

What Others Should Think of Us

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Preacher: Colin Horne

[0:00] 1 Peter, 1 Peter chapter 2. My brother Colin Horn has agreed to preach for us this evening and we're thankful for that.

! He's asked me to read 1 Peter chapter 2. We're going to just read verses 9 through 12. 1 Peter chapter 2 and verse 9.

But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God. Once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. Dear friends, I urge you as aliens and strangers in the world to abstain from sinful desires which war against your soul.

Live such good lives among the pagans that though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.

[1:14] Let's hear the preaching of God's word. Well, good evening. It's good to be with you all. I bring greetings from Grace Baptist Church.

We are always remembering you in our prayers and thankful for those of you that sometimes occasionally come and meet with us, whether that be on Sunday nights for prayer or fellowship lunches.

To have you there is such an encouragement to our hearts and so we're thankful for you all. Well, as we turn to the word this evening, I have a question for you. What do people see when they look at our lives?

What do people think about when they see the way you live? I want to look at a passage of scripture that tells us what people should see when they look at us.

It tells us what people should be saying about us when they look at our lives. Turn with me in your copy of the scriptures to Deuteronomy chapter 4. The book of Deuteronomy highlights the unique relationship between God and the nation of Israel.

[2:20] They're his chosen people. A couple books before Deuteronomy, in the book of Exodus, Israel was in slavery in the land of Egypt. Through a series of miraculous events, God saved them out of their bondage, brought them safely across the Red Sea, and drowned the Egyptian army as it tried to follow.

And then having delivered them from Israel, God entered into this special relationship with the nation of Israel. A relationship that God had promised years earlier to Israel's forefather, Abraham. God made a covenant with Israel. And he used some really strong language to describe what this covenant looked like and who Israel was to him. You don't have to turn here, but listen to some of the ways that God speaks of Israel in Exodus 19.

He says, I hope even some of that sounds similar to what we heard in 1 Peter chapter 2.

God never says anything like this to any other nation in the Old Testament. No other ancient people is considered God's treasured possession. No other ancient people is considered a kingdom of priests or a holy nation.

[3:37] God sets the people of Israel apart very distinctly from all other nations in their relationship to God. But God doesn't just tell Israel that they're unique in Exodus 19.

He also tells them how that uniqueness is supposed to flesh itself out in Exodus 20 to 23. He gives them his laws. And he gives his laws only to them.

Just like he said they were his special people and he said this to no one else, so too did he give them his laws. And he didn't give them to anyone else. He didn't give them to Edom or to Philistia or to Assyria.

He gave them to Israel. What comes to be known as the Mosaic Law sets down concrete terms for how Israel is to relate to God in their special covenant relationship to him. In obeying they are blessed.

In disobeying they are cursed. The book of Deuteronomy that I had you open up to outlines in detail all of the laws God gives to Israel as well as the covenant blessings and curses for obedience or disobedience.

[4:34] And one of the covenant blessings for obedience was the possession of a certain piece of real estate. It's called the promised land. God didn't just bring the people of Israel out of Egypt to make them wanderers in the desert, nomads forever.

He brought them out of Egypt with a clear destination in mind, the promised land. In the book of Exodus God makes it clear that Israel must obey his laws if they're to inherit the promised land. And yet when they come to the promised land in the book of Exodus, the Israelites fail to enter in and take possession of it because of their unbelief and their unfaithfulness to God and his laws.

And so God makes them to wander in the desert for 40 years until that generation has completely died out. Now when we come to Deuteronomy chapter 4, Israel is on the cusp of the promised land once more with that previous generation having died.

For a second time God reminds the people of their unique relationship to him and of their need to obey his laws and of the covenant blessing of the promised land for the obedience to his laws. So follow along as I read Deuteronomy chapter 4 beginning in verse 1.

And now, O Israel, listen to the statutes and the rules that I am teaching you and do them, that you may live and go in and take possession of the land that the Lord, the God of your fathers, has given you.

[5:51] You shall not add to the word that I command you, nor take from it, that you may keep the commandments of the Lord your God that I command you. Your eyes have seen what the Lord did to Baal Peor, for the Lord your God destroyed from among you all the men who followed the Baal of Peor.

But you who held fast to the Lord your God are all alive today. See, I have taught you statutes and rules as the Lord my God commanded me, that you should do them in the land that you are entering to take possession of it.

Remember, this isn't the first time God is having this conversation with Israel. Back in the book of Exodus, before failing to enter into the promised land, God says to the people these words, Behold, I send an angel before you to guard you on the way and to bring you to the place that I have prepared.

Pay careful attention to him and obey his voice. Do not rebel against him, for he will not pardon your transgression, for my name is in him. But if you carefully obey his voice and do all that I say, then I will be an enemy to your enemies and an adversary to your adversaries.

When my angel goes before you and brings you to the Amorites and the Hittites and the Perizzites and the Canaanites, the Hivites and the Jebusites, and I blot them out, you shall not bow down to their gods nor serve them, nor do as they do, but you shall utterly overthrow them and break their pillars in pieces.

[7:09] You shall serve the Lord your God, and he will bless your bread and your water, and I will take sickness away from among you. God has laid this out for Israel before. You are my unique people, on whom I have placed my special love.

Obey my commandments, and I will give you the promised land. And now God says it again here in Deuteronomy. Moses says, Listen, O Israel, to these statutes and rules. Do them in order that you may live and go in and take possession of the land.

God reminds Israel that obedience to his laws would result in covenant blessings. So if Israel hopes to live and prosper in the land, they can't add anything to God's laws nor take anything away.

Do what God has said and his blessing will flow. This idea is found in verses 1 and 2, and then again in verse 5, where Moses says, See, I have taught you statutes and rules as the Lord my God commanded me, that you should do them in the land that you are entering to take possession of it. So I hope this all paints a pretty clear picture for us as we're approaching this text this morning.

That there's this theme over and over in the Old Testament of this covenant relationship between God and the nation of Israel.

[8:16] And there are three really significant elements to this covenant relationship that we've just seen. It's a special relationship. It's a relationship built on God's laws. And it's a relationship that

involves blessings.

Namely, this promised land that God would give to Israel. In the first five verses of Deuteronomy chapter 4, this theme is very clearly brought out for us.

But then we come to verse 6, where Moses adds something more. He says something about Israel's relationship to the surrounding nations. And what he says may actually come as a bit of a surprise to some of us.

Often we think about or we read about Israel's relationship to other nations. And it's typically one of animosity. The nations are the enemies of God and of his people. The nations worship idols rather than the one true God.

And because of this, God has promised to completely annihilate those nations in the promised land who have disobeyed his commands. And who have rebelled against him.

[9:16] And these specific nations that have sinned against God, it would be right and just then that God would punish them. This isn't genocide because genocide implies innocence. This is righteous judgment that God has said he would pour out on these countries.

All of this to say, it's not unusual to think of the nations as the enemies of God and to think of Israel as the people of God. It's very sometimes black and white in our minds. Good guys, bad guys. But then we come to verse 6 of Deuteronomy chapter 4.

And it maybe doesn't fit with this neat theology of the nations that we may have put together in our minds. Follow along as I read verses 6 to 8. And this is what Moses is speaking of concerning the laws that God has given.

Keep them and do them. For that will be your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples. Who when they hear all these statutes will say, Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.

For what great nation is there that has a God so near to it as the Lord our God is to us whenever we call upon him? And what great nation is there that has statutes and rules so righteous is all this law that I set before you today?

[10:22] Shouldn't Moses be saying something at this point about God utterly destroying the nations? Shouldn't Moses be saying something about the surrounding nations and their abominable practices? Shouldn't Moses be saying something about the complete destruction of the nations because they're God's enemies?

He could have and it wouldn't have been out of place or unexpected at all. God has talked like that before about the nations. But instead of driving home the point that the nations are Israel's and ultimately God's enemies, Moses says something slightly different that should give us pause.

He says, Verse 6 here in Deuteronomy chapter 4 doesn't change the fact that these nations have rejected the living God and have worshipped dead idols that are really and truly God's enemies. Don't hear me say that they're no longer his enemies or that God now tolerates sin. But it does show us that there is hope for the nations surrounding Israel. Having destroyed the nations that live in the promised land, Israel was not to turn to all the other surrounding nations and look to wipe out any and all who rejected God throughout the world.

This verse shows us that salvation is not exclusively bound to the borders of the nation of Israel. It shows that God means for his blessing to extend beyond the boundary lines of the promised land.

[11:46] Way back in Genesis chapter 12, God makes some incredibly important promises to Abraham. The forefather of the nation of Israel. God says to him, I will make you a great nation and I will bless you and make your name great so that you will be a blessing.

I will bless those who bless you and him who dishonors you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed. God doesn't say, In you your family alone will be blessed.

God doesn't say, In you Israel alone will be blessed. No, he says, In you all the families of the earth will be blessed. Through Israel, God's plans of redemption for all the nations were to be carried out. Israel was to be a beacon of light to the surrounding nations. Israel was to be in some sense attractive to the surrounding nations. They were to be drawn by the way that they lived their lives. Israel was to cause God's enemies to stop and wonder, Who are these people?

They don't serve wood like we do. They don't serve stone like we do. They serve a God unlike any other God. Let's go see who this God is that gives such good laws and draws so near to his people.

[12:52] Even in Israel's victories in war, The nations were to see the hand of God. Even as Israel wiped out the nations in the promised land, Those nations surrounding the promised land were to

look in and see God at work winning those battles for Israel.

They were to see the wisdom of Israel through their obedience and trust in God and to be attracted to it. The surrounding nations were to see something in Israel. They were to see something in the way the Israelites lived their lives that was to draw attention, Not to Israel, but to Israel's God.

In the ancient Near East, wisdom was highly prized. I know wisdom isn't necessarily in vogue these days. You don't really hear people going around really seeking out wisdom. People seem to seek out a lot of other things and not wisdom.

But back then, in the ancient Near East, People living in that area at that time were constantly looking for wisdom. And in Israel, the nations were supposed to see that perfect wisdom they had been seeking.

They were supposed to see the wisdom of God on display in the people of God as they obeyed the laws of God. Let me say that again. They were supposed to see the wisdom of God on display in the people of God as they obeyed the laws of God.

[14:01] This would lead the nations to conclude, surely this nation is a wise and understanding people. This was to be Israel's attractiveness. That which the nations so highly prized could only be found among those who obeyed the laws of God.

A prime example of this is actually found in the book of 1 Kings. You can turn there if you'd like. I'm going to be reading several verses from there. During Solomon's reign, the kingdom of Israel was at its greatest point in the nation's history.

Its borders were as large as they'd ever been. The temple was completed. The nation was overflowing with wealth. And Solomon as king was the wisest man living on the face of the earth. God had blessed Israel for her obedience to his laws during the reign of King David.

And as Israel prospered, the surrounding nations took note. There's one passage that highlights this, and it's found in 1 Kings chapter 10. So if you'd like to turn to 1 Kings chapter 10, I'm going to be reading starting actually in verse 1.

1 Kings 10, beginning in verse 1. Now when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon concerning the name of the Lord, she came to test him with hard questions.

[15:15] She came to Jerusalem with a very great retinue, with camels bearing spices, and with very much gold and precious stones. And when she came to Solomon, she told him all that was on her mind. And Solomon answered all her questions.

There was nothing hidden from the king that he could not explain to her. And when the queen of Sheba had seen all the wisdom of Solomon, the house that he had built, the food of his table, the seating of his officials, and the attendance of his servants, their clothing, his cupbearers, and his burnt offerings that he offered at the house of the Lord, there was nothing more, there was no more breath in her.

And she said to the king, justice and righteousness.

And then she gave the king 120 talents of gold, and a very great quantity of spices and precious stones. Never again came such an abundance of spices as these that the queen of Sheba gave to King Solomon. The queen of this nation called Sheba, her name was Sheba, heard of Solomon's fame, and she visited.

And I want to kind of repeat maybe what she had said if you didn't catch it. At the very end, after seeing all the splendor of Israel, of seeing all the ways in which God had blessed the nation, she said these words. She said, Blessed be the Lord your God who has delighted in you and set you on the throne of Israel.

[16:47] Because the Lord loved Israel forever, he has made you king, that you may execute justice and righteousness. Or maybe another way of saying it, what wisdom and understanding, what a great nation this is.

But beyond that, what a great God this nation serves. Here is an example of the wisdom of Israel, shown through its obedience to God's laws, put on display for the nations, and causing the nations to marvel at the Lord.

Having looked at these examples, however, Israel's history is not defined by, is not marked by, her obedience to God, but rather by her disobedience. Over and over again, the nation of Israel sins against God, rejecting his laws and breaking the terms of this very important covenant God had laid forth for them in Exodus.

Over and over again, they find themselves deserving of God's wrath and punishment for their sin. What we read in Deuteronomy chapter 4 was supposed to be the norm for Israel and her relationship to other nations. But instead, we find that an example like 1 Kings 10 is really the abnormality.

It's the anomaly. It's the outlier. Israel is not to be remembered for her obedience to God, but rather for her disobedience. And because her attractiveness to the nations was so closely connected to her obedience to God and his laws, Israel failed to live out their role as God's ambassadors to the surrounding nations.

[18:05] In fact, ironically, Israel didn't just fail to draw the nations to God, but Israel ended up being drawn to the gods of the nations. The Lord had warned Israel of this temptation when Israel was to enter the promised land.

This was one of the prime reasons for God's command that Israel was to wipe out all the nations dwelling in the promised land. Listen to what Moses says. When the Lord your God brings you into the land that you are entering to take possession of it and clears away many nations before you, seven nations more numerous and mightier than you.

And when the Lord your God gives them over to you and you defeat them, then you must devote them to complete destruction. You shall make no covenant with them and show no mercy to them. You shall not intermarry with them, giving your daughters to their sons or taking their daughters for your sons, for they would turn away your sons from following me to serve other gods.

Then the anger of the Lord would be kindled against you and he would destroy you quickly. Moses told Israel to make no covenant with other nations. That sounds really harsh sometimes to our modern ears because we live in a society of such hyper-tolerance.

Shouldn't Moses lighten up a little bit? What's the big deal if Israel makes a covenant or two with other nations? What's the big deal if they come to some agreements with other nations? The big deal is that Israel had already covenanted herself to God.

[19:22] She had already entered into a special relationship with God. And to enter into any other covenant with any other nation would have meant acceptance and worship of the gods of those nations. And so God commands Israel to destroy the nations in the promised land.

But rather than obeying God and destroying the nations, Israel allowed some to remain. And just as God said, Israel fell into idolatry following after the false gods of other nations. And so Israel failed to keep and do the laws of God that we read in Deuteronomy chapter four.

Rather than being the law keepers, they were the law breakers. And because Israel failed to keep and do the laws, Israel also failed to be attractive to the nations. Rather than drawing the nations to the true God, Israel was drawn to the false gods of the other nations.

So then what hope is there for us? If Israel failed in every way to obey God, how can we hope to fare any better? A passage like Deuteronomy 4 seems like such an inspiring text, a call to action for the nation of Israel.

Obey God and bring glory to him as the nation's marvel. And if Israel had obeyed, we could easily see how this passage would apply to us today. Obey God and bring glory as your friends and your family and your co-workers and your neighbors marvel.

[20:39] But Israel failed to obey. So how can we hope to obey? Well, one has come who has not failed as Israel did. One has come who has not failed as we do.

One has come who has obeyed God in every way that we have disobeyed God. One has come who is not a lawbreaker, but a lawkeeper. For when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.

Jesus Christ is the hope of God's people in Deuteronomy chapter 4, and he's the hope of God's people sitting here tonight as Grace Fellowship Church. Jesus Christ is the only lawkeeper who has reconciled us, the lawbreakers, to God, the lawgiver.

And now because Jesus has perfectly obeyed the law in every way that we have not, those who trust in him for salvation are received as sons of God, and his spirit is placed into us that we might keep the laws as Jesus did.

That changes everything about Deuteronomy chapter 4. We can keep and do God's laws because Christ has kept and done them for us. We can leave those around us saying, surely this is a wise and understanding people, not because we are wise and understanding in and of ourselves, but because he who is the wisdom of God has placed his spirit within us.

[21:58] We have been made right with the lawgiver through the work of his son in order that we who are now lawkeepers might bring honor and fame to our God. We might be tempted as we read this passage to think that there's something now inherently special about us.

What Moses told the people of God in the Old Testament applies just the same to us today. Keep and do the laws of God, for that will be your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples, who when they hear all these statutes will say, surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.

We might be tempted to think, hey, I'm really something. People are, they're gonna look at me and they're gonna think highly of me. They're gonna think I've got something really going on for me. But any obedience to the commandments of God is not opportunity for us to take credit for our law keeping.

Rather, it's opportunity for us to give credit to the law giver who sent his son to make us law keepers by his spirit. Moses isn't saying it's all about us. He's saying it's all about God.

It isn't about the people who have received the law, but it's about the God who has given the law and has drawn near to his people and has kept the law on our behalf. What a privilege we have to know this God, not just as one who draws near in a cloud or in a pillar or one who has just drawn near in very distant ways from us, but we know him as one who has drawn near through his son.

[23:19] We have a God who didn't just draw near by dwelling in spirit in a temple behind a curtain. We have a God who took on flesh and dwelt among us and who has given us his spirit who now dwells within us.

That is a God who has drawn near whenever we call upon him. And because we have such a God as this, we have no position for navel-gazing. God has not set his love upon us because we're something.

God has not set his love upon us because we are worthy any more than he set his love upon Israel because they were worthy. Listen to what Moses says to Israel just four chapters later in Deuteronomy. God says, For you are a people holy to the Lord your God.

The Lord your God has chosen you to be a people for his treasured possession out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth. It was not because you were more in number than any other people that the Lord set his love on you and chose you, for you were the fewest of all peoples. But it is because the Lord loves you and is keeping the oath that he swore to your fathers that the Lord has brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you from the house of slavery and from the hand of Pharaoh, king of Egypt. And then later Moses says, Do not say in your heart after the Lord has thrust them out before you, it is because of my righteousness that the Lord has brought me in to possess this land.

[24:29] Whereas it is because of the wickedness of these nations that the Lord is driving them out before you. Not because of your righteousness or the uprightness of your heart are you going in to possess their land, but because of the wickedness of these nations the Lord your God is driving out before you, that he may confirm the word that the Lord swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.

It is not because Israel had something to boast in that the nations would look at her with wonder. And it's not because we have something to boast in that our family and friends and co-workers and neighbors will look on us with wonder.

People ought to marvel at us. They ought to find something attractive in our lives because we're in relationship with a God who draws near to his people. People should wonder at us. People should pay attention to us because of our God.

We have nothing to boast in concerning ourselves, but we have much to boast in concerning our God. I want to spend a few moments unpacking what I mean by people marveling at us or wondering at us or finding something attractive in our lives.

It could be easy to hear these words and to think, I just need to live out the gospel but not necessarily speak the words of the gospel. We could convince ourselves that there is truth in the popular axiom.

[25:41] Preach the gospel always and when necessary, use words. Or that might translate for us today, I just need to be a patient guy at work with my boss. I just have to be a good student and get good grades.

I just have to avoid gossip with my friends. These are all good things, all good applications of the text, but they are incomplete if we never open our mouths. We cannot live lives that cause people to wonder and never tell them the reason for our actions.

We can't be patient with our boss at work and when our co-workers ask, how do you do it? Just shrug our shoulders and say, I don't know. I guess I'm just patient. We can't get good grades and receive praise from our friends without pointing them to the Savior for whom we work.

We must use words when people marvel at our lives. Our scripture reading was from 1 Peter 2, 9-12 because that passage perfectly captures the need for words and actions.

Peter concludes that section of his letter by urging us to keep our conduct honorable among unbelievers to make our good deeds evident to them. But he doesn't just tell us to live God-honoring lives.

[26 : 46] He also tells us to speak God-honoring words. Peter begins in those verses by saying we were redeemed in order that we might declare. We were made to be God's people in order that we might proclaim the excellencies of him who called us out of darkness into his marvelous light.

People ought to marvel because we speak of our God who called us into his marvelous light. The obedience Moses calls us to in Deuteronomy 4 is not a silent, passive obedience.

It's an active, complete obedience that involves how we live our lives and what we say about our God. Before I wrap up, I want to address three conclusions that we could draw from this passage that are totally misplaced and need to be proven false.

Three conclusions that just need to be dismissed. You could call this the short list of things Moses isn't saying in Deuteronomy 4. I know, catchy, right? The first point on our list is that Moses isn't saying it's all about us.

And I've kind of addressed this already, but I really want to hit this home. We could have mistakenly come to the conclusion as we read Moses telling the people of Israel that the surrounding nations will say of them, surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.

[27 : 54] We could come to the conclusion that wow, there's really something in us. But that's completely misstrewing what it means. It doesn't mean, wow, these people are super awesome. They deserve a pat on the back.

Now, I've already said something of this, but it's reason for us not to boast in ourselves, but to boast in our God. If people see something good in me or in you and we don't seek to point them to the one from whom all goodness flows, then we're twisting the meaning of Deuteronomy 4 to serve self-seeking, vainglorious, sinful desires, which kind of brings us to the second point on our list of things Moses isn't saying.

He isn't saying that if people see something good in you, then you must be obeying God or that I must be obeying God. Moses isn't saying that either. He isn't saying that only outward conformity to the laws of God means that we're pleasing God.

God is concerned with our hearts. So just because people see something different in you, don't assume that you're in right relationship with God. We can look good on the outside but be filthy on the inside.

We can deceive ourselves and even others by the way we live our public lives even when privately we are far from God and his ways. God is concerned with our hearts. And for that reason, Moses isn't saying if people see something good in you, then you must be obeying God.

[29 : 10] Keep it up. Because we can look good, but that can just be a mask to disguise the true disposition of our hearts. So don't be fooled. Just because people see something about you on the outside doesn't mean you're obeying God on the inside.

And the third and final point in our list of things Moses isn't saying is this. As we obey God, everybody will like us. If this is what we come away with from the reading of Deuteronomy 4, we've completely missed the point of the text.

The Christian life is not a popularity contest. We shouldn't be concerned with whether or not we're liked by others. Now that doesn't mean that we're a bunch of inconsiderate, harsh, cold people either. We should live God-honoring, humble, quiet lives seeking to live at peace with everyone. But we shouldn't be living to get people to like us. And furthermore, we shouldn't expect people to like us because we obey God. You could get the wrong idea from this passage when Moses says that Israel's obedience to the laws of God would lead the nations to say, surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.

We could get the idea that Moses is in some way promising that as we obey God, people will necessarily like us or find us in our message to be attractive. It's so much bigger than that. [30 : 19] As I've already said, our obedience to God isn't about how people will end up thinking of us. And the way people think about us won't always be good. The way we live our lives won't always be attractive to people.

It won't always have a winsome effect on people. And if it does always have a winsome effect, we might very well not be speaking the whole gospel to others. Jesus made it clear at the Last Supper that we should expect people to dislike us because of him.

He said to his disciples, if you were of the world, the world would love you as its own. But because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. Remember the word that I said to you, a servant is not greater than his master.

If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you. The gospel is not always attractive. To some it is and to some it isn't. Through us, God spreads the fragrance of the knowledge of Christ everywhere.

To those who are perishing, we are a fragrance from death to death. To those who are being saved, we are a fragrance from life to life. Or elsewhere in the scriptures, to those who are perishing, the cross is foolishness.

[31 : 22] But to us who are being saved, it is the wisdom of God. So we ought to obey God. We ought to live lives that honor God. We ought to share the good news of the gospel of God without concern for whether people like us or not.

So to summarize, Moses isn't saying in this passage that it's all about us, and he isn't saying in this passage that it's all about what people think of us. Now, Old Testament texts, they can sometimes be tricky business interpreting and applying to the Christian life.

I hope that we've seen how Deuteronomy 4 intersects with our lives as we view it through the lens of the cross of Christ. It isn't simply enough to draw a flat line of application from a call for Israel to obey to a call for us to obey.

We can't do that. We have to funnel our call to obedience through the obedience of Christ. We can only hope to obey because Christ has first obeyed and given us his spirit, and that is reason for us to rejoice.

We can obey God because Christ has obeyed and given us his spirit. So I'd like to conclude by summarizing the main point of Deuteronomy 4 for us as Christians. It could be captured in this one simple statement.

[32 : 29] As we obey God, we adorn the gospel of his Son. As we obey God, we adorn the gospel of his Son. It's about extending the fame of the lawgiver we obey.

It's about extending the fame of the lawkeeper we've been united to. As we do what God says, as we obey his commands, we show forth the beauty of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. This isn't about us and our righteousness. This isn't about us and our standing before others. This is about God and the wonder of the gospel. In life, there will be people who like you and there will be people who don't like you.

But whether they like you or not, your life should cause them to stop in their tracks and marvel. Your life should draw attention to God and his great worth. Your life should be so bursting at the seams with the good news of the gospel that people can't deny the reality that we serve a God who draws near to us.

There's no other God. There's no other hope for the world. We have tasted and seen that the Lord is good. May people see that in you. May they see that in you as they look at your life, as they interact with you at work tomorrow morning, as they meet with you for lunch on Wednesday, as you work out next to them at the gym, as they see how you coach their kids' t-ball team.

[33 : 43] Wherever you are and whatever you're doing, may people see in you that you serve a God who has drawn near to you through his Son. The lawgiver has sent his Son to make us who were once lawbreakers, now lawkeepers.

And as we obey his laws, we adorn the gospel of his Son. May people look at us and see in us the work of God through his Son. May they look at us and say, surely this is a wise and understanding people, not because they see a people worthy of praise, but because they see a God worthy of praise.

Not because they see a people righteous in and of themselves, but because they see a God who has made them righteous through his Son. Others should look at us and see something in us because they see a God who has drawn near to us.

Let's pray. Heavenly Father, we think too little of you too often, and we don't realize what a wonder it is that you do draw near to us, that you are such a unique God, that you are not a God of wood or stone, that you are not a worthless idol that can be smashed to pieces, but that you are Lord over the universe, that you are creator of all, and that you have sent your Son to live the perfect life and to die the perfect death and to raise again from the dead that we might have life.

Thank you for giving us his Spirit. Thank you for giving us opportunity with those that we rub shoulders with to share the gospel. I pray that as you have changed our lives, as you have saved us, that we might then live lives that honor you and that point others to you.

[35 : 16] Lord, we ask for your help in this in the work week. We know that we are sinners who fear man, and we pray that you would give us boldness and you would give us courage and that people would see Christ and that they would marvel at a God who would draw near to his people.

We pray all this in Jesus' name. Amen.