

Perspective is Everything, Part 2

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[0 : 00] In connection with the message this morning, there are a number of CDs on the tables back there that are rubber banded together. Three CDs together and each of those deal with an elaboration of some aspect of the message we'll be sharing with you this morning having to do with perspective means everything.

God has his perspective, we have our perspective, and they are radically different because our perspective includes only those things with which we are certain and can see easily and understand.

And that means it is extremely limited because we know not what a day may bring forth. Matter of fact, we don't know what an hour will bring forth.

But God's perspective is full and complete. He takes into consideration everything. Think of that, if you will. Before God does anything, He takes everything into consideration.

What a God we serve. I'm going to do my best, which will be miserably falling short of the being and nature of God in the introduction to the message that will follow.

[1 : 14] And it is, frankly, a mind-blowing concept. It blows mind just about every time. This is the way you get a new mind. You know, you keep blowing the old one and you get your renewed mind. And that's happened to me I don't know how many times.

So who knows what's going to come out this morning. But at any rate, it will be a brief examination of the depth and the character of God, the likes of which we just cannot quite get our brain around. But we can worship and see it afar and be thankful that He is the God that He is. So in a number of ways, the message this morning is going to be really different.

The whole service is going to be different. And you'll understand what we're talking about as we move on through it. Believe it or not, as abbreviated as parts of it's going to be, I'm going to try and work in some Q&A; because the content we'll be sharing is the kind that would certainly evoke some questions on the part of those who are here.

And assuming, of course, that you have the courage to ask the question in public, which a lot of people don't. But if you do have a question and you want to voice it and for whatever reason you're intimidated to do so in public, feel free to write your question out.

[2 : 28] Drop it in the offering box. And next week, we'll do our best to deal with it. And you won't have to explain it in public. But for those of you who want to do so, you'll have opportunity.

Would you turn, please, to Romans chapter 5? Romans chapter 5. What we are going to be sharing this morning is, without a doubt, I can't call it incredible because we've already talked about that. If it's incredible, what does that mean? It means it has no credibility. So we won't use that word. I can't call it fantastic because that is related to fantasy.

And it isn't fantasy. It is fact. But we can still call it amazing because it is. It is amazing grace. And what we have to share is an old, old story. How old? About 2,000 years old. And when this story and this concept burst upon the scene in the Mediterranean world 2,000 years ago, it absolutely changed everything.

[3 : 55] The world had not been the same since. Yet, despite the fact that this amazing message that is described as the gospel or the good news is the best good news the human race has ever heard.

And early on, it was picked up on and appreciated. And it caused all kinds of conflict, turmoil, martyrdom, all kinds of consequences flowed from the giving out of this message called the gospel of the grace of God.

It was then and it still is today a concept that is utterly, totally, completely foreign to the way people think.

You need to understand that. This is a message that does not comport with the way people think and the value systems that we have developed.

It is completely contrary to that. And this is the principal reason why it is so greatly misunderstood and so rejected by so many.

[5 : 24] Yet it is within the confines and the truths of this message that a person's eternal destiny is determined.

Now your life here on this earth and the kind of life you live and the things to which you are exposed and what you experience is really important.

But it does not begin to compare with that life which is going to come after. Because contrary to what many would have you believe death in this life and this world does not end at all.

It just ends one thing. It ends your present physical existence. life and it is continuing somewhere else spiritually even though physically you're cremated or buried or whatever.

It is absolutely impossible for me to assign any words that would describe the importance and the permanence of what we're going to be talking about.

[6 : 35] This gospel of the grace of God. When the apostle Paul was given this message and began delivering it it really caused a furor.

And the reason is for what I've already explained. It does not comport with the way people think. It does not fit in with our value system and the idea of behavior and punishment or rewards it's completely foreign to that.

And this is why upon first hearing most people reject it out of hand. And they call it too easy or they call it a number of other things.

So let's get into Romans chapter 5 and I'm going to begin with verse 12 and we will just read the text and save a little bit later for some explanation.

Romans 5 and verse 12. Therefore and whenever you see the word therefore it is a word of summation. It is a word of conclusion. What the word therefore means is in light of everything I've said up to this point here is the conclusion.

[7 : 50] This is what I want you to get from it and that's what he's telling us. Therefore just as through one man Adam sin entered into the world and death through sin and so death spread to all men because all sinned and if we were to add to that we would say all sinned in Adam for until the law sin was in the world but sin is not imputed where there is no law nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Moses even over those who had not sinned in the likeness of Adam's offense who is a type of him who was to come and that of course is speaking of the second Adam or the last Adam that will be Christ he is the one who was to come but the free gift is not like the transgression for if by the transgression of the one

Adam the many everybody died much more did the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one man Jesus Christ abound to the many now the many here at the end of the verse is the same as the many earlier in the verse and it is simply a synonym for all or all of humanity and verse 16 and the gift is not like that which came through the one who sinned for on the one hand the judgment arose from one transgression that was Adam and Eve's sin resulting in condemnation but on the other hand the free gift arose from many transgressions resulting in justification justification and justification means being made and declared right for if by the transgression of the one Adam death reigned through the one much more those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the one Jesus Christ so then as through one transgression Adams there resulted condemnation to all men all of humanity even so through one act of righteousness that is the substitutionary death of Christ on the cross that was the act of righteousness there resulted justification of life to all men and of course men is used there in a generic sense and yes it includes the ladies too for as through the one man's disobedience Adam the many humanity were made sinners even so through the obedience of the one

Christ the many will be made righteous and the law came in that the transgression might increase but where sin increased grace abounded all the more now the one thing I want you to get from that which is really critical for the whole message is God's grace exceeds the depths and the boundaries of our sin that's everything God's grace is greater than our sin God's grace is so great it is able to cancel out the sin of the entire human race for all of human history that as sin reigned in death even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through

Jesus Christ our Lord now as briefly as I can I want to share something with you that I'm going to have great difficulty in trying to explain it's simply because I don't know it well enough myself to be

able to explain it as I would like and I'm going to share some things with you that I do not understand but which I fully completely believe because the scriptures make it ever so clear and I have no choice but to be submissive to the authority of scripture and like one person said yes I believe everything in the Bible and a big reason I do believe everything in the Bible is even though I don't understand some things I believe everything because of what I do understand so for the big big picture we've got to go back we've got to predate

[13:22] Genesis 1-1 and you can't get any further back than that because we're stepping backward into eternity because 1-1 reads in the beginning God created well we are going before the beginning when the God who created hadn't created anything yet he was he existed and we are told that in the beginning was the word and the word was with God and the word was God all things were made by him without him was not anything made that was made this is John chapter one and it is referring to Jesus Christ and it is calling him the word and in that same chapter of John's gospel we are told that the word and the word word means Jesus being called the word of God a word a word is the essence of communication you cannot communicate without words that's true of any language doesn't make any difference whether it's sign language or whatever even if it's sign language you're using you're using words in the signs that you make so words are critical and all

John 1 1 is saying is that Jesus Christ is the communication of God to man and he is taking what he wants man to know and has embodied it in a human being and this is why John goes on to say in that same chapter and the word Christ was made flesh and dwelt among us but prior to any of that there was the father the son and the holy spirit and I've talked a little bit about this in the past and I need to say it again even if so briefly because it is germane to the message you must understand the trinitarian nature of God well no you must not understand it because you can't but you must understand the concept even though you can't get your brain around it nor can I we do not know how it is that God subsists and I'm not saying exists

I'm saying subsists in three persons father son and holy spirit and each of these is equal to the other there is no inferiority or superiority within the Godhead of father son and holy spirit when we do the math using our human brains to grasp this as much as we can we tend to think that one plus one plus one equals three and this of course is what many Christians or what many unbelievers accuse Christians of believing that we believe in three gods which is nonsense that is called tritheism or tritheism three gods we're not into three gods there is not three gods there is one God subsisting in three persons and each of these persons is God in his own right now right away there is a mental dropout isn't there yes there is and all

I'm suggesting and I think that we must insist on this because it absolutely has to be true is that the nature and character and being of God is that which exists on an entirely different plane than humanity can you grasp that and that plane is a place where you're not going to go not now not ever when we have redeemed bodies glorified bodies and we are in the presence of the Lord we are never still going to understand the character nature and makeup of the creator it simply transcends all human comprehension and I think I mentioned before that if you're looking for some kind of comparison the difference between a human being and a little insect called an ant crawling around on the ground is considerable in so many ways but it does not begin to display the difference and the distinction between a human being and the

God of creation the gap is much greater God is infinite this is he is a being without limitations and before the beginning began which we refer to as Genesis 1 1 which is simply the record of the creation of materialism because before God created the heavens and the earth he was inhabiting eternity and subsisting in this three person however that constitution was I don't know but it was father son and holy spirit and it was not a father son relationship that began the way we begin father son relationships at all totally foreign to that well then why do you suppose God uses that analogy to try and explain himself well ask yourself the question what else could you use in order for

[19:09] God to communicate anything to us that we can understand it has to be somewhere on our level of comprehension and even then it isn't precise or exact it's just a weak illustration of the reality of God so don't confuse father son relationship in humanity with father son relationship in the deity or in the God head totally different totally different let me put it this way God is not able to explain himself to you and to me so that we can understand you just can't it can't be done the only one who could really comprehend and understand that is deity itself and deity alone none of the creature hood none of us we can admire we can worship we can honor we can believe but we're not going to plumb the depths of the being and nature of God deal with it it's just a position of

inferiority that we mere mortals have and that's the way and by the way

I would say the same thing is true of angels they fathom the being and existence of God any better than we do in many respects and this God this there is another false concept let me just touch on this a moment it's called modalism modalism is it's a concept that early believers adopted way back second third century and eventually it was rooted out but there are still some who see it this way and modalism is kind of like tritheism that there's three gods or modalism says well there's one God there's one God but this one God sometimes acts in the capacity of a father sometimes he acts in the capacity of a son and then sometimes he changes gears and operates in the capacity of the Holy Spirit and there is still just one God but he assumes whatever office is needed at the time to fulfill whatever function it is that he wants to fulfill that's called modalism that God just goes from one mode of being to another that's completely unsatisfactory that's that's not that's not the way it works then you ask well Marv how does it work I can say I wish I knew because I don't all I know is high holy lifted up beyond comprehension and our ability to really understand in this existence that predates Genesis 1:1 that goes into eternity he is the uncaused first cause and in his being and character and nature he devised a plan whereby he would create beings some are angelic beings and some are human beings and these beings are going to be endowed with the capacity to obey or disobey we call this volition and they are going to have the opportunity to exercise that and angels exercise it and we are told that about one third of the angels exercise their volition in a negative way and they rebelled against the authority of God as far as we can tell those fallen angels have become the demons that are referred to in the

Bible and they are demons that still exist and will have a very very active part to play in the tribulation period that is yet to come we saw our Lord Jesus doing battle with demons numerous times in the four gospels so humans came into being because of God's creative ability and they too were given this ability to behave or rebel and we know what happened and as a result of the sin of our first parents they took into themselves something of a nature that God did not put there when he created them they became tainted and the taint was with the disobedience of sin which actually became part of their nature part of their psyche part of their every fiber of their being so that when they produced offspring the offspring would be a reflection of the composite of their mother and their father and it would be carried on and the main result of this thing called sin is death and if you ever run into anybody who insists that they are not a sinner just congratulate them on being able to live forever then and they say well what do you mean well if you're not a sinner you're not going to die you're going to live forever well in a sense those who are believers in Christ do live forever but it's a spiritual thing and the body that is assigned to the grave because of sin is going to be eventually overcome and that is a glorious reality of the sons of God so what we've got is a situation whereby this created being called humanity or called man has fallen into the disfavor of God and as a result is justly condemned from him and his presence forever and there is no way that we can work our way back because our lostness will not allow us to do so and in spite of that God not being willing to forfeit his human creation that he brought forth not being willing to forfeit that has made plans whereby this rebellious humanity can once again come into his good graces his presence and enjoy his forgiveness and his salvation and his eternal life all freely no price to be paid it is a gift and what

[26 : 06] I've just explained to you in ever so brief terms is the greatest news the world has ever heard it's called the gospel the good news and when this came on the scene in that first century it hit like a thunderbolt it was the most bizarre the most extraordinary the most outlandish the most unbelievable thing that ever happened and yet it was every whit true whereby a way was made possible to get back to God be restored to him be forgiven by him enjoy his life his blessing his eternity solely as a gift now if somebody gives you a gift and they identify it as a gift it would be really foolish of you to say now how much do I owe you well you don't owe me anything it's a gift that's what makes it a gift it's free and that's the way the gift of eternal life is that God gives but wait a minute if you give somebody a gift it is free to them but it wasn't free to the giver was it somebody had to pay for it somebody had to pay that's the whole point

Jesus paid for it folks that's not just the main thing that's everything that's everything there is nothing that trumps that for I delivered unto you that which first of all I received how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures and that he was buried and rose again the third day according to the scriptures and Paul said I communicated that to you of first importance of first importance if you don't get anything else get that that's everything that's everything and do you

know to the world at large it's nothing think of that now listen this message amazing as it is became available in the first century through the apostle

Paul whom God called in a special way for a special message to deliver not just to you but to everyone that salvation is a free gift and this message that was embraced then resulted in the martyrdom of a lot of people who preached it and believed it they paid for it with their life rather than surrender that truth or deny that truth they allowed their bodies to be burned executed crucified however just because they knew what they knew and they could not deny it and would not deny it and that message has been placed in a holy record called the Bible that God inspired from the beginning it is added to what was already there called the Old Testament and has become what we call the

New Testament and it has been produced in hundreds and hundreds of languages around the world and the Bible has been the world's best seller from the time it was first published to the present time there is no volume and no book that has ever exceeded it it exists in the hundreds of millions of copies throughout the world in every language that it has been translated in which is hundreds of languages or portions of scripture and for centuries humanity has revered this and has accepted this document called the Bible as the very word of God and it was virtually without question for millennia but no more no more now the book is suspect the contents are suspect why what has man devised that exceeds it or excels it in any way nothing so how is it that this book this blessed book with all of its contents and all of its promises and all of its explanations has fallen into such disrepute among so many in our present generation why how

I'll tell you why and how because mankind in many places in many ways has made extraordinary strides accomplishments after all putting a man on the moon and not just putting him there but getting him back is no small feat if there's anything that humanity can puff its chest out about it's our space explorations never mind the fact that when you put a man on the moon it's still just the equivalent of stepping out the back door of your house and standing on the stoop that's perhaps a rough equivalent but that's about as far as it goes we have become so enamored with our scientific achievements and accomplishments and frankly

[32 : 28] I'm grateful for every one of them because it enhances our life it makes life more comfortable it even prolongs life in many ways so hats off to the research scientists and the experts who've come up with all the wonderful inventions and things that we enjoy that have prolonged and improved our lives hats off to them we're grateful for every one of them but the problem with that is man gets too greatly impressed with his own accomplishments and he looks at the Bible and says well this is the book with horse and buggies and spears and swords and a whole bunch of ancient things that go with it what could this musty old book possibly have to say to us sophisticated advanced moderns you don't find any telephones you don't find any cell phones in the

Bible you don't find any widescreen TVs in the Bible you don't find any of the scientific wonders of the world in the Bible no you don't and there's very good reason for that because the Bible was never given to be in league with or in competition with man's developments and inventions that's not the content of the Bible nor was it ever the purpose of the Bible the purpose of the Bible is to explain the reality of existence and humanity where we have come from what we are doing here why the world is the way it is and where we are going the Bible is a book of principles it isn't a book of details so it ought not to be faulted because it can't be considered modern and up to date it was never intended to be it was intended to be a communicator of truth and the

Bible tells the truth about us humans tells the truth about God tells the truth about our world how the world got the way it is why there is pain and suffering and sorrow and death it explains it all and by the way it is the only place you will find the explanation nowhere else only in that book explains origins explains values and explains destiny nothing else does nothing so we've got this being who is referred to as spirit John says chapter 4 I think is verse 34 Jesus was talking to the woman at the well and he said God is spirit what does that mean that means that God in his essence and character is not physical or material he's immaterial which means you can't see him you can't feel him

God is not made of stuff he's not matter he is non-matter he is immaterial this is how he can be everywhere at once how does that work well I don't know except because I don't know that much about the nature of the spiritual even though I've got one and so do you we all have a human spirit this spirit of which God is composed allows him omnipresence allows him to be in China right now while he is here which allows him to be in Africa at the same time while he is here and while he is in

China what kind of person are we talking about we are talking about an infinite person we are finite God is infinite if you have physicality if you're made of stuff if you're made of matter you have to have some place to be you have to have space you can't exist without space God existed without space as spirit before he created the heavens and the earth and the planets and all that is out there that we call the universe he was he was existing in this immaterial mode before heaven and earth was created before there were people before there were angels before there was anything there was this God who existed from eternity you don't understand that either nor do I but this is what the scriptures insist on because God is referred to as the uncaused first cause and you either have to have intelligence being responsible for everything that exists or you have to have non intelligence being responsible for everything that exists and it is inconceivable to us that non intelligence can create intelligence we don't have any problem with intelligence creating non intelligence we can build a pulpit that's intelligence creating something out of matter so [38 : 34] God in this person indescribable eternal person called God subsisting in three persons one of these persons is referred to as the son the son did not come into existence like our sons did because the son did not come into existence the son always was and so was the spirit always none of them ever had a beginning and all we can say all we can surmise and this is just admittedly speculation but all we can say is that this God this being God decided at one point in time to create beings angels and humans and we have referred in time past to that verse in

Revelation 4 11 that's the only one I've been able to find that explains why there is anything and that's when the four and twenty elders ascribe to God saying that you are worthy you are worthy to receive honor and power and glory dominion majesty might etc for or because you have created all things and by your good pleasure they were and are created and all that is saying to me is that God created things people angels universe stars all that we see because he was pleased to do so we are not told why he was pleased to do so he didn't create anything out of a sense of need because God has no needs that he cannot meet perfectly within his own character and nature he doesn't have to go outside himself to meet to meet any need he has he is a self existent one we are just the opposite we have all kinds of needs outside of ourselves the air we breathe and the water we drink is outside of ourselves and we can't live without them but God has no needs that he does not and cannot meet within his own person he didn't have to create anything he didn't do so out of a sense of need or obligation he did so simply because it pleased him to do so now you ask why did it please him to do so

I have no idea I have no idea why it pleased him to do so but he did and in connection with that he was pleased to create volitional beings beings that he would endow with a capacity to obey him or to disobey him the only alternative that God have as far as I can understand is that he had to create them without that ability which would have meant everyone would be pre-programmed angels and humans would be pre-programmed so that they could not disobey they were wired in a certain way and obedience is all they could do but a programmed forced obedience is worthless a programmed forced love is worthless it has to be voluntary we want to be loved not because somebody has no choice they have to love us what kind of flaky relationship is that where everybody is just some kind of a puppet a robot where you yes master and you just obey whatever that's ridiculous so God and I use the term advisedly because it's not a good term to use in connection with

God but I'm talking to human beings we we would say it looks like God took a risk in creating these beings who were morally neutral angels and humans but had the capacity to go either way that was the choice he had does he make them robotic so they can't rebel or does he give them a will and a volition so that they can obey if they choose to or they can disobey if they choose to that's what God did if you wonder why he went that way you'll have to take that up with him maybe you'll have an opportunity but at any rate humanity as well as angels went astray we don't know how long Adam and Eve were in that garden before they ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil we're not told how long some think maybe 15 minutes we don't know but the temptation was pretty strong no doubt because there's something about us humans that when we are told there is something we must not do that's the thing we want to do we call that human nature that's just a way to and you know when it starts it starts at about the age of two maybe that's why kids are called the terrible twos because that's when they start strutting their stuff they want to do their own thing and like the little youngster that kept standing up in his high chair and mother would say sit down and he would stand up again and finally she's afraid he's going to fall and hurt himself you know so she gets a little more firm and she grabs him and she planks him down in that high chair and says now you sit

there and he sits there and he starts crying and he says in the midst of his tears he says I'm sitting down but on the inside I'm standing up that's a perfect picture of humanity don't tell me what I can't do don't tell me what I have to do don't tell me how to do it I'll make it on my own and that's just systemic to humanity that's the way we are so with humanity in this fallen state of moral and spiritual disrepair God could do with us what he did with the first increment of humanity he just wiped them out he wiped them out one family was salvaged

[46 : 06] Noah his wife Shemham and Japheth and their wives that was it and God started all over again but it wasn't long until the same old temptations and enticement returned and we've got a repeat performance with crime heartache death disease everything that goes with it and it just gobbles up every generation that comes along every generation that comes along you read Genesis I think it's Genesis I forget what chapter maybe it's five I don't know but every verse in the chapter every verse in the chapter ends with and he died and he died and he gives another name and he died another name and he died and we all died we are all going to be in that obituary column one of these days unless the

Lord comes first and in the midst of all of this death and disease and rebellion and heartache and war and conflict that we see all throughout humanity nature it's been said nature is red in tooth and claw it sure is it sure is in the midst of all of that God and this is difficult for us to understand difficult for me to understand why God doesn't do with this generation what he did with the generation of Noah I don't know except he's already made it clear that he has other plans for this world otherwise that could very well be our end so in the midst of all of that fallenness and failure and fault and sin God looks at this fallen distorted humanity that was originally created in his likeness and in his image and instead of instead of a holy disgust for the whole thing and just write them all off like he did with

Adam like he did with Noah he looked upon this fallen humanity with pity and with love and this triune being obviously together made some kind of an arrangement the likes of which we can't understand that would allow the father to send the son to be the savior of a fallen humanity and he's going to use one of our own kind to do it and this is why Jesus is referred to as the God man the theanthropic one he was fully God and he was fully human and I don't understand that either but he was the scriptures make it quite clear and because the scales of the universe were so out of kilter and so lopsided due to the sin of humanity

God is devising a way whereby he can bring this fallen rebellious humanity as a whole race back to him so that there is an opportunity for reclamation and reconciliation and acceptance and forgiveness what is it going to take to balance the lopsided scales of the universe it's going to take an injection of the very effort and work of deity itself in order to balance that scale and make it even so that God can accept a fallen humanity once again and that's where Jesus comes in that's what it's all about that's what the manger is all about that's what the cross is all about that's what the empty tomb is all about that's what everything is all about and where do you sit with that this well words words words fail me

I want to close with reading along with you your insert would you look at it please I'm just amazed at this Marie and I were reading this just this morning yesterday today this is a contribution of of Mr. [51 : 29] Stamm and it's taken from his book two minutes with the Bible and it talks about this great provision that God has made for us through Christ it is just remarkable I'm just going to read it and read it somewhat rapidly but would you follow along please and let's begin with September 5 and by the way I didn't plan this because I already had my message figured we were going to continue on with God's perspective and how God sees things differently than we do and that's what we're doing and then when we got into our devotions when we're reading this I thought this is amazing it couldn't have been better if I'd planned it and I hadn't planned it I guess I'm so used to the things I planned not working out that sometimes the unplanned things work better look this grace and debt this is this is amazing now to him that worketh is a reward not reckoned of grace but of debt but to him that worketh not but believes on him that justifies the ungodly his faith is counted for righteousness what's that mean it means that his faith is accepted in the place of righteousness which he doesn't have so you don't have to have righteousness you just have to have faith and what does that mean it means you have to believe but to him that worketh not but believes on him that justifies the ungodly his faith is counted for righteousness as we look back at all the Old

Testament types the physical types the narratives the sacrifices we exclaim the cross was not an accident nor an afterthought on God's part he had it in mind all the while surely Paul was right when

he said of believers that God hath saved us and called us with an holy calling not according to our works but according to his own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began it is on the basis of the cross typified all through the Old Testament that God now saves us by grace through faith alone or through believing alone and the types show that this was indeed his eternal purpose furthermore salvation should be by grace through faith as our text above declares if man could earn his salvation it would be the payment of a debt not the bestowal of a gift and God will never be indebted to anyone he will never be in a position where he owes us sinners a debt nor will he ever allow us to disgrace ourselves and annoy others by our boasting about how we earned eternal life but he can on the basis of the penalty paid at Calvary bestow salvation as a free gift this is why we read the wages of sin is death but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord it is the gift of God not of works lest any man should boast God owed Abraham nothing but seeing his faith he said in effect this man believes me I will count his faith for righteousness in other words he's saying I will take Abraham's faith in me and count that in the place of the righteousness that I would demand from him that he cannot provide that is glorious that is it's not incredible it's not fantastic but it is amazing isn't it it is amazing God owed Abraham nothing but seeing his faith he said in effect this man believes me I will count his faith for righteousness and this he still does for those who trust him only he has now revealed the basis for this action it is

Christ's payment for sins at Calvary what do you think Jesus meant when he said it is finished wow what was finished the transaction was accomplished the deal was done the act was completed he who knew no sin was made to be sin in our place so that we could become the righteousness of God in him and don't you ever leave out those last two words in him not in you not in your church in him this is why in

Romans 4 5 he forbids works for salvation and declares that the believer's faith is counted for righteousness and I'm going to read the reverse page too I just give it to you and ask you to take it home and read but you won't you'll forget that you've got it you'll stick it in your Bible and there's some notes some place and that'll be the end of it so I'm not going to trust you with that have you ever noticed that God does not hold the great men of scripture up to us because of their personal goodness almost invariably their records are marred by failure and sin but God bids us look at their faith to see what their faith did for them even those who live consistently good lives are not held up to us for their personal worth because God knows their imperfections for if Abraham were justified by works he has whereof to glory but not before God for what does the scripture say Abraham believed God and it his belief was counted to him for righteousness and verse 6 goes on to say about David even as David also describes the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputed righteousness without works without works did you get that this is the this is the bombshell of the first century without works are you crazy are you kidding you've got to do this and you've got to do that you've got these hoops to jump through and you've got to jump through all and don't you miss one either no not of works no works all of grace this is because man cannot live a life good enough to make him acceptable to God for with God only perfection is good enough one sin spoiled the earth

[58 : 37] God will not allow one sin to spoil heaven too this is why in grace he gave Christ to die for our sins and to pay the just penalty for us and because of the all sufficient payment of Christ in our behalf God can now be just and the justifier wow that is that is amazing you know it took God to think this up no human being would ever come up with a solution like this how he could justify a fallen failed sinful human being and make him acceptable and forgiven without his doing something something providing something joining something giving something no totally without works totally by grace amazing famous 11th chapter of Paul's letter to the

Hebrews bears out the fact that salvation or acceptance with God is obtained not by human effort but by faith this great chapter on the heroes in God's hall of fame begins with the words for by it faith the elders obtained a good report and then goes on by faith Abel by faith Enoch by faith Noah by faith Abraham and closes with the declaration and can you put your name in the place of any one of those can you say by faith you with your name is that a reality in your life because there is no other way and I want to close with this I had some hymns picked out and I told the people that we'll have to sing them next week because I took all the time I'm sorry for that but I want you to consider this in closing all of this all of this is made possible only because of the true identity of that person who was on the cross the book of Acts is even referred to as the blood of God

Jesus Christ God in the flesh when Christ the mighty maker died for man the creatures sin if you were ever able to get over that it has to be because you just don't understand it you only think you got over it nobody has ever plumbed the depths of this everybody in the body of Christ needs to understand that the one singular thing that made that payment that Jesus made acceptable the one thing that made it acceptable was his identity everything hinges on that if Jesus

Christ is not very God in the flesh who in his deity willingly surrendered his life to pay for the sins of us mortal sinful creatures if he is not who he claimed to be then he's got to be the world's greatest con man that ever arrived on the scene and he has succeeded in hoodwinking millions and millions of people for thousands of years some of whom even laid down their life for him you have to make a choice between one of the two there isn't anything in the middle there is no middle ground if Jesus Christ is who he claimed to be if he is who the Bible claimed him to be then absolutely nothing in the world matters more than your being rightly related to him nothing nothing are you would you pray with me please father once again we have entered an area of which we know so little but we know enough to be able to act on it and that is our prayer for everyone within hearing whether here or electronically or through

CDs or whatever you have made it possible for us to do business with you the God of the universe through the provision that you have made for us through the death that Jesus Christ died and paid the full price of our redemption so he would be able to offer it to us as a free gift what love what amazing amazing love the father and the son and the spirit had to have for a fallen humanity to complete a transaction that has become the centerpiece of the universe and always will be our prayer right now is for any who are listening to this message that the spirit of

[64 : 56] God may enable them to connect the dots in their own mind and heart and see themselves as so many have as being a sinner undone unacceptable and unworthy before you but willing to admit it acknowledge it not hiding or justifying our sin but freely acknowledging it and because of that seeing ourselves as separated from you we reach out to Jesus whom you provided for that very purpose of being the go-between so that in simple faith we can put our trust and confidence in Jesus who died for us and paid the price for us and is willing to put it to our account if we will but admit our sin and trust the Lord Jesus for who he is and what he did will you give a special insight and unction to any who may be needing it right now looking for more answers and cause them to know that this is the beginning of finding more answers once we are in

Christ for any who may be here and unsure of these things dear friend I want to offer for you a prayer that I call it a can't lose prayer and would you be willing to pray and would you be willing to pray and ask God if these things are true then you're willing to be shown and would you be available for evidence that God might have for you that's all he wants an open and a willing heart and God will see to it that you will not go without the information you need thank you father for this amazing truth that we only wish we understood better but to the degree that we do understand it we relish it and we revel in its truth and we bless you for it in Christ's wonderful name amen so thank you thank you you thank you for it you thank you you thank you thank you you thank you for it thank you for it thank you thank you thank you for it