

The Substitutionary Life of Christ

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Preacher: Jon Hueni

[0:00] In verse 12 and read through the end of the chapter. We read of God's amazing grace in this passage.

! May it help us to understand it and appreciate it better. And in this way, death came to all men because all sinned.

For before the law was given, sin was in the world. But sin is not taken into account when there is no law. Nevertheless, death reigned from the time of Adam to the time of Moses, even over those who did not sin by breaking a command, as did Adam, who was a pattern of the one to come. But the gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died by the trespass of the one man, how much more did God's grace and the gift that came by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, overflow to the many?

Again, the gift of God is not like the result of the one man's sin. The judgment followed one sin and brought condemnation, but the gift followed many trespasses and brought justification.

[1:25] For if by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ?

Consequently, just as the result of one trespass was condemnation for all men, so also the result of one act of righteousness was justification that brings life for all men.

For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous. The law was added so that the trespass might increase, but where sin increased, grace increased all the more, so that just as sin reigned in death, so also grace might reign through righteousness to bring eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

J. Gresham Machen was a professor, a brilliant professor at Princeton Seminary and a minister of the gospel in the Presbyterian Church USA.

And he was grieved to see his beloved denomination start drifting from the truths of scripture and even undermining the foundational truths of the gospel.

[2:53] And so he took his stand, both speaking and writing, in defense of the truths of the gospel. And he paid a dear price.

He was attacked, he was slandered. And when the seminary refused to hold to their founding doctrinal position, Machen conscientiously resigned his post and along with some others founded a new seminary in 1930, the Westminster Theological Seminary of Philadelphia.

formed on the basis of complete loyalty to the scriptures that God has given us. Now he was single all of his life, so he threw himself into this work of the new seminary.

He was its driving force, humanly speaking, teaching and administering, writing, traveling, preaching. And he labored that way for six years.

As winter break arrived in 1936, Machen was deadly tired and had a cold. But he had already agreed to take some meetings out in North Dakota for some churches there over the break.

[4:05] So he went, even though he was advised not to go. He arrived at Bismarck to 20 below zero temperatures. He traveled about speaking. He developed a cough with intense pain.

And he was hospitalized with pneumonia. He only grew worse and worse. And then on New Year's Day, 1937, he dictated a telegram to Professor John Murray back in Philadelphia, his close friend and colleague at the seminary.

These were to be his final words. I am so thankful for the active obedience of Christ. No hope without it.

And so he died at the age of 55. Now, what was it that gave this man such confidence in the face of his own death?

It wasn't a lifetime of service to Christ in his church. It was not his own faithfulness to uphold the gospel, to serve the Lord, to stand for truth in a day of drift.

[5 : 15] It wasn't any of his own obedience to the commandments of God. Rather, his solid and thankful hope in death was the active obedience of Christ.

Do you know what he was talking about? Do you have that same hope? That if you would die today, you would have that hope in the active obedience of Christ.

Last week, we considered the substitutionary death of Christ. Christ died in the place of his people. The death that he died under God's curse was for us. Now, this week, we consider the equally important truth of the substitutionary life of Christ.

That the life that he lived, he lived under God's law in the place of his people. So we must, with one hand, ever cling to the truth that he died for me, and with the other to cling to the truth that he lived for me.

[6 : 23] As we just sang in that hymn, Christ was sent by the Father from on high, our life to live, and our death to die. Upon a life, I did not live.

Upon a death, I did not die. I, another's life, another's death, I rest my whole eternity. So we begin in the Valley of Elah.

And here we see the representative principle illustrated. You'll understand as I go on. On either side of the valley is a hill. And on one hill are all of Israel's armies.

And on the other hill are the Philistines. But the two armies are not fighting. They are watching. As only two men are going down into the valley to fight.

There's a champion from each side. There's Goliath, the nine-foot Philistine warrior. And he had made a challenge. The challenge was send me a man to fight me.

[7 : 30] And if he's able to kill me, all of us will become your subjects. But if I kill him, then you will become our subjects.

And there's David, the godly teenager. And he's answering the call. Going down into the valley to vindicate the name of God that had just been blasphemed by this uncircumcised Philistine.

Now the destinies of these two nations then are held in the hands of these two men who represent them. As goes Goliath, so goes all the Philistines.

As goes David, so goes all the Israelites. If David wins, we win. If David loses, we lose.

So, there's no passive or bored spectators on this sideline. We're watching and shouting for David as if our lives depended on it. For indeed, they do.

[8 : 40] They do. Now that's the representative principle. One acting not just for himself, but for all the rest that he represents.

So now, we're in a garden. The Garden of Eden. And we see this representative principle in action. There's Adam. In Hebrew, Adam.

It's the word for man. So you have plants and rocks and animals and then you had this unique creation of God.

Man. Adam. Mankind. Human beings. There's two kinds of Adam. There's male Adam and female Adam. But the very first Adam is named Adam.

Adam. So when you hear the word Adam, it's the word for man. Why so? Why is this man named man? Because he is the first man.

[9 : 49] He is the representative man who represents all the Adams to come after him. And so he is not acting for himself, but for all humanity.

All the descendants of Adam. Adam. And so he's put to the test. The test of obedience. Will Adam obey God no matter what?

And the test was just one tree. He's free to eat from all the trees in the garden except one. But God said, don't eat from this tree. And if he obeys, he'll be confirmed in life forevermore.

Eternal life is his if he obeys. But if he disobeys, he will surely die. But now remember, as goes Adam, so goes the whole human race.

You and I included. So cheer for Adam. And as we watch, we see the devil presenting the bait to his wife Eve, to Adam's wife Eve.

[10 : 55] And he gets her to eat first and she takes some of the forbidden fruit. And we see her tempting Adam and everything in us says, no Adam, don't do it.

And we wince when we see him bite into the forbidden fruit. And oh, what we lost on that day when Adam fell.

Some of you lost a lot of money when the stock market plummeted a few years ago. What, maybe 40% at a time? And one day, folks, we lost it all on this day.

We lost everything. We lost eternal life. Gone forever. The favor, the friendship with God. And what did we gain? We gained a sinful heart.

We gained death. We gained eternal condemnation in hell. Now look there in Romans chapter 5 if you still have it open to the passage that was read for us.

[11:58] And notice here how Paul tells us that the whole human race was piggybacked on top of Adam, our representative. So that when Adam fell, we all fell with him.

When he sinned, we sinned. When he lost eternal life, we lost eternal life. And so on. Notice the representative principle. How the one man, Adam, has affected the whole human race.

Verse 12. Just as sin entered the world through one man. There he is, Adam. And death also entered through sin.

And in this way, death came to all men. Not just to Adam, but to all men because he represented all his posterity.

Did you know that's why all men die? That's why Machen died. That's why my grandparents died. That's why you and I will die. Because of the sin of the one man, Adam.

[13:00] Verse 15 says, But the gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died by the trespass of the one man. There it is again. Do you see the representative principle?

One man disobeyed, trespassed, and the many died. Because though he was just one man, he was the representative man acting on behalf of them all.

Verse 17. For if by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man. That's why funeral homes will never have a shortage of business until Jesus comes.

Because death reigns. And it reigns because of what that one man, the first man, Adam, did. He sinned. Verse 18.

Consequently, just as the result of one trespass was condemnation for all men. Here we see that all men are condemned to hell because of the trespass of the one man, Adam.

[14:09] And verse 19. For just as through the disobedience of the one man, the many were made sinners. Adam's disobedience moved us all into the category of sinners.

So do you see this? Five times in this brief passage, Paul says what the one man did has affected us all. It sunk us into sin, to death, to condemnation, judgment.

Now does someone complain and say, ah, this representative principle is not fair. I didn't put Adam in office. I didn't vote for him. Why is he my representative? As if we would have done better than Adam.

Listen, every one of us ratify Adam's choice every day of our lives as we sin against God. We would not have done any better.

No, what Adam did, he did for all his descendants. That's the representative principle in action in the garden. Well, thirdly, we now come to a manger in Bethlehem.

[15:22] And we see again the representative principle, active. Galatians 4.4, when the time had fully come, God sent his son, born of a woman, born under law, to redeem those under law.

Why is God's son here on earth in this manger? Why has he become man? Why has he been born under law? The Bible says to redeem those who were under law.

Notice how we're described here in Galatians 4.4 as those who are under God's law. We are God's creatures and therefore we're under his authority, under his law, his commands.

No one is above God's law. We're his creatures. We're all under his law. Now, what does God's law require of us? Well, two things.

Number one, perfect obedience. That's what's required of everyone under the law. Perfect obedience. Do this and you will live. But cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the book of the law.

[16:43] law. We must obey all his laws all the time. That's the first thing that is required of all who are under the law.

But we haven't, have we? We're all lawbreakers. So there's now a second thing that this law demands of all that have broken its commands.

and that is the penalty of death. The wages of sin is death. That's the punishment for breaking God's law. So we not only owe God perfect obedience to his law, but we now also obey him death under his wrath and curse.

And so the Son of God was born under the law. He came to both give a perfect obedience to that law and to lay down his life in death, suffering the penalty for breaking that law.

And that's how he redeems us, by his life and by his death. His perfect obedience in life and his perfect obedience in death.

[18:03] death. Now the eternal Son of God so identified with his people that he became one of us. He became an Adam, a man. He's born of woman.

And so as man, he too is under law. There is no such thing as a man that's not under law. And so in becoming a man, he is born under the law. He's under obligation to give perfect obedience to that law of God.

And so we have the unique situation of the one and only law giver is now the law keeper and must obey all that God has said. Why is he here under the law?

Not just for himself, but for all his people, all that he represents, all that the Father has given to him. He's obeying for them as well.

And that's why in 1 Corinthians 15, the Bible calls Jesus Christ the second man. Well, he's not the second man.

[19:11] Well, he's the second, Adam's the first man, and Jesus is the second man in the same likeness and pattern as the first man. And Corinthians also calls him the last Adam.

Just as Adam in the garden was the first Adam, Jesus is called the last Adam. He's the second and the last representative man acting as a representative as Adam did.

So he's here to triumph where Adam failed. He's here to obey where Adam disobeyed. And he's here to then undo by his obedience what Adam plunged us all into by his disobedience.

Jesus. You know, one of the favorite names for Jesus found in the book of Isaiah, it's the servant of the Lord. Kids, put your thinking caps on.

What does a servant do? Well, a servant obeys. That's his job. That's the job description of a servant, to obey the master.

[20:20] Jesus is the servant of Yahweh, the servant of God. God, he's here to obey. That's his mission. And so as he's coming into the world, he says, I have come to do your will, O God.

Your law is within my heart. I've come down from heaven not to do my will, but to do the will of him who sent me. And so he comes to John the Baptist and says, baptize me.

John says, me baptize you. Jesus says, suffer it to be so. It's proper for us to fulfill all righteousness. I'm here to fulfill all righteousness.

Baptize me, John. And so he does. And his whole earthly life is one long test of obedience. Will he obey God's commandments no matter what?

You see, it's the same test that Adam, the first Adam had. Now the last Adam has the same test. And he has the same tempter, the devil.

[21:26] So number four, we now come to a wilderness of Judah. And we're watching another showdown. And we see this representative principle in action.

This time the showdown is between Satan and the second Adam, Jesus Christ. Not in a pleasant garden where there was a sinless environment.

No, now it's in a wilderness, in a wicked world of sin. And Jesus and Satan are in hand-to-hand combat. Jesus is fighting as the representative of all his people just as David fought for all of Israel.

And brothers and sisters, you and I are spectators then here in the gospel as we watch in this wilderness struggle. We're not just learning about how to fight temptations ourselves.

Yes, that lesson comes. But the first thing we are doing in Mark 4 or Luke 4, whichever account you, as we're watching Jesus go into this temptation, we are watching our champion, the last Adam, to see if he will obey God no matter what.

[22:40] Because how he comes out of this battle determines how we come out in this battle. If Jesus wins, we win, but if he loses, we lose.

Eternal life, that is. The stakes are high indeed. Remember what we need to be right with God, a perfect obedience to God's law.

That's what we need then, to win. Oh, but we've blown it. Every one of us have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Here's our last chance.

It's the last Adam. And he's here to represent his people. There will be none other. He's the last Adam, the second man. There's none to follow.

So all our hopes are pinned on Jesus. And if he perfectly obeys, then heaven is ours, and God's favor is ours.

[23 : 38] But if he sins just once in his whole lifetime, we are all damned, we're left under the condemnation that was ours for sinning in Adam, our first representative.

I mean, that means that if he just slips a little bit, and is just a little less than perfect in his obedience, we're lost forever.

This is the last Adam. God's sinning in time. days, they're going at it. It's not just at the end of the 40 days. The Bible says for 40 days he was tempted by the devil.

And at the end of those 40 days, he's hungry, he hasn't had a thing to eat, and then the devil comes with those three more temptations. And we see our Savior standing on the word of God.

Unmovable. Unmoved. Perfect obedience. Once, twice, three times, the whole 40 days. And Satan goes off with his tail between his legs.

[24 : 48] But not for good. Just until a more convenient season, he'll be back, nipping at our Savior's heels all through his life.

All through his life, he's tempting him, tempting him in every way just as we are, yet he was without sin. And so as a 12-year-old boy, he's tempted to disobey his father and mother.

But scriptures tell us he went down and was obedient to them. That means there was never one time where he was slow in doing what his mother told him to do. There was never once when his dad told him to do something and he did it half-heartedly.

Or he did it partially. Are there any children here who have ever disobeyed your parents? You deserve to go to hell for that.

You need a Savior who has perfectly obeyed his mother and father. And that's what Jesus has done. He's just the Savior for sinners.

[26 : 01] Young and old alike. Here's Jesus tempted in all ways like we are, yet without sin. Perfect obedience. Pressures all through life, from all sides, temptations coming from his closest friends, even Peter, his bosom buddy.

And at every point, the issue for the servant of the Lord is not my will, but what God wants. Your will be done. I love the Father, and I do exactly what my Father has commanded me.

And in that exact obedience, we have a righteousness provided by God for sinners. And then we come to that supreme act of obedience.

What's the hardest commandment of all to obey? Well, it was when God the Father said to the Son, you go to the cross and be damned in the place of your people. And how the demons of hell were let loose on him then, the hour when darkness reigned and the struggle in Gethsemane of drinking that cup of God's wrath cost him his whole soul to convulse.

grace. What will the servant of the Lord do now? He's been faithful at every point all along the way, but now the biggest test of all.

[27 : 32] And Paul says he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. And that means we haven't thought about the cross a right unless we see it as obedience.

It was an act of obedience by the servant of the Lord to the Lord God who sent him on that mission. And Jesus says, I will do exactly what my Father says to do.

He would rather die than break one of his Father's commandments. obedience. And so he obeys the Father. This is the climax of his obedience, laying down his life, down to his last breath.

And it was because his obedience was perfect that his death is atoning. Why is it that the blood of this sacrifice cleanses us from all sins? It's because this sacrifice is a perfect sacrifice.

He's never sinned once in his life and the perfect lamb can be offered to cleanse from all sin. His obedience merited God's favor and salvation for all his people.

[28 : 46] Here is the righteous servant preparing righteousness, providing righteousness for many. Isaiah 53 11. So we come back to Romans 5 if you're still there.

And notice how Paul says the same thing about Jesus as he did about Adam in terms of the one acting on behalf of the many. The same representative principle is in effect.

What Jesus did, he didn't do for himself but for them. And all his people are piggybacked on top of Jesus. And when he obeys, they reap the rewards.

Notice, we don't have time to read all of these again, but in verse 15 at the end we see that God's grace and the gift that came through the one man overflowed to the many that he represented. And this gift that came through the one man brought justification, verse 16 says. And verse 17 says that this gracious gift that overflowed to the many is the gift of righteousness.

[29:51] That's the gift that came by the one man and overflowed to the many. At the end of verse 18 we read, so also the result of one act of righteousness was justification that brings life for all men.

Christ, one act of righteousness results in justification for all that Christ represents. And that brings life to them whereas before death reigned over them.

But don't miss verse 19. It's the clearest and last punctuation mark on this whole section. For justice is through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners.

So also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous. How is it that many sinners can be made righteous?

It's through the obedience of the one man, Jesus Christ. Christ's obedience is what makes them righteous because when he lived, he lived in their place and when he obeyed under the law of God, he obeyed for us that he might redeem us who are under law.

[31:14] So now number five, we find ourselves in the courtroom of heaven and God the just is holding court and the books are open and he's pronouncing judgments and he's saying guilty, guilty, guilty, righteous, righteous, not guilty, righteous.

And he's doing something very unusual. He's declaring ungodly sinners to be righteous. When we all know that we're as guilty as sin and yet he brings down the gavel and says righteous, righteous, he declares this man is righteous.

That's justification. He's justifying them. He's saying this man is righteous in the eyes of the law.

And when God justifies one, he declares that this person is in a right standing, a right relationship to my law and to me, the God of that law.

in other words, the law has nothing to say against him. The law does not have one jot or tittle that has not been obeyed.

There's no condemnation from the law for this man. It has been perfectly satisfied at every point.

There are no outstanding claims against this man. And the gavel comes down and says, I declare him to be right, right with God, right with his law.

[32:46] Now, how can God do that and still be a just judge? We don't like those kind of judges that take guilty sinners and let them go scot-free. How can the holy just God be looking at an ungodly man and say, he is righteous?

Because he credits to them the righteous obedience of Jesus Christ. You see, Jesus Christ has rendered that perfect obedience to God's law.

And so that obedience is credited, imputed to their account. Now, there was a double transfer on the books of heaven. A double transfer from one account to another.

Sometimes you might transfer money from one account to another. That sort of thing is the picture that we have of what took place in the courts of heaven. My account in heaven was loaded with sins, F's, failures.

Every disobedience to God's commandments was there standing against me. But God in grace transferred all my sins onto Christ's account.

[34:08] Everyone, they're gone. They're on Christ's account. And then Christ was treated as I deserved. He was damned in my place. But then that's just half of the transfer.

The perfect obedience, the straight A's on Jesus account were transferred over to my account. So not only do you not see sin here, you also see perfect obedience to God's commandments.

sins. And then I'm treated as if I had never sinned. As if I personally had kept every command of God because the perfect obedience of Christ has been made mine.

The double demand of the law has been met for me by Christ. Perfectly obeyed, suffered the penalty of death I deserve, and so now the law has no quarrel with me.

The gavel falls and Jesus, God says, he's justified, he's right, he's right before me. It's a great exchange, isn't it?

[35:20] He gets my sin, and I get his righteousness. And so I'm treated as he deserves, and he's treated as I deserve.

Now how is this righteousness of Jesus received? How does it get onto my account? How does it get over here? Because that doesn't happen for everyone, does it? Some go to hell and suffer for their own sins, and when the books are opened at judgment, what they see, what God sees is not the righteousness of Jesus, but their own sin, and they're sent to hell to pay forever their debt to God.

How is it that with some, righteousness comes over to their accounts? How does that happen? And the Bible's unified answer is by faith alone.

by faith alone, Romans 5 1, we have been justified, declared righteous through faith. And it's always through faith or by faith.

It's never because of faith, it's never on account of their faith, as if God looks and he sees faith in the sinner and says, oh my, that's such a valuable thing, that merits Christ's righteousness.

[36 : 32] righteousness. No, a person's faith is nothing of the merit and ground of Christ's righteousness coming to them. It's only the instrument. It's only the means.

Indeed, faith could never merit God's righteousness in Christ. Christ's righteousness is what merits our salvation.

salvation. Saving faith, as one man put it, is just the empty hands held out to receive Christ and his righteousness. Is there anything meritorious in being a beggar?

Is that a work that God says, wow, I'm going to give him righteousness for that one? Just to beg, just to come and say, God, I don't have anything to offer you. I just hold out my empty hands and say, I'm a hell-deserving sinner, but you promised to give righteousness to any sinner who came and disowned any of his own goodness and threw himself upon your mercy in Christ.

Mercy, Lord. And faith is that empty-handed reception of Christ, and that's what brings his righteousness to us and to our account.

[37 : 49] The special posture of faith is that it rests completely on another. It does nothing. It receives everything. for Jesus has indeed done it all.

And so now we are in a prison in Rome, and the apostle Paul is there, and men are threatening his life. He doesn't know whether he'll live or die.

How can he meet his approaching death with confidence? Well, he once had been a very religious man and had worked real hard at obeying God's laws.

In fact, he thought he had done a real smack up job. He thought that he was perfect as to legalistic righteousness. He had it down. He had this law keeping business down.

He was expecting that God would look on the books and see it full of all sorts of righteous good deeds and say, come on in, Paul. Wow, you have deserved heaven.

[38 : 51] That was Paul's mindset. That was his view of himself. He was hanging on to this idea that my good deeds provide righteousness, obedience, enough obedience for God to accept me.

And then one day his eyes were opened to see what God really expects from everyone who is under the law. Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do all that is written.

And the last of the Ten Commandments was a special barb in his conscience. You shall not covet. And it's like the lights went on and Paul saw what a sinner he was before that holy God that requires perfect obedience, not even coveting what is not mine.

and all that supposed righteousness that he thought he had on the books of heaven, it all just evaporated. It was gone in a moment. He saw it to be for what it was, just imagined righteousness. It was the best he could do was filthy rags in the sight of the holy God. Woe is me, he says. And so he renounced all of his goodness, all of his imagined righteousness.

[40 : 21] He renounced it so that he could gain Christ. And he tells us about in Philippians 3, what I thought was righteousness, I now consider as rubbish that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law.

But that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith. To be found with my own righteousness is to be found wanting in the day of judgment.

The only righteousness that will put me in good stand in that day is the righteousness of God. It comes from God. All my own righteousness is entirely excluded, he says.

The righteousness I need before God does not come from me at all. It comes from outside of me.

And that's why Luther called it an alien righteousness. Kids, have you heard about aliens?

They're not from around here. They're from somewhere else. That's the idea of alien. It's alien to us. It's outside of us. And that's what Luther meant.

[41 : 35] This righteousness that I need to get into heaven, it's not found in anything I am or do. It's alien to me. It's all found in Jesus, who by his one act, the obedience of the one man, made many righteous.

And notice he says, it's from God, this righteousness is from God, and by faith. It's not by my working, by my obeying, it's by my believing.

So we've been in a valley, we've been in a garden, we've been in a manger, we've been in a wilderness, we've been in a prison, we've been in the courtroom of heaven, and we now end inside your heart, where a battle perhaps is raging this morning.

Satan would have you cling to your own righteousness, your own goodness, but that's like clinging to a grenade that has already had the pin pulled, you're hanging on to that which will damn you, get rid of it, renounce it, throw it away from you, all your good deeds, see them for what they are, filthy, stinking rags in the sight of God, put no trust in them, you've got to come empty handed to receive Christ and his righteousness, and as long as you're holding on to anything you are or have done, your faith, your repentance, your church attendance, anything you do, if you're hanging on to anything, then your hands aren't empty, are they?

And that's the only way you will ever receive Christ, is when you let go of any other hope, and you hold out your hands and say Jesus, you're my only hope, and then you receive him and all his obedience, but to the extent that you're holding on to something, to that extent, you are not empty to receive Christ, that's why there's no mixture of law and works, or of law and grace, of my obedience, a little bit of my obedience, and sure I need some of Christ, none of that, you can't have any of Christ's obedience, as long as you're holding on to any of your own, it's only the empty hands that receive this, and that's why Paul says, all that I was clinging to, I now renounce as garbage, you don't hang on to garbage, you get rid of it, constantly get rid of it, get rid of it, that I might be found in Christ, and in his righteousness, righteousness, sadly, that men cling to their own righteousness, even like men cling to life itself, and Paul says, since they did not know the righteousness that comes from God, they sought to establish their own, and did not submit to God's righteousness, but Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes, and this righteousness from God is finished, it's complete, get this, all the obeying of commandments that you will ever need to make you right with God forever, has already been done 2,000 years ago, it's all been done, don't say, well,

[45 : 12] I need to obey a little bit, no, it was done 2,000 years ago, it was over, it was finished, that was his cry from the cross, it's finished, it's finished, there's not one thing that can be added to it, it's perfect, and that's good news to any sinner who this morning might be convicted of their sins, is that you today?

You know you have absolutely nothing to offer to God to deserve forgiveness of your sins, you know you have nothing, and the gospel tells you you need nothing, that's the good news, you need nothing, he's done it all, you only need to come just as you are, an empty handed hell deserving sinner, and receive Christ and his righteousness by faith as a free gift, so come, come, he's here this morning, this offer is good today, come to him, you get to him not by coming down an aisle, you get to him by prayer, and you just talk to him right there in your seat and say, God be merciful to me, a sinner for Jesus' sake, put all of his righteousness to my account and take all my sins away, that Jesus might bear them away, nothing, either great or small, nothing sinner do, Jesus did it, did it all long, long ago, weary, working, burdened, one, wherefore toil you so, cease your doing, all was done, long, long ago, till to

Jesus' work you cling, by a simple faith, doing is a deadly thing, doing ends in death, cast your deadly doing down, down at Jesus' feet, stand in him, in him alone, gloriously complete, it is finished, yes, indeed, finished every jot, sinner, this is all you need, tell me, is it not?

Tell me, is it not? Sinners, isn't that all that you've needed? Isn't that all that I needed? Just what Jesus has done, plus zero.

It was enough for that saved sinner in North Dakota many years ago, enough for him to die with confidence, I'm so thankful for the active obedience of Christ, no hope without it.

[47 : 49] Count Zinzendorf, the Moravian, 1700s, is it enough for you? When from the dust of death I rise to claim my mansion in the skies, even then this shall be all my plea.

Jesus hath lived, hath died for me. Upon a life I did not live, upon a death I did not die, another's life, another's death, I rest my whole eternity.

let's pray. Gracious Father, what is this love that you would send your one and only son to live for us and then to die for us?

Oh, how he meets our need, exactly, because we needed a perfect obedience and we didn't have it, and we thank you for your perfect life, Lord Jesus.

and we needed to die under God's wrath and could not bear it, and you died in our place, Lord Jesus. You are the Lord, our righteousness, and forgive us for the various ways that we still cling to our own righteousness.

[49:08] Help us to come day by day as empty-handed sinners with nothing good to say for ourselves, but that Jesus lived and Jesus died for me.

Bring someone this morning who is still in Adam, still under death and condemnation, to cry out and receive Christ and be represented by him.

Thank you, Lord Jesus, that you turn none away, and we praise you in your own holy name. Amen.