



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

Ephesians 2:8-10

"The Divine Means of Receiving Divine Healing"

TRANSCRIPT

[Message] A number of us, I see some of you here who were in Austin yesterday and Friday night for the Texas Reform Conference, Texas Conference on Reform Theology is the name. It was the fourth of these conferences, and about fifteen people from Believers Chapel went down and six of us came back, that I know of, because I see six in the audience. But some of the others stayed down to hear Jim Packer and Dr. Tom Nettles of the Mid-America Southern Baptists Seminary in Memphis, who were the speakers for the meeting. We enjoyed it very much. The theme was "God With Us," really the Emanuel principle, God with us. And they spoke on such themes as "God with us in the Covenant," "God with us in Redemption," "God with us in Calling," and "God with us in Worship." And your comments concerning worship, Dr. Howard, reminded me that that was one of Dr. Packer's messages, a very fine message. And this morning the two speakers are still in Austin speaking in two of the churches down there.

The conference was held in St. Matthews Episcopalian church's parish house. It had no connection with St. Matthews, so far as I know. They rented the auditorium, although Dr. Packer is an Anglican minister. It was a very enjoyable time. And on the way back my breaks went out about thirty miles out of Austin, and there are two people

in the audience who are still pale from the experience. They were in the back seat, but by divine providence and God being with us we got home. And I'm grateful that we did, because I was a little bit worried too.

Now, we are continuing our series of studies in the most important Christian truths. Obviously I've made a selection out of a score or two of them that could be called that. And today our subject is "The Divine Means for Receiving Divine Blessing." And so we are turning for Scripture reading to Ephesians chapter 3, verse 8 through verse 10. A very familiar portion and I know that you can see from the reading of the Scripture the place that evangelical faith has in our salvation. Ephesians chapter 2, and verse 8, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."

Now, I would also like for you to turn to Romans chapter 3, and let me read just a few verses there as well. Romans chapter 3 and I'll read verse 24 and 25, and then verse 28. Romans 3, verse 24 contains these words, "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God." Perhaps it would be fitting to read the next verse which completes the paragraph. "To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." And then you might wonder why I've chosen to read verse 28. It has a historical significance. This is a verse in which Luther in translating the Bible into the German language, for the Germans who were not used to reading the Bible in their own language, Luther added a word not found in the Greek text. The Roman Catholics, who were in controversy with him, although he was a Roman Catholic at the time, were very much upset, of course, with Luther's doctrine, and so they picked up this addition to the Scripture to criticize Luther. This is what he wrote, verse 28, "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without

the deeds of the law." He added the word "alone," the German word *allein*, alone. And he was criticized for that.

But it illustrates an important point. It illustrates the point that certain concepts are found, even when the precise words may not be found. Because it's obvious, if as Paul states here, we are justified by faith, and apart from the works of the Law, then obviously if there are no works involved in our justification, and we're justified by faith, it's faith alone. It was a natural, logical, and true inference derived from what the apostle has just stated. But of course, when we're anxious to criticize we can find all kinds of rationalization by which to criticize. That is a principle that applies to us as well. May the Lord bless this reading of his word and let's bow together now for a moment of prayer.

[Prayer] Father, we are thankful for the privilege that is ours this beautiful Sunday morning to gather in this auditorium and to hear the word of God. We're thankful for the things that the Apostle Paul has written. We thank Thee for the clarity of them, for the way in which they remind us that Thou hast provided for the forgiveness of sins and justification of life for men through the saving work of Jesus Christ. And we thank Thee that the principle by which this salvation has become ours is the principle of grace, a free gift for those who by the Holy Spirit are given life and faith in Christ.

We pray that today that might be the experience of some in this auditorium if they do not know him whom to know is life eternal. We ask Thy blessing upon this service and the other services that have been mentioned. We pray particularly for the sick, and troubled, and perplexed. We ask Thy blessing upon them. Give healing mercies within Thy will.

We pray for the whole church of Jesus Christ wherever they may be scattered abroad. We pray for our country, for our President. Thou knowest Lord the concerns of our heart. We commit them to Thee with confidence that Thou art the sovereign master of this universe and that Thou art working all things out according to the counsel of Thine

own will. We thank Thee for those who are visiting with us. We pray especially Thy blessing upon them. For Jesus' sake. Amen.

[Message] The subject for today is "The Divine Means for Receiving Divine Blessing." We have seen in our studies on the eight most important Christian truths that salvation is the product of God's sovereign grace for his sheep. As the apostle in 2 Corinthians chapter 5, verse 20 and 21 (correction to Dr. Johnson Romans 5:20-21) has said, "Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord."

So we have been talking, essentially, about reigning grace. Now, today we are going to look at the terms upon which this grace is given to men but the Lord God. Ephesians 2:8-10 is not only the central message to the Ephesians, as one of the better commentators has said, it's the central message of the Apostle Paul. And in fact, it's the central message of our Lord himself. It's the central message of the Bible, "For by grace are ye," ye sinners, "For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works lest anyone should boast."

This was one of the things that appears over and over again in the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ. In fact, you can find pre-Pauline statements of "By grace are ye saved through faith" in the ministry of men who lived before the time of the Apostle Paul. One can also find it in the words of our Lord when he dealt with the rich young ruler who came to him and said, "Good master, what good thing shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" The Lord Jesus after saying to him, "Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one, that is God. If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." He saith unto him, "Which?" Jesus said, "Thou shalt do no murder. Thou shalt not commit adultery. Thou shalt not steal. That shall not bear witness. Honor thy father and thy mother. And thou shall love thy neighbor as thyself." This young man was overly confident, so Jesus

pointed him to the second table of the Law, the things that pertain to every day life. So if he checked his life by the Law he would see that he wasn't measuring up to the Law of Moses.

The young man saith unto him, "All these things have I kept from my youth up. What lack I yet?" Jesus said unto him, "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell what you have and give to the poor and you shall have treasure in heaven, and come follow me." The Lord was simply telling him, "You are not what you think you are. You think you have kept the Law, let's see. Give away what you have." "And when the young man heard that saying he went away sorrowful for he great possessions." One of the amazing things about this is that in one of the other gospels in recording it Jesus said "One thing you lack." To think that there was a man of whom it could be said he lacked only one thing, but that's the fundamental thing. And so the Lord Jesus turned to the disciples and said, "Verily, verily I say unto you, that a rich man shall with difficulty enter into the kingdom of heaven. And again I say unto you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God."

Now, Luke uses a term for a surgical needle, and so our Lord is speaking of something that is almost comically impossible, trying to get a camel through a surgical needle. Well, someone has said, all you need to do is dissolve it in sulfuric acid or something like that and squirt it through. But that, of course, is a modern invention. When the disciples heard it they were exceedingly amazed and they said, "Who then can be saved?" And Jesus looked at them and he said, "With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible, even the salvation of a rich man." Now, if you will look at those terms you will see that that's precisely what Paul is saying, "For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves." With men, it is impossible. It's the gift of God; with God all things are possible.

The Lord Jesus is saying simply in his own terms in this interview the thing that Paul says in Ephesians 2: 8-9. This is a remarkable passage, of course, because it

demolishes two common misconceptions. One, men are saved by obedience. Paul says, "No, men are saved by faith on the principle of grace for obedience." He says in the 10th verse of Ephesians 2, "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works." So men are not saved by obedience, they are saved for obedience. And they are saved on the principle of grace.

The other of the misconceptions of modern man, and this pertains to evangelicals, because they have bought into this as well. Men are saved by their own faith, men like to say. But Paul says, "No men are not saved by their own faith as a first cause of blessing from God." Or as some others like to say, "They're saved by non-meritorious faith." If a faith originates with us, if that's its ultimate origination with man, it's meritorious by definition. You cannot say, if you're speaking about something that arises totally from within man, "non-meritorious faith." It's by definition and description, meritorious. It's something that we do, which according to that theory God honors. Paul says, "No men are not saved by their own faith as a first cause of blessing or by non meritorious faith." No one questions that faith is man's activity. We say "our faith." We know that we have believed.

The issue, however, is who is responsible for our faith? Is it we? Or is the Lord God? And the Scriptures answer very plainly that our faith is the product of the working of God. Listen, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." Now, we'll talk about that in a moment, but obviously faith is something we do as a work. The apostle could not say that this by grace through faith salvation is the gift of God. We'd have to say, "Wait a minute. Part of it's the gift of God. But the other part I originated myself." So the apostle traces it all to God as the Lord Jesus did when he said, "Except a man be born from above he cannot see the kingdom of God."

Now, that's an important truth. That truth determines the terms by which that which Jesus Christ has accomplished for us becomes ours. We call this the terms of

salvation. Many terms have been proffered by men, water baptism, other ordinances, joining the church, doing good works, various types of ways by which we say we benefit or receive the benefits that the Lord Jesus has accomplished. Paul says we receive it through a God-given faith. Now, that's important. That underlines the graciousness of grace. It is grace. That's what you were singing about wasn't it? God's grace.

So we look at these verses, verse 8 through 10. Notice the opening line. It expresses the principle of our salvation. "For by grace are ye saved through faith." Now, the apostle has said very beautifully in the preceding context, the Ephesians new calling. Listen, they were dead, he says in verse 1. They were dead in trespasses and sins, but by virtue of their new calling they have come from death to life. Look at the 5th verse, "Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us," hath made us alive, together with Christ. "By grace ye are saved." And further, this quickening of life is to an ultimate eternal display of the grace of God. Incidentally, my Christian friend, if you are in heaven one day, one of the reasons you will be there is so that God can display the grace that he had wrought in you. Look at the 7th verse, "That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus." I can see you around the throne of God, not you but you, you out in the radio audience, you I can see you around the throne of God and the angels talking about the grace of God and pointing to individuals who display the grace of God in their lives and someone raises his head and says, "Well, God did his part, I grant that, but I did my part, too. I believed." No, there won't be anything like that. In heaven we shall see displayed the grace of God, and his grace includes also the provision of the terms by which we blind and rebellious sinners receive the benefits that God offers to us. So we are saved by grace, God's free gift.

Now, you can see the prominence that Paul puts upon grace in verse 5. He says, "By grace ye are saved." Verse 7 he says, "That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace." Then in verse 8 as well, "For by grace are ye saved

through faith." Grace is the necessary principle of our salvation. It's freely given to us. Now, it's grace because of our condition, our minds are blinded. Paul states in the 14th chapter and the 18th verse these words, "Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them because of the blindness of their heart." So our minds are blinded, our hearts are deadened, our wills are rebellious. In fact, we are dead spiritually. That's the way we're born. We're born dead spiritually.

Some of you know that one of my favorite theologians is Robert L. Dabney. Professor Dabney in one of his messages given about a hundred years ago said, "Let us consider and we shall see that the change of a godless, self-willed, worldly soul into a sincere believing joyful Christian is as truly above the laws of his natural heart as the living again of a corpse is above the powers of nature." And then later on talking about the same kind of thing he says, "Yes, but I suppose that the Spirit of all truth does not select figures such as that the figurative resemblance of the truths contained under them would be false. Now then, can the blind eye so admit light as to open themselves thereby? Does obstinate enmity get love out of itself? Does the stone," he's talking about the fact that in the Old Testament unbelievers are said to have a stony heart. "Does the stone imbue itself with softness? Does a dead corpse prepare its own resurrection?" Well, the answer is very plainly no, we are dead. And if we are to enter into life there must be a divine operation.

"For by grace," Paul says, "are ye saved through faith?" The way in which he puts that is a way in which he stresses not simply the fact that we are saved. But there was a time when we entered into this experience and we are now enjoying the effects of it. Like a man who was drowning, and finally he's dragged into a boat, and it can be said he's saved. He's not yet at the shore, but he's been saved. Maybe he's still coughing out water, but he's saved. And Paul says, "We have been saved." The work is not yet complete, let me assure you. I speak only of myself. The work is not yet complete.

Keep quiet Martha. [Laughter] So that work is never complete as long as we are here in the flesh. But we are among the saved. We have been saved by grace through faith.

Now, when he says through faith it's the instrumentality of appropriation, and human responsibility that is found in that. What is faith? From whence does it come? Why does God say by faith? Well, in the first place a word about its nature. Faith is the soul's rest upon God and his truth about Christ. That's what faith is. The Scriptures say that Christ is the Savior of sinners and that he has died for sinners. And over and over again that message is sent out in promise and then in fulfillment. Faith is to rest upon God and the truth that he has revealed through the Lord Jesus Christ, that's faith.

Now, we have different popular views of faith, and we even have different religious views of faith. In popular views faith is the hope that a person might have about something which may or may not be true. We say, "I have faith that such and such will happen." We have no assurance that it will happen at all. In fact, all we are doing is expressing some aspiration that we have. In Roman Catholic theology faith is ultimately believing what the church says. And that's all. That's enough to make a man safe. One may have explicit faith in the Roman church, believing explicitly that Christ has died for sinners. But one also might be saved by having implicit faith. That is, no real committal to the truth, but committal to the church. And so faith has a different meaning in the Roman Catholic church.

Occasionally you will find people who have different views even among evangelicals. But faith implies the knowledge of certain things about Christ, the assent of the mind to those things, and the trust of the individual in those things, when those things take place, knowledge, assent, trust. Men have come to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Someone has said in a simple acrostic, "Faith, F-A-I-T-H, faith is simply, Forsaking All I Take Him, faith." That's very simple. Bishop Ryle one of the Anglican bishops of evangelical theology used to say, "Saving in faith is the eye of the soul. The sinner is like an Israelite bitten by fiery serpents in the wilderness. And at the point of death the Lord

Jesus Christ is offered to him as the brazen serpent set up for his cure and so the sinner looks and is healed. Saving faith is the eye of the soul." He said, "Saving faith is the hand of the soul. The sinner is like a drowning man at the point of sinking. He sees the Lord Jesus Christ holding out help to him. He grasps it and is saved. That's faith." Ryle also said, "Saving faith is the mouth of the soul. The sinner is starving for water, food, and is sick of a sore disease. The Lord Jesus is set before him as the bread of life, the universal medicine. He receives it and is made well and strong. This is faith. Saving faith is the foot of the soul. The sinner is pursued by a deadly enemy and in fear of being overtaken the Lord Jesus is put before him as a strong tower, a hiding place, and a refuge. He runs into and is safe."

One of the French commentators, Professor of New Testament at the University in New Châtelaine used to like to say, "Faith is the hand of the heart. It's simply that by which a person through God's initiating grace rests upon the Lord Jesus Christ and what he has done." How important that is. Where does it come from? It doesn't come from human reason. It doesn't come from the church. It comes from the word as used by the Spirit. Like we say, from the word and the Spirit, listen to the well-known text. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." What a magnificent amount of truth is found in that. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

Why does God save men through faith? That's a reasonable question to ask. Why are men saved through faith? Why does God demand faith? Well, I suggest to you that one of the reasons that God saves men through faith is the simple one that by it the Savior's glory is safe-guarded. When we say that we are saved through faith, we are really acknowledging in Scripture language that we really don't have anything to do with our salvation. It is something done by God. Salvation is of the Lord. And so the Lord God has arranged in his infinite wisdom that we should be saved through faith in order that we should not boast. That's what Paul's saying here. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: that no one should boast." Faith, we

receive from the Lord Jesus Christ and the Trinity, so to safe-guard the Savior's glory. John Barrage, one of the old Puritan preachers, what a wealth of truth they possessed. He said, "Christ will either be a whole Savior or none at all." And that's what the Scriptures say. Further we could say, salvation's by faith, in order that we might have assurance of salvation.

Now, it's easy to reflect upon this and see why that is so, but the apostle does state it very clearly in Romans chapter 4, and verse 16, listen to what he says. "Therefore it is of faith that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed." Now, let's start at the end of that, what we want is assurance. Well, how can we have assurance? If salvation depends upon us we could never have assurance, because we don't have the kinds of lives that could measure up to the infinite standard of a holy God. He requires that we be infinitely holy. We are required to present him with a perfect righteousness. So, how can we be sure? Well, we cannot be sure by any works basis. So it must be by grace. So we read back from "that it might be sure" to "grace." If God gives it to us, then it can be sure. But then we go back to the first word again and say, "Therefore it's through faith." So God having as the goal that we might be sure that we have life determined that it should be by grace and in order to have it received through grace he decreed that it should be by means of faith. Simply trusting in what he has done in Christ. What a marvelous text that is. It is of faith that it might be by grace, to the end that we might be sure.

Are you sure? Are you sure you have eternal life? Further, do you know that it is through grace that you have this eternal life? And therefore, do you reckon that God has made it the terms upon which we receive the blessing through faith in order to preserve this by grace through faith salvation.

Now, the source of the salvation is expressed in the next line of Paul's statement in Ephesians 2. He says, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." There's a lot of discussion that's raged over this. And

we don't have time this morning to talk about the Greek text and the significance of the neuter pronoun in this context. Let me simply say this. It is possible to take that word "this" as referring to faith in spite of what some New Testament Greek scholars have said. If they go back and read classical Greek and read widely in classical Greek you will find places in classical Greek where the neuter demonstrative pronoun is referred to a feminine noun. For faith is feminine.

Now, you realize the ordinary Greek grammatical rule is that the demonstrative pronoun should agree with its antecedent in gender and number. But you do find exceptions, so it's possible. But it's much better if you want to show something to just simply point out that the preceding clause, "for by grace," grace is feminine, "are ye saved through faith." Faith is feminine. And this neuter, "not of yourselves," the "this therefore" is not primarily a reference to faith. It's not directed to grace specifically. But it's directed to the whole statement, "For by grace are ye saved through faith." This by grace through faith salvation is, as Paul says, not of yourselves, it's the gift of God.

Now, my Christian friend, who at 9:20 is still thinking "If by grace through faith salvation is not of ourselves but the gift of God, it follows inexorably that faith is not of ourselves, it's the gift of God. Now that which follows inexorably by sound logic here is stated by Paul and others in the New Testament in a number of places. Augustan, talking about how he came to understand that men were saved by grace, pointed to 1 Corinthians 4:7 where Paul says, "For who maketh thee to differ from another? And what hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?" 1 Corinthians 4:7, and when Augustan commented on that he said, "That's how I came to understand the semi-pelagians who believed in free will were wrong. Because," he said, "as I read that, the text said everything that I had I had received. And so if I have faith, I have received it. It's not something that originates with me." And he came to a clear understanding of the grace of God through that, "That not of yourselves."

We've all heard of converts who've said, "My conversion is due to myself and God. I fought against God with all my might and God did the rest." Well, that pretty well expresses the sovereign nature of God's salvation. It's the gift of God. Now, if it's the gift of God, Paul's word necessitates our depravity. Human nature, my Christian friend, and my non-Christian friend is not weakened human nature. It's not tainted human nature, as my good old Mississippi Baptist preacher friend likes to say, "Human nature was not stunted in the fall in the Garden of Eden. But human nature is fallen and depraved." The fundamental human Christian postulate is that men are fallen. The fundamental human postulate and humanism's perennial heresy is that men are not fallen. That men can, of themselves, please God. And that particular philosophy, while we clearly recognize it in some of those who are opposed to Christianity still pervades in Christianity the thinking of those who insist that we're saved through grace but by the decision of our own free will. They often don't realize that they're really contradicting the doctrine that they like to affirm.

Now, Paul concludes verse 10 by saying, "For we are his workmanship." In the original text that's very emphatic. "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." This is the proof of the preceding and the purpose for which we are saved by grace. His workmanship, we are not self-made. Mr. Simpson, Scottish interpreter, says, "That would be an inevitably badly made, jerry built sample of overweening self-esteem." We are made by God. We are his workmanship. And we are not saved by good works. We are saved for good works. As Luther said, "It's not against good works that we contend, but it's against trust in works." The Reformers like to put it this way, "Sola fides iustificat, sed non fides quae est sola." Well, where is the hallelujah? [Laughter] Well, some of you understand that. "Faith alone justifies, but not the faith which is alone."

In other words, it's faith alone by which we are saved. But the faith which God gives us, which brings us into the possession of the position of justification by faith is a

faith that results in good works. As Paul puts it in verse 10, "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works." Now, Paul goes on to say in verse 10 that these works are prepared beforehand. Now, when he talks about prepared beforehand, he's talking about the same thing that the Scriptures talk about when they talk about predestination or election. Election and predestination have to do with persons. For preparation has to do with things. And Augustan pointed that out. He said, "It's for things what predestined is for persons." The works that we do as Christians, they're not works that surprise God. He doesn't look down and say, "Well, that was a nice thought that Louis brought out this morning. I hadn't really thought of that." Or he's preaching this morning again. No, all of this was prepared by an infinitely wise God. I am by his wisdom preaching this morning, and you are by his wisdom, in case you didn't realize it, you're here by his divine preparation, too. This is no ordinary meeting. This is a meeting that God has reflected upon and planned and predestined in the ages past. So therefore, it's significant for every one of us, for me as well as for you.

Let me conclude, we are saved by sovereign grace through faith for obedience and all, even the faith, is of God. Now, some of you have heard me tell this story, but it's a favorite study of mine. It was something that Dr. Donald Grey Barnhouse once told me a long time ago when I was a young preacher. And I thought it was so interesting because it seems to be so true. That is, there are people who are in the Christian church and have been in the Christian church, and I think are genuine Christians, but they don't really understand how they came to be Christians. So Dr. Barnhouse used to say, "Thousands of fundamentalists are in the stork school of theology." He then cited a story that appeared in *Reader's Digest*. A little girl came home from school and asked her mother, "Mother, how was I born." And Mother said, "Oh the stork brought you." "And you Mother?" "Well, I was found in a cabbage patch." "And Grandmother, how was Grandmother born?" "Well, she was found under a rose bush." So the next day the little girl went back

to school and she wrote on a theme that day, "There's not been a natural birth in our family for three generations." [Laughter]

Many people are just as ignorant of the facts of their new birth as that little girl. They don't realize they are born by the sovereign operation of the Holy Spirit who regenerates our dead hearts that we may believe in Christ and be justified. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." The Synod of Dordrecht, one of the great synods of those who believe in sovereign grace says, "Grace will not be grace in any way unless it is free in every way." That is true. And then another one of my favorite theologians, he's really not a theologian he's a preacher, but some preachers are theologians, too. In one of his writings he says, "The doctrine of grace is therefore nothing but the doctrine of the holy and undivided Trinity." The doctrine of grace is really nothing more than saying, "Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit." That's what we say when we say we are saved by grace. Glory to the Father, glory to the Son, glory to the Holy Spirit. When we sing the "Gloria " that's what we're singing.

If you're here today and you've never believed in Christ. We invite you to come to him. Believe in him. Trust in him and what he has done. He has accomplished the atoning sacrifice. The blood has been shed. Sins have been paid for by the Lord Jesus Christ. And to sinners is offered the salvation of God. It's very simple, to enter into the family of God, the Scriptures say, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." And so, within my heart, as I rest upon what he has done for me, I receive the gift of justification by faith. I have a righteousness that is acceptable to the Lord God. So we call upon you as an ambassador of Jesus Christ, lean upon him, trust in him, by an act of faith originated by God, but still your act, rest on Christ. Why not in you heart right now? If you've never made that decision say, "I thank Thee Lord for the gift of Christ. I trust in him for my eternal salvation. I stop trusting in the church, and my good works, and the ordinances, or anything else that you may trust in. I trust in Christ alone." For as

the apostle says, "We are saved not by the works of the Law, but by faith alone." May we stand for the benediction.

[Prayer] Father, how marvelous it is to consider this plan of salvation that shall be theme of Christians and saints through the endless ages of eternity. How marvelous it will be to sit around the feet of the Lord Jesus Christ and see the display of divine grace in the lives of sinners. Oh Father, if there should be any here who have never believed in Christ, may at this very moment they commit themselves to him, receive eternal life, join, by Thy grace, the family of God, and be part of the glorious manifestation of the future. We pray for Jesus sake. Amen.