

Sin After Salvation

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[0 : 00] Well, let's go first of all, if we may, to Colossians chapter 2, and we're going to look at this issue of sins I've done after I was saved.

There is a sense in which, positionally speaking, and I'm going to start with this because I'll build on it. Positionally speaking, there is no such thing as sins that you've committed after you were saved. For the simple reason of what is expressed here in Colossians chapter 2. But I want to qualify that by saying, there are two aspects to your salvation.

One has to do with your position, and one has to do with your practice. And the distinction between these is absolutely critical, and also provides the basis for real peace, joy, security, contentment in the Lord.

And to know of an assurance that your sins are forgiven, and as Paul said, therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

[1 : 18] That is your position. Your practice is something else. And those need to be kept separate and distinct. If you do not understand the difference between them, you have no real basis for peace or joy.

And I've been talking to some Roman Catholic friends in connection with what I'm dealing with in Christianity Clarified. And they are completely unaware of this concept of positional truth.

And it is not built into their theology. And their theology expresses it this way. And by the way, I'm not taking the word of any Roman Catholics for it, because a lot of Roman Catholics do not know their church's doctrine any better than a lot of Protestants know their church's doctrine.

So I don't count on them for their opinion. But I do have an official document that sets forth the catechism of a Roman Catholic church that was provided by them.

And it's very, very enlightening. And one of the concepts is, as regards salvation, you are to exercise faith in Christ as your Savior.

[2 : 37] And then that gives you the right to strive for salvation. In other words, you believe on Christ as your Savior.

But that is not the end of the deal. You have to strive to achieve that level of salvation.

And however much you strive, the likelihood is it is not going to be enough. And that's why you have to go to purgatory to get the job finished. And there, you are punished.

You are punished for your sins until the debt is paid. And then you are free to be released from purgatory and go to heaven.

So it is an ongoing process. And by the way, it is one that keeps you very dependent upon the church.

[3 : 37] Because your salvation is achieved. You earn it. And you work toward your salvation through your participation in the sacraments. And the first, of course, is baptism for Roman Catholics, which is usually at infancy.

But the other sacraments that need to be added, of course, have to do with what the church has to offer with communion, etc. And I'm somewhat familiar with this also because my first wife was born and married Roman Catholic.

And she clued me into a lot of it. So, in essence, the peace, the joy, and the security that everyone who has come to faith in Christ is entitled to because of the finished work of Christ is that dangling carrot out there that you never really reach.

And you're always striving for it. So where is the security? Well, there really isn't any. Where is the assurance? There really isn't any. Where is the confidence? There isn't any. Where is the joy?

There isn't any. But when Jesus said in John chapter 8, If the Son sets you free, you shall be free indeed.

[4 : 53] And the construction there in the original puts an emphasis on that word indeed with the idea that if the Son sets you free, you shall really, really be free.

No two ways about it. Because that is what is in store and what every believer is entitled to because that is the extent of the payment that Jesus made for your sins.

You are entitled to it. Not because you deserve it. Because you don't. You are entitled to it because the Savior paid the price in full and left nothing for you to pay.

He left a lot for you to enjoy and appreciate and to contribute. But you are not contributing to your salvation. You are contributing to your own works that will be examined in 1 Corinthians chapter 3. We may get there this morning. And that's an entirely different issue. So let's go to Colossians chapter 2 first of all. And look at this passage because it's quite remarkable.

[6 : 04] Beginning with verse 8, Paul said, See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ.

For in him all the fullness of deity dwells in bodily form. And in him you have been made complete. That means there's nothing lacking. What does complete mean? It means you are as complete as you can be in your position.

You are a fully finished product. You are not in process. You are a done deal. That regards your position.

And your position is not quantitative. It is qualitative. By that we're talking about a reality as opposed to a progression.

[7 : 19] And the difference between them is dramatic. Let's go on and see this. In him you have been made complete. He is the head over all rule and authority.

And in him you were also circumcised with a circumcision made without hands. That's a tremendous statement. What is this?

A circumcision made without hands. Listen. Under Judaism, when a baby boy was born, eight days old, he was circumcised.

There's no question about it. It was an axiom. It was an automatic thing. He was circumcised. And what that signified was that this child is separated unto God.

And he is God's personal property. He's a child of the covenant. And if you were Jewish, that Abrahamic covenant was just, it was the most significant thing that designated and separated the Jew from the Gentile.

[8 : 28] God was the covenant relationship that they had with the one true God. And that was emblematic of a position that could in no wise be changed.

In other words, when that baby boy was circumcised at eight days of age, he was locked in. Locked in to being a child of the covenant. And entitled to all of the privileges that are set forth in the law of Moses and so on, as well as the responsibilities.

So that was a positional thing. And here, what Paul is saying, and he is speaking, by the way, as a Jew, who is fully familiar with the circumcision thing.

And he is giving Gentiles the equivalent of what the Jew has in a covenant relationship with God.

But it is not a physical circumcision. It is a spiritual circumcision. And the counterpart to this is, as an Israelite, when John the Baptist came on the scene and began preaching, repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

[9 : 39] And part of his formula was repent and be baptized. Repent and be baptized. There was a performance thing there.

And it was literal water that made them qualified to prepare themselves for the kingdom. That was part of the get ready.

Get ready. The idea is repent. Get your act together because the kingdom of heaven is right around the corner. And you need to be ready to enter into it.

So it was a qualifying thing. And water baptism was part of it. That was for the Jew. And this was exclusively Jewish. Exclusively Jewish.

Gentiles had nothing to do with this whatever. That's going to come later. And then it won't be the gospel of the kingdom. It will be the gospel of the grace of God, which is another separation that we'll be looking at.

[10 : 36] So what we're talking about is the difference between the physical and the spiritual. And in the water, we see the baptism that is physical for the Jew.

And the baptism for the believer under the dispensation of the grace of God is not water at all. It is for by one spirit. Are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jew or Gentile, bond or free, male or female?

You are all children of God by faith in Jesus Christ. That's a dry cleaning. There's no water in that baptism. It is a spiritual cleaning in the same way that here in Colossians 2, it is not a physical circumcision.

It is a spiritual circumcision. And this is what he's talking about. He says in verse 11, You were also circumcised with a circumcision made without hands.

Well, how could you do that? How could a Jewish baby boy, eight days old, be circumcised without hands? You know, in every Jewish community, there was a man who had the responsibility.

[11 : 59] I don't know what his title was. I don't recall the name in the Jewish language, in Hebrew. But he was recognized throughout the community as being the official circumciser.

And when baby boys were born, he would be called in on the eighth day and with hands, two of them, and with a flint stone.

He would perform a surgical procedure on that eight-day-old baby by circumcising him. And he used his hands to do it.

It was a physical thing on a physical baby and a physical circumcision. But that's all gone. In Christ, under a new dispensation, the dispensation of grace, physical circumcision made with hands is replaced with spiritual circumcision.

What does that mean? It means in the same way that that baby was set aside in a covenant relationship with Jehovah, in the same way a Jew or a Gentile now need to be physically circumcised because they are circumcised spiritually, the penis isn't touched at all, and there are no hands.

[13 : 27] That's the difference. One is physical, one is spiritual. And the chief thing that characterizes the church as being different from Israel and Judaism is everything under Judaism was physical, material, animal sacrifices.

Everything was physical, hands-on, see it, touch it, handle it. But under the grace of God, it isn't that way at all. Now, the Jews require a sign.

What does that mean? It means a miracle. That's the word for a miracle. Simeon. The Jews require a sign, something physical that you can see and attest to.

But we walk by faith and not by sight. What's that saying? It's saying we do not require a physical sign or physical evidence or physical proof.

Ours is spiritual. How is that activated? Just by believing. You mean that's it? Just believe? Yes. That's it.

[14 : 36] That's called justification by faith. And that is the thing that separates the old dispensation from the new dispensation.

And that's exactly what Romans is all about. Now, let's look at this text here. If we may, we're in Colossians chapter 2. And Paul says you were also circumcised with a circumcision, made without hands.

He's talking. He's a Jew. But who's he talking to? Who's Colossians written to? It's a bunch of Gentiles. A bunch of non-Jews.

And, you know, by the way, let me just insert this to give you a little appreciation for it. When a Gentile came to the position where he abandoned his false gods and was of the conviction that there is one true God and one only, he would become a proselyte.

He would become a proselyte to Judaism. I'm sorry. That's not true. He would be a God-fearer. A God-fearer is one who embraced the God of Israel as the true God.

[15 : 59] That's a God-fearer. That's a Gentile. And a proselyte was one who embraced the God of Israel as the one true God and was circumcised.

As a Gentile, was circumcised. Then he was a member of the Jewish faith in good standing just as if he had been born a Jew.

But the circumcision was required. And once that was done, then you were eligible to join into Judaism in a full, complete way.

Now, you can understand why it was that there were a lot more God-fearers than there were proselytes.

Because the idea of being circumcised if a guy is an adult or 30 or 40 or 50 years old, that would not be a favorite thing.

[17:00] And most of them did not do that. And by the way, it always showed up, too, by who was circumcised and who wasn't circumcised. And you wonder, how in the world did they make the distinction?

It was the public baths. You've got to remember, in this culture, every city, however small or however large, had public baths. Some of them had many baths.

And the men frequented those baths. And they were naked as a jaybird. And that was the way that they conducted their cleansing and their fellowship and everything.

They would go into these baths, these hot baths. And there they would be completely exposed. And if somebody was there, and if you're in the midst of a bunch of Jews, and here's all these guys circumcised.

And then walks this goyim, who has everything intact. You can't help but notice that. And it's obvious. So, that's how they made a distinction between circumcised and uncircumcised.

[18:04] That was a really big deal in that first century. So, anyway, let's go on. Verse 12. Having been buried with him in baptism. What does that mean?

Again, guys, we're talking about position. Official position. Do you realize that officially, as far as God is concerned, you were crucified with Christ?

You were on that cross when he was. You were there with him. You were raised with him in newness of life. You are seated with him. Paul, later in Colossians chapter 3.

Look across the page. Verse 1 says in chapter 3. If then. And this is a first class conditional clause. And it ought to be translated since. Since then, you have been raised up with Christ.

What does that mean? It means that's your position. Guys, your position is the way God looks at it as opposed to the way you look at it.

[19:10] We look at being raised up with Christ. What are you talking about? Crucified with Christ. What are you talking about? I wasn't even born. I wasn't even thought less. In the mind of God.

You were on that cross with Jesus. You died his death. You are resurrected with Jesus. And here Paul is saying. Since.

Since then you have been raised up with Christ. What does that mean? It means that's your official. It means that's the way God sees you. God doesn't even see you as being in process.

He sees you as a completed project. You are raised with Christ. That's God's viewpoint. Not our viewpoint. Our viewpoint is we are right here on planet Earth. What Joe?

I'm just going to give a picture of what you just said. Here's a picture of what he just said. Okay, this is Jesus here. This is you and me right here.

[20:06] This bookmark is you and me. This is Jesus right here. And when you set Jesus as your Savior. Dying on the cross for you. Your salvation. Here's where you go.

Right here in Jesus. This Bible represents Jesus. You are here. And so when God sees you. What's he see? Jesus. You are Jesus.

There's a picture of what he just said. Okay, amen. Thank you, Joe. Joe gets excited. But I'm going to tell you something, fellas.

If you can't get excited about this, there's no hope for you. Amen. This is incredible. Roger, what? Can you imagine how bad that rubs the Satan, the devil raw?

Oh, absolutely. Somebody saved. Absolutely. Sealed. He can't touch them anymore. Absolutely. It's a... Oh, that's got to... Guys, what we're talking about is the most wonderful thing in the world.

[21:08] That God was in Christ. Reconciling the world unto himself. Wow. That is something. If...

You know, I've never gotten over that. And I never hope to. This...

We've described this as the transaction of the universe. That the great creator became our savior. And all the fullness of God dwells in him. And it is just mind-boggling. It is just wonderful beyond words.

I tell you. When you were dead. Verse 12. Now, having been buried with him in baptism. In which you were also raised up with him through faith in the working of God who raised him from the dead.

[22:14] When you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh. He made you. You Gentiles. He made you alive together with him.

Having forgiven us all our transgressions. Every single one of them. This is the qualifying or the quality of your salvation.

It has to do with your position. Not your practice. And that's what this fellow was talking about. When he says, sins I've done after I was saved.

Well, the sins that you have done after you're... And by the way. Some people are actually laboring under the assumption. That in this life and in this body.

If you are properly devoted and related to God. You have attained a position of spiritual perfection. [23 : 25] Whereby you no longer sin. As a Christian. There are those who... There aren't as many now as there were a generation or two ago.

But as a Christian, they believe that it is possible to be totally sanctified. So that you are unable to sin.

It's called sinless perfection. And when you achieve that, then you are entitled to the security and the comfort that comes from knowing that.

And the way that most believe that that is achieved is by praying through. And they have meetings that are conducted that sometimes go on for hours and hours.

And when someone comes to the conclusion that they have been totally sanctified. They rejoice and everybody rejoices with them.

[24 : 22] And here is one who has entered into that state where they no longer sin. And it can become embarrassing because as they live their life before people who are noticing them.

It becomes obvious that the perfection is somewhat deficient. And they justify it by this. Now, don't get me wrong. I am sinless.

Although, I still make mistakes. And I don't do things perfectly. But what we're talking about is fudging.

The truth of the matter is, if we say we have no sin, the truth is not in us. And we'll look at that verse a little bit later too. But positionally, guys, insofar as your position is concerned, that is determined entirely by quality, not quantity.

Yes? I want to add something right here. I can't hold back on this one. Okay. Just to add to that question. Should we testify to the lost?

[25 : 37] Should we testify to the lost? Or should. I'm using those two words. Can or should we testify to the lost? Well, if we are a believer, if one is a believer, you automatically are put in a position where you have not only an opportunity but a responsibility to share your faith, communicate your faith, whether you're in a church or not.

Now, someone has said that evangelism and salvation is really nothing more than one beggar telling another beggar where to find bread.

That's what witnessing is. And although the church plays an important part in that, it doesn't necessarily have to be involved because we as an individual have the truth of God within us and the experience of salvation and every reason, every right, and every responsibility to relate that to others.

And that's a privilege as well as a responsibility. So, yes, brother? What you just described, where people, you say, pray to try and say that they're sanctified, but then that shows that they're using their own works to attain that sinlessness, the holiness.

Because, you see, if you're trying to do something so that you can attain holiness, which means you're nullifying God's power because you're trying to do it on your own faith and your own power to attain that holiness.

[27 : 14] Thank you. And you're talking about holiness. You're talking about sanctification. Yes, sanctification. Yes, sanctification, being set apart. And the word literally means to set apart. And in reality, when you come to faith in Christ, you are then sanctified, set apart unto God through Jesus Christ.

And sanctification is also an ongoing process whereby we are being sanctified. And the time will come when we are completely sanctified, but it won't be in this life.

So, sanctification is in three segments. It is positional, it is ongoing, and it is final. All of those have to do with being separated.

And it literally means, as the word denotes, it means when you come to faith in Jesus Christ as your Savior, if you just picture this, if you just picture a giant hand reaching down from heaven and picking you up out of the world and moves you over here and sets you down in this smaller body called the body of Christ made up of believers.

That is, you're being set apart from the world unto God. And that is your sanctification positionally. And there is a practical sanctification.

[28 : 41] And that is achieved by growing in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ. Because just as a newborn baby, when the baby is born and has life, but what it needs is to develop and to mature.

And so it is for Christians. When we are born again and we come to faith in Jesus Christ, we are a spiritual baby, spiritual infant.

And what we need, desperately, is the same thing that a newborn baby needs. Nourishment.

Nourishment. Needs food. Needs to grow. Needs to be mature.

Needs to be healthy. And the health is often determined by what is made available to the baby. And guys, what this is all about, what we're doing here this morning, is just a part of that.

We are simply trying to add to our appreciation and understanding. We are expanding our sanctification, our being set apart.

[29 : 46] And each time you take in spiritual truth, you are set apart a little bit more and a little bit more and a little bit more. And that is what growth in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ is all about.

So, in verse 14, having canceled out the certificate of death, consisting of decrees against us, and which was hostile to us, and he has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.

When he disarmed the rulers and authorities, this is the satanic element, he made a public display of them, having triumphed over them through him.

Therefore, let no one act as your judge in regard to food or drink or in respect to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day, things which are of a mere shadow of what is to come, but the substance belongs to Christ.

And in verse 20, Since you have died, not if, not maybe, but it's an accomplished fact. Since you have died with Christ through the elementary principles of the world, why, as if you were living in the world, do you submit yourself to decrees such as, do not handle, do not taste, all these regulations and rules and everything, which goes with a legalistic kind of life.

[31 : 08] And Christ has set us free from bondage and free from legalism, and he has given us an incredible opportunity to live for him, not out of fear because of what he'll do to us if we don't, but out of a deep-seated appreciation for what he has done for you.

He used to sing a little song, After all he's done for me, After all he's done for me, how can I do less than give him my best?

After all he's done for me. And we're not paying God for our salvation, we're paying him back, but we are expressing our appreciation for his having provided it to us.

You know, an unthankful Christian is an oxymoron. That's a contradiction in terms. Nobody should have a greater sense of gratitude to God than one who is a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ.

And it's just, there's absolutely nothing like it in the world. Since you've died with Christ, the elementary Christ, yes? I thought Paul was born not a Jew, that he was like a Gentile.

[32 : 27] Is that right? Paul was what? A Gentile, then he converted? Oh no, Paul was a Jew. He was a Jew. Yeah. Paul was a Jew. He gives his pedigree. He gives his pedigree in Philippians, I think it's chapter 3, where he says, I am an Israelite, born of the tribe of Benjamin.

And the Benjamites, the tribe of Benjamin had its own special status. I think, I guess you could call the tribe of Benjamin the Green Beret of the 12 tribes, because these guys were, they were really something.

You didn't want to come up against a Benjamite in battle, because you didn't stand a chance. The men in the tribe of Benjamin were told that they could sling a stone within a hair's width of a target.

These guys were expert marksmen with the sling, and they were the most feared of the 12 tribes when it came to going into battle. Yeah, read the kings. You'll see how good they were.

These folks are kings. So Paul, Paul was a Jew, but he was unusual, because he had to have had, he had to have had a Jewish mother, and possibly a Gentile father, but we don't know.

[33 : 56] Now, Timothy, that was probably the case with Timothy, but Paul was a full-fledged, 100% of the tribe of Benjamin, circumcised the eighth day, he says there, a child of the covenant, and so on.

And all of those things that were part of my pedigree, all of those things that the Jews would consider for bragging rights, I'm this and I'm that, and Paul says, and I count them all, but rubbish.

Compared to my new relationship with Jesus Christ, all of those things that are supposed to be impressive on a resume are worthless compared to my being in Christ.

And there in Philippians, he gives you the example of that. Paul thought he was being a good Jew by killing the Christians. Oh yeah. Yeah. Well, Paul wasn't killing Christians. Paul was killing, when Paul was at his peak and persecuting, there were no such things as Christians.

Right. They were not, they were not called Christians. In fact, what they were was believing Jews. And what Paul was committed to doing was stamping out his fellow countrymen.

[35 : 15] This was Jew on Jew. The persecution from the Gentiles didn't come until many years later. Fellas, you've got to remember that for the first eight or ten years after the crucifixion of Christ, all believers were Jews.

All of them. There were no Gentiles. If you were a Jew in that first century and you had a personal faith in Jesus Christ as your Savior, you were target for the majority who did not see it that way. And the whole issue, guys, and by the way, 2,000 years later this is still the same issue with the Jewish nation about Jesus the Messiah.

If Jesus was who he claimed to be, then it's a slam dunk as to who he is and what he did and why it matters. And if he isn't who he claimed to be, then he qualifies for being one of the greatest con men who ever lived, who hoodwinked millions of people.

So, when a Jew came to faith in Christ, he was referred to as a believer, a believing Jew. And when a Jew today comes to faith in Christ, he doesn't cease being a Jew because he was born a Jew and he'll die a Jew no matter what.

[36 : 58] But he has become, like Marvin Rosenthal used to say, I'm not a converted Jew, I'm a completed Jew because when a Jew comes to faith in Christ there is a sense of completeness there that he didn't have before.

So, all of these things come into play. Hey guys, I'm getting behind here, my time is going to run out. So, thank you for being here.

Let's go to, for the time we have left, let's go to 1 Corinthians, 1 Corinthians chapter 3. And here's where, here's where our works really come into play.

But it has nothing to do with salvation, it has everything to do with what we do with our salvation.

And in, oh, I'm sorry, I'm in 2 Corinthians, I told you to turn to the right place and then I turned to the wrong place.

1 Corinthians 3. beginning with verse 10.

[38 : 18] Paul says, according to the grace of God which was given to me as a wise master builder, I, Paul, laid a foundation and another is building upon it.

But let each man be careful how he builds upon it. In other words, he's saying salvation is the base level here, but once salvation has been realized and achieved, there is a whole lot to be done with it.

Do you know, the principal thing that we are to do with our salvation is to give it a workout. That's what he meant when he wrote to the Philippians that to work out your own salvation, it means put your salvation and your position in Christ to work for you in extending it to others and in the life that you live and so on.

So here he's saying in verse 11, no man can lay a foundation other than the one that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man builds upon the foundation, the foundation is salvation, builds upon it with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw.

He's using material things that people could identify with to try and characterize the works or the lack thereof that a person engages in after they're saved.

[39 : 41] And he's saying that everything you do as a believer, your works, your effort, your labor, is of a quality that God appreciates and will accept.

it belongs to the gold, silver, and precious stone variety. Those are the works or the deeds or the acts that stand tall before God.

They will receive a reward. But on the other hand, there's another output that we can engage in, and all of us do, some of each.

I don't think anybody is a perfect believer and very, and someone has said, if you ever meet a man who thinks that he's perfect and got this thing called a Christian life all together, I'd just like to talk to his wife.

Because she'll give you the real scoop, you know. That's the way it works. So Paul is saying, each man's work will become evident. There is gold, silver, and precious stones.

[40 : 51] Those things will stand the test. When God's scrutinizing eye examines your deeds, the things you did as a believer, they are going to appear to him as gold, silver, or precious stones, and they will stand the test of scrutiny, for which there will be a reward.

But we all know that we are capable of doing things, not only in the spirit, but we are capable of activity in the flesh. Sometimes we do things that are good, but we do them for the wrong motive. We may do something good, but we do it simply so we will get the credit and recognition for it. Hey, everybody, look at me. Look at who I am. Look at what I did.

God says, that is wood, hay, and stubble. Not only what you do, but why you do it is important. What's your motivation?

And the wood, hay, and stubble, when Jesus looks at our deeds that were performed, that are wood, hay, and stubble, they're going to go poof, just up in smoke, and that's it.

[42 : 11] And there's no reward for wood, hay, and stubble because no reward has been deserved. Fellas, we do not deserve salvation. Period.

Nobody does. But after salvation, we can engage in activities, actions, and attitudes that are worthy of reward and recognition by the God who saved us, and He will not allow your labors to go unrewarded.

They will be recognized. And this is exactly what he's talking about when he says, each man's work, will become evident, for the day will show it, because it is to be revealed with fire, and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work.

If any man's work which he has built upon it remains, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work is burned up, he shall suffer loss, but he himself shall be saved, yet so as through fire.

fire. In other words, our works do not add to our salvation. Fellas, the job of salvation that Jesus Christ accomplished on you is as complete as it could possibly be.

[43 : 28] There's nothing to be added to it. Positionally speaking, you are a finished product in him. But after we have received that status, then our labor counts for something.

And it doesn't add to our salvation, it doesn't make us more saved, it simply makes us, what shall I say, maybe more enjoyable in the afterlife with what we've got by way of reward that he has recognized.

And I don't understand much of this, but this is the principle that is here, and it is a beautiful thing. It's a beautiful thing. So, we've got a quality and a quantity, and these have to be kept separate.

Our salvation is never quantified. If it's quantified, then the question is, how much? How many? How do you know when you've achieved it? How do you know when you're saved? How do you know when you've done enough? How do you know when you've prayed enough? How do you know when you've attended church enough? How do you know when you've witnessed enough?

[44 : 39] How do you know any of those things? You don't. You can't. And our security is not based on quantity. It's based on quality.

And when you realize the opposite of the quantity is the quality, the quality is where Jesus Christ comes in. What was the quality of the work that Jesus did on the cross when he paid for your sins? It was as full, as complete, as entire, as anything could possibly be. And that was put to your account. That is amazing.

John Newton couldn't stand it. He had to make a song, he had to write a song about it, called it Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound. That's the quantity versus the quality.

It is a quality issue, not a quantity issue. If it's quantity, you have no basis for assurance. You have no basis for stability. You don't know where you stand.

[45 : 51] You don't know if you've done enough. It's just a big question mark. And fellas, there is no security in a question mark. There is security only in an exclamation mark.

Jesus paid it all. And he gives his righteousness to me. One more reference while we're in Corinthians here. And it is in 2 Corinthians chapter 4.

And this is a verse that I would hardly recommend that you fellas commit to memory. It's one of the most precious ones. 2 Corinthians chapter 5.

2 Corinthians chapter 5. Verse 17. If any man is in Christ, he is a new creation. Old things passed away, behold, new things have come.

All these things are from God who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation.

[47 : 00] And Paul is talking about himself and the fellow members of his team. Namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them.

And he has committed to us the word of reconciliation. Therefore, this is why we are ambassadors for Christ. As though God were entreating through us, we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.

He made him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in him.

It's a tremendous thing to realize. How righteous are you before God? You are just as righteous as Jesus. that's your position.

I'm sure that's not your practice, but that's your position. You are saved on the basis of the position, being in Christ. Nothing can be added to this, because what Jesus did was so final and so complete, it's insulting to think that anything could be added to it.

[48 : 16] It's insulting to think that you could do something to add to it. Jesus didn't pay 99% of your sin debt, and he just left 1% for you.

No, he didn't. No, he didn't. I'll tell you what, I know Marv Wiseman well enough to know if I had to produce just 1% I'd find some way to screw it up.

Yeah, we're talking about human nature. That's the way it is. But Jesus paid it all. All to him I owe. My, oh, my. That's... So, we've got a two-fold thing here. In verse 19, he is saying that he reconciled the whole world to himself.

Then in verse 20, he's saying, we beg you, be reconciled to God. And this appears to be contradictory, but it is really, it is really the establishing of a distinction here.

[49 : 25] And what he's saying in verse 19 is that because Christ died and reconciled the whole world to himself, he made the way of salvation open and available to everybody. And that's what we beseech you, will you appropriate what God has provided for you by receiving it and accepting it, or will you ignore it and reject it?

That's the choice that people have. And both of these are involved here. So, the one has been achieved for us. He made salvation available.

Now, take advantage of it and use that volition you have to exercise your faith in what Jesus Christ has done. Any other thoughts or comments? Anybody? Yeah, Joe?

Yeah, in terms of that growth and where you stand with Christ, you'll know it'll come to you, it'll be, it's an automatic thing, and what I mean by that is, when you have somebody come up to you the next day, say you saw yesterday and they come up to you the next day and they say, thank you, and you say, thank me, what did I do?

I didn't do, oh, and then they tell you what you did, that they're thanking you for, and you didn't even realize that you did something that was loving, you did a loving act for somebody and didn't even realize it, and when you are doing things like that, that you don't even realize you're doing it, you'll get these signs like this, you are maturing in Christ.

[51 : 03] It's called walking in the spirit, as opposed to walking in the flesh, and all of us, all of us do some of each, none of us have this thing called Christianity altogether, flawlessly, it's just, you know, I've often said that we all have wrinkles in our beliefs, in our theology, and in our behavior, too.

There are times when we do not always act Christianly, huh? There are times when we blow it, when we lose our cool, when we say something unkind, do something unkind, and what we are demonstrating is we're still in the flesh, and if you're not in the flesh, you're not human, and the only one who never had to be concerned about the flesh was our Lord Jesus Christ, but all of the rest of us have to contend with them.

And this is why Paul says, walk in the Spirit and you will not fulfill the desires of the flesh. And it's a guarantee that if you don't walk in the Spirit, you will fulfill the desires of the flesh.

And fellas, we all know that we have a lot of people who are professing Christians, and they live a life that causes us to wonder if they really know Christ.

we don't have the ability to judge them because we can't look inside of someone and see if faith is really there. The only thing we have to go on is how they demonstrate it, how they live it, and that allows us to draw conclusions.

[52 : 50] So sometimes it's an unhappy situation. But thank you all for being here this morning, guys. I appreciate it, and thank you, Michelle, for the great service. you're welcome.
Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.