



## BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The Sermons of Dan Duncan

John 3:17-21

Winter 2021-22

"The Great Rescue"

TRANSCRIPT

Thank you Seth, and good morning to all of you. It's good to be with you. Well we are in the Gospel of John. We're in chapter 3 and we spent all of last week in verse 16, one of the great, great verses of the Bible. We're looking at verses 17 through 21 this morning but they're really an explanation of John 3:16. So I'm going to begin with the 16<sup>th</sup> verse and then read through 21,

<sup>16</sup> "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. <sup>17</sup> For God did not send the Son into the *world* to judge the *world*, but that the *world* might be saved through Him.

*(You'll notice there that the word world is used three times in that verse and it is used with three different meanings. And I mention that because we are going to consider that in a moment in the lesson itself.)*

<sup>18</sup> He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. <sup>19</sup> This is the judgment... *(I think we can understand that word as, "This is the verdict")*, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil. <sup>20</sup> For everyone who does evil hates the Light,

and does not come to the Light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. <sup>21</sup> But he who practices the truth comes to the Light, so that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought in God. John 3:16-21

May the LORD bless the reading of His Word and bless our time of considering it together; may it be a time of edification and growth for all of us.

*(Message)* Most of us thrill to stories like the Marines liberating Americans from the Barbary pirates or the Israeli Defense Forces' raid on Entebbe to free hostages from terrorists. We celebrate such events in songs and books as heroic—not because they were conquests but because they were rescues. They freed people from cruel hands at great sacrifice.

And that is what John celebrates in our passage in John chapter 3, verses 17 through 21, in what is the greatest rescue mission of all the ages—and the greatest sacrifice. That's how he explains the coming of Christ: It was done for the helpless who were hostages, though none were innocent or deserving. And John went to special effort to make that clear and explain that.

I say 'John', as I mentioned last week it's not clear whether Jesus is continuing His 'monologue', as some called it, or if John is now speaking. Either way, the speaker, (and certainly through the Holy Spirit), has made it very clear that those that are rescued here are not innocent or deserving. They are the guilty as we will see.

But these verses aren't isolated as I pointed out in the reading of the text; they don't stand alone. They are connected and connected clearly to what preceded in the previous verse that we considered last week, John 3:16: Which is about God's love for the world, for both the Jew and the Gentile; and multitudes of those.

He explained first that love is in regard to its *object*. It is for sinners, and all kinds of sinners. Secondly, it is a *sacrificial* love, a *giving* love. God gave the very best, as we considered last week, His only begotten Son. And He gave the very best for the very worst.

Thirdly, it reveals the *nature* of God's love. It is put in the past tense—God so *loved*. It's from all eternity. When God saw us wrecked and ruined, He did not look down through time and see some who were good and some who would believe—and chose them. No, He looked through time to see nothing but a wrecked, ruined human race; ruined by sin and rebellion and yet, He loves us still. It is an unconditional love. That's the *nature* of the love of God.

And fourthly, God's love is seen in its *purpose*, in its *goal*—which is salvation, eternal life. It is sovereign love, and it is effective love, meaning it obtains what it seeks—which is salvation.

And that is what John enlarges on in this next verse, the *purpose* of God's love, the reason God sent His Son into the world—it was a rescue mission to save the helpless who are also the guilty. “For God did not send His Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him.” (vs17). That is Good News; that is the Gospel.

But it raises a couple of questions. And the first is, why the Gospel? Why do we need good news? Why the need for this rescue mission?

The notion that people need rescuing is an affront to modern man. The idea of sin is out of date today, old fashioned and obsolete. So for many, for most, this verse is a non-starter; it's an offense. Our society has for a generation or more been living outside the realm of moral absolutes—without a clear objective standard of right and wrong and living in denial of the natural order of creation. And that can only have dire consequences which may result in people hitting the wall, as it were. Crying out in despair for help like that tax collector in Luke chapter 18, who beat his chest and said, "O God, be merciful to me, the sinner!" (vs13).

But regardless whether one does or not, (one seeing through their circumstances, their dire condition), we have the Word of God—which is better than

consequences, for it is God's inerrant revelation. It is powerful in and of itself and it is clear about the human condition: It hasn't changed, the human condition, in millennia. From the beginning, "...all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." (Rom 3:23).

It's when a person understands the truth of that, and the personal reality of it, (that he or she is guilty), then the cross becomes real to them and the true and only cure for their guilty condition. Now that's the reason Christ came into this world of fallen humanity: To be the cure; not the judge—that was not His principle purpose for coming. He came to save the world.

But that leads to the second question: What does John mean by *world*? Well we considered that previously in our sermon last week in verse 16—but it is the natural question to ask here because much of the world isn't saved. In fact, multitudes die lost; in doom for eternity. Revelation chapter 20, verses 14 and 15 give a graphic picture of the end of the unbelieving, of unrepentant humanity in "the lake of fire."

Well then, if the *world* that Christ came to save is the same as the *world* He entered, (the world of the elect and the non-elect, or 'all without exception'), then the Lord failed in His mission, didn't He? But the Bible is clear, God cannot fail in His purpose.

I could give a number of verses. I'll just quote a couple: Isaiah chapter 14, verse 24, the LORD said, "Surely, just as I have intended so it has happened, and just as I have planned so it will stand." In Isaiah 46, verse 10, He said, "...My purpose will be established, and I will accomplish all My good pleasure."

God is immutable; He doesn't change. He cannot be frustrated, so we can know His purpose by the outcome. We can know His purpose by what He accomplished. The end result indicates His design or plan. And His plan of salvation is to save the *world*; not all without exception—but all without distinction. It is the *world* of the elect: the Jew and the Gentile, male and female, all kinds of people; His salvation is worldwide.

The word *world*, the Greek word *cosmos*, has different meanings in different places. It's used of the universe, the cosmos; 'The everything' is described with that word in some places. It's used of 'the world of mankind generally,' this earth and humanity. We see it that way used in the first use of *world* in verse 17.

It's used in a limited sense, later in John chapter 12, verse 19 at the Lord's triumphal entry into Jerusalem. The crowds are excited and they are crying out, "Hosanna." They think they're receiving their king and the kingdom is about to come. So they're excited and crying out to Him. But the authorities...they were not so happy. They were worried and they said, 'the whole *world* has gone after Him.' Well not 'the whole world' in the sense of the barbarians in Germany and Briton, or the populations of Asia and Africa. They meant 'lots of people' from all over the land; from Galilee and Judah.

It's used also of the *world* of the unsaved. We have one example of that later on in John 17:9, where Jesus is in His high priestly prayer and He says He does not pray for the world; "I do not ask on behalf of the world." Well, this doesn't mean He doesn't pray for His people. But here it's used of the *world* of the unbelieving, the unregenerate.

We can see that, for example in 1 John 5, verse 19, "...the whole world lies in the evil one." The whole world? All of us? No, that's the *world* of the unbelieving—not believers. Paul wrote in Colossians chapter 1, in verse 13 that God has "rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son." We've been taken out of the domain of the devil, out of his realm, and we've been placed in God's kingdom. So we're not "in the evil one."

It's used of the *world* of the elect also; it's used of the saved. Context is what determines the meaning of a word. And the context of different passages indicate the meaning of this word *world*. Last week I suggested that the explanation, or definition, of 'the world of the elect' is given in Revelation chapter 5, verse 9. I think that's a perfect example of what John means when he's speaking of the *world* that Christ came to save. There the elders give their praise to the Lamb, who has been slain, and they say,

"...You were slain, and purchased for God with your blood, *men* from", (or 'some out of' is a more literal translation), "every tribe and tongue and people and nation."

Now that's the meaning of "the world" here in our text, this third use of the *world*. And so if I could paraphrase verse 17, I would put it in this way, 'God sent His Son into the world of mankind, not to judge the world of sinners, but to save the world of chosen believers, the world in all of its parts.'

God is reclaiming the world, this fallen world, by saving representatives from every nation, race, and ethnic group. And He has done that in only one way, and that is "through Him", John said, (vs17). Meaning, 'Through Christ's sacrifice' on our behalf, in which He represented us in judgment, and took it, took that judgment in our place on the cross.

So they, believers, can't be judged. We can't be judged. If you are a believer in Jesus Christ, your judgment has already taken place. We've been judged 'in Him' when He was judged in our place, when He hung on the cross and bore the punishment that we deserved. So there's nothing left to punish. We cannot be judged for all the sins that Christ has paid for. Christ was judged for all of them, without exception. So as Augustus Toplady put it, I think so well, "Payment, God cannot twice demand—First, from my bleeding surety's hand, And then again from mine." (*"Faith Reviving"*). God cannot punish all of our sins in our Substitute and then hold us guilty for them.

And so, as Christ triumphantly declared from the cross, "It is finished.", that meant, all that could be done has been done: The issue's settled, redemption was accomplished. So when we call this 'a rescue mission', it was that. He rescued us; like snatching us 'as brands from the burning.'

What kind of rescue is it that doesn't rescue? —Not a successful one. What kind of love is it that doesn't achieve blessing? —Well, an ineffectual love, a helpless love. God's love is powerful. God's love is effective. God's plan is perfect, and cannot be frustrated. Princeton theologian, B. B. Warfield wrote, "God did not then, only "so loved

the world” as to give it a bare chance of salvation. He “so loved the world” that He saved the world. The world of His chosen ones.”

And they are multitudes. That's what Christ accomplished at the cross. Now all that remains to be done for salvation, is to apply it—which the Holy Spirit does. Down through the ages, He applies it to those whom God has chosen from the foundation of the earth. And people, (as a result of that), respond, inevitably, in faith, (which a person must do if he or she is saved. )

Well that too, is part of grace; our response, our faith —just as the doctrine of unconditional election is all about God's sovereign grace, His mercy. And in fact, the elect are not simply chosen to salvation, they are chosen to salvation *through* faith. [I think we have a misconception when people separate those two: ‘Well, you're elect to salvation’, and then there's no response. ‘You're saved because you've been elected’.] No, we're elected to salvation *through faith*—and the elect believe. So, faith is the evidence of election.

Now that's clearly stated in the previous verse, the need of *faith* in verse 16, with that word very prominent; "...whoever *believes* in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life." John, (or the Lord, whoever was speaking there), underlines the importance of faith. No one is saved apart from *believing*, apart from having faith in Christ.

That's what John emphasized next in verse 18 where he stated, whoever “believes in Him is not judged." It is believers who are saved and not judged. God loved and Christ died so that believers shall not perish but have life: Believers in Him; believers in Christ and in Christ alone; He is the only object of saving faith. —Not faith in Jesus as an ‘important man’ and ‘a good teacher.’ That was Nicodemus' problem and he called Him “Rabbi”, which showed great respect for Him. Islam has that; they call Jesus a prophet.

But He's far more than that— infinitely more. Jesus of the Gospel of John is God's only begotten Son. In fact, the Jesus of Matthew and Mark and Luke is the same; He is

the eternal, divine Son of God. God from God. He is the eternal 'Word made flesh'. So He is now God and man. He could not be the Savior of the world if He were not God *and* man.

But as a perfect person, a man, He became the substitute for fallen people by dying in their place and suffering the penalty of sin in their place, as their substitute; suffering it for them.

And His death is of infinite value, able to remove all of your sins, all of mine, an innumerable, infinite number of sins and of an infinite number of sinners—for that's the design of it because He is God. He had to be man to be our representative, our substitute. He had to be God to give us a sacrifice that has infinite value.

And so we have this Savior, who is One who has supplied all that we could not supply: An infinite person with a sacrifice of infinite value. And in that sense only is He the object of our faith. We believe in the Son of God who died for the guilty. And everyone who does that, who believes in Him—(simply believes); who trusts in Him with his soul or her soul—entrusts our soul to Him has the magnificent promise that he or she is not judged.

Commentators have observed that John didn't use the term or the language of *justification*, as Paul did. (We sang about that—*And Can It Be*), Wesley had that. "Clothed in righteousness," is how he described our justification, which is a good way of putting it—and Paul makes a great emphasis of that. But it's been observed, as I said, that John doesn't seem to do that. But really, his teaching here, this verse here, is just as plainly teaching justification as Paul's instruction is. Paul wrote in Romans 8, verse 1, "There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus." We've been justified. We've been declared righteous. We've been forgiven; Romans chapter 5, verse 1, "...having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Well that's what John was promising here. The believer in Christ is not judged. Not, 'Will not be judged', but, 'Is not judged—now.' The grammar's important here. That's justification. It occurs at the moment of faith. What a blessing.

That is how the Christian life begins, with forgiveness, because faith joins the believer to Jesus Christ and all that He has done for us at the cross. The moment we believe a transfer occurs; His payment for our sins becomes our payment. We paid it through our substitute. And His righteousness becomes our righteousness. We are fully and forever accepted by God into His family as sons and heirs. That happens at the moment of faith.

We are not climbing a ladder to heaven, trying to gain God's acceptance at every rung or step, never being sure if we're safe until we finally arrive there. No, we are accepted fully and forever at the moment of faith. No condemnation. Peace with God, now.

And because we are also being sanctified, (you can't separate justification from sanctification), because we're now being changed, transformed by the Holy Spirit, we have both a desire to and the power to live increasingly like Christ. And we're being changed in His image. Slowly; Slowly but surely.

John was a master of brevity. But all of that is here in the words, "Whoever believes in Him is not judged;" (vs18)—now, and forever more. Then he adds, "...he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God,". Reinforcing here, the *object* of faith—the *object* being Christ as the God-Man.

Again, grammar is important here. John didn't write that, 'The one who does not believe will be judged in the future', but he says, 'Is already judged.' Christ came into the world that was already condemned due to sin and unbelief. But a person's rejection of Christ only confirms all the more clearly his or her guilt.

F. F. Bruce compared the unbeliever to a person who visits a museum, like the Louvre, where artistic masterpieces are on display. And he said, "It's not the masterpieces but the visitors that are on trial." And he referred to an incident when a pop star dismissed the Mona Lisa as "a load of rubbish." Bruce commented that, "He did not tell us anything about the Mona Lisa; he told us a lot about himself." And then he

made the point that, "What is true in the realm of the esthetics of beauty is equally true in the spiritual realm."

The man who dismisses Christ as unworthy of his allegiance, passes judgment on himself—not on Christ. He doesn't need to wait for the judgment day; the verdict on him has been pronounced already. As long as a person remains in unbelief, he is separated from God and separated from life—and under the sentence of death.

And it's, in fact, on that frightening fact, that this chapter ends in verse 36, "The wrath of God abides on him.", (*"presently abides on him."*). Every unbeliever lives in that condition: Living moment by moment, freely, happily maybe, healthy—but under the wrath of God which is impending—and it can fall on him at any time.

All of this underlies the need of rescue and the urgency to believe in Christ. People are already condemned. They only compound their guilt by not believing in Christ. And while Jesus did not principally come to judge, still His coming brought about a division among humanity. Those who do not believe in Him judge themselves.

In verse 19 John says, "This is the judgment," and then describes how this judgment, or verdict, of guilt comes on the condemned—it's by a willful choice. It's a choice made with eyes wide open, "...the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil." That's historical. It happened when Christ came.

But it's true in every generation. *Light* and *darkness* are common words in John's Gospel, as well as John's epistles, particularly his 1 John. They represent truth and error, good and evil, righteousness and sin. Here Christ is the Light: He is the embodiment of truth; He is the revelation of God; of holiness and of God's love. He came shining brightly into this dark world and exposed men for what they were. And men recoiled from that Light. They despised Him and what He was because they loved their sin.

That's what John is saying: They didn't want their lives disturbed. His appearance, His revelation was a disturbance to their lives because of the darkness they love. The

deeds they do in darkness are evil and they don't want to be made aware of that; of their disorder.

Spurgeon said, "As salt flavors every drop of the Atlantic, so does sin affect every atom of our nature. It is so sadly there, so "abundantly there", that if you cannot detect it you're deceived."

That's true. But the deception is self-deception: ignoring the sin that is abundantly there, practicing self-justification, denying it is evil, so that they can continue living in the way that they love to live.

It may not be the life of a harlot or a bank robber but that of a Pharisee, the self-righteous man. That is the man that comes under the greatest condemnation from the Lord; the self-righteous person; the moral man; the church goer—but not a believer.

But that is what is most basic, or I should say, brings out the most basic element of sin—and that is this sense of autonomy—that is the self-directed life. That is fundamental to man's rebellion; He wants to govern his own life. Men want to be 'the captains of their souls'. They want to govern their own lives and not be ruled by God. They venerate being independent, unconquerable in their poems and songs.

But it's rebellion! In fact, in Psalm 2, verse 3, "Let us tear their fetters apart and cast their cords from us!", that is man in rebellion. It's the spirit that started all of our problems at the beginning in the garden. It's unbelief and the cause of our condition which Isaiah called "unclean."

That's another statement that men don't want to face or don't want to own up to; because Isaiah said in Isaiah 64, verse 6 that "...all of our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment." ...'All of our righteous deeds?! Now that is insulting to man; 'Not one good thing, is that what you're saying? Not one good thing in me?' That is what Isaiah is saying—that's his point. And man doesn't want to hear that. But the small voice of conscience doesn't let man get away from that. Man hears that, he wants to deny it but there is that voice and conscience that says, "No, no. It's true."

And so what does man do? Well, as Paul put it in Romans 1:18, he suppresses "the truth in unrighteousness." He quiets that voice of conscience until finally it's not heard anymore.

Well, John puts it differently in verse 20. He said, 'They don't come to the Light out of fear that their deeds will be exposed.' It's not just the fear of shame, but the fear of conviction. They don't want that truth.

The response of people to the Light is often illustrated by the response of those 'creatures of the night' you see when you go out into the garage, maybe, and turn the light on and these little things scurry for dark corners. That's their nature, to live in darkness. And that's true of the natural man spiritually. The Light, righteousness, forces a response. Conviction of sin compels a choice—either to repent or reject.

In our Lord's day the rulers and teachers felt their position was threatened, politically and morally. They felt they were losing their control of the people because of this Teacher who had come and seen that the nation was like sheep without a shepherd.—And they were. So these men joined together in a conspiracy to silence Jesus; and they used the cross to put out the Light. But of course, they couldn't put out the Light; God raised Him up.

I had a professor who illustrated that from one of those trick candles on a birthday cake; that the child blows it out and feels good: She did it! And she celebrates... and suddenly the flame's back. Well that was the resurrection. The authorities celebrated their victory over the Light when, on the third day, He was back.

So they tried a cover up. They invented the story that the disciples stole the body. It didn't work. Conspiracies get exposed. God makes sure of that, and the Gospel only spread, filled the city of Jerusalem, and then Samaria, and Galilee, and all of the world. That's the insanity of sin: It doesn't fix anything. It only makes things worse.

Jesus did not come into the world to judge the world, not primarily—but He will judge the world someday. He's coming again with a sword. And everything hidden will

be revealed. All the secrets will be exposed. So, the sensible response is to repent. But men are not sensible about spiritual things. They're sensible about their finances. They're sensible about their health. They may be sensible about all kinds of things in this world and temporal thing. But when it comes to the eternal things, when it comes to spiritual things, they're irrational.

So today men can't kill Christ; He's seated at the right hand of God. He's untouchable. So they kill the idea: They put Him out of their thoughts; they close their minds to the Gospel. Or they take a more active and hostile approach by silencing the voice of the messengers—persecuting the evangelists, ostracizing the friend or family member, or killing the missionary.

People will silence the Gospel because they don't want to know; because they don't want to be convicted; because they want to continue living the way they want to live—living in darkness. It's their natural, spiritual environment, what they love—just as a fish wants water and a bird wants the sky. They can't leave their environment; it's against their nature. And an unbeliever won't leave the dark, that's what's natural to them.

How do we convince a person to not be what they want to be; convince a person that what they think is nonsense, foolishness—is really wisdom and truth; or persuade them to abandon what they dearly love? Men love the darkness. So giving the Gospel and opening a person's mind to the glory of the Light of the Gospel, the glory of Christ and all that He's done, is not a matter of persuasion (as though we can convince people to embrace what they naturally reject and resist.) We can't do that.

That takes a work of God: "You must be born again" Jesus told Nicodemus. You don't give birth to yourself; you're the object of that. You must be born again—and we can't make that happen. The new birth is a work of God—completely; it is supernatural. Salvation is supernatural. It's a work of God.

But that work occurs through the Word of God by means of giving the Gospel, shining the Light of God's truth on people. That's all we can do—and that's sufficient. And when we do that, people will respond. Not everyone, but people will respond.

That's what John says in verse 21, "But he who practices truth comes to the Light, so that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought in God." "Practices the truth" means, "adheres to the truth", 'believes the Gospel and acts upon it', follows it—does what he is called to do. We went through the three different phases of faith: the *knowledge* and *assent* and *trust*. He does that; he practices the truth.

"Well, there you have it", someone may say "We do have ability to respond to the Light, to recognize our need and believe!" No, not apart from sovereign grace we don't. One of the commentators, Don Carson, put it well, I think. He wrote, "The lover of Light does not prance forward to parade his wares with cocky self-righteousness but comes into the Light so that it may be seen plainly that what he has done has been done through God." That's exactly what John means here. The obedience of faith has "been wrought in God": In union with Him, done in His power—not our own.

Later, in chapter 15, verse 19, Jesus tells His disciples, "I chose you out of the world", (they didn't choose Him), 'I chose you out of that fallen world to be the world that I'm saving.' That's true of every believer in Christ. We were part of this fallen world. We were lovers of darkness but the Lord chose us and brought us into the Light; and He gave us the hearts to believe. —And in His power we did. It doesn't show our ability but God's grace to enlighten minds and move our will to understand and obey. It's all of grace, which is why we need to be rescued. That's what God did.

Paul indicated that in Romans chapter 5, verse 6, "For while we were still helpless, at the right time, Christ died for the ungodly." That's what we were, helpless and guilty, undeserving—but He rescued us. And Paul said it directly in that verse we read earlier, Colossians 1, verse 13, that, "He", (*God*), "rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son." And He did that at the

cross; that's where the rescue was accomplished. And it was the only way that it could be accomplished.

I read a book recently titled, *The Great Rescue*. It's about America entering The Great War in 1917. —That's what it was called at that time, *The Great War*. The French and English armies were spent; German U-boats were sinking hundreds of ships; the tide of war had shifted to Germany—when America entered it and saved Europe from the Kaiser. It was a great rescue—but not a permanent one. Two decades later, America was rescuing Europe from Hitler.

The Great Rescue, the only real rescue, is the cross. It's the only permanent rescue, the only eternal rescue. And it is necessary because we all naturally love the darkness rather than the Light.

And it was a personal rescue. Hebrews 12, verse 2 describes Jesus as, "the author and perfecter of faith, who for the *joy* set before Him endured the cross."

Are you a believer? The *joy* He had was knowing He would rescue you specifically. He knew the pain and separation He would suffer but He knew it would save you out of darkness and into His kingdom. And so He suffered it all for the joy of having you personally with Him for all eternity. You were on His heart from all eternity, and in His divine nature He had you on His mind as He hung on the cross and died for you.

Now if He so loved you that He entered this world—not to judge, not to judge you—but to save you at such a cost, then certainly He loves you now that you are in His family; that you are His child; that you're His brother, His sister. And He'll always, always do what is best for you. So we're to trust Him. We're to love Him. We're to live for Him.

If you've not believed in Christ, you're lost and you're in darkness. The way out is through faith in Christ as God's eternal Son and our Savior. The sovereign grace of God is emphasized throughout this fourth Gospel; and we will come to it in chapter after chapter. But so is human responsibility: You must believe to be saved. Salvation is for the

believer whoever he or she may be. So believe and thank God for the gift of faith and forgiveness—and life everlasting.

Father, we do gladly confess that our sins are many, more than we can count, even comprehend. Thankfully, Your mercy is more and You took it all into Your Son and judged it there. We thank You for that, thank You for the righteousness we have. It's an alien righteousness, it's not our own. It's a gift of You. It's the righteousness of Christ imputed to every believer with forgiveness and new life. We thank You for Your mercy. Help us to understand it better, and live in light of it, and live obedient lives that honor you.

Now the LORD bless you and keep you, the LORD make His face shine on you and be gracious to you. The LORD lift up His countenance on you and give you peace. In Christ's name, Amen.

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