

The Implications of Justification (Part 2)

Romans 3:27-31

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I was thinking this week that for some of you all is right with the world again, because after five months baseball has returned. I thought of you baseball lovers this week because I read again a quote from Ravi Zacharias, the apologist. He wrote this, “Walter Truett Anderson humorously gives us an insight into our postmodern culture in his book *Reality Isn’t What It Used to Be*. [*I love that title.*] He compares the current predicament, the current philosophy that surrounds us, with an analogy from baseball.” Zacharias goes on to say that, “When you think about how an umpire in baseball calls balls and strikes, you have really a great illustration of how philosophy has changed over the last several hundred years. A premodern baseball umpire would have said something like this: There are balls and there are strikes, and I just call them the way they are.” That’s a premodern umpire. “The modernist umpire would have said, I just call them the way I see them.” And then he makes the point, “The postmodernist umpire would say something like this: They ain’t nothing until I call ‘em.” “You see,” Zacharias goes on to say, “in terms of postmodern thinking all reality is subject dependent and the postmodernist frames reality at his or her whim.” It is nothing until I say what it is.

Postmodernism, as you know, is simply a label for the prevailing intellectual mood and perspective in western culture that began back in the early 1970’s. Here’s how D. A. Carson describes postmodernism. He says, “It insists that absolute certainty is no longer possible. To be frank, it is a mere illusion, the product of disreputable arrogance. Moreover, absolute certainty is not even desirable because it engenders a narrow outlook and cascading self-righteousness. Surely, the postmodernist would say it is better to encourage insights that flow from many different perspectives, including, different religions and diverse moral codes.” Carson goes on to say that, “In postmodernism whatever truth we discover cannot possibly enjoy ahistorical universality. In other words, it can’t be truth that is from outside of history that is universally true. It will be true for one culture but not another. It will be true in one language but not in another. It will be true for this social grouping, but not for that one.” This is postmodernism.

At its heart, postmodernism is a rejection of certainty about everything. In fact, a rejection about the very idea of certainty, the desirability of certainty. Of course, such a claim is absolute illogic. It is nonsense. Because, think about this, every truth claim is, by its very nature, exclusive. In fact, when the postmodernist says, we cannot be certain about truth, what is he doing? He’s making an exclusive truth claim. He can’t even live by his own system. However illogical it may be, postmodernism has become the dominant philosophy in western civilization and it has produced some devastating stepchildren. It has led to moral relativism, the idea that

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there is no absolute standard of right and wrong. That morality is based on cultural norms, on a consensus, on individual circumstances.

But postmodernism has also led to religious pluralism. What is pluralism? One author defines it this way, “Pluralism teaches that God is actively revealing Himself in all religious traditions. The Christian faith is merely one of many equally legitimate human responses to the same divine reality.” You’ve probably heard the most common illustration of this idea. You know it, you hear glimpses of it in everyday conversation when you share the gospel with somebody and the person says to you, well, that’s fine for you, you know, if that works for you. What is he saying? He’s saying, I’m a pluralist, I believe that all faith traditions are headed to the same trajectory, to the same end.

But the most common illustration of pluralism is that of the world’s religions are just different paths up the same mountain. We all arrive by our different paths at the same ultimate summit. We are all pursuing the same divine reality. So, pluralism then teaches that there are many legitimate forms in which to worship God and many ways to reach God. Contrary to religious pluralism, Scripture unapologetically teaches that there is only one living and true God. And in Romans 3 Paul argues that that exclusivity isn’t bad news, it is, in fact, very, very good news.

We’re studying Romans 3:21-31. Let me just remind you that Paul here sets forth, in these verses, God’s gift of imputed righteousness. This paragraph that begins in, or this section I should say, that begins in verse 21, runs down to verse 31, consists of two paragraphs, two basic ideas. In verses 21 to 26 we have Paul’s explanation of justification as he sets forth the key elements, articulates for us the key components, of justification. We looked at that paragraph, which is really the heart and soul of this epistle, in detail.

In verses 27 to 31, Paul lays out then, the implications of justification by faith alone. Let’s read again this paragraph, beginning in verse 27. Paul writes,

Where then is boasting? It is excluded. By what kind of law? Of works? No, but by a law of faith. For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from works of the Law. Or is God *the God* of Jews only? Is He not *the God* of Gentiles also? Yes, of Gentiles also, since indeed God who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith is one. Do we then nullify the Law through faith? May it never be! On the contrary, we establish the Law.

Now, I called your attention to that little word then in verse 27. It’s the word therefore, as its usually translated in the New Testament. Paul is going to give us the implications of the gospel that he preached. Because getting the gospel right is so important, Paul wanted to make sure that we truly understood it. And so he here identifies three crucial implications of justification by

faith alone. He intends for these implications to serve as crosschecks to make sure that we have really understood the only way of salvation.

We looked last week at the first implication of a proper understanding of justification by faith alone. If you really get it you will understand that the true gospel excludes all human boasting, verses 27 and 28. Look at verse 27, “Where then is boasting?” Paul means the boasting of a sinner before God about his own merits, his own deeds. In light of the reality of justification by faith alone, where is such boasting in a person’s own merits, a person’s own actions? Paul says, “It is excluded.” The word means to shut the door. Paul’s gospel, he says, has slammed the door on all human boasting.

How did that happen? Verse 27, “By what kind of law?” Paul here is contrasting two different principles or systems of seeking to be justified. And he says, is boasting excluded by a system of works? No. He says, the system of being justified through faith alone, in Christ alone, that is what silences all boasting. Verse 28, “For we maintain that a man,” that is anyone, any person, “is justified,” is declared right with God, “by faith,” notice the contrast, “apart from,” completely independent of, literally, “works of law.” Paul says listen, being justified by faith alone is the absolute opposite of being justified by any human work or by keeping any kind of law. That is how justification by faith alone excludes all boasting, because it’s not based on anything we do. And so there’s nothing for us to boast about. And if you really understand the gospel, you understand that you, nor anyone else who ever comes to a true knowledge of God, can ever take pride in anything they are or anything they’ve done. Because that’s contrary to the basic foundational tenet of the gospel.

Now, there’s a second implication of a true understanding of justification by faith alone that we come to today. It is that it underscores the exclusivity of the gospel. Justification by faith alone and a true understanding of it underscores the exclusivity of the gospel. We see this in verses 29 and 30. In these two brief verses Paul underscores for us four massive theological realities about God, truths that are essential to the gospel. We’re going to study these, that are buried in these two verses, not in the way we normally do, in the word order of the text, but I want to deal with them in a kind of logical order, and by the time we’re done we’ll put these two verses together in our understanding.

Let’s read the two verses, verses 29 and 30,

Or is God *the God* of Jews only? Is He not *the God* of Gentiles also? Yes, of Gentiles also, since indeed God who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith is one.

Now, let’s look at the massive theological realities about God that undergird the gospel, that are underscored in the gospel. First of all, theism. The first theological reality Paul wants us to see here is theism, there is a God. As I’ve shared with you many times before, when it comes to the

origin of the universe there are only two options. You have to buy into one of these options. Either there is a God who created all things or matter itself is eternal. Those are the only two options. You can think about it all day and you will come back to those two basic conclusions.

But Paul here doesn't argue in these verses the existence of God, because he simply assumes it to be true. And the reason he assumes it to be true is because he has already explained in the first three chapters of this letter how God has personally proven His existence to all men. Man, all people, all people know that there is a God. Go back to chapter 1. Very familiar territory here, Romans 1:19, "that which is known about God is evident within all men; for God made it evident to them." Verse 21, "Since they knew God." All men know God. He's talking about pagans here. He's talking about people without the Scripture.

How does man know God? Well, as we learned, through general revelation, through what God has exposed of Himself in the world at large. General revelation, first of all, verse 20 of chapter 1, through creation, "For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, even His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen." How? Well, they're "understood through what has been made, so that all men are without excuse." God has made Himself known through the creation.

He's also, chapter 2 verses 14 and 15, made Himself known through what Paul calls, in verse 15, "the work of the Law written in all men's hearts." They have a basic understanding of what God requires. And "they know," therefore, chapter 1 verse 32, what God expects and that judgement comes on those who don't live up to what God expects. They know this. They also, verse 15 of chapter 2, have a conscience that takes that "work of the Law" and either accuses them or excuses them based on their conformity to that understanding of God's will and purpose. In addition to this, all men have God's providence, which is intended to show them Himself. Chapter 2 verse 4, they experience the kindness, the tolerance, the patience of God. Or as Paul puts it in Acts 14:17, "God has not left Himself without a witness, in that He does good to all men."

But in addition to general revelation, Man knows there is a God by special revelation through the Scripture. And Paul has argued this so many ways in the first three chapters I just want to show you one. Go back to chapter 1 verse 2. He says, "the gospel that I preach," the gospel that has its source in God, "God promised beforehand through His prophets." Where? "In the holy Scriptures." God has made Himself known in all of these ways.

So although Paul doesn't prove God's existence in chapter 3 verses 29 and 30, the fact that God exists undergirds his entire argument. So the reality of theism, that there is a God, lies behind and supports the text that we study together this morning. Go back there with me. Now, this brings us to a second theological reality that Paul intends to stress in these verses. Not only theism, that there is a God, but secondly, monotheism, that there is one personal God. Look at

verse 30, Romans 3:30, “since indeed God who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith is one.”

Now, interestingly enough, the New American Standard here has chosen to change the word order from the original Greek; unnecessarily, I think. Let me read to you, literally, the Greek text of verse 30. Here’s how it reads, “Since indeed God is one.” “Since indeed God is one.” Now, if you’ve been familiar with Scripture any time at all, you know the ground from which this truth springs. Paul here is taking us back, he is borrowing from the bedrock confession of Judaism, the bedrock confession of the Old Testament. I want us to turn back there together. Turn to Deuteronomy 6. He says, “God is one.” And he’s taking us back into the soil of one of the richest Old Testament texts.

In Deuteronomy 6:4 we have the *shema*. The word *shema* is simply the Hebrew word for here, which is how this text begins. “Here,” verse 4 of Deuteronomy 6, “Here, O Israel!” Listen Israel, “The LORD is our God, the LORD is one!” And therefore, “You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.” Now, I want you to look back at verse 4. I want you to notice that the second half of verse 4 is not a command. He begins with a command, “Hear,” listen, pay attention. But the second half of verse 4 is a declarative statement, it is a confession about God.

Notice, first of all, it is a confession about God’s identity. He is, whom? “The LORD.” Notice the word LORD in all caps. And notice that that word occurs two times just here in verse 4. It is God’s sacred personal name. The Hebrew word consists of just four Hebrew consonants, four Hebrew letters. Y H W H. Y H W H. It’s probably pronounced, we don’t have the vowel pointings preserved in the manuscript that have been passed down to us, only the consonants, but it was probably pronounced something like Yahweh. Yahweh.

In most English translations, probably in yours if you look at verse 4, this name, whenever we come to this name, Yahweh, it’s translated in English with the word LORD, not in capital L, lowercase o, r, d, but in all capitals. When you come to the word LORD in your Bible in all capitals in the Old Testament, it is this Hebrew word, Yahweh. This designation for God is, by far, the most frequent in the Old Testament. This is God’s name. It occurs, are you ready for this, about 6,000 times in the Old Testament text. It’s formed from the third person form of the verb to be, the third person form of the verb to be. Now, when God speaks of Himself, as He does, for example, in Exodus 3:14, he uses the first person form of the verb to be. He says, “I am.” But when we speak of God, we refer to Him as Yahweh, which is the third person form, He is.

Now what does this mean? Why would God call Himself, I am? And why do we refer to Him as He is? Why is this God’s personal name? What’s the significance of it? It speaks of His self-existence. He is, simply, the one who is. He is responsible for all existence, including His own existence. He depends on nothing outside of Himself. He depends on no one. Geerhardus Vos,

the great Old Testament theologian, writes, “The name Yahweh gives expression to the self-determination, the independence of God, that which we are accustomed to call His sovereignty.” That’s what this says, I simply am, and I have to be reckoned with. I depend on nothing. I depend on no one. I am in charge. I am God. Moses says, listen, if you want to love God, if you want to know God, you must first acknowledge Him to be the one who has revealed Himself by the name in the Scriptures as Yahweh, He is.

Now, look again at verse 4 of Deuteronomy 6, because not only is it a confession of God’s identity, it’s also a confession of God’s gracious choice, God’s gracious, sovereign choice. Notice, literally, Moses writes, “The LORD,” or Yahweh, “our God.” Now the expression, “Yahweh, our God,” occurs almost 400 times in the Old Testament. The first person to use this expression was God Himself. In Exodus 3:18 He tells His people to refer to Him this way. “Call me,” when you talk about Me to others, “Call me Yahweh, our God.”

Now, the significance of this expression is explained for us over a page or two in Deuteronomy 7:6-9. If you look at that text you see that God explains why He loved Israel. Verse 7, “The LORD did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any of the peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples, but the LORD set His love on you,” verse 8, “because the LORD loved you and because He kept the promise which He swore to your forefathers.” “Know therefore,” verse 9, “that Yahweh your God, He is God, the faithful God, who keeps His covenant promises and His steadfast love to the thousandth generation of those who love Him and keep His commandments; but he repays those who hate Him to their faces, to destroy them.” By the way, do you see there are only two options. In the mind of God there is no neutrality when it comes to Him. Either you love Him or you hate Him. And He deals with you based on what He finds.

So understand what’s being said here, when Moses says He is “Yahweh, our God,” he’s saying what God says in Deuteronomy 7, that God had set Israel apart for His own treasured possession. Why, why had He chosen them? Why did He set His love upon them? Solely because of His love. God’s election of Israel was grounded solely in God’s love and His own faithfulness to the promises that He had initiated, that He had made. It had nothing to do with their merit or their intrinsic goodness. So when the Israelites said “Yahweh, our God,” they should have been confessing that their only hope was in the grace of God, in His undeserved love.

The same is true for us. If you want to know and confess that Yahweh is your God, you must admit your sin. You must acknowledge your own unworthiness. And you must acknowledge that if you can call Him your God it is solely because of His love and His initiative and not your own. So this verse, verse 4, is a confession about God’s identity, He is Yahweh. It’s a confession about God’s gracious choice. He is our God simply because He set His love upon us.

And thirdly, it is a confession about God’s uniqueness. Look at the end of verse 4, “Yahweh is one!” This is a clear confession of monotheism. By the way, our Lord affirms that this is

exactly what it means, because in Mark's Gospel, chapter 12, a scribe says to Him, "Teacher, you have truly stated that 'GOD IS ONE', " and then He interprets it, "AND THERE IS NO ONE ELSE BESIDES HIM," and Jesus says he answered intelligently. So in other words, Jesus affirms that that's what this means. It's speaking of the uniqueness, the oneness of God. In other words, listen carefully, Yahweh is the only one to whom the attributes of deity belong. He is not the first among many gods like Baal for the Canaanites, are Re or Ra in Egypt or Marduk in Babylon. He is the one and only God and, therefore, completely sovereign.

Deuteronomy 6:4 is the great Old Testament declaration of monotheism: There is one God and Yahweh is His name. This is the truth that Paul was affirming in Romans 3, God is one. "Since indeed," Paul says, "there is one God, God is one." This is the message of the entire Scripture from Old Testament through New Testament. Deuteronomy 4:35, "Yahweh, He is God; there is no other besides Him." Isaiah 45:5, "I am Yahweh, there is no other; besides Me there is no God." In the New Testament, 1 Corinthians 8:4, Paul says, "we know that there is no such thing as an idol in the world, and that there is no God but one."

Now in the Old Testament context in which verse 4 of Deuteronomy 6 occurs, this was a warning against idolatry. It was warning against polytheism. For us today in the pluralistic world in which we live, in the postmodern world in which we live, this is a reminder that there is not a higher power. That there is not a divine force. That there is not an amalgamation of all the world's deities. There is not a deity who can at the same time be called Jesus, Allah, and Brahman. Scripture demands monotheism. But not a nameless faceless higher power. There is only one God and Yahweh is His name.

And Jesus taught us, didn't he, that that one God eternally exists in three persons, in three centers of consciousness, that we are to call Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Unfortunately, there is a push even today in evangelicalism to allow for the possibility that Mormons, who teach a different God, a different Jesus; Hindus, with their millions of gods; Jehovah's Witnesses; Buddhists are simply worshipping the true God under a different name. But God will not have it. Listen to Isaiah 42:8, "I am Yahweh, that is My name; and I will not give My glory to another, nor My praise to graven images." So in Romans Paul highlights the existence of God and the oneness of God, playing off this great Old Testament confession of God as one. Now go back to Romans 3.

A third theological reality that he mentions here, not only theism, not only monotheism, but thirdly, universality. Universality, the one true God is the God of all humanity. He cares for all human beings everywhere. There is only one God. And He is God of every person on this planet. Do you understand that? Do you believe that? The God you worship is not simply the God of Christians. He's not simply the God over the realm of America. He's not simply the God over the realm of Israel. He is the God of this planet, of every human being who lives.

Notice how Paul puts it in verse 29, "Or is God the God of Jews only? Is He not the God of Gentiles also? Yes, of Gentiles also." You see, Paul is coming off of this idea that God is one,

and if God is one, then He's God of both Jew and Gentile. You see, the first century Judaism that Paul encountered had misunderstood the implications of the fact that there is only one God. They believed that since God had chosen them, they enjoyed an exclusive relationship with Him and that Gentiles could really only come to know God by becoming Jewish. Paul turns their reasoning completely on its head. Since there is only one God, He is the God of both Jews and Gentiles. It's like what David says in Psalm 24:1, "The earth is the LORD'S." "The earth," literally, "is Yahweh's." "The earth is Yahweh's and all it contains, the world, and those who dwell in it." God wasn't the God of that little people group in that little piece of land in the Middle East. "The world is Yahweh's and all the people in it."

So the question arises then, so why did God choose the Jews? If that's true, if God is a universal God, why did He choose the Jews? Well I've explained this to you before, but let me just remind you, in the first 11 chapters of Genesis God dealt with the human race as a unit. And the testimony of those chapters concerning man and his moral condition is clear. He consistently rebels against God as Creator. He will not know Him. He will not have God to rule over him. And so God, in His mercy and grace, beginning in Genesis 12, decides to take a gracious step to provide men, both individually and corporately, with a powerful testimony to Himself, to His character, to His purposes. He would raise up one family, and through that family He would, in a unique way, put Himself on display to the whole world.

That nation, Abraham and his descendants, would become God's great object lesson. They would become His witness nation. They were to be salt and light to the world. This is clear from the very beginning. In Genesis 12:3, when God chooses Abraham, what does He say to him? He says, "in you all the families of the earth will be blessed." God's mission was global.

You come to Exodus 19, when you have the children of Israel gather at the base of Mount Sinai and God institutes the constitution of the nation. What does He say to them? He says, "you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine." Yes, but to what purpose? Listen, "and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests." In other words, God intended that the people of Israel to be like His priest, bringing the truth of Him to the world. So in choosing Israel God was not neglecting the rest of the world. Israel was to be His witness nation to the world. God is a universal God. When God chose the Jews His plan was always universal. He is God over this entire planet and all who live on it.

You say, well what about the gods of the nations? Well, both the Old Testament and the New Testament are in full agreement that all other so-called gods are not really gods at all. In fact, false gods, false religions are inspired and controlled by demons. And those worshipping false gods are in reality worshipping demons. Listen to these texts. Deuteronomy 32:17, Moses writes, "They sacrificed to demons who were not God, to gods whom they have not known." Notice how he connects it. He says, they're worshipping these gods that they didn't, they hadn't, "that you have not known," but they were really worshipping demons, "new *gods* who came lately,

whom your fathers did not dread.” Psalm 106:37, “They even,” speaking of Israel, “they even sacrificed their sons and their daughters to the demons.” He’s talking about the false gods. Those false gods don’t exist. They were inspired by, empowered by demons. False religion is demonic.

Paul, in 1 Corinthians 10:19-20, he says, “What do I mean then? That a thing sacrificed to idols is anything, or that an idol is anything? No, but the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons.” So understand then, what Paul argues in Romans 3, he argues that the truth of justification by faith alone underscores the reality of theism, that God is, the reality of monotheism, that God is one, and the reality of universality, that the one true God is God of both Jew and Gentile, of all peoples everywhere.

Now, that brings us back to Romans 3 and back to the primary theological reality that Paul has been driving toward in these verses, the theological truths that God is, that God is one, and that God is over all peoples everywhere. Those three truths all lead to one great theological conclusion. And that is, exclusivity. There is only one way to God. Look at verse 30, “since indeed God is one, He will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith.” Both Jew and Gentile He will declare righteous through faith alone.

Because there is only one true and living God, Paul argues, there is only one way to be reconciled to Him. The one way that he has chosen. And that is, that way of justification by faith alone, is based on what? He’s just explained it to us in this very passage. It’s based on the work of Christ alone. Look at verse 24, it is “through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus.” Verse 25, very specifically, it’s through the work of Christ, when God displayed Him on the cross publicly, “as a propitiation,” as the satisfaction of His wrath through His death, and that work is received by faith. That’s the only way.

I’m in the middle of a book. I’m in the middle of a lot of books. In fact, it’s getting dangerous on my bedside table, it teeters at times, but one of the books I’m in the middle of is a book entitled *God’s Forever Family*. It was book of the year a few years ago. It’s about the Jesus People movement of the 1970’s and the fruit of that movement. Now, let me just say, there were many things wrong with the Jesus People movement, but they got one thing right, and very right. The primary rallying cry of the Jesus People movement was what? One way. If you’re old enough to remember those days you remember it. These words, one way, they were placarded everywhere. On signs, on t-shirts, on cards, on bumper stickers, on people’s Bible. Everywhere you went you saw, one way. It was affirming the fact that there is only one way to know the true God. And that way is through Christ and His work on the cross.

As I was thinking about that I was thinking about what it would be like if today Christians were to resurrect that motto as the rallying cry of Christianity. And how differently it would be received in our world today because of the rise of religious pluralism. The world would rise up against us as one voice calling us bigoted, narrow-minded, exclusivist, dangerous.

James Montgomery Boyce, speaking of the exclusivity of the gospel, wrote this, “This,” meaning the exclusivity of the gospel, the one way, “is so contrary to the accepting or permissive spirit of our times that it is hardly safe to utter it except behind the strong stone walls of one’s church. This is because any such claim to truth, which Christianity certainly makes, is perceived to be narrow, bigoted, hateful, ignorant, wicked, cruel, base, vile, and intolerant. They would say it’s the kind of thinking that has led to genocide, religious wars, witch hunts.” But Boyce says, “It does not lead to any of these things. The teaching that there is only one way to come to God is merely the natural outcome of the basic gospel of grace.”

Folks, do you understand what Paul is saying here? There is only one way for every person on this planet. It’s the way he’s just explained. As Jesus put it in John 14:6, “I am the way, the truth, and the life; no one [*no one, no one*] comes to the Father but through Me.” Do you believe that? Do you believe in the exclusivity of Christ? Do you believe in the exclusivity of the gospel? This is what the Bible has always taught. Luther, writing about John 14:6, said this, “Whatever is not Christ is not the way, but error. Whatever is not Christ is not the truth, but a lie. Whatever is not Christ is not the life, but death.”

In Acts 4, Peter, after the healing that was done there said this, “let it be known to all of you,” this is Acts 4:10, “let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus the Nazarene, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead - by this name this man stands before you in good health.” “And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given,” that is, given by God, “among men by which we must be saved.” Paul puts it this way in 1 Timothy 2:5, “there is one God, and therefore there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.”

Do you understand? There is one God, there is only one God, only one true and living God, the God of the Bible. And that one true God is God over all of this world and all of the people who dwell on it. Every individual who lives, He is over them as God. And that means, as Paul’s gospel argued, that there is only one way to God, the way He has made, He justifies, or He declares righteous, both Jew and Gentile, by faith alone in the person and work of His Son alone.

Listen, it doesn’t matter who you are, it doesn’t matter what you’ve done, the one true and living God has promised that He will declare you to be forgiven, to be right with Him, if you will come through the one way that He has established, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, through the public display of God’s wrath on Christ on the cross. If you will believe in the Savior, in the Redeemer, then you will be declared just before God.

God extends a universal invitation in both Old and New Testament. I love Isaiah 45, where God says in verse 22, “Turn to Me,” this invitation goes out, He says, “Turn to Me and be saved, all the ends of the earth;” no matter where you are, “for I am God, and there is no other.” Revelation ends with this invitation, in Revelation 22:17, “let the one who is thirsty.” If you’re spiritually thirsty today, God says, “let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who wishes take

of the water of life.” That is, the refreshing salvation that comes from Christ. “Let him take without cost.” It was purchased by Jesus Christ.

If you’re here this morning as a believer in Christ, let me say to you that the fact that there is one God and only one way to God means two things. Don’t ever forget this. The fact that there is one God and there is only one way to God means that you and I must tell and we must go, because that’s the only hope.

Turn over to Romans 10. This is the very point Paul makes here. Romans 10:13, “‘WHOEVER.’” “‘WHOEVER,’” it’s a universal invitation, “‘WILL CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SPIRITUALLY RESCUED FROM THEIR SIN.’” How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed?” You have to believe in order to call out to God. “And how will they believe in Him whom they have not heard. And how will they hear without somebody to tell them? And how will they tell them unless they are sent? Just as it is written, “‘HOW BEAUTIFUL ARE THE FEET OF THOSE WHO BRING GOOD NEWS OF GOOD THINGS.’”

Listen, Christian, do you understand, just like Israel, you have not been saved just to enjoy being God’s chosen son or daughter. You, like I, and like Israel of old, we have become God’s witness nation. That’s why you live. That’s why you still have breath. We are a kingdom of priests, Peter says, now. We’re responsible to put God on display, to tell the nations that God is a savior. And for us it means those two things. It means we must tell. God may not call you to go, but He’s called you to tell. Open your mouth and speak of the one true and living God and the one way to Him. And for some of us, God may call us to go. Because how will they hear, how will those people on the other side of this planet, living in darkness, living under the darkness of a false god empowered by demons, how will they know unless somebody tells them about the one true and living God who has made the one way to know Him through His Son.

Let’s pray together. Father, we confess that You are the one true and living God and there is no one besides You. We confess that You are the God of every person on this planet. That You are the only God of the entire universe. That there is no intelligent being over whom you do not reign as God.

And Father, we confess that there is only one way to know You. And that is through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, through the propitiation in His blood. Father, I pray for those here this morning who don’t know You, may they see that invitation. That You invited them to come to drink of the water without cost. That You’ve invited them to turn to You and be saved because You are God and there is no one else. No one else to save them. No one else to rescue them. May this be the day they turn to You.

And Father, for us who are believers, forgive us for our apathy and indifference. O God, remind us that because You are God, like Paul, we must tell and we, some of us, must go. Because “how will they believe in Him of whom they have not heard?” Seal these truths to our hearts

Father. Help us to see the implications of the gospel we embrace. We pray in Jesus' name, amen.