

Salvation by Grace Through Faith

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[0:00] Romans chapter 3 and find verse 27.

Finish up the third chapter of Romans. Verse 27.

Where is boasting then? You know, really, I don't need to start there. I need to start with 26.

Actually, I need to start at the beginning of the book of Romans.

Can we just start chapter 1? Yeah. I don't need to preach it again, but to kind of set the context.

Well, we can't do that. But I will read verse 26.

To demonstrate at this present time his righteousness. That he might be the just and, or be just rather, and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

[1:14] That's where we need to begin. And then verse 27. Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law?

By what principle? Of works? No. But by the law, the principle, of faith. Therefore, we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law.

You can almost hear Martin Luther saying that, can't you? Or is he the God of the Jews only? Is he not also the God of the Gentiles?

Yes. Yes. Of the Gentiles also. Since there is one God who will justify the circumcised by faith.

That's the Jews. And the uncircumcised through faith or by faith. Gentiles. Do we then make void the law through faith?

[2:20] Certainly not. On the contrary. We establish the law. The law. That's interesting passage, isn't it? Now, Paul, you know, he's doing, once again, what he has already done before in the book of Romans.

He is kind of placing up there a question and then he is answering the question. It's kind of a dialogue or it's dialogical. It's a kind of a technique that is used.

Now, these are true bona fide questions in the hearts of people. Specifically, I think in this case, in Paul's case here, they are questions primarily coming from the Jew.

And yet, they're questions also that come from others and not just Jews. And so, therefore, his answers to the question are answers that apply to all, Jew and Gentile.

And they're very appropriate. The answers are very appropriate. Not only for Paul's day and in this situation, in this context, in which he wrote the letter, but very appropriate for our day.

[3:28] In the context of religion, quote, or Christianity. Or the context of how a person is saved. And what that means. And the implications of that.

See, he's already been, and very clearly, has laid before us the doctrine of salvation by grace through faith.

By grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone. That's already been laid before us. In incredible terms, words. And so, having then presented that tremendous gospel, what that means and the implications of it, then he says, then where's boasting?

That's the first question he deals with there in verse 27. Where is boasting then? And then the second question he deals with there in verse 29, is God the God of the Jews only?

And then the third question pertains to the implications of justification by faith regarding God's law.

[4:36] So, the idea being, if we're justified by faith, then the law must be useless. Must be no purpose for it. And that is the objection that he is answering.

And I would say that that third question, we'll eventually get to it tonight. If I'll get on with it. But that third question is, very clearly, an objection from the Jew.

Those who had the law, who were given the law. And so, the objection is, you know, if a person who's never had the law can come to Christ by faith, then the law was never worth anything.

And so, you know, Paul's answer is, God forbid. Absolutely not. And so, we'll get to that here in just a minute. So, we have three questions that he's going to answer.

And I would say that they're kind of questions that spring from or that the doctrine of salvation implies. Doctrine of salvation by faith.

[5 : 37] Salvation by grace through faith, number one. Dealing with this first question. Number one, it excludes the pride of man.

It excludes the pride of man. And I use man in the generic sense. Mankind. And that's what he's saying here in verse 27.

May I read it again, those two verses? Where is boasting then? It is excluded. Not what, by what law rather, principle, is it excluded?

By works? No, but by the law of faith. Therefore, we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law. Works of the law.

Obedience to the law. Saved by faith, not by works, is basically the answer, isn't it? Now, let me say a word or two about the problem of pride.

[6 : 38] And I had kind of debated within myself whether I'd just kind of spend our whole time tonight talking about pride because it is such a serious thing. Very much so. Now, I'm not going to have decided, but just say just a few words.

Now, you don't find the word pride in the text, do you? You have the word boasting. At least that's the way it's translated in most versions of the Bible. But it's connected to pride.

In fact, it is the observable side of pride. Boasting is the outward expression of the inward reality. Pride.

You don't see pride. You see the expressions of it. And one of those, really the overarching expression would be boasting.

Boasting. Comes from pride. And pride is, for all of us, sin number one. Do you know that?

[7 : 38] It's pride. It is so pervasive in the human race, fallen race. I mean among mankind.

It's pervasive. It has grown and grown and it has infected every one of us. It's pervasive. Started with the devil. In fact, pride is what made the devil the devil.

Did you know that? Remember what Satan said? He said, I will rise above the Almighty. I will set my throne above him. And pride is what made the devil the devil.

You can go all the way back to the Garden of Eden. You find that really the sin, the first sin committed, in a sense, came out of pride. It came from Eve first.

She could be, know all things. That she could be as God. It was pride, you know, God's holding out on me. That's what Satan kind of whispered in her ear, you know.

[8 : 45] That you deserve more. God's holding out on you. He's got that one tree over there you can't eat of. I mean, forget the fact that there are hundreds and hundreds of other trees with luscious fruit.

And you can have all of that you want. But there's that one tree. God's holding out on you. And so Eve is thinking, what? That dirty, rotten God. Doesn't he care anything about me? Me, me, me.

See, it's pride. And then, of course, Adam committed the same sin. And through Adam, that sin, the sin of pride and all sin in general, passed on to all of his offspring.

And I'm not just talking about his sons and daughters. And he had a lot of those. But I mean all of us. Because we all were there, in a sense, and we all have come out of Adam.

So pride is pervasive. And it is also pernicious. I mean, it's insidious.

[9 : 50] It's deadly. It has not only infected us, but it will kill us. Pride. I mean, it's a terrible sin. And I would say to you that there will never come a time in this life prior to our death and resurrection, prior to our glorification, when we leave this planet.

There will never come a time in this life, on this planet, where you will escape pride. There will never come a time when you will have absolute, total victory over pride.

It is so pernicious. It's terrible. Now, let's then, having considered that, let's bring that to the argument here.

Because when you take pride, I mean, you take pride and apply it to religion, to faith, or whatever that religion might be. When you apply it to religion, then you have a big time problem.

And Paul is saying that everything I've just said about salvation, by grace through faith, it absolutely excludes all pride.

[11:07] Pride can have no part in salvation. No part. It's excluded. It's excluded. And so let's just think for a moment, the doctrine of salvation by grace through faith, how it excludes, it excludes boasting in a lot of things.

It excludes boasting that your salvation is based upon your morality. Or doing right. Let's just call it that.

Doing right. It excludes boasting in doing right. Because not anyone has ever or will be saved by doing right.

That is, in the sense of morality. And Paul has already said this early on in this chapter, in chapter, or in the preceding, yeah, in this chapter. When he said, there is no or none righteous, no, not one. So that's removed. And so that man or that woman that thinks somehow he or she can gain some merit with God and can be saved through morality is mistaken.

[12:21] That's removed. You're not going to get to heaven and get there and say, you know, I made it. I must have been good enough. And throughout this life, you know, people living through this life thinking, I hope I'm good enough.

I'm sure trying to be good enough. Trying to be moral people. And there are a lot of good moral people out there, aren't there? But morality is no way to salvation.

Because if it were, then you'd have something to boast on. Right? You'd have something to boast about. So morality, you can throw that out. Doing right, you can't boast in that.

The doctrine of justification by faith excludes any boasting we might have on our own morality.

Number two, I would say our responsibility.

Or let's name it this. Working right. Working right. I'm not just talking about good works. That is excluded.

[13:29] And no one's going to get to heaven based upon good moral living. Likewise, no one's going to get to heaven by good works. And I would take this to this level.

Not just good works as in, you know, helping people and being kind and doing nice things and all those things. But I mean moral living in the sense of doing even religious works.

And a lot of people are involved in that, aren't they? In the church today. I think there are a good many who think that they're going to heaven because they taught a Sunday school class.

Maybe for 30 years. Or 40 years. Or maybe because they had perfect attendance in Sunday school.

Religious activities. Sang in the choir. Or tithed. Attendance.

[14:30] Tithing. Commitment to the church. You see, I really think we ought to take it to that level.

There are those who think and can boast or attempt to boast in their kind of responsibilities that they have, you know, been committed to.

Spiritual, church, religious responsibilities. And that's excluded. Paul said in verse 12, chapter 3, There is none who does good.

Not even one. He's building a case here for justification by faith. That is, salvation by grace through faith. He's building a case here in chapter 3.

And he says there's none righteous, no, not one. So you can't look on your morality and boast in that for your hope of salvation. He has dismissed, excluded the whole idea of good works.

Because no one does good, no, not one. So any kind of spiritual working right kinds of things, you can just exclude that.

[15:42] No boasting there. Third, our, what I would call our sensitivity. Sensitivity. Because I'm a slave to alliteration. Sensitivity.

Feeling right. You know that there are people in this world who think that their eternity is secure because they feel good about it.

And I would say, to go beyond that, you know, maybe a person has the right kind of feelings about God. You know, kind of an emotional type of feeling that they have for God and for Jesus.

Have you ever talked to anybody like that? They just feel so good about God. He's so wonderful.

He's so wonderful. He's the creator God.

I'm talking about feelings. Or maybe it's feelings toward the gospel. You know, the good news about Jesus.

[16:58] That's just fantastic. It's just wonderful. I feel so good about that. And God's word, the Bible, has such a good feeling about it.

You understand what I'm talking about? I mean, it's sad. I'm not funny. People who are boasting. In the sense that they are going to heaven and they're boasting in their destiny, their eternal destiny of heaven.

Because they have, for a good part of their life, felt so good about spiritual things. About God and about the gospel and about God's word. And they have also feelings about sin.

There's a big one. Just a real sensitivity about sin. And see, there's proof. I'm saved.

Because, you know, I have this sensitivity toward, you know, toward drinking and gambling. And, you know, going to certain movies.

[18:13] I would never do that. Certain feelings about sin. And so when they, you know, tell a little lie, they feel bad about that. Now, listen, there's nothing wrong with feeling bad about those things and having certain feelings.

And I would recommend that lost people feel that way about sin. I really, really do. I think criminals ought to feel bad about it. So bad that they don't do it anymore.

Certainly, I'm all for that. The problem is just a feeling about God and about his word and about the gospel. And certain feelings about sin and sinfulness is not going to save you.

Salvation is not in that. Otherwise, you could boast in that. You see. Or maybe we could just say feelings about salvation itself. You know, I mentioned assurance this morning.

And I believe God gives assurance to his believers at the point of salvation. He gives an assurance of their salvation. But assurance by itself is not salvation.

[19:25] So people who just feel good. And I've talked to people like this. And maybe you have heard this. And it's obvious from the conversation. They haven't a clue about what it means to be saved.

And what salvation is. And yet they'll say, preacher, I'm okay. Don't worry about me. I got my ticket to heaven. You know, whatever term they might use, you know.

And I understand that in many cases that's kind of a smokescreen, kind of a put-off, kind of a, you just leave me alone, preacher. I don't really want to talk about this. But in reality, there are those who have a false assurance, a false sense of security about salvation.

And so, because they feel good about it, then it must be it. It must be okay. And yet, I'll remind you something else that Paul wrote earlier in the chapter.

He said, there is none who seeks after God. Number four, you know, we're just kind of listing some of these.

[20:32] Our morality, doing right. Our responsibility, working right. Our sensitivity, feeling right. Our theology, knowing right. Now, I have been involved in the academic world for several years, working on that doctrine that I'm still not done with.

But I have read a lot of books on theology written by pagans. I mean, pagan, not in the sense of, you know, rank, overt pagans.

I mean, in the sense of religious pagans. They're very religious people, but they're not believers in Christ. They're not born-again believers. And yet, they have a vast knowledge of God's Word.

Vast knowledge. In fact, in a kind of ironic sense, in the field of biblical scholarship, we are, in a sense, in a twisted sort of way, indebted to some of these liberals and unbelievers who have written great works, you know, great word studies and great dictionaries and encyclopedias of the Bible.

And we're almost indebted to them. Isn't it ironic that we use their resources and tools for biblical study, and yet they're not even believers? They know a tremendous amount of theology.

[22:04] And you can know all the right theology. And believe that it's right. And not be saved. Be lost and headed for hell.

Right knowing or knowing right. You know, intellectually. Because, you see, if salvation, if you have some assurance of salvation because you have such a vast knowledge of God's Word and you've memorized so much of it and you have a great understanding of it, then if that's salvation for you and you're banking on it based upon that, then there's a point of boasting.

You can't boast in your theology. Right knowing or knowing right. And Paul said in verse 11, there is none who understands. And I'll give you one more.

Our spirituality. And I kind of distinguish this from our theology, our spirituality in this sense, believing right.

Believing right. This is incredible when you think about it, that you can, a person can believe, I mean really believe, all the facts of the Gospel.

[23:30] Believe. There's a Jesus. That He really was a man. That He really was the Son of God. Really was born of a virgin. Really did live on this earth and perform miracles.

And those were true miracles. And He did preach. And believe that He did die on the cross. And really believe, truly believe, that on the cross, God placed the sin of mankind upon Him.

And He paid the price for sin. And even say, I believe He paid the price for my sin. And you can believe all of those facts and not be saved. Isn't it incredible?

Some would believe, have a belief about a past decision that they made.

Maybe as a child. Maybe as a teenager. Maybe it was even later on as an adult. And so, your faith is based upon some act you've done in the past.

[24:33] And that in itself is not salvation. I would even tell you, and this would be, in kind of a strange way, weird way, a point of boasting, even for bonafide believers, that faith by itself, faith itself, is not our salvation.

Hmm? In fact, that's one that we all need to deal with, even as believers.

You were not saved because of your faith. Your salvation is in Jesus. Jesus saved you.

Your faith didn't save you. Now, think about that for a moment. Let that kind of roll around in your head. And understand that in a kind of diabolical way, even as believers, Satan can convince us, even our own flesh can somehow convince us that we're saved because of our faith.

We're saved because of Jesus. Faith was the instrument. See, the Bible doesn't say that you're saved because of faith. It says you're saved through faith.

[26:04] Through faith. Or by faith. It's the instrument of our salvation. It is what links us with the Lord Jesus Christ and His righteousness. Otherwise, faith can become a work.

A works. Repentance can be a work. If you're trusting in the repentance for your salvation, or the act of faith for your salvation, oh yeah, anyone who's going to come to Christ must repent of sin and place their faith in Christ and His death upon that cross for you.

Absolutely. I'm not denying that. But just be careful because there's a fine line. And even as believers, in fact, I heard or read one commentator, a very sound commentator, say that even on into heaven, you know, a million years on into heaven, we, we, we, you know, somebody would ask the question, you know, how did you, what's your salvation base?

Well, faith. In fact, we're tempted to answer in that way. Are you a believer? Are you saved? Yeah. How do you know?

Faith. Now, that sounds right, but in reality, it's not right. You see, that's why I say that pride is such a, a, a pervasive kind of pernicious kind of thing.

[27:28] We can never, ever escape it. And, and so we, we can even turn some of the most, uh, uh, elemental aspects of the gospel, turn them into works.

We're saved because of the grace of God. We're saved because of the sacrifice of Christ upon the cross. for us. So, all pride, all points of pride, and I've tried to, to mention a good many of them, and there are many, many others.

Anything at all that you might place your anchor on other than salvation by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone, anything else, would be a point of pride, a point of boasting, a, a point of human works.

All right. I spent way too much time on that one. Salvation by grace, through faith, number two, eliminates the plurality of religion.

Explain this as we go along here. Let me give it to you again. It eliminates plurality of religion. verse 29.

[29:00] Or, is he the God of the Jews only? Is he not also the God of the Gentiles? This is Paul's answer. He's the God of the Gentiles. Yes, of the Gentiles also.

God of the Jews, yes, but also the Gentiles. since there is one God, one God, who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith.

Now, let me say just a word about the problem of plurality in religion. Do you know what that means? There are varying views, you see, concerning religion.

There is the view that we could kind of lump it all under the view of the unregenerate religionist. I'll just use that designation.

The unregenerate, the unsaved, unbelievers. The religionist who would say, quote, all religions are of equal value so long as their respective adherents, those who are followers, are sincere.

[30:05] Sincere in their devotions to it. So, all religions are equal. That would be one view that would fall under the unregenerate unbeliever, unbelieving religionist.

All religions are of equal value. Now, some might branch off and say, well, they're not all equal. Some are better than others. But even that is plurality.

See, that allows for you to believe the way you believe and I believe the way I believe and so forth. And, it's not just simply a freedom that we have.

We do enjoy in this country. I believe we ought to have that freedom. That person ought to have the freedom to worship any god they choose. That's freedom. But, though that is certainly a byproduct or a product of plurality, the truth is when it comes to salvation, there is no plurality.

There's no plurality. No different ways. Let me give you a quote from the decline and fall of the Roman Empire book. I pulled this out of a commentary pretty good.

[31:18] And, see if this kind of rings true today in the American Empire that I hope is not falling yet but it is declining for sure. Here's the quote.

To the common people, all religions are equally true. To the philosophers, they are equally false. And, to the magistrates or rulers or how about we insert politicians, they are equally useful.

Think about that. How true that is. But, we're talking about plurality. That is, that all the different ways, all of those out there, pretty much all of those, although even the pluralist would say that there's some that just aren't going to make it.

But, most of those ways are out there all leading to the same place. And, all you need to do is to be sincere about your religion. Just believe what you, what your particular religion teaches and be sincere about it.

And, the great God of all in some sense, you know, we're all going to the same place. Same God. Alright, so, Allah, he's the same God and Buddha, he's the same God and all, you know, we're just all kind of going different ways.

[32:30] It's plurality. Now, the regenerate Christian says, and here's the view our side, hopefully, you're in agreement with this. If not, we need to speak after the service.

But, here's the view, there is only one way to God. And, it is salvation by grace only through faith only in Jesus Christ only. there's no other way.

And, we could go to many passages in the Bible that teach that. Now, that's not a very popular view in the world today, is it? And, I would tell you that it never has been a popular view in the world.

It certainly is an unpopular view in some parts of the world so unpopular that to proclaim that view probably will get you killed or put in prison, certainly persecuted.

In our country today, to shout that from the main streets is, is really a dangerous thing even today in our country.

[33:46] Who was that just recently the governor of Alabama? Was it the governor of Alabama? who in a particular rally or setting made some statement about if you are not a believer in Jesus Christ, you're not my brother and sister.

Is that correct by the way? And yet, he got under so much, came under such fire over that he had to kind of soften that and really pretty much deny it.

and yet it is true. That's not a very popular view. And those who believe this are usually branded as, well, usually ignorant.

That's one response. Just a bunch of ignorant, uneducated, backwoods, Baptists, you know, or whatever denomination.

Ignorant, or you're branded a bigot, or intolerant, certainly that, intolerant of all the other religions.

[34:59] Amazing, no one is tolerant of ours. You're intolerant, or it's sectarian, that would be kind of the more technical term for what we're considered sectarians.

You know, very isolated, very narrow-minded. But it's interesting how Paul answers this question.

And he answers, or his answer, could be summed up with the word universalism.

Now, don't brand me as a heretic and get out of stone or something, because we Baptists don't like that term, universalism. And I do not believe in a universal salvation of all, that all are going to be saved.

That's not what I mean, but Paul does respond, and we could identify it with the word universalism.

And in essence, Paul proves here in these two verses that Christianity is not narrow.

It's not sectarian. It's not bigotry. Christianity is not those things. The gospel represents salvation for everyone who will believe.

[36:28] believe. That is not narrow-minded. For everyone who will believe, for anyone who will come to Jesus Christ, that's what the gospel represents, no exception.

For everyone who will believe, anyone who will come, may come. It is a very inclusive gospel. Now, follow me along here, because this is going to be Paul's argument here.

Again, I do not believe in universal salvation, but I do believe, now hold on, do believe in a universal religion for all.

It's the old-time religion. It's the biblical religion. And so, I want you to consider Paul's universalism here.

This is rather interesting. Think of it in this sense. You've got to get the whole thing. I hope, you know, the lights don't go out and something happens and I don't get to finish here because you think, I don't know about this.

[37:45] Number one, Paul believes in a universal God. or maybe I should say it this way, one God.

There's just one God. Hmm? Okay. And this is key to the whole thing. And he says there in verse 30, there is one God.

There it is right there. See, see, listen, the question that's asked there at the beginning in verse 29 and the implication of the question, is he the God of the Jews only?

That's sectarian. That's narrow. That's bigoted. But Paul says, is he the God of the Gentiles?

Yes, God of the Gentiles also. There's only one God. There's only one. Just one God. Universal God. God. One of my favorite chapters in the book of Acts is Acts chapter 17.

[38:52] We'll not turn to it there and read it, but you might remember that it's when Paul was visiting Athens. And he's walking around the city there and he sees all these gods, I mean, all these idols, you know, idol of this God and this God and that God and this God and then he even found one to the unknown God, you know.

And you remember that story. And so he was granted an audience with the, the, the Bible says the Epicureans and Stoics, these Greek philosophers and thinkers and they were kind of open to a lot of things and that was the deal with the Athenians, you know, these Greeks and that's why they had all these gods, they were just kind of open to any and all gods.

You talk about plurality on steroids in Athens, even to the unknown God. people. And so when Paul preaches to them, he doesn't begin with Jesus, he begins with God.

That's a lesson to those of us who are preachers and have opportunities to proclaim the gospel. Where we begin with the gospel depends on our audience.

He wasn't in the church there talking to church people, he wasn't even talking to people who were Jews, who had some framework for the Bible and God's word.

[40:15] He was talking to people who had no idea whatsoever. And they were open, they wanted to hear this, quote, new religion. And so Paul begins with God and he talks about him being the creator and he created all men out of nothing and so forth.

He goes along and I can just kind of imagine these Greek philosophers, they're just, I mean, they're just with him and this is interesting and this is wonderful and this is new something new.

You know, they're kind of test tasters. They want to test all these different religions. Ah! And then Paul comes to it and he says, this God demands that you repent.

And then he brings Jesus in there. And that he is raised from the dead. That's when these Greek philosophers, they couldn't go there. You see, Paul wasn't being a sectarian.

Paul was not being a bigot. He was not narrow-minded. He was presenting to them the one God of all the universe. That's quite broad.

[41:33] But there's just one. and he demands that you repent and trust his son Jesus. So, universal God. Second, his answer to pluralism, this universalism, not only a universal God, but a universal spiritual condition of mankind.

All of mankind are in the same condition, spiritually. They're all this way.

And this is somewhat implied in the text. And I think a little stronger than implied. But when he says there in verse 30, there's one God who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised by faith.

The implication is that their condition is in a condition of sin guiltiness. all are in that condition.

That's why God has promised that he will justify those who will respond in faith to his son Jesus.

They all have the same condition and everyone has the same condition.

[42:50] It's universal. It's sin guiltiness. It is a condition which precludes what God will do through faith and that is to justify.

In Romans 3.23, I think we have this stated as clearly as it could possibly be stated. Romans 3.23, for all have sinned. That's universal.

See, we're not being narrow-minded as Christians and sectarian and bigoted. Because there's one God. One God of all.

And everyone has the same problem. Sin. Sin guiltiness. All have sinned and come short, fall short of the glory of God.

All. Third, there is a universal need of mankind, therefore. these kind of flow logically.

[43:59] There's one God, universal God, universal spiritual condition of mankind, therefore there's a universal need.

And what is that need? The need is the removal of the sin guiltiness. You know, that's what makes Christianity unique from all the other religions of the world.

All the false religions and pagan religions. Christianity is the only one that offers an answer to the sin problem. And that's the universal need of man, to have that sin, guiltiness removed.

And that's the essence of justification. Remember, as I defined that a couple weeks ago.

Justification is that gracious act of God by which He places the believer or He rather sees the believer as righteous.

As righteous. As though the believer has never sinned. That's where He places the believer. In that position before Him.

[45:25] Not because the believer deserves it or has turned over a new leaf and now, you know, well, you know, He's trying now and so I'll give him or her the benefit of the doubt.

No, this is a judicial act of God where He places us in a position before Him where He sees us as though we had never sinned. And not only that, but as though we had always perfectly obeyed Him. And that's what we need. That's the universal need of mankind. Justification. And though, so that leads fourthly to a universal gospel.

The universal gospel for all. the gospel, the good news of Jesus Christ is for all. It's to be proclaimed to all, not to the Jews only, but to the Gentiles also.

So Christianity is not exclusive, it's not sectarian. In fact, in our day, and even Baptists have been grappling with this, we've kind of even turned that around, that the gospel is for the Gentiles and not for the Jews.

[46:39] Because they're chosen people, they're already saved, they don't need the gospel. It's ridiculous. Just ask all the apostles about that, and Peter about that, who primarily preached to Jews, and pleaded with them to repent of sin and trust Jesus Christ as the Lord and Savior.

They gave them the gospel, we need to give the Jews the gospel today too. It's not to be thought of as an insult or a slap to God's chosen people, that we would plead with them to repent of sin and trust Christ.

But it's a universal gospel. Listen, who may come to Jesus? Who may come?

Everyone. Everyone. Everyone. All are universal sinners. Universally sinners. Universally lost. And Paul has just described in the first few chapters of Romans, he described God's justification for condemning all unbelievers, be they rank pagans, heathens, or even religious heathens or pagans. Big sinners, small sinners, and the way of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ is for them all. That's not narrow. That's not sectarian.

[48:00] sin. And how may you come as you are? That means you don't have to go out there and somehow clean up your life first and you know to get rid of this sin or that sin or change your life in this way and you know kind of turn over that new leaf.

Come as you are. What is your sin? Come to Jesus with that sin. Repent of it. Trust him. So, who may come?

Everybody. We proclaim it to everybody. Same gospel to all. Same gospel. How may they come? All of them.

They may come as they are. And when? Now. Now be a good time. Here's our plea.

If you will come to Jesus he will receive you. Do you have any basis scripturally for that? Well, Jesus said in John 6:37, all that the Father gives me will come to me and the one, anyone, everyone who comes to me I will by no means cast out.

[49 : 24] Universal gospel for all. It's the same gospel. for all, for everybody. Tell the world. Lastly, a universal invitation.

A universal plea to respond. A universal way of response. And what is it? Well, this too is clearly implied in the text. More than just implied.

The invitation to all is respond in faith. Faith. Place your faith in Jesus Christ alone.

Isaiah 45, 22, look to me and be saved. All you ends of the earth, for I am God and there is no other.

So, salvation by grace through faith excludes the pride of man, eliminates the plurality of religion, and then there's one more and we'll just have to go through this quickly. We're not through, Paul's not through, by the way, of teaching us about justification by faith, through faith.

[50 : 35] We're going to get on into chapter 4 and Abraham and so forth. So, he's not through with that, but he answers these questions. So, here's the third and final one. And I would say then that the doctrine of salvation by grace through faith establishes the precepts of God, the law of God.

It establishes it. Verse 31, Do we then make void the law through faith? Certainly not! Exclamation mark.

I know the exclamation mark is not a part of the original text. It didn't have any punctuation. But the idea is clearly there.

certainly not! No way, no how. They might say it in other parts of our country. On the contrary, we establish the law.

Establish the law. Now, the gospel, you see, this is what Paul is saying, the gospel does not nullify the law. It doesn't nullify it, make it of no use, and that was really behind the objection here or the question, which is really an objection, and it's coming from the Orthodox Jew, the one who's been given the law.

[51 : 53] The law came through the Jews. That's why they thought the Gentiles couldn't be saved, because they didn't have the law. And so then Paul gives us the principle of faith.

And so it's coming from the Jews, saying, well, you know, what about these Gentiles out there? They can't be saved by faith only. I mean, they don't have the law, and so if they can be saved by faith without the law, then the law must not be worth anything.

That's the objection here. And Paul says the gospel, justification by faith, does not nullify the law.

The gospel, salvation by grace through faith, does not replace the law.

Some have that objection, that now it's a replacement of the law. that it replaces the law as some new and better way of salvation.

I mean, think about it. That's pretty logical thinking. Can't be saved by the law anymore. We're saved by grace through faith. So it's a new way, a better way.

[53 : 05] But the gospel does not replace the law, and why? Because the law was never a way of salvation. It was never a way of salvation, not in the Old Testament. And so therefore it's not a way in the New Testament.

So the gospel doesn't come and replace the law as if the law was the old way to be saved, and now the gospel is the new way to be saved. It doesn't replace the law because the law never did save anybody, ever.

Not even in the Old Testament. We get on into chapter four, we're going to have a case study of Abraham. And he was saved by grace through faith. Not obedience to the law.

And so the law, what purpose is it? I mean, how do we establish it then? Well, the law, the purpose of the law was to show God's perfect standard. That's the perfect of God's law, the purpose of God's law, and still is today.

So the law hasn't been abolished. Jesus didn't come and die on the cross and now we don't need the Bible anymore, or God's law, don't need the Ten Commandments, don't need any of that anymore. Because the law is still useful today, still performing God's purpose, and that is primarily to show God's perfect standard.

[54 : 17] But not just that, it is also, the law has been given to us to show the absolute impossibility of meeting that standard. Have you ever read the Bible and said, I just can't, I don't see how to do that.

I mean, just think about the logical outworking of this in your mind. Okay, I'm going to, I'm not going to go to the cross, not going to trust Christ, I don't want to really do that.

I tell you what, I'll just get my Bible out and memorize it and I will obey every part of it, every part. You can't do it. And the first thing you discover when you read God's Word is you can't do it. It's impossible to obey it totally, completely. It's impossible to reach God's perfect standard. You can't do it. And the law is given to us for that very purpose.

And I would say a third thing, therefore, then, the law drives us to faith in God. Compels us to put faith in God.

[55 : 25] To have faith in His means of salvation because there is no other way. No other way, I can't do it. His means of salvation, it drives me to place my faith in His way of salvation.

What is His way? The cross. The cross. And so, the cross establishes the law, doesn't it? It satisfies God's standard. God's standard. God's standard. God's standard. In the first place, the cross is where the penalty for sin was paid.

A penalty that God requires. And if God nullified the law and let us be saved without the penalty paid, then God's, God would, would be a liar.

God would be impure. God would be unholy, unrighteous. But He didn't do that. The cross paid the penalty. Satisfied the law.

[56 : 35] But I would also say that the cross drives the lost sinner to repentance and faith in Christ. The cross does. That's why we preach the cross.

And I would say thirdly, matching the three I've already mentioned about the purpose of the law, thirdly, the cross provides the only way you and I will ever be able to obey any of God's law.

Because you can't do it until you've been redeemed, regenerated, made alive.

And even the obedience of a lost sinner is still sin to God. He said, your righteousness is as filthy rags to me.

The only way that you and I could ever hope to offer to God obedience as acceptable to Him is in our salvation as regenerate believers in Christ.

[57 : 51]