And that's because they're blind to their own sins. You know we say love is blind don't we? What do we mean when we say that?

Love is blind. Well we mean the young lady is so head over heels in love with this guy that she doesn't see his many faults until mother sits her down and points them out.

even so this self-righteous man is so in love with himself that he is blind to his own faults his own sins his own breaking of God's law.

[24 : 16] Oh he can see the sins of others just fine it's 2020 out there just listen to him talk about these sinners. He sees quite clearly the sins of others but it's his own sins that he's blind to.

Psalms 36 David exposes those who have no fear of God this way in their own eyes they flatter themselves too much to detect or hate their sins.

You see it's flattery it's self-love that has them blind to any wrongdoing on their part. it's pride in self that blinds them.

Now what was missing in the Pharisees' prayer? Examine it. You know our prayers are telling things they reveal an awful lot. What was missing in this man's prayer?

Well there was no confession of sin was there? I didn't hear any did you? How did our Lord teach us to pray? How did our Lord teach us to pray? What was that petition right after?

[25 : 28] And give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. Forgive us our transgressions as we forgive those who transgress against us.

Right? That's how we are to pray because we have sinned. We have incurred debt before God. And if we claim to be without sin John says we've deceived ourselves and the truth is not in us and furthermore we make God out to be a liar because he claims that we have sinned and his truth has no place in our lives.

Now I doubt if we interviewed if we asked the Pharisee I doubt that he would ever say aloud I am without sin. That would be a bit too bold perhaps even for a Pharisee but his confidence in his own righteousness you see would make up for whatever few sins that there may be.

And his absence of confession is the most revealing thing about what he really thinks. He senses no awareness of sin or he'd be confessing it before God.

did he have no sins to confess? I mean just from what we've seen here in Jesus' story what about self-righteous pride that thinks that God ought to be impressed with our holiness?

[27 : 03] Are you kidding? That's perhaps the worst sin of all in this story. What about arrogantly looking down his nose at others?

Isn't that a sin? And dissing him publicly? Dissing this tax collector publicly as he's praying? Isn't that misusing the Lord's name?

We're calling on the name of God and then we're using that time to cut down someone over here? Wouldn't that be a sin? What about all the sins Jesus put his finger on in Matthew 23 in the Pharisee's life?

Oh, he had plenty of sins. Sins of plenty. But he failed to see them because he was comparing himself to the wrong standard of righteousness.

He was comparing himself with other sinners beneath him like this tax collector, this adulterer, this robber. He was not comparing himself to God's blazing holiness who is too holy to even look upon sin and countenance it.

[28 : 15] My bath towel that I use at home is white. About every week I throw it in the washer and then I take it out and I hang it back up on the wrong and use it for another week.

But one week instead of hanging it up I put it in the towel closet right on top of all my other white towels that have never been used.

And you know what I learned at that moment? I learned that my towel isn't white after all. It's rather off-white and maybe even gray. I never would have known that unless I put it beside that which is truly white.

And most people today and let me say most people in churches today don't have a clue how holy God is. they're not reading his word where his holiness is.

Have you read the Old Testament? He's no different in the New. Read Revelation if you think it's a different. No, it's the same God. Same wrath for sin.

[29 : 23] Same holiness. But people today do not know how holy God is. They're comparing themselves with the others out there.

That scum. Those deplorables. I look pretty good. I can look down my nose at them. But it only shows I have not seen what is truly the blazing white holiness of God.

Because in the light of his perfect purity all my dark sins are seen for what they really are. and all confidence of my own righteousness is shattered.

It was only imaginary. It was never even real. And I must confess we have all become like one who is unclean and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags.

And then do I see that there is absolutely no way I can earn my way into heaven to be right with that holy God. absolutely none. And the very thought that I can do so is itself offensive and just adds to my sin.

[30 : 38] In the light of God's holiness I see that my sins have forfeited every blessing from God. And what I need from God is not justice and reward. I need mercy.

Unmerited love. Undeserved favor. Free forgiveness. The gift of righteousness. a gracious pardon. And so we must take our place.

Every one of us must take our place beside the tax collector and cry God be merciful to me the sinner. The sinner.

The sinner your Bible talks about. Those who have gone astray with our backs toward you seeking our own way. I am that sinner. The sinner who's who's who's deserved the wrath of God the wages of sin that is death.

That's the sinner I am. Oh God have mercy on me the sinner. But you know it's it's too humbling for the Pharisee to get down there with the tax collector and to plead mercy alongside of him.

[31 : 55] But it was that man rather than the other who went home justified before God declared righteous not by faith in his own righteousness but by faith in God's mercy in Jesus Christ and that is how we sinners you and me get right with a holy God.

Galatians 2.16 was written by a former Pharisee who cried for mercy from the Lord and found it the Apostle Paul.

He says we know this is something Paul knows we know that a man is not justified by observing the law but by faith in Jesus Christ.

So we too have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by observing the law because by observing the law no flesh will ever be justified in God's sight.

Faith finds nothing in ourselves to commend ourselves to God. If it looks this direction inward it says there's nothing of righteousness here that will pass the standard of God.

[33 : 15] And so what does faith do? It looks outside of itself to what Luther called an alien righteousness. It's completely apart in a way and outside of ourselves.

It is the righteousness of Jesus Christ. His obedience to the law that was perfect that met the standard of God's righteousness.

How can God declare this rotten sinner to be right before the law? Would you like a judge like that that looks at a guilty man?

He's got the blood on his hands and the judge says not guilty but right with the law. Something's wrong with that kind of judge. We'd want him gone. How can God ever justify such a wicked sinner?

How can Jesus say that? Well because he was on his way to Golgotha and there on the cross he would step in and say father give me what the sinner deserves and almighty God in his justice would damn his own son and turn his back and forsake him making him to cry my God my God why have you abandoned me?

[34 : 25] And in the darkness of Calvary Jesus suffered the hell that sinners deserved. That's why he can say of this sinner he's not guilty because he would have taken his sins if he's trusting in Jesus then Jesus righteousness is put to his account and his sins were put to Jesus account and he paid for them in full.

That's how good God is. Rather than exacting the payment from the guilty sinner he says I'll assume the debt myself and come in Jesus Christ and pay the debt for him.

and it's on the basis of Jesus perfect life that we couldn't live and his atoning death that we should have died that everyone who trusts in him can be declared righteous righteous before God so our participation in the benefits of Christ's life and death depends on whether our trust is not in our righteousness but in his.

The righteous one dying for the unrighteous to bring us to God justified. That's too humbling for the Pharisee.

It was their self righteous pride that made them enemies of the gospel of grace that Jesus was preaching. And that's why Jesus said of them that tax collectors and prostitutes are entering the kingdom of heaven before you.

[36 : 10] You won't enter. They will and are. And so Jesus concludes this parable saying everyone who exalts himself will be humbled and he who humbles himself will be exalted.

Those are the only options. Those are the only results. It's either humble yourself and be exalted or be humbled for having exalted yourself.

It's either declare yourself to be a condemned sinner before God or I'm sorry declare yourself righteous and be condemned by God or condemn yourself as unrighteous trusting in Christ alone and so be declared righteous by God.

Now earlier in this gospel of Luke, Luke recounts how Jesus called Levi to follow him as one of his twelve disciples. It's Luke chapter 5 27 and following.

And the Bible says Jesus went out and he saw a tax collector by the name of Levi sitting at his tax booth. There he is that traitor taking good Jewish money and giving it to the Romans.

[37 : 31] And Jesus came up to his tax booth and said follow me. And Levi got up left everything and followed him.

Now that must have created quite a stir among the tax collecting community. Levi's gone off following the carpenter from Nazareth. He's left everything.

Can't believe he'd walk away from such a lucrative job. And Levi would say oh but I've gained far more and I want you to meet this Jesus for yourself.

And he invited them over to his house for a banquet in honor of his new master. And they showed up in great numbers. What a sight. Jesus eating with the deplorable tax collectors and sinners who had come.

And once you know it the Pharisee squad also showed up and they were appalled the scriptures say and complained to his disciples. Why does your teacher eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?

[38 : 41] And Jesus answered them it's not the healthy who need a doctor but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance.

So here he is. Here's Jesus the son of God and he's talking with these tax collectors. He's the great physician. And he's caring for these sin sick souls.

You know that's why he's here. He's right where he belongs. That's why he came from heaven to earth in the first place. To call not the righteous but sinners to repentance.

And by the way that's all there really are because there's none righteous. No not one. There's just these self proclaimed righteous guys with their noses tilted in the air. but they're not really righteous.

And they will never be righteous in God's sight until right alongside that repenting tax collector they stand on equal ground as a sinner in need of God's grace in Jesus Christ.

[39 : 56] I wonder if it's sunk into you that Jesus intentionally chose a tax collector to be one of his twelve disciples. Now here in the gospel of Luke and in Mark's gospel he's called Levi that was his Hebrew name but his Greek name is Matthew.

And he was not only one of Jesus' disciples he's also the author of the first gospel the first book of the New Testament. Imagine it a converted tax collector a social deplorable spreading the gospel of Jesus.

That's right Jesus wants sinners to hear of the saving mercy and grace of God in Christ from other sinners who have tasted and seen that the Lord is gracious just as he'd want.

And so Jesus intentionally saved and chose a tax collector as one of the twelve. He intentionally wrote a tax collector into his story that we're studying this morning. And in the very next chapter Luke 19 Jesus will bring to salvation that chief tax collector Zacchaeus.

And all of this is sending the important message loud and clear I have come into the world to save sinners. Real sinners who have offended a holy God and I've come to save them.

[41 : 15] And so Jesus says I tell you this man not the other went home justified before God. Now that wasn't a special deal that was just cut for this tax collector. No that's the way it is for everybody.

In fact that's the next word. He said everybody who exalts himself will be humbled and everyone who humbles themselves will be exalted. So you may have come in here today lost in sin guilty condemned and on your way to hell.

But if you come to Jesus owning your sin and renouncing it and trust in Jesus' righteousness you can go home today right with God. He will save you.

He will declare you righteous through the righteousness of Jesus transferred to your account and received by the empty hands of faith. But if you're trusting in your own righteousness for heaven you may come in here every week and you'll go home every week condemned by God not righteous you may be the most religious person in this church like the Pharisees were but if your confidence is in your righteousness that's the verdict of the judge of the last day.

But the wonder is if you came in as a Pharisee today thinking I think I'm good enough for heaven but this morning your eyes have been opened to see what true whiteness is true holiness is and you know that Jesus is your only hope for righteousness and you're crying out to him to have mercy upon you the sinner well you can go home justified before God you see it's one in the same gospel one in the same sinner for all sinners Pharisee religious man immoral tax collector you know sometimes as Stan mentioned God even puts the gospel in the mouth of his enemies in Luke 15 it says now the tax collectors and sinners were all gathering around Jesus to hear him but the Pharisees and teachers of the law muttered this man welcomes sinners and eats with them we say amen you spoke the truth there and hallelujah that it is so because I find myself to be a sinner in need of a savior oh and here's one who welcomes sinners you know those those those teachers of the law those Pharisees you've got to measure up you've got to clean your life up before you can ever come and expect to get into heaven but this Jesus says you could come just as you are a sinner and throw the whole of your weight on what

[44 : 08] Jesus has done for sinners and you will be justified made right with God that's good news that's the gospel and this emphasis on tax collectors whether in Jesus story his parable or in real life it's all meant to encourage sinners especially those who may think that they've out sinned God's mercy that they're out of the reach of God's love and grace as if they're too bad for heaven listen you may be despised as a deplorable by the self righteous but you are loved by Jesus Christ and he welcomes you to come just as you are and he will have mercy on you turn from your sin come and embrace the Savior he's just that kind he's plenteous in mercy he delights in mercy and if you come he will welcome you with no reluctance in fact he'll rejoice over you with singing George Whitefield used to say that Jesus even takes the devil's castaways so what more could you want in a

Savior than what is found in my Jesus none too vile but his blood will cleanse from every sin his righteousness will cover the worst of sinners and make you right with God have you come to him for mercy by prayer cry God be merciful to me a sinner because of what Jesus has done for sinners at the start I told you that the Son of God has come to teach us how to be right with God and oh bless God for passages like this where it makes it just crystal clear how we get right with God here's the true gospel here's the only way it becomes the test of all gospels being preached today if any so-called gospel cannot welcome the worst of sinners to come to Jesus Christ just as you are and to be saved by him then you know it's a false gospel and no gospel at all oh but

Jesus has done so much more than just come to teach us how to get right with God how to be saved he has come to accomplish salvation for us he doesn't just come to tell here you got to do this this and this no he came to do this this and this for us and now he says with open hands of empty hands of faith just receive me and in me eternal life for I am the way the truth and the life and no one comes to the father except through me I am the way come walk with me I am the truth come and believe on me I am the way I am the way the truth I am the life come and receive me and with me eternal life for he who has the son has life and he who has not the son of God has not life that's how we get right with God it's through

Jesus the only mediator between God and man let's pray and thank you our father you didn't need to offer us a way of salvation you didn't offer the fallen angels a way to be redeemed you consigned them to an eternal hell but when mankind fell you immediately showed mercy and grace you could have created a new humanity at far less cost than redeeming the old fallen humanity for you you did not spare your own son but gave him up for us all so thank you for your mercy thank you Jesus for coming to reveal the father to us and to show us that his heart is one of mercy he is holy and he will damn all who are too proud to come and cling only to Christ for life so don't let this sweet gospel be lost and wasted upon any here and as it goes around the globe today we thank you for every gospel preaching church and preaching place and pray that you would gather many who would honor the Lord

Jesus by taking him up on his welcome if you come I will receive you get glory to yourself
and thank you for your mercy in Jesus we pray in his name amen