



## BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

Galatians 3:10-14

"The Imputation of Human Sin to Jesus Christ"

TRANSCRIPT

[Message] For the Scripture reading this morning will you turn with me to Galatians chapter 3? And will you listen as I read verses 10 through 14, Galatians chapter 3, verses 10 through 14. While you are finding this passage, I was saying to the elders, I don't know whether this is prophecy or not, but I was saying to them that we have been after people in the congregation to consider the possibility of starting new churches in the Dallas area. There are always a lot of people who do not like a large church. And I have a great deal of sympathy with them. I'm not sure I really do. And perhaps by the fact that Believers Chapel, if it does become a large church, that may be, as we were saying, that be the occasion for some to go out and start small churches. So we may accomplish what we are trying to do in a reverse way. But we hope that if you are not sympathetic with this, that you will at least pray for us and enable us to find God's will in it.

Now if you've found Galatians chapter 3, verse 10.

"For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The

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just shall live by faith. And the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them. Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree: That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith."

May God's blessing be upon the reading of his word. Let's bow together in prayer.

[Prayer] Father, we would ask particularly that Thou wilt guide us with regard to the future. We need, Lord, the wisdom that cometh down from above. And we pray for the elders and for the deacons and for all who are involved in the plans with regard to the enlargement of the ministry of the word here. That Thou will give of Thy wisdom to them that we may know Thy mind. We realize, Lord, that there are many things that are not advantageous about a larger auditorium, a larger group of Christians meeting together. There are many things that we seem to lose. But we pray that Thou will guide us and that Thou wilt through Thine infinite wisdom enable us to solve the problems that face us. We pray that Thou wilt bind us together in a sense of unity in the purpose of the proclamation of the word of God. Help us to realize that that is the essential ministry, the sharing of the great truths which Thou hast communicated and committed to us through the Spirit and through Godly men.

And in our day, Lord, help us to proclaim Jesus Christ in a way that will reach out and touch those whom Thou hast, whom Thou art bringing into the body of Jesus Christ. We pray for our country. We pray for the critical decisions that must be made in Washington. And we pray that our President and those associated with him may also have Thy wisdom and Thy guidance. And we would also particularly pray, Lord, with regard to the problems of our own personal lives, of which there are so many. And we

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pray for the sick and ask Thy blessing upon them. And we pray for the troubled and we pray that Thou wilt bring peace. And for those who are perplexed and need divine guidance, we remember, Lord, the promises of the word of God, "I will guide thee with mine eye." Give guidance. And Lord, now we commit this meeting to Thee, and we pray that Thy blessing may be upon us as we study the Scriptures. For Jesus' sake. Amen.

[Message] One of the signs of our decadent age is its antipathy to dogma or doctrine. And in fact, often in order to create an impression of disapprobation, the term doctrine is converted to dogma, because dogma does have a bad sound. The apex of this antipathy to doctrine or dogma is directed toward theology, often even among Christians. Although, most often among pagans.

About three years ago Mr. Charles Schultz in *Woman's Day* magazine had a cartoon of about three pages long entitled "A Christmas Story." And I liked it because it had to do with theology. It began with some pictures of Linus reading accounts of the Christmas story to Snoopy. And he listened as he heard him speak about the Shepherd and about the glory of the Lord shining round about them, and about the gospel message, "For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord." And then Linus looked at Snoopy and said, "That's what Christmas is all about, Snoopy." And in the next page Lucy is putting a letter into the United States mailbox and Snoopy is standing over on the side looking at her. And then he follows along with her and he hears her explanation of Christmas. And it is, "Then on Christmas Eve he flies through the air in a sleigh with a bunch of reindeer and brings all these kids the things they've asked for. Why I don't know," Lucy says. And then Snoopy in the last picture is back on his dog house, lying on his back reflecting. "I'm going to have to be careful; all this theology could ruin my Christmas."

And I think a lot of people feel that way about theology and dogma. It is blatantly reflected in the hymnbook's stanza in one of our cults, which is a paradox on the

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Christian hymn, "Just as I Am." And in that cult's hymnbook the stanza reads, "Just as I am, Thou wilt receive, though dogmas I may never believe, nor heights of holiness achieve, Oh God of Love I come." And in that is reflected again this antipathy to dogma, to doctrine. In fact, there are large religious organizations that have as one of their cardinal doctrines the fact that they do not accept any Christian dogma, which seems to me to be a contradiction in terms. That a group of people could say that they are a church and say that our doctrine is that we have no doctrine, which seems to me, at least philosophically, a contradiction. I do not know why it has not occurred to them.

Alfred North Whitehead once said, "I consider Christian theology to be one of the great disasters of the human race." But I don't think Professor Whitehead or Philosopher Whitehead meant that one should not have a theology. His antipathy was just directed toward Christian theology. A year ago I went out to California to be the speaker for a retreat of the Ambassador Class of the Hollywood Presbyterian Church. And we met at Santa Barbara at Westmont College for the weekend. And at one of the meetings a young man who was the leader of a church in the city of Santa Barbara came to the meeting and at the conclusion of it, due to a mutual friend he was introduced to me, and I had heard of him. And we began to discuss his church in the city of Santa Barbara, which he brought up. And one of the things that he was making as one of his points was that his local church was a local church which gathered around Jesus Christ alone, and they had no theology. But they were just meeting around the person of Christ seeking to glorify him. And it is quite common for people to make this claim. They say the important thing is not our theology and not what we say as Christian doctrine, the important thing is the person of Jesus Christ.

Well, I got a little disturbed over his constant belittling of theology, and finally I asked him if his group believed that Jesus Christ was the Son of God. And he was a bright young man and he immediately saw what I was driving at. And he even hesitated to answer the question, "Do you believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God?" Because he

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began to see immediately that he did have a theology after all, and it had at least one point. And so while he hesitated I asked him a second question, "Do you believe in the forgiveness of sins through Jesus Christ?" Because I knew that he did. And the discussion became so embarrassing at that point that, I always like to have some real interaction in a theological discussion a good argument where we have a few points said, but this was like taking candy from a baby. [Laughter] So it just stopped at that point, because it was obvious that he did have a theology. He may not have the theology that I have or he may not have as much theology, his mind may not be made up on as many points, but he did have theology. He had one; Jesus Christ was the Son of God. And two, the forgiveness of sins came through Jesus Christ. And so his church, which met around the person of Jesus Christ and did not have anything to do with theology, really did have theology.

Well as I walked away from the meeting one of his young disciples followed along with me, a real nice young fellow but very immature. And he drew up along side me with a nice smile on his face; I will say that for him. And we began to have a pleasant little discussion. And he said, "Dr. Johnson, I don't know whether you know this or not, but the dictionary has said that theology is a systemic organized treatment of God." And then he went on to say, "Now, the Bible does not systematically and in an organized treat of God." From this he inferred, of course, that we should not have theology. And so I then was getting a little more disturbed I guess, but I said, "Now I happen to know a little bit about the meaning of Greek words, and it so happens that the word theology really is simply a combination of theos, which means God, and logos, which means words, study, utterance, speech. So that theology is nothing more than the study of God." I came back and found out that's precisely what is in Webster's dictionary. Theology, the study of God.

But he wouldn't accept my statement; he had his own predetermined theology. You see, the whole question comes down to not should we have a theology or not, but

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shall we have a good theology or a bad theology. Everybody has a theology. And we cannot really do anything in spiritual things without expressing what we believe about spiritual things. We may sit in an audience like this this morning and say, "I'm totally neutral." But that is your theology. That happens to be your view. And we cannot then not have a theology.

Now theology used to be called the "Queen of the Sciences." And systematic theology the "Crown of the Queen." But pragmatism has led to suspicion of dogma. And when we say that we're not interested in dogma or doctrine, we're interested in the practical or in the person of Jesus Christ if we're Christians. And we really have become prey to the philosophical doctrines of pragmatism. Rejecting revelation, there is no final truth, only working hypotheses. And as we know, if we know anything today, relativism is now king and the queen has been divorced and put away. But not in Believers Chapel, we are still preaching theology. And we intend to keep on preaching theology. At least as long as I'm preaching I intend to keep on preaching theology. And we want to help the Queen regain her throne by studying some for these last three times that I'm going to speak to you.

And we've been talking about imputation. Imputation is one of the great theological doctrines of the Bible. It is safe to say if we do not understand imputation we do not really understand the heart of Christian theology. Now, we said last time that to impute means simply to reckon or to count. And we referred to the Old Testament Hebrew word, hashav, which mean "to count, or to reckon" found in Genesis chapter 15 and verse 6. When God called Abram out and said, "Abram take a look at the stars and so shall thy seed be. And Abram," Moses said, "believed God and it was counted, it was reckoned, it was imputed to him for righteousness." In other words, Abram's faith was the means of procuring for him the righteousness of God. That's the word imputation, reckoning.

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And then in the New Testament we referred to Romans chapter 4, verses 3 and 6 and some other passages in which the word *logizomai* was found, and there too we saw that it was right at the heart of Christianity and means "to reckon, to count, to impute." "What saith the Scripture," Paul writes in Romans 4:3, "Abraham believed God and it was imputation, counted, reckoned unto him for righteousness." Verse 5, "But to whom But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted, imputation for righteousness. Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works." So it means imputation, it means to count, it means to reckon, it means to impute.

Now, that's the meaning of the Hebrew word, and I sad that this doctrine is at the heart of Christianity. In fact the Bible tells us that there are three great acts of imputation which are the core of the three basic doctrines of Christianity. The first, which we studied last week was the imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity. And we referred to Romans chapter 5 and verse 12 where Paul says, "Wherefore as by one man sin entered into the world and death by sin, so death passed upon all men for all sinned." And we pointed out that by reason of the fact that Adam sinned, men have imputed to them the guilt of the sin of Adam, not only the guilt of that sin, but they inherit a corrupt nature. And that corrupt nature expresses itself in acts of sin or corruption. And the ultimate end of every human being apart from the second coming of Jesus Christ in the air, in which Christians will be caught up to meet him in the air, all men shall die. And that includes every one in this audience from you who have gray hairs, such as I have, to you who are just kids. One day you shall die and they shall place your body in a grave. Why? Well because Adam sinned in the Garden of Eden, and his sin has been imputation immediately to you. You stand under his guilt and condemnation and the proof of it is in the nature that you have and the acts that you perform and ultimately God's final word when you die. Now, these are facts. It would seem to me that it would be the part of wisdom for us as human

beings to recognize these facts and then to reckon with what God has said concerning the deliverance from that ultimate penalty.

Today we want to talk about the second imputation, not the imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity, but the imputation of human sin to Jesus Christ. Then next Sunday, God willing, we shall talk about the imputation of God's righteousness to those who believe. So there is imputation number one, Adam's sin to his posterity. Imputation number two, the imputation of human sin to Christ. Imputation number three, the imputation of righteousness to those who believe. So you can see that these three doctrines which have to do with imputation have to do with sin, have to do with satisfaction of God's demands in Christ's sufferings. And third, salvation or justification and these three doctrines of sin, of the satisfaction of divine justice through the sacrifice of Christ, and salvation are the three core basic fundamental doctrines of Christianity. In fact, it's what we must understand if we are to be knowledgeable Christians at all.

Now, let's turn to Galatians chapter 3, for this is the passage that we want to consider. We could turn to many in the New Testament, but this is one of the great ones in which Paul discusses the imputation of sin to Jesus Christ. Now Paul is arguing in this passage that justification or salvation is by faith, a vanishing truth. If you go into our Christian churches today it's not often that you hear anyone speak of justification by faith. It's ordinarily justification by work, justification by religion, justification by being a good citizen in the community, justification by working in the church itself. And so consequently people think it is by giving to the church, by attending the meetings of the church, by joining the church, by observing the ordinances, by being a good citizen, by doing good in the community, all of these types of things are ways whereby we merit eternal life.

Now, Paul's doctrine cuts straight across all of that, and he says that by the doing of good works, "No man shall ever be justified before God." Now he's trying to prove that point here. I say that is a doctrine that has almost disappeared, and that is precisely



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what the Augsburg Confession said about it in its day. That confession reads, "We are not made holy by our works, but rather through faith in Christ alone," a doctrine that has almost disappeared. That's what they said. Now, Paul, I say, argues directly contrary to this. I think Paul is the kind of man when everybody comes together in a meeting and everybody agrees on a point, Paul is the kind of man who stands up and says, "Now wait a minute. Now wait a minute." He always in his doctrine seems to run counter to what men think naturally. As a matter of fact, his doctrine is divine. Most feel of Paul as the pardoner in Sir David Lindsay's *Three Estates*. He said, "By him that bore the crown of thorn, I would Saint Paul had never been born."

But Paul is one of the greatest thinkers that we have ever had, even apart from his Christianity. Now, in this section he's trying to show that salvation is by faith, and he does it in this way. He says first of all our early Christian experience can only be explained by a doctrine of faith. He says, "You didn't receive the Spirit by the works of the Law did you? No, you received it by the hearing of faith." Then he said to the men who were listening to him, many of whom were Jews and who knew the Old Testament, he said, "Let's take a look at the illustration of Abraham." Now, everyone could agree that Abraham had been justified for he's the father of the faithful. And Paul said, "Take a look at Abraham, and you will discover that Abraham was not justified by works, he was justified by faith." He simply looked at the sky and he said, "I believe" or "Amen." And his faith was counted to him for righteousness.

And now in the verses that we're looking at he continues to prove his point by showing that every person who stood under the Law of Moses stood under its curse. Now, to make that applicable to us in the 20th Century all we have to remember is that while the Law of Moses was given to Israel, it was given to Israel in order to demonstrate the true nature of the human heart. "By the Law is the full knowledge of sin." And further, Israel was a sample of humanity, which God took, and which God tested by the Law and by which Law God proved to be utterly corrupt. And in so taking the sample

from humanity he demonstrated as Paul puts it in Romans 3:19 and 20, that "the whole world is guilty before God."

Now, for example, if I were to test the purity of the water in Lake Dallas, it would not be necessary for me to pass the whole of the lake through my tests. All I would have to do, because of the basic unity of water, is to take one little bucket of water out of that lake and test that. And I could test the purity of the lake. And so when God took a portion of humanity, Abraham and his descendants and tested them, bestowing upon them the blessings of divine revelation, divine providence, and all of the other things that God gave especially to Israel. And when they are demonstrated to be sinners, then it's obvious that the whole of the human race stands under sin.

Now, Paul's point here is that the Law is a justifying agency for no one. It condemns everybody. So he will point out then first the condemnation of the Law, first because of its claim. Listen to verse 10; we want to talk about that for a moment. "For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse." That means if we put in modern language, that means anyone who wants to be justified before God by what he does, he stands under a curse. "For it is written, cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them."

Now, here are four things to discourage any legalist. If you are in this audience this morning and you think you can get to heaven by what you do, then listen to what Paul says about the Law of Moses. "Cursed is every one that continueth not." Now the first thing that you want to learn is that there is no one outstanding act, no two outstanding acts, there are no two fifty great acts of benevolence that can gain you heaven, though they may be in themselves greatly to be admired. For the text says, "Cursed is every one that continueth not." In other words, if we're to be justified by works, we must never have an evil thought. We must never do an evil act from the moment that we draw our first breath as a human being to the moment that we draw our last as a human being. So our past must be perfect. Our present must be perfect. Our

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future must be perfect. "Cursed is every one that continueth not." We must keep everlastingly at it. That's why in a system of salvation by works, such as some large religious organizations preach, there can never be any assurance of the forgiveness of sins. There can never be any countenancing of the doctrine of the security of the believers. They could never preach and teach that a man could be justified and no that he's saved. He could not really say that "I know that I am a Christian. I know that I shall be in heaven some day," because they are on a principle of salvation by works, and the future has not come yet. That's the first thing to discourage a legalist. You must keep everlastingly at it.

Second, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law," not just some of them. For when we break the law it's like breaking a pane of glass. When you crack it in one spot you have broken it in all. We cannot pick and choose among the doctrines of the Law of Moses. We must keep the whole Law, and if we are on a merit system we must do perfectly, continually everything that we do. We cannot select certain things that we live up to, "I'm very good in patience," someone might say. I think I'll get to heaven on my patience. Yes, but what about your love, your joy, your peace, your longsuffering, etcetera.

Third, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law." You thought it was just the Ten Commandments didn't you? Well listen, it is the whole book of the Law. As a matter of fact, all that makes up the Law of Moses, it's moral laws, the Ten Commandments, it's civil laws, it's social laws. Why all of that was contained within the Law and when an Israelite was responsible for keeping the Law it meant not only the commandments, which no one has ever kept, but it meant all the other things too. And so when a person is committed to a merit system, he must continue in everything, everything imaginable. His whole life story must be a story of obedience in every sphere.

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And finally, as if to climactically stress it he says, "To do them." And he uses a tense in the Greek which stresses an action as an event. It's as if he were to translate it, "to do them completely." So "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them completely. In other words, if you want to get to heaven on the basis of merit, it must be one hundred percent merit. Now, how many of you would like to stand up and say, "I have never in my past, in my present, I am confidence never in my future shall I breathe on word that is contrary to the will of God, have one thought that is contrary to the word of God. I am perfect." Would you like to stand up and give a personal testimony to this audience and let us admire you? No you wouldn't like to do that, because you know that you are guilty. The very fact that you are guilty is proof of the fact that the Adamic nature has been communicated to you and you stand under the guilt that attaches to all who belong to Adam. No picking and choosing.

I heard of a man who hear a sermon on the Ten Commandments and as the preacher went down all of the commandments, he came out. He was absolutely without a shred of righteousness, but he found some. For he came out and he said, "Well, at least I've never made a graven image." Now, that is human self-righteousness you see. We are nothing. William R. Newell was one of our great Bible teachers, and he was talking to Dr. W.M. Host of the China Inland Mission a long time ago, and they are reported to have been discussing the question of a Christian's recognizing himself to be nothing. And Mr. Newell, as they were about to part said, "Mr. Host, I wish you would pray that I may become nothing in the sight of God." Mr. Host is reputed to have said to him, "Well, Newell, there's no need to pray about that. You are nothing, take it by faith." [Laughter] So we are condemned because of the claim of the Law, that one must keep the Law perfectly

But not only that, we are condemned by the character of that Law too, for it is not a faith instrument and salvation's by faith. It's a works document. Listen to what Paul

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says in verses 11 and 12. "But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by," not by doing, but by, "faith. And the law is not of faith: but," as it itself says in the Old Testament, "The man that doeth them shall live in them." In other words, if we are under a merit system, we are under a system of doing, but God saves by faith. He doesn't save by what we do. All he wants us to do is to realize that we cannot do anything to please him and then flee because we are guilty and condemned and at the point of eternal death flee to him for mercy.

Do you remember the rich young ruler? Well he came to Jesus as probably one of the most outstanding young men of his day. In fact, it's startling when we read it to realize that the texts say that Jesus loved this man. He came running to our Lord. It was obvious he was interested in religious things. He came running to him. He knelt before him. He was a reverent kind of a person, like the kind that attend church on Sunday morning, you know; like I'm paying my respects to God today. And he knelt before him and he said, "Good master, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?" Jesus said to him, "Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one, that is God. But if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." And this young man who had everything, listen this young man was young, he was strong, he was wealthy, he was powerful. What else would you need if you were young, and you were strong, powerful, and you were wealthy? Why he had everything. The keys of life were all hanging at his girdle. He's the kind of man, by the way, that the mothers, if they should see him coming into church on Sunday morning, providing they had eligible daughters, they would punch their friends and say, "Look who's coming into the church today." He's that kind of a fellow.

And so Jesus said to this man when he said, "Which commandments?" Well, "The commandments are thou shalt do no murder. Thou shalt not commit adultery. Thou shalt not steal. Thou shalt not bear false witness. Honor thy father and mother. And thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." The young man said, "All these things have I

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kept from my youth up." Jesus could have stopped right then and said, "You liar." But you see, apparently this man was sincere; he really thought that he had. He didn't understand the nature of the Law. And so our Lord said, by the way you'll notice he only quoted half the Law. He quoted the Law that could be proved, that is the evidences of the right attitude in the heart, the second table of the Law. He didn't quote the first, "Thou shall have no other gods before me." Which he summed up in, "Thou shall love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy mind, with all thy soul." But in order to show this man really what he was he said, "Well, since you've kept everything you lack one thing." Isn't it amazing that Jesus could ever say to a man, "One thing thou lackest."

Campbell Morgan said when he read this story for the first time and saw that word he was utterly amazed. He said, "The whole story gave me three surprises. First that there should ever be any man about whom Jesus would say, "One thing thou lackest." And then he said, "When I read about this man my first impression gave me my second surprise, and that is that this fellow lacked anything." And he said that his third surprise was when he finally came to understand what our Lord was trying to do, his third surprise was that he was ever surprised before. You see, our Lord's trying to get him to see his sin, which he doesn't see. And so Jesus said, "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell what you have and give to the poor and thou shall have treasure in heaven, and come and follow me." "So you say you've kept all the commandments, okay, give away all of your possessions now and come follow me." For you see if he really had no other gods before him, than the Lord God, what's money? What's money? If he really did love the Lord his God with all his heart, with all his soul, and with all his mind, what's his bank account. You see, this fellow was a liar, basically he was a liar. He was really not without sin. He had as a matter of fact broken the fundamental commandment of the Lord God, the first law, "Thou shall have no other gods before me." That was our Lord's way of saying, "through the Law we all have sinned."

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Now I think when we see an instance like this, then we can honestly say, "Not the labor of my hands could fulfill Thy law's demands, could my zeal no respite no, could my tears forever flow. These for sin could not atone, Thou must save and Thou alone," for we are all guilty. Now, Paul does not stop with pointing out the condemnation of the Law. He points us to the cure that is in Christ. He says in verse 13, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." Now, this is the second imputation. If the first imputation is the imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity, the second great imputation of Christianity is the imputation of our sin to Jesus Christ who bears the penalty and the judgment of it. It is he who bears the broken Law, which we have broken. And we who are guilty have our guilt upon him. And he bears the guilt of his own to the uttermost under the judgment of God.

Now, Paul tells us what he became. He says he became a curse for us. Now, we are cursed. We are under the curse of a broken law, but he became such for a time on the cross at Calvary. We are made of sin, we are sin throughout, all of our thoughts, all of our actions are tinged by the fact of our own self-interest and rebellion against God. Everything that we do, even when we come in a great benevolent act that is going to benefit humanity, it ordinarily is done in order to benefit us so that men may say, "My he's a benevolent fellow." Now, this is satisfaction by means of substitution. He became a curse for us. God's law must be meted out upon the breaking of it. Sin must be punished, because of who God is. If he did not punish sin he would not be righteous. If he did not punish sin he would not be holy. Would you like a God who did not punish sin? Why, if you did then it would mean that there would be utter chaos in humanity, and he is a God that punishes sin. So he became a curse for us.

Now what did he do? "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law." Now there is a beautiful picture here and I want to try to get this over before I close this morning by telling you a story that really happened. Dr. J. Oliver Boswell, former

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President of Wheaton College, now Professor of Theology in Covenant Theological Seminary in St. Louis, once was having a Bible class in New York City and they were discussing substitutionary atonement. And he had an elderly man in the back of the audience who was listening, whom he knew.

And when they came to the subject of substitutionary atonement, the elderly man asked if might go to the blackboard and explain the meaning of these texts. And Dr. Boswell who knew him said, "Why, of course." And so he went to the blackboard and he pointed first of all to the text in verse 10, "For as many as are of the works of the Law are under the curse." And he said, "All who were in Israel who tried to keep the Law were under the curse of the broken Law, for they all broke it. And we all who try by a merit system to be justified before God are under the curse." And so he drew a long sword and he took the little preposition under, and he wrote the Greek word *hypo*, which it is, right under that sword, and he tried by that to point out that we naturally are under this sword that is definitely going to plunge itself through us and destroy us sooner or later if some provision is not made. It reminds us of the sword of Damocles, in fact, that's what he called it.

You remember Damocles? He was a courtier in King Dionysus' palace in Syracuse. Cicero tells the story. And he went around saying the life of a king was really a wonderful life. A king had everything going for him and nothing going against him. He kept talking about that, and the king got a little disturbed. So he said, "Damocles I'm going to have a banquet and you're going to be the honored guest." And he was quite happy over that until he came into the banqueting room, and everybody had gathered around. And at the head of the table there was the king's throne. And that was the place where Damocles was to sit. And so he was ushered over to his throne to sit in during the banquet but he looked up and he saw hanging right above him was a long heavy sword hanging by a single thread. It was the king's way of pointing out to him that the life of



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the king was not the life of reilly. And so we use the expression "the sword of Damocles" of impending judgment.

Well, that's what we were. We under the curse, for the sword of the broken law is over us. But now, in verse 13 the professor went on, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the Law being made a curse for us." Now the word translated "for" is the Greek word *hyper*, it means literally over. And so our friend on the blackboard had drawn the sword with the Greek preposition *hyper*, under, and saying that's where we were, under the curse. He now took his chalk and he wrote the Greek word *hyper* over the Greek word *hypo*; *hypo* means under, *hyper* means over. And he wrote it over it, because he wanted to point out that through the work of Jesus Christ when the sword falls in judgment it does not fall upon those who were under, but it falls upon the one who has been made a curse over us. And then he took his chalk and he drew a line out from the *hypo* under, and he put out at the end of it the Greek preposition *eck*, which is rendered in verse 13, from. "Christ hath redeemed us from," out from the curse; in order to stress the fact that because the sword has fallen on Jesus Christ, we who were under the curse are now out of the curse.

It's just as if we were to demonstrate it this way. This is the curse. We are under it. And if something does not happen, that curse shall fall upon us. But Jesus Christ comes in over us, being made a curse for us so that the judgment falls on him. And because it falls on him, and he bears it, we who are under the curse are now redeemed out from the curse. The man who wrote those things on the board was Professor A.T. Robertson, professor for many years at the Louisville Southern Baptist Seminary perhaps the greatest Greek scholar of his generation. It was his way of explaining substitutionary atonement.

Now the consequences of this are expressed in verse 14, "That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ." We shall talk about that next Sunday, and so I'm going to pass it by. It's a reference to justification. "That we may

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receive the promise of the Spirit through faith." And the Spirit has come as a pledge of the fulfillment of all the promises of God. I'd like to conclude this morning by pointing out this, Adam's sin has been assumed by Adam's Lord, and Adam's sons may now go free.

May I close with one of my favorite stories? Because it illustrates for us the fact that which we could not do by our works, God has done for us in grace. Dr. Campbell Morgan was preaching in a Yorkshire coal field many years ago. He was holding meetings in the community and many of the miners were in the audience in the nights. And it was his custom after each one of the meetings to invite any who were interested to come into an inquiry room where someone discussed with them their spiritual condition. Night after night there was a big husky coal miner who kept coming down after the meetings were over to discuss spiritual things, but it seemed as if no one could give him any assurance of the possession of everlasting life. So finally one of the Christian workers came to Dr. Morgan and said, "Dr. Morgan, would you mind coming and talking to the man if he comes again." Dr. Morgan said, "Fine, I'd be delighted to." And that night he was back and he was again deeply under conviction for his sin. He obviously did not have any peace. He went to the inquiry room and Dr. Morgan sat down to talk with him. He said that he pointed him to Isaiah chapter 55 and verse 7 and asked if he were ready to do his part, and that was turn from his way and his thoughts and God would surely do his part, abundantly pardon.

And the coal miner bluntly said, "I don't believe it. After all my sinfulness God could not forgive me like that. It's too cheap." And Dr. Morgan plainly directed by the Holy Spirit asked him if he'd been to work that day. He said, "Yes." He said, "Where did you work?" He said, "I worked eight hundred yards under ground." He then said, "How did you get home?" He said, "I walked home." He said, "Oh, but how did you get up to walk home." He said, "Well I put my tools down, and I came to the bottom of the shaft. I entered the cage, I was lifted up, and then I walked home." Dr. Morgan said, "How

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much did you pay to get up?" And he stared and Dr. Morgan and rather abruptly said, "Nothing." Dr. Morgan kept quiet; a change came over his face. He said, "Oh that won't do. I didn't pay anything to come up but it cost the company." And then it dawned on him. And he added, "Oh my God, is that what you mean? You mean it's cheap for me, but it's not cheap for God." And Dr. Morgan said, "That's right, it's cheap for us, for it's of grace. But it's not cheap for God, for God's Son must become a curse for us."

Now, you know, there's a striking thing about Christianity. I don't know whether you've ever noticed it or not. It's different from every other truth or system of truth. And that is, that's its adherents love their God. Speak to a Mohammedan, he doesn't love Mohammed. Speak to a Hindu; he does not love the god Shiva, or any of the other gods of Hinduism. Speak to a Buddhist, they don't love Buddha. Speak to a Confucianist, they don't love Confucius. But the disciples of Jesus Christ love Jesus Christ because of the truth of what he has done. We are condemned; he has born the condemnation of his own. And he invites all to come and partake.

If you are here today and you have never heard the gospel of Jesus Christ, that the sins of men are imputed to him and we may go free, we invite you to come. In your heart believe, receive the forgiveness of sins. Let's stand for the benediction.

[Prayer] Father, we are grateful to Thee for the imputation of Adam's sin to the race, with all its consequences for this is Thy program. But we must confess that we are even more grateful for the imputation of Adam's sin and all its consequences to our representative, Jesus Christ who has born that sin for us. And we express to Thee Lord the devotion of our hearts. We love him because he first loved us. And Father, if there should be one in this audience who has not yet come to Christ, give them no rest nor peace until they recognize...

**[RECORDING ENDS ABRUPTLY]**

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