The Gospel of Our Salvation

The gospel of our salvation today in this dispensation of God's longsuffering and grace

A 26-Lesson Radio Series by Keith Blades | Enjoy the Bible Ministries®

Study Overview & Lesson Summaries

About This Series

In this 26-lesson radio series Keith Blades takes a close look at the gospel of our salvation and at the assurance of our salvation that God wants us to have. Keith first shows that the gospel of our salvation today is the gospel of the grace of God given to the Apostle Paul, and from Romans 1:18 – 3:26 sets out its three parts. Salvation is by grace, through faith, without works of any kind at any time, yet the gospel is often perverted — sometimes subtly, through gospel cliches that mix together salvation and serving the Lord. From Lesson 10 Keith works through the eight most common reasons Christians lack assurance. The series closes with a survey of the riches of God's grace — at least 35, Keith says — grouped as pertaining to our justification, our sanctification, and our exaltation in Christ.

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Lesson Summaries

L1

Which Gospel Is the Gospel of Our Salvation? *II Corinthians 4 and 11; Galatians 1; the Gospel of the Kingdom; Revelation 14; Romans 3*

The Gospel of Our Salvation and Its Perversions

- The series looks at the gospel of our salvation — salvation from the debt and penalty of our sins, which becomes ours when we trust exclusively in the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior — and at the assurance God wants us to have
- The series is important especially because the gospel of our salvation is so often perverted and commonly misstated: people are frequently told there are works they must do to be saved
- There is no salvation in a perversion of the gospel of Christ; it is a message designed to keep people unsaved

Satan's Policy of Evil Against the Gospel

- Perversions of the gospel exist because of Satan's strong desire to keep people from being saved; he has a whole policy of evil dedicated to producing and propagating false gospels
- In II Corinthians 4 Paul calls Satan the god of this world, actively endeavoring to blind men's minds; in II Corinthians 11 one of the mind corrupting doctrines in view is another gospel
- From Galatians 1: God has only one gospel of our salvation today; Satan has a number of false gospels, perversions of the gospel of Christ
- Only the gospel of Christ in truth is the power of God unto salvation; a perversion of it is not

Not the Gospel of the Kingdom or the Everlasting Gospel

- There is more than one gospel and more than one program recorded in the Bible, so we must first make sure which one is the gospel of our salvation today
- The gospel of the kingdom, proclaimed by John the Baptist and shortly thereafter by the Lord, is the good news that the time had come in God's program with Israel for the kingdom of heaven to be established on this earth
- It pertains to God's program with Israel; God is not saving people today by it, and the kingdom of heaven is not the issue of how to go to heaven when you die
- The everlasting gospel of Revelation 14 is preached after this dispensation of grace is over; its salvation is a physical deliverance at the very end of the great tribulation, and there is no salvation in it today

The Gospel Given to the Apostle Paul

- God suspended His program with Israel when the Lord Jesus Christ returned from heaven (Acts 9) and raised up Paul as a brand-new apostle, giving him

the gospel of the grace of God, the gospel of our salvation in this dispensation

- To find the gospel of our salvation we go to Paul's epistles — for example, Romans 3 from verse 21; the gospel of our salvation today is God offering salvation freely by His grace from the debt and penalty of our sins, obtained through faith placed exclusively in the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, our substitute Redeemer

L2

The Three Major Parts of the Gospel *Romans 1:15–3:26: Worthy of Wrath, No Escape by Works, Justified Freely*

The Good News God Is Proclaiming Today

- God is mercifully holding back His judgment upon this world and, as He does, is offering to save anyone from that coming judgment
- Christ died as our substitute Redeemer, in our place, taking upon Himself the debt and penalty of our sins; He propitiated, or completely satisfied, God's perfect justice with respect to our sins
- God can completely forgive our sins and give, as an absolutely free gift, the perfect righteous standing of justification we need to live forever in His sight
- The gospel is often perverted by adding works — such as joining a church or partaking of sacraments and ceremonies — to God's requirement of simple faith in Christ as your all-sufficient Savior

The Power of God unto Salvation (Romans 1:15–17)

- The gospel is the power of God unto salvation — not your works, not my works — activated in response to faith; verse 17 makes plain that faith alone activates it, the only thing God's grace can respond to

The Three Major Parts

- Part one, Romans 1:18 through the end of chapter 1: God declares all men worthy of receiving His wrath — the gospel starts off with bad news
- Part two, Romans 2:1 through 3:20: nobody can escape being worthy of His wrath by anything they may try to do
- Part three, the third and final aspect, Romans 3:21–26: only here does the good news begin — God offers to justify any man freely by His grace through the work His Son has done on the cross as our substitute Redeemer

Worthy of Wrath and Unable to Escape It

- The wrath of God is revealed from heaven but not yet poured out; in this dispensation God is longsuffering, holding back the day of His wrath — yet we need to recognize we are worthy of receiving it
- Nobody will see any need to trust Christ for salvation unless he first sees he needs salvation; Romans 1:28–32 gives a list in which every man can see himself
- Paul shows the error of thinking works can escape the judgment of God; such works only provoke the wrath of God all the more, and the law has made it so that all the world may become guilty before God (Romans 3:19–20)

Justified Freely by His Grace (Romans 3:21–26)

- The righteousness of God is the very thing we need; God gives it as an absolutely free gift, received not by trying to merit it by works but simply on the basis of faith in His blood
- Propitiation is the perfect satisfaction of justice by a penalty being fully paid;

faith is placing your trust in someone else doing something for you rather than doing it yourself

L3

By Grace, Through Faith, Without Works *Romans 9, 3:24–4:8, 11:6; Galatians 2: Grace and Works Mutually Exclusive*

A Dispensation of Longsuffering and Grace (Romans 9)

- This dispensation is first and foremost the dispensation of God's longsuffering and grace, as He holds back His day of judging this world
- In Romans 9 Paul speaks of the great dispensational change — God has suspended His program with Israel; the backdrop is God being ready to judge the vessels of wrath fitted for destruction
- Instead of pouring out His wrath now, God reveals it from heaven, tells men what is coming, and offers to save anyone from that judgment who will trust Christ as Savior

Faith Alone in Christ Alone

- To believe in Jesus means to trust Him and Him alone for salvation — no ritual, ceremony, aisle, promises, or works of any kind; God saves you the moment you place your faith in Christ
- Satan's policy of evil perverts the gospel by adding to God's simple requirement of faith in Christ, making people think works of some kind are required for salvation
- What is free you do not pay for, merit, or do something in exchange to get; all the work necessary — Christ's cross work, the shedding of His blood — has been done, and we do not do the work

Boasting Excluded: Abraham and David (Romans 3:27–4:8)

- Boasting is excluded because our works have no place at all in either the providing or the procuring of our salvation
- Abraham's justification is set forth as an example even in this dispensation of Gentile grace; God responded solely to his faith in what God said, not to any works
- What you get in response to works you get not by grace but by debt (Romans 4:4); belief is not a work but a non-meritorious response, compatible with grace
- David, as Paul quotes him in Romans 4:6, knew he was justified in God's eyes on the base of faith and faith alone, God imputing righteousness to him without his works

Mutually Exclusive and Mutually Destructive (Romans 11:6; Galatians 2)

- Any time anything is by grace, works have nothing to do with it; works is a destroyer of grace, which is why Satan propagates perversions — injecting works into a message of grace destroys the grace in it
- Something is either one hundred percent by grace and zero percent by works, or the reverse; there is no mixture — they are mutually exclusive and mutually destructive to each other
- From the last verse of Galatians 2: Christ died for no reason at all if you could justify yourself in God's eyes; He had to perform all the work for you because there is no work you can do on your own

L4

Faith: The Only Response Legally Compatible with Grace

Romans 4, 11:6; Galatians 2–3; Ephesians 2; Titus 3; I Corinthians 1:21

God's Longsuffering Will Not Continue Indefinitely

- This dispensation of grace has been in effect ever since God raised up Paul, but God's longsuffering will not continue indefinitely; it will end one of these days, maybe very soon, and God has given no time schedule for it
- Only God and His grace can save you, and the only thing His grace can accept is complete faith placed in the Lord Jesus Christ as your all-sufficient Savior

Of Faith, That It Might Be by Grace (Romans 4)

- Abraham before the law and David under the law are set forth as examples; the inheritance of everlasting life promised to Abraham rested not on his works or the law but simply on his justification by grace through faith
- The promise of inheritance is "of faith, that *it might be* by grace" (Romans 4:16): grace could be the operating principle only if faith was the only response upon which it could be given

Works Fit Debt; Grace and Works Exclude Each Other

- Works is compatible with debt, not with grace (Romans 4:4–5); believing is completely compatible with grace — the only thing legally compatible with it
- Grace and works are mutually exclusive (Romans 11:6): nothing can be partially by grace and partially by works; it is either exclusively by grace or exclusively by works, and that applies to our justification
- Because God justifies us freely by His grace, our works are 100% excluded, and faith is demanded as the only response to the gospel

If Works Could Save, Christ Died Aimlessly; No Law Could Give Life (Galatians 2–3)

- If our works could in any way be involved in our salvation, Christ need not have died (Galatians 2:21); all the work had to be done by a substitute, one who could function as a redeemer, because we were helpless and impotent on our own
- A man who tries to perform the works of the law to produce salvation is under the curse of God (Galatians 3:10); as God said in Habakkuk 2:4, which Paul cites in Galatians 3:11, the just shall live by faith
- No law could ever have been given that could give life, because it is impossible to obtain life on the basis of an individual's works (Galatians 3:21–22)

Saved by Grace, Not by Works of Righteousness (Ephesians 2; Titus 3)

- By nature we were children of wrath — what the first part of the gospel declares — but God undertook for us, as the third part declares; we are saved by grace, through faith, not of works (Ephesians 2:3, 8)
- The washing of regeneration in Titus 3:5 is not water baptism; the Holy Ghost responded to our faith in the gospel, washed us from our sins, and regenerated us
- It is God's good pleasure to save an individual who will believe the gospel of His Son, not anybody who wants to try and work for their salvation (I Corinthians 1:21)

L5

Giving Your Heart and Life: Service, Not Salvation

Ministers of Righteousness; Subtle Perversions; II Corinthians 11; Romans 3:21–26; Romans 12:1–2

Saved by Simply Believing

- God offers to save anyone who will simply believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as their all-sufficient Savior — placing total faith, trust, confidence in Him and what He did for them on the cross
- Keith says there are upwards of 150 times in the New Testament alone that faith alone is declared to be the issue when it comes to being justified in God's sight

Ministers of Righteousness (II Corinthians 11)

- In II Corinthians 11 Paul deals with the subtle ways Satan goes about to deceive people's thinking; in verse 4 he mentions another gospel he was afraid the Corinthian Christians would receive
- Those preaching it in Corinth were false apostles (verses 13–15), preaching about the Lord Jesus Christ differently than Paul did and a gospel different than the gospel of God's grace
- Satan's ministers in this dispensation of grace are not ministers of evil, sin or iniquity but, Paul says, ministers of righteousness: they preach that human good works are necessary for someone to be saved

Subtle Perversions and Gospel Cliches

- Such a gospel may sound good, but it is not the gospel of Christ, and the power of God unto salvation is not resident in it
- A tract adding keeping the Ten Commandments, water baptism, or a life of service in good works to believing should be easily recognized as a perversion
- As with any counterfeit, the closer a perversion resembles the truth, the more successful it will be; subtle perversions use terminology that sounds legitimate but is taken from passages about discipleship or service to the Lord

The First Misstatement: Give Your Heart and Life to the Lord

- Of the gospel tracts Keith reads, not one writer defined faith as trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ as your Savior; they all defined faith as doing works, disguising works under the terminology of believing
- When God declares the gospel of His grace (Romans 3:21–26), He no place says what these tract writers said; it is spelled out simply as faith in the Lord Jesus Christ — the exact opposite of a task
- Romans 12:1–2, often used in tracts as if it were about how to be saved, speaks to brethren already saved about how they ought to respond to the mercies of God
- Only a saved person has any capacity to give their heart and life to the Lord; telling someone they must serve the Lord to be saved confuses salvation with Christian service and is a perversion of the gospel of Christ
- Give your heart and life to the Lord is not how to be saved; trusting the Lord Jesus Christ completely as your all-sufficient Savior is how you get saved

L6

Make Jesus the Lord of Your Life

Salvation vs. Discipleship — Matthew 10, Luke 14, Romans 3 and 10

Subtle Perversions Mix Salvation and Service

- Subtle perversions go unnoticed because they mix the issue of salvation with the issue of serving the Lord; salvation and serving the Lord, and salvation and discipleship, are not the same thing
- An unsaved person is told to give his heart and life to the Lord, make Jesus the Lord of his life, or commit the control of his life to Jesus — misstatements of God's requirement, and so perversions of the gospel of Christ

Giving Heart and Life Is for the Sanctified

- When an individual trusts the Lord Jesus Christ and not anything he can do, God's justice counts that faith for righteousness, forgives his sins and gives him the perfect righteous standing of justification
- In this dispensation of grace God also sanctifies the one who trusts Christ; it is in view of that sanctified position in Christ that a saved person ought to give his heart and life to the Lord
- The cliche tells an unsaved person that he needs to act like a saved person if he wants to be saved

Matthew 10 and Luke 14: Commission and Discipleship

- Matthew 10:37–38 is part of the first commission the Lord gave to His 12 apostles; the gospel in view is the gospel of the kingdom, not the gospel of the grace of God for our salvation today
- Having believed the gospel of the kingdom they were justified unto eternal life; whether they would reign and rule with the Lord in the kingdom depended on their conduct — a portion of God's word not describing this dispensation of grace
- In Luke 14 the Lord is talking about discipleship, not justification unto eternal life — He doesn't say "he cannot be saved"; discipleship has a cost and involves works, and you can't be a disciple until you're saved

Faith in His Blood, Not Making Him Lord

- In all three tract examples, the reader is told that believing in the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior is not enough — he must also make Him the Lord of his life
- Romans 3:21–26 nowhere says anyone is saved by making Jesus the Lord of his life — it doesn't say unto all and upon all them that make Him Lord or give their heart and life to Him; the issue is "faith in his blood"
- Making Jesus the Lord of your life is an issue of serving the Lord, something that should be done once someone becomes saved, but not how you become saved in the first place

Romans 10 and Matthew 10:32–33 Misapplied

- Romans 10 has to do with the people of Israel; to confess "with thy mouth the Lord Jesus" is not making Him Lord of your life but confessing the reality that Jesus is the Lord — which Israel as a whole did not do
- In Matthew 10:32–33, within the apostles' commission to Israel, confessing Him before men is standing for the truth of who He is, to be rewarded when the kingdom is established — not how anyone becomes saved

L7

First Turn From Your Sins, Then Accept Christ *Romans 6 and 13, Titus 2, Colossians 3 — Turning From Sin Is for the Saved*

Faith Alone vs. Serving the Lord

- Salvation is by grace through faith without works of any kind at any time; faith

alone in Christ alone is the issue, just as Paul declares in Ephesians 2:8–9

- How to be saved involves faith alone in Christ alone; how a saved person ought to serve the Lord involves doing the good works he has been created in Christ Jesus to do — two separate and distinct matters, not to be mixed together
- God isn't offering to save you in exchange for you trying to serve Him; only after God has saved you and given you His Holy Spirit to indwell you do you have any power to do anything like making Jesus the Lord of your life

Turning From Sins: Another Gospel Cliche

- Telling an unsaved person he must first turn from his sins to be saved is another very common gospel cliche, often linked with others, and a misstatement of God's requirement for salvation
- God does talk about turning from one's sins, but not as a requirement for being saved; He urges us to do it once He has saved us — Christian service in view of the sanctified position He gives us in Christ

Romans 6: The Sanctified Position

- Paul goes over the gospel of our salvation in the first five chapters of Romans; in chapter 6 it is with saved people that he deals with turning from sins
- A Christian is also a sanctified individual — God sanctified him when he trusted Christ; because of that sanctification he has the capacity to turn from sin, which an unsaved man has absolutely no power or capacity to do
- God the Holy Spirit baptizes the believer into living union with Christ and into His death; it is foolish to tell an unsaved man he must do what a Christian is exhorted to do in order to become a Christian

Urged on Christians: Romans 13, Titus 2, Colossians 3

- In Romans 13:11–14 turning from sins is urged on those who have salvation, in view of who they are in Christ; no unsaved person has any capacity to do that, and telling him he must do it in order to be saved is a perversion of the gospel of Christ
- In Titus 2:14, to "redeem us from all iniquity" is your justification, received when you trusted Christ; to "purify unto himself a peculiar people" is your sanctification, received when baptized by the Holy Spirit into Christ's death, burial and resurrection
- In Colossians 3 Paul tells members of the body of Christ that turning from sin is the only consistent thing in view of who they are in Christ — not what an unsaved man must do to be saved

God Has Done Something About Sins

- Sin is the reason people need to be saved, but it is not true that a person must do something about his sins — God has taken care of the sin issue Himself through Christ's redemptive work
- A common misunderstanding surrounds the meaning of the word repent: people often think that to repent means to turn from one's sins; but to repent does not mean to turn from one's sins at all — the next study looks at repentance for what it really is

L8 Repent: To Change One's Mind *Genesis 6, Matthew 3, Hebrews 6, Romans 1–2 — What Repentance Means*

The Wrong Definition and the Right One

- Faith alone in Christ alone is the only thing God's grace can respond to; any gospel message making works of any kind requirements for being saved is a perversion of the gospel of Christ
- Two gospel tracts from two different organizations both use the wrong definition for the word repent, and so end up producing a perversion of the gospel
- To repent does not mean to turn from one's sins but to change one's mind about something, to think differently about it; a change is involved, but a change of mind
- The Greek word metanoeo behind the English word repent is a compound word: meta, a prefix indicating a change or alteration, and noeo, the root verb meaning to think
- The gospel says things about us we don't naturally think; not until we change our mind about how we really stand in God's sight will we ever see the need for a Savior

God Repented (Genesis 6:6–7)

- In Genesis 6:6 and 7 the word repent is applied to God both times; if it meant to turn from one's sins, these verses would say God has sinned — and God hasn't sinned, never has, never will
- Repentance means to change one's thinking, to alter one's thinking — a change that takes place in the mind

John the Baptist and the Gospel of the Kingdom

- In Matthew 3 John has arrived in God's program with Israel, and the gospel of the kingdom begins to be preached to the nation Israel; John tells them to repent in view of the kingdom being at hand
- At the same time John tells them how they stand in God's sight — a generation of vipers, not fit by nature to enter the kingdom; "think not to say within yourselves" tells them they need to think differently
- The fruits are "meet for repentance" but are not repentance itself; repentance is a change of mind that can lead to a change in conduct

Hebrews 6: Repentance From Dead Works

- In Hebrews 6:1 the apostle reminds the Hebrew people what they primarily changed their mind about when they heard the gospel of the kingdom: "repentance from dead works" — the works Israel believed would make them acceptable unto God

Repentance and the Gospel of God's Grace

- A person in this dispensation of grace hearing the gospel of God's grace needs to change his mind too: Romans 1:18–32 tells us we are worthy of God's wrath; the second part of the gospel, in Romans 2, convinces men there is absolutely nothing they can do to escape wrath worthiness with God
- In Romans 2 God's goodness leads you to change your mind about thinking you can escape His judgment by good works; repentance does not mean to turn from sin but to change your mind about how you stand in God's sight

L9

Invite Jesus Into Your Heart *God Does the Inviting — Romans 10, Luke 11, Revelation 3:20*

Believing Is Not Inviting

- The final gospel cliche Keith looks at — invite Jesus into your heart — is, like all the others, a misstatement of God's requirement for salvation
- Someone can invite Jesus into his heart and yet not completely trust in Him as his Savior; believing isn't the same as inviting or asking — they are two completely different things
- No one has to even ask God to save them; telling someone he needs to invite Jesus into his heart or ask God to save him has things backwards

God Himself Does the Inviting

- It is God Himself who does the inviting, the beseeching or the asking in salvation; as we function as ambassadors for Christ (II Corinthians 5:20–21), it is God's message, and He has given us the privilege of being His spokesman
- Even though the words come out of our mouth, it's God's gospel and He is the one actually doing the beseeching; Paul recognized he was simply the messenger boy with the gospel
- The issue is not anybody asking God to save them, but God asking individuals to allow Him to save them by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus

Calling Upon the Name of the Lord (Romans 10:12–13)

- In Romans 10:12–13 the expression "call upon the name of the Lord" is misunderstood when people equate it with inviting Jesus into your heart
- Calling upon the name of the Lord, a common expression especially in the Old Testament scriptures, refers to acknowledging a helpless, hopeless predicament and that your only help comes from the Lord
- By the end of the second part of the gospel you realize you are in that predicament; calling upon the name of the Lord acknowledges that you can't save yourself but He has provided salvation, appropriated by believing on the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior

Luke 11 and Revelation 3:20: Israel's Program

- Luke 11:9–13 is God's program with Israel in the gospel accounts, not the dispensation of Gentile grace in which we live today; the Lord is speaking to His own disciples, who had already believed the gospel of the kingdom
- He is talking about physical provisions for them, especially in the time of great tribulation, given if they ask, seek and knock — not how they get to be justified
- Of the verses appealed to, Revelation 3:20 is probably the most commonly used, and this is a tremendous and unfortunate misuse of Scripture: the letters to the seven churches are to the churches of the remnant of the nation Israel, and standing at the door is not standing at the door of anybody's heart

Exposing the Perversions

- It is absolutely necessary to expose gospel perversions: the gospel of Christ is perverted when works of any kind are made a requirement for salvation; salvation is not by works, nor by faith plus works — it is not of works at all

L10

The Three Judicial Results of Being Saved *Romans 5:1–2: Peace with God, Access, and Hope of the Glory of God*

Riches of God's Grace and Three Judicial Results

- The moment you trusted the Lord Jesus Christ you became the immediate

possessor of a great number of the riches of God's grace; Paul teaches throughout his epistles that we possess over thirty distinct riches

- The very first ones he teaches us about are the three judicial results — the three benefits we receive from God's justice as a result of having been justified (Romans 5:1–2)
- In justification God forgives your sins and imputes to your account the perfect righteous standing the Lord Jesus Christ possesses before Him; the three judicial results constitute our perfect salvation standing before God

First: Peace with God

- Peace with God is the exact opposite of what the first part of the Gospel declared we had by nature — a wrath relationship with God (Romans 1:18; Ephesians 2:1–3)
- The very first judicial result is no longer being under the wrath of God, no longer being a child of wrath

Second: Access — Complete Acceptance with God

- Access has to do with a gracious standing we now have before God: complete acceptance with God. As sinners we were alienated from God, at enmity with Him, and declared His enemies
- Alienation is no longer an issue; no more are we at enmity with God. Every aspect of God's character and essence is now for us
- In Romans 8:31–39 Paul takes God's person itself, but especially God's power; we stand in grace (Romans 5:2), so God's grace is for us; verses 33–34 show God's justice completely for us; and God's love is for us

Third: Hope of the Glory of God

- The hope we now possess is completely different from the expectation we had as unsaved; Romans 2:7–9 shows what we would have merited if judged by God on the basis of our works
- "Our expectation is no longer indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish"; our hope now is the glory of God — living forever with God in a glorified, immortal body

No Longer What We Used to Be (Romans 5:6–10)

- God used to declare us unrighteous, ungodly sinners; we're not sinners any longer — we're saints, the name God gives to us
- We used to be enemies, but now we're reconciled to God by the death of His Son
- Next: the much assurance God wants us to have concerning the fact that we possess these judicial results

L11

God Expects Us to Have Much Assurance

I Thessalonians 1:5; Romans 4; I John 5:13: Eight Most Common Reasons for Lacking Assurance

Justification: A Completely Secure Possession

- The three judicial results of our justification are the first of the riches of God's grace we need to understand and appreciate — part of that is realizing we possess them as completely secure possessions
- Justification cannot be lost, revoked, reversed, renounced, altered, diminished or repealed; it is "an irrevocable, permanently fixed judicial transaction of God's justice"
- A lot of Christians never have the assurance of their salvation they ought to

have, primarily because they never learn the particular doctrines God has given to us

The Gospel Came in Much Assurance (I Thessalonians 1)

- The Thessalonian believers are set before us as examples of a positive and proper response; the gospel came to them not in word only but "in much assurance"
- Much assurance is not simply being convinced the gospel was true; they had much assurance built up within their hearts concerning the fact that they were justified
- God has packaged particular doctrines along with the gospel; when learned, they produce the much assurance God wants regarding our justified, saved standing before Him

By Grace through Faith: The Promise Sure (Romans 4)

- In Romans 4 Paul validates that justification really is by grace, through faith, without works of any kind at any time — true in this dispensation of grace and in God's program before it
- Grace and works are like oil and water — they don't mix. Faith is a non-meritorious response, the only thing compatible with grace
- When something is by grace and faith procures it, there can be assurance or surety of possessing it; in Romans 4:16 the result is that you understand the promise is sure — if something is sure, you can have assurance of it

Even in God's Program with Israel (I John 5:13)

- Keith takes I John 5:13 in connection with God's program with Israel: John wanted the members of the remnant of Israel he was writing to, to know that they had eternal life
- Just by these three passages, it is obvious God does expect us to have much assurance of our salvation

Eight Most Common Reasons Christians Lack Assurance

- (1) Failing to really understand and appreciate salvation being by grace; (2) not learning to appreciate the judicial act of justification; (3) failing to learn the other doctrines designed to produce much assurance; (4) lacking an understanding of their two natures
- (5) A lack of comprehension of what happens when a Christian sins; (6) confusing salvation with service and rewards at the judgment seat of Christ; (7) walking by sight rather than by faith; (8) careless, slack handling of God's Word

L12

The Eight Reasons: A Word of Explanation *Eight Most Common Reasons Christians Lack Assurance, Romans 11:6 to Matthew 24:13*

Reasons One and Two: Grace and the Judicial Act

- Reason one: when something is by grace, works are completely excluded (Romans 11:6) — and that's exactly the way it is with our salvation
- Such Christians don't grasp that the salvation of their souls from the debt and penalty of their sins was an established fact the moment they trusted
- Reason two: the judicial act of justification consists of forgiveness of all sins and the imputation of Christ's righteousness to our account; there is no such thing as disjustification or recondemnation for the believer
- A believer's justification by faith in Christ is an unalterable, irrevocable,

undiminishing, eternity-lasting act of God's perfect justice

Reason Three: The Other Assurance Doctrines

- Reason three: the other doctrines include the much more love of God — loved much more being justified than when we were ungodly sinners — and our baptism by God into the total victory over sin
- Also our security (latter part of Romans 8), where God's power, grace, justice and love are for us; the veracity of God's promises; the new covenant; the earnest and sealing of the Holy Ghost; the judgment seat of Christ

Reasons Four and Five: Two Natures; When a Christian Sins

- Reason four: the sin nature is still possessed by Christians — we still have the lust of the flesh and can still sin — but having such lusts is not a sign that we are not saved
- Reason five: God's response to a Christian's sin is not wrath and recondemnation — justification forbids that — but the indwelling Holy Spirit is grieved (Ephesians 4:30); Paul does not say grieved away

Reasons Six and Seven: Rewards; Walking by Sight

- Reason six: our service to the Lord involves our works — the rightful place for good works; Christians think they find Bible verses that talk about losing salvation when actually those verses are talking about losing rewards at the judgment seat of Christ
- I Corinthians 3:15 and 9:27 (the potential of being a castaway) deal with rewards at the judgment seat of Christ for a Christian, "and not the issue of how to become a Christian at all"
- Reason seven: walking by sight rather than by faith; the sufferings of this present time (Romans 8) is the basic doctrine every believer needs to learn, and we are to base our assurance of our standing before God solely upon the veracity and unchangeableness of His promises

Reason Eight: Careless Bible Handling (Matthew 24:13)

- Reason eight: careless and slack handling of God's Word misapplies passages, ignoring the context and failing to rightly divide the word of truth
- In Matthew 24:13 the Lord is talking about physical deliverance and salvation for His elect remnant of Israel during the tribulation period — not anything in this dispensation of Gentile grace; Hebrews 6, James 2 and Philippians 2:12 are other classically mishandled passages

L13

Reason One: Salvation Really Is by Grace *Romans 3:24–4:16: Works Legally Excluded, Abraham and David, the Promise Sure*

Poor Bible Handling and the Assurance Doctrines

- Christians often take verses out of their proper dispensational setting or context and apply them to their personal salvation, ending up thinking they may have lost it or are in danger of losing it
- Christians are often their own worst enemies here, failing to learn the assurance doctrines God has given to us; the first three of the eight reasons have to do directly with those doctrines

Freely by His Grace (Romans 3:24; Ephesians 2:8–9)

- Reason one: such Christians think some work inconsistent with their salvation will cost them their salvation; they have failed to grasp that God justifies by grace through faith alone

- God offers to justify us “freely by his grace” (Romans 3:24); when something is free, it’s not something you have merited at all
- Being saved by grace means our works have absolutely nothing to do with our salvation (Ephesians 2:8–9); no works, past, present, or future, are taken into account by God when it comes to saving us

Works Legally Excluded: The Law of Faith

- In Romans 3:27–31 Paul shows works have been legally excluded from justification; the law of faith is the only legal principle God’s justice can respond to when it comes to our salvation
- In Romans 4:4, “to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt”; Abraham did not work for his justification — God responded only and solely to his faith, and that’s the very way it is with us
- From David (Romans 4:6), God imputes righteousness without works; there isn’t any work you can do that can cost you your salvation

Justified the Instant He Trusts Christ

- God’s justice justifies a person and eternally saves him the instant he trusts Christ; it doesn’t have to wait to respond to the issue of works
- God’s power to save is resident in the gospel and activated by faith (Romans 1:16); the righteousness of God is available to all men but comes upon the ones who believe (Romans 3:22)

By Grace through Faith: The Promise Sure (Romans 4:13–16)

- The promise of heirship of the world — everlasting life forever with God — is sure because it’s by grace through faith
- Since works are excluded, no works we ever perform can make it so that we no longer possess the promise; being by grace through faith makes it sure, so we have assurance

Reason Two: Stuck Being Justified, Permanently Reconciled

Romans 11:29; 8:33–34; 5:10–21: Legal Implications of Justification and Reconciliation

L14

Reason Two: Almost the Capstone

- Reason two: Christians failing to understand and appreciate the legal implications of both the justification and reconciliation that took place when they trusted Christ
- The legal implications of our reconciliation is the ultimate assurance doctrine — almost the capstone — designed to show that we are stuck being justified; there is no way we can ever be at enmity with God again or get back in Adam

Without Repentance (Romans 11:29)

- In the context of Romans 11:29 Paul is not dealing with our justification but with God’s program with Israel — temporarily suspended, not cancelled, while this dispensation of grace is in effect; God will resume and fulfill it
- Israel’s gifts and calling are not something God can go back on, and He hasn’t given them to the members of the church, the body of Christ today
- What verse 29 says is true of any judicial act of God’s justice: the gift of eternal life and the calling to obtain the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ are without repentance to us as well

No Disjustification, No Recondemnation (Romans 8:33–34)

- Paul shows God is for us in the totality of His being, citing four aspects of His

character and essence: His power, His grace, His justice, and His love

- There is no such thing in God's justice as disjustification — the cancellation of our justification — or recondemnation, the returning of us to a state of condemnation; in other words, losing our salvation
- The adversary would love to lay a charge against us, but Paul asks whether anybody could successfully do that: there's no possibility of anyone successfully laying a charge against us — the adversary can't lay one, someone else can't, even you yourself can't; God's justified you
- Christ's sacrifice is good enough not only to save us but to eternally maintain our salvation; He paid for our sins past, present, and future, and is at the right hand of God making intercession for us

Not as the Offence: Permanent Reconciliation (Romans 5:10–21)

- We used to be at enmity with God; now, being justified by faith, we are reconciled to God (Romans 5:10). It was the disobedient work of Adam that produced our alienation and enmity
- Christ did not simply reverse what Adam did: what Adam had before he sinned was probationary life with God, conditional fellowship — there would be no way we could ever have assurance of salvation there; Christ provided for us to have what He has
- Our reconciliation is not conditional righteousness and conditional acceptance, but Christ's perfect righteousness and perfect acceptance — not conditional life, but His eternal life
- As sin reigned unto death in Adam, so now grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life; we are stuck being justified unto eternal life, permanently, eternally reconciled to God

L15

God Is for Us; God Cannot Lie *Romans 8:31–39; II Corinthians 1:17–22; Titus 1:1–3: More Assurance Doctrines*

Other Assurance Doctrines

- Already examined: the complete exclusion of our works, which have nothing to do with obtaining or maintaining salvation, and God's irrevocable act of justifying us — there is no such thing as disjustification
- The reconciliation to God received through Christ is really the capstone of all the assurance doctrines; failure to learn the other assurance doctrines also contributes to a lack of assurance

God Is for Us (Romans 8:31–39)

- Access (Romans 5:2) is having complete acceptance with God: every aspect of God's character and essence is for us now — the expression "for us" runs through the passage
- Every aspect is for us, but Paul cites four in particular: His power (verse 31), His grace (verse 32), His justice (verses 33–34) and His love (verses 35–39)
- Paul asks a question as he introduces each one, to show none of the four is anything but for us, regardless of what the circumstances of our lives may seem to indicate; we go by the doctrine that is recorded

His Power, Grace, Justice and Love

- God is omnipotent; no one, including ourselves, can stand in His way and thwart Him from accomplishing what He has declared He will do with us
- Having begun in grace, God is not going to change horses in midstream and

deal with us on the basis of our works: we don't only obtain salvation by grace — salvation is maintained by God's grace

- His justice is for us: no one can successfully lay a charge against us or accomplish our recondemnation, not even ourselves
- When miserable things take place, Christians often get the idea that maybe God doesn't love them anymore; but "in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us"
- We have a perfectly secure, eternally secure, permanently established position of reconciliation to God in Christ; the understanding and appreciation for the security of his salvation that Paul expresses (verses 38–39) is the same every member of the body of Christ ought to express

The Veracity of God's Promises (II Corinthians 1)

- Veracity means God always tells the truth — He is truth itself; He cannot lie. Our promise of eternal life in a glorified immortal body is secure also because it is based on the veracity of God
- Answering some Corinthians who thought him fickle, Paul says "all the promises of God in him *are* yea, and in him Amen" — all true, you can count on it — because "God *is* true"

God, That Cannot Lie (Titus 1:1–3)

- God promised eternal life to Himself before the world began, then promised it to us in the gospel He committed to the Apostle Paul; because God cannot lie, the promise is true and will come to pass

L16

Sealed and the Earnest of the Spirit *II Corinthians 1:21–22; 5:1–5; Ephesians 1:13–14; 4:30; I Corinthians 3:8–15*

The Gospel of Our Salvation

- God is holding back His day of wrath and offering to freely save anyone; salvation isn't by works, ceremony or ritual, but is a gift of God's grace given in response to simple faith in the Lord Jesus Christ

Two Security Issues (II Corinthians 1:21–22)

- At the moment we trusted Christ, God did some things to us designed as security issues; Paul names two in connection with the Holy Spirit — the earnest and the sealing — to convince our hearts we will receive what He has promised

The Earnest: Earnest Money from God (II Corinthians 5)

- An earnest is given after making a purchase to declare that the purchaser will certainly return to collect what he has purchased; earnest money is kind of like a down payment
- That token would also be a legal earnest, assuring the slave that he now belonged to the one who purchased him and that his new purchaser would return
- God purchased us out from the slave market of sin and Satan's possession; the earnest of the Spirit is like earnest money from God declaring His purpose to return and receive us unto Himself
- Paul doesn't say "we hope" but "we know": God "hath wrought us for the selfsame thing" and given the earnest of the Spirit (verses 1, 5)
- The indwelling Holy Spirit functions as an earnest: the promise that the purchased possession, our bodies, will be redeemed by the return of the Lord

Jesus Christ for us

Sealed with the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 1:13–14; 4:30)

- We were sealed with, not by, the Holy Spirit — the Holy Spirit Himself functions as the seal; a seal is not only for identification but also for security
- Ephesians 4:30 underscores that we are "sealed unto the day of redemption" — the day the Lord Jesus Christ returns for us, ends this dispensation of grace, and redeems our bodies
- God stakes the integrity of His entire being on fulfilling the promise; if we were not to get the redemption of our bodies, the Holy Spirit Himself would be forfeited — an impossible thing

The Judgment Seat of Christ (I Corinthians 3:8–15)

- The judgment seat is not about whether one is allowed into heaven; it concerns the evaluation of our service and the privilege of being rewarded for service well pleasing to the Lord
- Only saved individuals in this dispensation of grace will be at the judgment seat; a Christian could receive no reward at all and yet be perfectly secure in his salvation
- Works of wood, hay and stubble produced after the flesh will be burnt up with loss of reward — but "he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire"

L17

The Old Sin Nature Is Still With Us *Reason Four: II Corinthians 5:16–17; Romans 6:1–13; Galatians 5:16*

Reason Four: Sin Still Dwells in Our Members

- Of eight common reasons Christians lack assurance, three have been covered; the fourth is not understanding that even though we are saved, sin still dwells in our members
- We still have the old sin nature, and it will try to constantly assert itself; Christians sometimes think, or are outright taught, that once saved they won't have sinful desires anymore
- It is easy for such a Christian to think that maybe he isn't saved anymore — so it is very important to understand the doctrine of the sin nature we still possess as Christians

II Corinthians 5:17 in Its Context

- The verse is often used to teach a complete newness of wants, desires and habits once saved; its context isn't talking about that issue at all — false doctrines are taught by taking verses out of their context
- It concerns the great dispensational change God made in setting aside temporarily His program and dealings with the nation Israel; the old things passed away are those in verse 16 — knowing men after the flesh, Jew and Gentile distinctiveness
- Paul is not talking about a personal change in an individual's life; teaching from this verse a complete newness of habits gives an understanding that contributes to a lack of assurance of salvation when the old sin nature does rear its ugly head

Sanctified: Sin's Mastership Broken (Romans 6)

- Romans 1–5 teaches that God justified us; from Romans 6:1, that He has also sanctified us. The old sin nature hasn't been eradicated: sin's mastership is broken, but sin has not been evicted from our members yet

- Being dead to sin, our sanctified position in Christ, is sin's mastership being broken over us; the mechanics is the Holy Spirit baptizing us into Christ's death, burial and resurrection — no water baptism at all
- Verse 4 says "we also should walk in newness of life" — not that we will; it is not automatic, but the consistent thing to do in view of our sanctified position
- The body of sin is going to be completely destroyed at the redemption of our bodies, which we don't have yet; we have our sanctified position even in these mortal bodies

Let Not Sin Reign

- In verse 12 Paul exhorts us to begin to put our position into practice; sin's broken mastership gives us the freedom to yield ourselves unto God — but we can still yield to the old sin nature
- The lusts of sin are still in our bodies, appealing to our mind, mentality and will; in view of who we are in Christ we don't have to let sin reign or obey its lusts
- Galatians 5:16 doesn't say you won't have the lusts; it says you won't fulfill them — when lust or sin comes along, it is not a sign that you aren't saved

L18

When We Do Sin as Christians

Reason Five: Romans 8:33–34; 5:20–21; Ephesians 4:30; 5:16; II Corinthians 7:11

Reason Five: What Takes Place When We Sin

- Four of the eight common reasons have been covered; failing to learn the assurance doctrines is the first major reason, and misunderstanding other doctrinal matters is the other major reason
- Reason five is very closely related to reason four: Christians often do not understand what takes place when they sin, how God responds, and how He wants them to respond — and this can contribute to a lack of assurance

No Disjustification, No Recondemnation (Romans 8:33–34; 5:20–21)

- The starting point: when Christians sin, the loss of justification and the return to a status of condemnation in God's sight does not take place at all
- Christ's propitiatory sacrifice is eternally effective: it takes care not only of sins at the moment we trusted Christ but of sins that follow; God's justice was for us then, is for us now, and will always be for us
- Paul has in mind the adversary, who would most of all love to lay a charge against God's elect; Christ's eternally effective sacrifice and intercession has dismissed that charge and ever will
- God does not strip justification away from us or recondemn us: our standing before God in Christ is the standing in His grace, and the power of that grace is more powerful than sin

Grieved, Not Grieved Away (Ephesians 4:30)

- In the context of not living consistent with who we are in Christ, Paul underscores that we are "sealed unto the day of redemption" — nothing takes place that has to do with our eternal standing before God
- When we yield our members unto sin, the Holy Spirit who dwells in our bodies is grieved — that is God's response; but He is not grieved away: the last part of verse 30 shows the impossibility of that

Wasted Time and the Loss of Rewards (Ephesians 5:16)

- When we sin, we have wasted time — for Christians sin is the biggest waste

of time there is; because of our sanctified position we have the privilege of redeeming time, purchasing time to God's honor and glory

- At the judgment seat of Christ we will suffer the loss of rewards for the wasted time that sin has been in our lives (I Corinthians 3) — but it is not God's justice that responds against us

Sorrowing After a Godly Sort (II Corinthians 7:11)

- There is no need to beg God for forgiveness — we have forgiveness of all our sins, past, present and future — nor to ask God to take you back, because you haven't been lost
- Sorrowing after a godly sort: it ought to grieve us in our hearts also — and there is a difference between sorrowing after a godly sort and sorrowing after the world
- God wants us, when we sin, to have a change of mind consistent with who we are in Christ; but the first and most important thing is that there is no such thing as disjustification

L19

Misunderstanding the Judgment Seat of Christ *Reason Six: Suffering Loss, Castaway, Denied — I Corinthians 3, 9; II Timothy 2*

The Gospel of Christ

- The gospel of Christ is the good news that Christ died on the cross to function as your substitute Redeemer; no one is saved by works, ceremonies or joining a church — faith alone in Christ alone is God's requirement for salvation

Reason Six: Misunderstanding the Judgment Seat

- Five of the eight reasons have been covered; next to ignorance, Keith says misunderstanding, "I guess," is behind most of the remaining reasons
- The sixth reason is misunderstanding the judgment seat of Christ — in particular verses that speak about suffering loss, being a castaway, or being denied by the Lord in that day
- The judgment seat evaluates our service as Christians, not whether we remain saved or have entrance into heaven — that is guaranteed by the judicial act of justification when we trusted Christ
- God also sanctified us; the issue at the judgment seat is rewards for walking consistent with who we are as sanctified people

Suffer Loss, Yet Saved (I Corinthians 3)

- Verse 8 introduces receiving rewards according to labor; our sanctified position gives us the capacity to live unto God and to labor with God in what He's doing
- Whether we have eternal life is settled the moment we trust Christ; but Christians can still walk after the flesh, and Paul indicates two categories of building material
- Suffering loss in verse 15 is loss of rewards, not loss of salvation — "he himself shall be saved"; Christians take the expression out of its context

A Prize and a Castaway (I Corinthians 9)

- From verse 17 the context is rewards; in verse 24 Paul speaks of a prize, not a gift — salvation and eternal life are a gift
- A member of the body of Christ may not be rewarded at all; Keith says the literal concept behind "castaway" is being disapproved — disapproved for

rewards

If We Deny Him (II Timothy 2:11–13)

- Verse 11, "if we be dead with *him*," reminds us of the sanctified position taught in Romans 6, 7 and 8; for those who are faithful to the message and suffer for so doing, there is the reward of reigning together with Christ
- Verse 12, "if we deny *him*, he also will deny us," is not terminology describing possibly losing salvation — that's not the context; it is possible to be denied the right to reign with Christ as a reward at the judgment seat
- Verse 13, "he abideth faithful": He has promised everlasting life on the basis of the perfect justification He has given; what is possible at the judgment seat is losing rewards, not salvation

L20

God Isn't Dealing With Us as With Israel *Reason Number 7: Deuteronomy 28; Romans 6:14; Galatians 4; Romans 8:18–39*

Reason Number 7: How God Deals With Us Today

- A misunderstanding of how God deals with us today in this dispensation of His grace can also lead to a lack of assurance
- Christians often think God is dealing with us today just as He dealt with Israel in time past; when bad things happen, they often conclude that maybe they aren't even saved anymore

Deuteronomy 28: The Law Contract

- In God's program with Israel a law contract was in effect: God would deal with Israel on the basis of their performance of that law, blessing or cursing them
- Deuteronomy 28 describes tangible, physical and visible blessings that directly affect the circumstances of the lives of the members of the nation Israel; if they did not perform, they were not only not blessed but cursed, and the curses intensify over time
- If bad things were happening, Israel knew on the basis of the law contract that they were displeasing to the Lord; Israel therefore naturally looked at the circumstances of their lives to determine how they stood with God

Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth

- Failing to rightly divide the word of truth, a Christian can easily start to conclude that he is really coming under cursings and maybe has even lost the salvation he thought he once had
- We can't go back to Deuteronomy 28 or Leviticus 26 to evaluate what happens in the circumstances of our lives — one reason it is so critical to rightly divide the word of truth (II Timothy 2:15)

Not Under the Law: Dealt With as Adult Sons

- We're not under the law (Romans 6:14); a grace system of operation is in effect today, and there isn't any blessing or cursing from God on the basis of our performance
- As Paul teaches in Galatians 4, God deals with us as adult sons, not as little children under the tutor and governor principle of the law
- We're to confidently walk by faith in the knowledge of who we are in Christ (II Corinthians 5), regardless of what the circumstances of our lives are like

Sufferings in This Dispensation (Romans 8:18–39)

- Grievous things can and do happen to us as Christians; the last half of Romans 8 is fundamental doctrine so we can respond in a proper manner to

the sufferings of this present time

- We can expect sufferings, but not because we're failing to perform or failing to please the Lord — a big difference from God's program with Israel
- Paul experienced the sufferings of this present time and, aboundingly, the sufferings of Christ, yet was well pleasing to the Lord; nothing we experience is to be interpreted as separation from the love of God

L21

Improper Bible Handling: Physical Salvation, Seeing the Lord

Reason Number 8 begun: Matthew 24:13; Hebrews 12:14; Isaiah 33:13–17

Reason Number 8: Improper Bible Handling

- The 8th and final reason: all too often Christians are just downright careless in their handling of God's Word
- Christians often think they can find a verse that contradicts the assurance doctrines and teaches you can lose your salvation; yet there are no contradictions in the Bible at all — only apparent ones, due to ignorance or improper or dishonest Bible handling

Matthew 24:13: A Physical Salvation

- Matthew 24:13 is taught to mean you have to maintain your salvation, but it isn't talking about possibly losing your salvation at the end of your life at all
- The salvation in view isn't the salvation of anybody's soul — it isn't spiritual salvation; the issue is a physical salvation
- The Lord is not talking about how someone gets saved, nor to unbelievers; He is talking to His disciples in His program with Israel
- The things the Lord speaks of pertain to the day of the Lord, particularly the Great Tribulation; as Paul teaches in Romans 9, 10 and 11, this present dispensation of God's grace has suspended God's program with Israel
- The salvation in verse 13 is the physical deliverance the disciples will experience at the end of the Lord's day: they'd be physically delivered by the angels gathering them together unto the Lord in the land of Israel

Hebrews 12:14: Seeing the Lord

- Hebrews 12:14 does not say "without which no man shall be saved" but "without which no man shall see the Lord" — and seeing the Lord and being saved are not the exact same thing
- Hebrews is not an epistle written by the Apostle Paul to the body of Christ; it is written to the Hebrews, and deals with members of the remnant of Israel who have the prospect of ruling and reigning with the Lord in His kingdom
- They are reminded that otherwise they won't end up seeing the Lord, but it doesn't tell them they won't be saved

Isaiah 33: The Lord's Royal Entourage

- Hebrews 12:14 refers to Isaiah 33:13–17: those who have been faithful to the Lord and have stood firm against the afflictions and persecutions from Israel's vain religious system get the reward of being part of the Lord's royal entourage
- Hebrews 12:14 is not a passage about anybody losing their salvation, either in Israel's program, and certainly not in this dispensation of grace

L22

What Kind of Salvation Is in View? *Reason Number 8 continued: Luke 14:25–33; I Timothy 4:16; Philippians 2:12*

Ways the Bible Is Improperly Handled

- We take verses out of their proper and unique context, ignore the context altogether, string verses together that God never put together, or don't rightly divide the word of truth and confuse God's program for Israel
- One grievous fruit of improper Bible handling is lacking the wonderful, peaceful assurance of salvation that God wants us as Christians to have

Luke 14:25–33: Discipleship, Not Salvation

- The passage is commonly used to teach that great dedication and service must be performed in order to get saved; yet neither the word saved nor eternal life is used in the passage at all
- Discipleship and being saved are two different things: no one can be a disciple until he is first saved; discipleship is an additional issue, and it does involve one's works
- The Lord speaks of this in His program with Israel, where the cost of discipleship was very extreme — not of discipleship or service in this dispensation of grace

Save Simply Means Deliverance

- The word salvation, or save or saved, is not always referring to salvation from the debt and penalty of your sins; most of the time it refers to a physical deliverance from some predicament or trouble
- The word save simply means deliverance, and there are many kinds of deliverances; there is the kind of salvation the Lord provided for when He died upon the cross and functioned as our substitute Redeemer, our Savior

I Timothy 4:16: Delivered From Satan's Policy of Evil

- Taken out of context, the verse is taught to mean Timothy must be careful or he'll lose his salvation; it does not teach that you might lose your salvation
- The Holy Spirit describes in great detail the satanic policy of evil in effect throughout this dispensation of grace — seducing spirits and doctrines of devils (I Timothy 4:1)
- Paul speaks of Timothy and the local assembly he oversees being delivered or saved from being victimized by the satanic policy of evil

Philippians 2:12: Working Out Their Own Deliverance

- Mishandled, "work out your own salvation" is used to teach that we can't assume we've got it; Paul speaks of deliverance from the intimidating tactics of their adversaries
- Some of the Philippians were being cast into prison and suffering for Christ's sake; Paul, in prison in Rome, was being saved from those tactics by particular doctrines (Philippians 1:19)
- They were to take the same doctrines that worked in Paul and work out their own salvation or deliverance from those intimidating tactics

L23

Keep Verses Within Their Context *Reason Number 8 concluded: Romans 8:12–13; Colossians 1:21–23; Galatians 5:4; Hebrews 6:4–6*

Let the Context Tell You

- Most commonly of all, we don't rightly divide the word of truth; one of the most common grievous fruits of improper Bible handling is lacking the

peaceful assurance of salvation

- You can't assume salvation always refers to salvation from the debt and penalty of your sins; keep verses within their context and let the context tell you what kind of salvation is in view

Romans 8:12–13: Functional Life and Functional Death

- These verses are used to argue that living after the flesh means we will spiritually die and lose our salvation; but the life and death here are not spiritual, and not even physical, life and death
- The context is clear from chapter 6, where Paul began the doctrine of our sanctified position in Christ; in Romans 6, 7 and 8 the issue is what we might call functional life and functional death
- The issue is living unto God and bringing forth fruit in the details of our lives that honors and pleases the Lord, is acceptable to Him, and will be rewarded by Him at the judgment seat of Christ
- Walking after the Spirit is simply being mindful of who we are in Christ by the Holy Spirit having baptized us into Christ's death, burial, and resurrection
- Walking after the flesh is not walking in sinful deeds and in wicked things but trying to please the Lord by walking under the law

Colossians 1:21–23: Presented to the Father

- Paul already made it clear in verse 21 that we are reconciled to God; when he taught the doctrine of the judgment seat of Christ, he made it clear that is what our presentation in verse 22 is all about
- At and after the judgment seat of Christ, the Lord Jesus Christ presents us to God the Father as He found us in our service; that evaluation will be used to determine rewards from the Father — the passage isn't about potentially losing our salvation

Galatians 5:4: Fallen From Grace

- Falling from grace isn't something done when a Christian sins; the people who fall from grace are the people who try to justify themselves by the law
- It is impossible for someone who has trusted the Lord Jesus Christ to lose their salvation: the reconciliation is permanent, and there is no such thing as disjustification

Hebrews 6:4–6: The Apostate Element

- Hebrews is written to the Hebrews and pertains to God's program with Israel, not this dispensation of grace; the people spoken about in verses 4, 5 and 6 aren't even saved in the first place
- The point has been reached when it is impossible to renew that apostate element to repentance again; the passage is not about anything that could ever happen to someone who has trusted the Lord Jesus Christ

L24

Surveying the Riches of God's Grace *Numbers 1–10: Colossians 1:12–14; II Corinthians 5:20–21; Romans 1, 5, 6; I Thessalonians 1:10*

Grace Instead of Wrath

- The world was ripe for the day of the Lord's wrath after God's merciful opportunity to Israel; Stephen saw the Lord standing, signifying the time had arrived for His day of wrath (Acts 7)
- Instead, God sent Paul forth with the unexpected good news that He was holding back His day of wrath and bringing in an unprophesied dispensation

of His grace

For Those Not Saved

- This dispensation of grace will not go on forever; it will end one of these days. Those not saved will pay the debt and penalty of their sins themselves in eternal separation from God
- Christ died on the cross in your place to completely pay that debt and penalty; God's only requirement is that you trust completely in what Christ did for your salvation

Numbers 1–3: Forgiveness, Justification, Eternal Life

- Keith gives the riches as a list, with at least a verse or two for each; there are at least 35, and that doesn't exhaust the list
- Number 1 (Colossians 1:12–14): complete forgiveness of all our sins, past, present, and future; God's justice was put in the position in which it could completely forgive them all
- Number 2 (II Corinthians 5:21), like the flip side of complete forgiveness: perfect justification; our sins were imputed to Christ, and Christ's righteousness was imputed unto us
- Number 3 (Romans 6:23): as part of our salvation package we received the gift of eternal life; we were justified unto eternal life

Numbers 4–6: The Three Judicial Results (Romans 5:1–2)

- Keith turns the three judicial results of justification into numbers 4, 5 and 6. Number 4: being justified, we possess eternal peace with God, whose justice used to be ready to pour out its wrath upon us
- Number 5: access, involving complete acceptance and harmony with every aspect of God's character and essence. Number 6: the hope of the glory of God, involving a glorified immortal body like the one Christ came back from the dead in

Numbers 7–10: Saints Through Promised Deliverance

- Number 7 (Romans 1:7): God no longer calls us sinners but saints, and we no longer bear a moniker of unrighteousness; we are called saints because He justified us, forgave us all our sins, and sanctified us the moment we trusted Christ
- Number 8 (Romans 5:5–9): being justified, we are the objects of God's much more love. Number 9 (Romans 5:11–21): permanent reconciliation; taken out of Adam and put into Christ, it can never be lost, forfeited, revoked or diminished
- Number 10 (I Thessalonians 1:10): promised deliverance from the Lord's day of wrath; when this dispensation of grace ends we are taken out, the rapture of the church, to the heavenly places, where our vocation and purpose is

L25

Sanctified Position, Adoption of Sons, the Spirit's Ministries

Numbers 11–22: Romans 6 and 8; I Corinthians 2, 6, 12; Ephesians 1:13–14; II Corinthians 5; Philippians 1:28–29

Number 11: Baptized Into Christ (Romans 6)

- Keith resumes the list at number 11, reminding listeners that it is by no means an exhaustive list
- Number 11: the moment we trusted Christ, the Holy Spirit baptized us into Christ's death, burial, and resurrection, giving us a sanctified position in Christ

so we can live unto God, even though we still have bodies of sin

- This baptism has nothing to do with water; God the Holy Spirit performs it. A baptism is a purification unto sanctification and a new identification
- God also made us dead to sin, a completely different issue; being made dead to sin, sin's mastership doesn't have to rule in the details of our lives

Numbers 12–13: Under Grace; the Adoption of Sons

- Number 12 (Romans 6:14–15): part of our sanctified position is the liberty of no longer being under the law but under grace; the law was never designed to enable someone to live unto God by being under it
- Sin does have dominion under the law, but we are under grace, and our sanctified position in Christ can operate under grace
- Number 13 (Romans 8:14–15): God deals with us as sons in this dispensation; we have received the adoption of sons
- In time past God dealt with Israel as little children under the tutor and governor principle of the law; He treats us as adult sons, and laboring together with God is a privilege of sonship

Numbers 14–15: Indwelt and Sealed by the Holy Spirit

- Number 14 (I Corinthians 6:19–20): instead of the tutor and governor principle of the law, the Holy Spirit Himself indwells our bodies
- Number 15 (Ephesians 1:13–14): we are sealed with the Holy Spirit unto the day of redemption; He sealed us the moment we trusted Christ, He Himself is the seal, and He functions as the earnest of our inheritance

The Spirit's Ministries; Numbers 17–22

- We also benefit from the Holy Spirit's intercessory ministry (Romans 8:26–27) when we don't know what to pray for. Number 17: His special illuminating ministry concerning the revelation of the mystery of God's will, as we study Romans through Philemon
- Number 18: members of God's new creation, the church, the body of Christ, which is different from the nation Israel. Number 19: the capacity to earn rewards at the judgment seat of Christ. Number 20: the capacity to know God in intimacy of daily fellowship
- Number 21: complete victory over death; if we die before the Lord returns, absent from the body, present with the Lord. Number 22 (Philippians 1:28–29): the privilege of suffering for Christ's sake to the glory of God

L26

Riches That Pertain to Our Exaltation in Christ *Justification, Sanctification, Exaltation; Numbers 23–33: Ephesians, Colossians, I Timothy 3:16*

Three Main Categories of Riches

- II Corinthians 8:9: we have been made rich in Christ, not in money or material possessions, but in the riches of God's grace and all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ
- The riches group into three main categories: the first, at the beginning of the list, pertain to our justification in Christ; the second to our sanctification, such as the adoption of sons, the Spirit's indwelling, and earning rewards at the judgment seat of Christ
- The remaining riches all pertain to our exaltation in Christ: we not only have justification and sanctification in Christ, we also have exaltation in Christ

Our Exaltation With Christ (Ephesians 2)

- God exalted His Son to be head of all principality and power; part of our position in Christ involves being exalted with Him, raised up and made to sit together in heavenly places (Ephesians 2:6)
- Paul deals with the doctrine of our exaltation with Christ in his later epistles, Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians in particular

Numbers 23–25: Deliverance, Citizenship, Vocation and Inheritance

- Number 23 (Colossians 1:13): total deliverance from Satan's ownership; we were actually owned by him. Number 24: complete legal heavenly citizenship; translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son, we belong there
- Number 25 (Ephesians 1:19–23): we now possess a vocation and inheritance in the heavenly kingdom of Christ as the head of all principality and power; the members of the church, the body of Christ, will function as the fullness of Christ's governmental authorities in the heavenly places

Numbers 26–28: Spiritual Blessings, Ages to Come, the Mystery of God's Will

- Number 26 (Ephesians 1:3): all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ; every one needed for our role there in the ages to come, we possess right now
- Number 27: we will be the objects of the exceeding riches of God's grace in the ages to come. Number 28 (Ephesians 1:7–10): the revelation of the mystery of God's will, kept secret in ages past and now made manifest

Numbers 29–33: Fit for the Heavenly Places

- Number 29 (Colossians 1:12): full fitness to be utilized by God in the heavenly places. Number 30 (Ephesians 3:9–10): the capacity to make an impact to God's glory in the heavenly places before we ever even get there
- Number 31 (Ephesians 6:10–12): the complete capacity to withstand the satanic policy of evil against us; the whole armor is there, and we just need to avail ourselves of it
- Number 32 (I Timothy 3:16), in Keith's words: “we possess the privilege now of the fulfilling the mystery of godliness.” Number 33, the final richness: the grandeur of the dispensation of the fullness of times to look forward to and function in throughout eternity

Key Doctrinal Distinctions

Which Gospel Is the Gospel of Our Salvation?

There is more than one gospel in the Bible; the gospel of our salvation today is not the gospel of the kingdom, which pertains to God’s program with Israel. The everlasting gospel of Revelation 14 is preached after this dispensation of grace is over; anyone who responds to it today finds no salvation in it. When God raised up Paul, He suspended His program with Israel and gave Paul the gospel of the grace of God, the gospel of our salvation in this dispensation.

Grace vs. Works

Grace and works are mutually exclusive and mutually destructive: something is either one hundred percent by grace and zero percent by works, or one hundred percent by works and zero percent by grace. If you work for something, you get it not by grace but by debt; belief is not a work but a non-meritorious response, and faith is the only thing legally compatible with grace. Works is a destroyer of grace; that is why there is no power of God unto salvation in a perversion of the gospel of Christ.

Salvation vs. Service, Discipleship and Rewards

Salvation and serving the Lord are not the same thing; salvation and discipleship are not the same thing. How to be saved involves faith alone in Christ alone; how a saved person ought to serve the Lord involves doing the good works he has been created in Christ Jesus to do — two separate and distinct matters, not to be mixed together. Commonly heard gospel cliches describe continuous ongoing works of the Christian life and of Christian service that God exhorts saved people to do, not how a person gets saved; and believing isn't the same as inviting or asking. The judgment seat of Christ has to do with the evaluation of our service to the Lord and reward for service well pleasing to Him; it has nothing to do with whether we are saved or kept saved. Salvation and eternal life are a gift; in I Corinthians 9 Paul is talking about a prize, and in I Corinthians 3:15 suffering loss is loss of rewards, not loss of salvation.

Repentance: A Change of Mind

To repent does not mean to turn from one's sins but to change one's mind, to think differently about something; where God is said to have repented in Genesis 6 it cannot mean turning from sins, for God has never sinned. In this dispensation repentance is spoken of in connection with the gospel as changing your mind about how you stand in God's sight; turning from sin is something God exhorts Christians to do after He has saved and sanctified them.

Justified and Permanently Reconciled

A believer's justification is an unalterable, irrevocable, undiminishing, eternity-lasting act of God's perfect justice; there is no such thing as disjustification or recondemnation for the believer. Christ did not simply reverse what Adam did; He didn't provide for us to have what Adam originally had, but what He has: His perfect righteousness and perfect acceptance with God. We are stuck being justified unto eternal life; there is no way we can ever be at enmity with God again or get back in Adam.

Dead to Sin vs. Sin Eradicated

When we trusted Christ God not only justified us (Romans 1–5) but also sanctified us (Romans 6); being dead to sin is sin's mastership being broken over us. Being dead to sin does not mean sin has been eradicated from our members; we still have the old sin nature, and lust or sin coming along is not a sign that we aren't saved. When a Christian sins there is no disjustification or recondemnation; the Holy Spirit is grieved, not grieved away, and time is wasted — for which we suffer the loss of rewards at the judgment seat of Christ.

Israel's Program vs. This Dispensation of Grace

The gospel of the kingdom is the good news about the time having come in God's program with Israel for the kingdom of heaven to be established on this earth; it is not the gospel of our salvation today in this dispensation of Gentile grace. Matthew 10:37–38 is part of the first commission the Lord gave to His 12 apostles, with the gospel of the kingdom in view; it concerns being counted worthy of ruling and reigning with Him in that kingdom, not how someone gets saved in the first place. Luke 11 is God's program with

Israel in the gospel accounts, not the dispensation of Gentile grace; in Revelation 3:20 the Lord is talking to members of the remnant of Israel, and standing at the door is not standing at the door of anybody's heart. God isn't dealing with us today on the basis of the law contract; we can't use Deuteronomy 28 or Leviticus 26 to evaluate the circumstances of our lives. A grace system of operation is in effect today: God deals with us as adult sons, not as little children under the tutor and governor principle of the law. Hebrews is written to the Hebrews and pertains to God's program with Israel; Hebrews 12:14 speaks of seeing the Lord, and seeing the Lord and being saved are not the exact same thing.

What Kind of Salvation Is in View?

Every time you come across the word salvation in the Bible you can't assume it refers to salvation from the debt and penalty of your sins; the word save simply means deliverance, so keep verses within their context and let the context tell you what kind of salvation is in view. In Matthew 24:13 the salvation is a physical salvation for the members of the remnant of Israel at the end of the great tribulation — God's program with Israel, not this dispensation of Gentile grace. In Philippians 2:12 salvation refers to deliverance from the tactics of the satanic policy of evil; I Timothy 4:16 concerns Timothy and the local assembly being delivered from being victimized by that policy of evil.

Key Scripture References

Genesis 6:5–7	Repent applied to God twice — so it cannot mean to turn from one's sins
Deuteronomy 28	Israel's law contract: blessed for performance, cursed for failing to perform — not to be used to evaluate the circumstances of our lives
Matthew 3:1–12	The gospel of the kingdom preached to the nation Israel; John commands them to repent — to think differently about themselves
Matthew 10:37–38	The Lord's first commission to His 12 apostles: counted worthy of ruling and reigning — not how to be saved; not describing this dispensation of grace
Matthew 24:13	A physical deliverance for the remnant of Israel at the end of the great tribulation — God's program with Israel, not how to be saved unto eternal life
Luke 14	God's program with Israel: discipleship, which has a cost — not how anybody gets saved
Romans 1:15–17	The gospel is the power of God unto salvation, activated by faith and faith alone
Romans 1:18–32	The gospel's first part: all men are worthy of God's wrath
Romans 2:1 – 3:20	The second part: nobody can escape being worthy of His wrath by anything they do; here Paul says men need to repent
Romans 3:21–26	The third part: God offers to justify any man freely by His grace, received simply by faith in His blood
Romans 3:27 – 4:8	Boasting excluded; Abraham and David justified by faith without works

Romans 4:13–16	Of faith that it might be by grace: being by grace through faith is what makes the promise sure
Romans 5:1–2	The three judicial results of justification: peace with God, access, and the hope of the glory of God
Romans 5:12–21	Christ did not simply reverse what Adam did; He provided for us to have what He has — permanent reconciliation
Romans 6:1–15	Turning from sin dealt with among the saved; the sanctified position — baptized into Jesus Christ, dead to sin, sin's mastership broken; under grace
Romans 8:31–39	God is for us — His power (v31), grace (v32), justice (vv33–34) and love (vv35–39); nothing can separate us from His love
Romans 11:6	Any time anything is by grace, works have nothing to do with it
Romans 12:1–2	Addressed to brethren already saved — how they ought to respond to the mercies of God, not how to be saved
I Corinthians 3:10–15	The judgment seat of Christ: suffering loss is loss of rewards, not loss of salvation
I Corinthians 9:24–27	A prize, not a gift; castaway — disapproved for rewards
II Corinthians 1:17–22	As God is true, all the promises of God in Christ are yea; sealed and given the earnest of the Spirit
II Corinthians 5:1–5	Paul doesn't say we hope — he knows this without a shadow of a doubt; the earnest of the Spirit is the promise that our bodies will be redeemed
II Corinthians 5:20–21	As we function as ambassadors for Christ, God Himself is the one doing the beseeching
II Corinthians 11:1–4, 13–15	Another gospel; Satan's ministers are ministers of righteousness
Galatians 1:6–7	Perversions of the gospel of Christ — another gospel which is not another
Ephesians 1:13–14	Sealed with the Holy Spirit, who Himself is the seal — for identification and also for security
Ephesians 2:1–9	By nature children of wrath; saved by grace, through faith, not of works
Ephesians 4:30	Sealed with the Holy Spirit until the day of redemption; when we sin He is grieved, not grieved away
Philippians 2:12	Deliverance from being victimized by the intimidating tactics of adversaries — a classic example of the Bible being mishandled
Titus 3:5	Not by works of righteousness; the washing of regeneration is not water baptism
Hebrews 6:4–6	The apostate element in Israel; those spoken of aren't even saved — nothing to do with a Christian losing salvation
Hebrews 12:14	Written to the Hebrews: seeing the Lord is a special reward, not the same thing as being saved
Revelation 3:20	Spoken to members of the remnant of Israel — not standing at the door of anybody's heart
Revelation 14:6	The everlasting gospel, preached after this dispensation of grace — no

	salvation in it for anyone today