

How to Get Eternal Life - Part 2

Getting Honest About Myself

How to get eternal life? That's the question of the hour - question of the month. It's really been the question of all time, hadn't it? I mean some people want to avoid the question, how to get eternal life, but inevitably you're going to ask it. You're going to ask the question. Especially when you are pondering your own mortality. There is no more important or urgent question. When you think about the fact that you're not going to be here for ever - you'd like to have a good after life not a bad one. So, you're going to have to ask the question. More importantly you really need an answer. I know it's not popular to be right these days, but you really need the right answer. Be good for us to get the correct answer. Unfortunately, the answer that is intuitive - kind of the instinctive answer - the most common answer if you were just to go and stick a microphone in people's face and ask them is the answer you get all the time. It's the answer that's seemingly kind of built in. It's what everybody says. And they say it if they're church goers or non-church goers; they say it if they're religious or nonreligious; they say it if they're your family, friends or somebody at the Aliso Viejo Town Center; they say it. And what they say is, "you want to be good - to do good things - you know you do the right things - you try you be sincere - you work real hard at it." Unfortunately, the intuitive answer is the wrong answer. I mean that's what the Bible reveals from beginning to end. The instinctive answer is not the right one. And unfortunately, when you are wrong about this question and your answer is not the right one, it has catastrophic implications. So we better get it right.

Thankfully, someone came to Jesus and asked him the question. So we have in Matthew 19 the answer from Christ himself. And it's a surprising answer. Even what we are going to write down this morning will seem counterintuitive. Because if you're telling me that's not how you get eternal life - it seems like that's what Jesus is saying you should do to get eternal life. But read it carefully. Look at it with me. Matthew Chapter 19. The very interesting answer of Jesus when posed the question, "what good thing must I do to get eternal life?" Now last week we looked at the first part of verse 17 which was wait a minute before we talk about getting eternal life with God you better make sure we're talking about the same God. Do you know who we're talking about here. I mean there's really no one that's good except for God alone. So let's think on that Sabbath school graduates; leader of your synagogue. I mean let's just really think through what we're saying here about "good" things. But now that we've talked about a little bit about good, he now talks about the good thing. He asks, "what good thing must I do...? And Jesus, not it carefully, doesn't say well here's the good thing you've got to do. He goes from good thing to good things. Look what he says, bottom of verse 17, "If you want to enter life, {here it comes} obey the commandments." Wait a minute. You said that was the wrong answer. No-no; the answer of trying to do good is the wrong answer. This is the right answer; keep the commandments. That's the right answer. Now that's not what they teach you in personal evangelism class. It's not what you learned in the tracks, right? But it's the right answer. Matter of fact it's so right we just need to write it down on our worksheet. It's exactly what Jesus said. You want to enter life - you want to have eternal life? Keep the commandments. Let's just jot it down like this.

1. Keep All the Rules and Get Eternal Life

That's simple. That's all there is to it. Keep the rules - get eternal life. And I say all the rules because when he says "Which ones?" he goes to the beginning and he states the capstone of all the commands of God. He goes back to the first written words of God ever. The tablets. Think about it. The Pentateuch, the first five books of the Old Testament were written as they wandered in the desert. Right? This is when Moses gets revelation from God. He inscribes it on stone, and it is the beginning of his moral code. He's giving it to mankind. Here it is. It is the commands of God. He starts, interestingly enough, at the second half. He says, verse 18, "Do not {commit} murder {That's command number 6 by the way. Did you memorize these as a kid? Command number 7}, do not commit adultery, {command number 8} do not steal, {command number 9} do not give false testimony" {don't lie}. Then he goes back to command number 5 which is the beginning of the second half of the commands which all have to do with relationships. Then, by the way, in Exodus 21 and 22 and 23 he elaborates on all of those. And he gives you all the varied details of how I'm supposed to relate to my "neighbor" - the people around me. And after saying all of that he sums it up with this Leviticus 19 quotation. Lev. 19:18 says, among other places in the Bible, "love your neighbor as yourself." That is the command that summarizes all the relational moral commands of God. That's the big umbrella. And throughout the Bible, you know you've studied the Bible you know, it says if you do that you do all the others. If I love my neighbor, I'm not going to sleep with his wife, right? If I love my neighbor, I'm not going to steal his car. If I love my neighbor, I'm not going to lie to him. If I love my neighbor and my parents, I'm going to honor them. Love is the key here. And if you do it and do it right and do it perfectly, all the commands, you'll keep them. Keep the commandments. "Which ones?" All of them. That's why I added the word all. Keep all the commands and get eternal life. Now you should put next to this "in theory." Because you know you just can't. What did we say last week. We come out broken. You can't do this. Which by the way is whole point of throwing the law out there. Here's the rules - keep them. Now amazingly enough, apparently the rich young ruler's wife was not there because his answer in verse 20 is I'm doing it all dude. I keep them all. Right? Can you imagine if his wife was there? Wouldn't be quite the... can you imagine your husband saying that? I keep all the laws man. I've kept them all. The young man says, "What do I still lack?" It's an interesting followup to saying I keep the rules.

Do you notice I said he started with the second half of the law code. The second half just has to do with horizontal relationships. The first half of the law code, do you know it? Has to do with my vertical relationship with God. Now what does he start with the second half? The second half is the most obvious. I mean I can see my relationships with other people. Hard to see my relationship with God. That's the invisible part; that's kind of private; that's subjective; that's, I mean it's real, but it's not as obvious. If I mess up in my relations with others, everybody sees it. He starts there, but he can't cop to anything. So God gets right to the vertical relationship. Do you know the first command in the law code. What's the first command? You went to Sunday school. No gods before me. I'm first. God, Yahweh, the creator of heaven and earth. I'm the number one thing in your life. And the next one's about idols. Right? Can't have idols. What is an idol? Or gods? A god is a priority, a loyalty in my life that is ultimate or supreme. You should have no ultimate or supreme priorities that get above me. So he goes right for that one. And by the way, on the second half of the law code there's another law he doesn't quote. It's the tenth one, where you numbering them with me, six, seven, eight, nine and five. Where's ten? You know what ten is? You shall not covet. Can't covet. Covet your neighbor's what? Well it

starts with his wife and then it goes on to all of his stuff. This guy is about to have Christ prove to him that he is not a law-keeper by saying give me all your stuff. Give it away. Do you see how this gets back to the vertical relationship with God? Can God say to you - get rid of your stuff? Now he didn't do number ten because number ten has to do with stuff, and we can assume based on his response, he loves his stuff. He loves his stuff more than, God, because he's not going to part with it. Matter of fact, the next verse says, verse 22, "When the young man heard this, he went away sad..." We didn't read very 21, I'm sorry. I'm way ahead of myself. "Jesus said, If you want to be perfect..." By the way, circle that word and put it in the margin. It's the word I always say - I transliterate it for you because there's not a real good English equivalent to this word. It's the word *teleos* (Gr?). Have you heard me say that word before? *Teleos* is an important Greek word because it doesn't translate very well. We put the words in English like perfect. Now what do you think of when you hear the word perfect? Flawless, that's what you think. If you want to be flawless, right? That's not what he's saying. That's not what *teleos* here means. *Teleos* means you want to get it right. It means just right. If you want to get this thing right, which again is all a mechanism for him. The guy will not admit that he breaks the rules. Well let me show you - you want to be complete? You want to get this thing right? You want to know what you're lacking? Let's talk about your vertical relationship with God. He says right here to him if you want to be *teleos* "... go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, {and then God will be so pleased with that}... you will have treasure in heaven." Don't worry about your stuff, you'll have stuff from God. God will credit your account and "Then come, follow me." And the man, verse 22 "... heard this, he went away sad, because he had great wealth." He would not do it. He said God I'm not going to do that. Christ I won't do that. Keep the commandments. Now here's a guy who wouldn't admit that he had a problem with the commandments. Obviously, he does, and the Bible says - you've been to Sunday school - none of us keep the rules. But we think we keep the rules well enough when we say things like this, "I keep most of them." Let's just grant just for the sake of argument that Jesus says, fine, you're good with you relationships, how about your relationship with God? He could say, well at least I kept those. I may not be able to give up my stuff - I may have a coveting problem, but I keep the rest of them. Let's just jot this down: Most doesn't count. OK, that's why I put the word all there. Most doesn't count. He was failing on the tenth and first commandments. He may have had a pretty good track record with the other eight, but he's not keeping them all. And if you don't keep them all you've still got a problem because the next verse, verse 23 says "I tell you the truth, he turns to his disciples and says, it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven." That's why you have to understand the word perfect, because the word perfect means complete. It means let's get it right, and the point is not super Christianity, hey if want to be a super Christian do this... No. It can't even enter the kingdom of God. And the problem is, he doesn't recognize his fault, his sin. And when it comes to the issue of wealth, he can't let go. So, I keep most of them, but I don't keep them all. Not enough.

Turn to James 2 real quick. This is all going to come together. Keep all the rules get eternal life - that doesn't sound right, no, it's totally right. Totally right. The problem is you can't do. Well I keep most of them because I don't think there is anybody on our video, or anybody in your block, or anybody in your workplace who when they say I'm going to be good and that's how I'm going to get to heaven - their going to admit, well I don't keep them all perfectly. I don't keep them all, I keep most of them. OK, most doesn't count. Here's why. James 2:10. "For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles in one point is guilty of breaking it all." That

doesn't seem fair, does it? Now let's think this through for a second. Number one in verse 10 you need to know this is all theoretical as well because nobody keeps all the rules except for one, but let's just say you did. If you kept the whole law yet you stumbled at just one point, he'd say you are guilty of breaking it all. Why? Because the law is a composite. It is a picture. It is a composite picture of God's standard. And if you break part of it then it's messed up. It's like me saying I'm going to sell you a brand new windshield for your car, but only the top right half is smashed the rest of it is perfect. You'll love it. Now you're not going to pay for that kind of windshield, right? Even though it's only broken in part of it because it's not, it's got to be complete. It's like me selling you a boat, and I say there's only one hole in the hull. Right? The rest of it's great. I am look at this side of the boat. It's totally seaworthy over here. It's just got this hole on this side. Not good enough. You know I'm going to sell you a computer, but it only has one major virus on it, but the rest of it's clean - it's still infected. See the problem? The law's the same way. It's a composite picture of what God expects, and if you don't meet the requirement here you don't meet the requirement. You don't measure up to the standard of God. Verse 11. "For he said, do not commit adultery also said do not murder." It's the same God reflecting the same kind of standard in different areas of your life. "If you do not commit adultery, but you commit murder you {are still} a lawbreaker." and that's the bottom line. You need to admit it. Even if you say I keep most of the law. Most of the law doesn't count. Or how about this. I keep the big rules - not the small rules. OK. Just put this down. All but the small rules doesn't count. Because that's a big one, right? I mean I'm going to say, you don't commit adultery, that's great, you haven't slept with my wife, but you killed a man yesterday. You're still a lawbreaker. See it still doesn't fit the pattern that most of us have when we read things like we just read. Do not murder, don't commit adultery, don't steal, don't bare false testimony. Let's just start with the first two - murder & adultery. I mean I'm hoping there are not too many people here... yeah, I murder and I commit adultery. We like to think, I don't have a problem with those big commands. Remember Jesus could've passed out a CD of his whole sermon to the rich young ruler. Said, hey, you missed the sermon on the mount the other week, and I was preaching and I was telling you that if you hate in your heart you're in the same genre of sin it's just in a different degree. Remember that? "You've heard it said, don't commit murder, but I say don't hate your brother" cause if you do it's the same sin, in a different degree. Oh and lust, you haven't crawled into bed with your neighbor's wife, that's great. But here's the deal, when you lust after her in your heart the problem is it's the same sin at a different degree. So, you're not innocent, you, I know you don't like to think you're guilty of sin because you're only committing small parts of that sin. It's like lying. Right? If I came up to you and called you a liar. You'd say, I'm not a liar. You know. Well, I don't tell big lies. Right? Now think about it. Any firemen here. I come up to you and I say... you'd say I'm not an arson. Don't call me an arson. I only burn down small houses, really small ones. I try to shoot for only like 900 square feet or less. I would never burn down a 2000 square foot house. I know there are people burning down entire malls. I don't burn down malls, just small houses, and most the time I don't even mean to do it. Don't call me an arson. Don't call me a liar. I only lie those little ones. They change color when they are small. Have you heard that? Well it's a white lie. Think about that. What? White lie? What are you talking about? And you're not a liar because your lies are small. Right? No, Jesus said even if there's lust in your mind you're an adulterer, even if there's coveting in your heart you're a thief, even if there's hatred in your heart you're a murderer. See? Keeping the big ones, doesn't count. Or how about this one. I hear it on the video all the time. I'm trying and that should count for something. You're not going to hold my failures against me

because I'm trying. Now let's just at least grant you this, it is better for you to try to do the right thing and fail. Better, than for you to be willfully disobedient, and the Bible says that is worse. But you do not get excused for not keeping the rules just because you tried. Right? Give this a try. Go return your car, next time you take a business trip, go to the airport and crash it first of all and then bring it to the Avis guy with his little computerized notebook thing. His little clipboard deal and hand it to him and make sure it's really messed up and then when he says whoa, Dr. Fabarez, look at your car. Tell him this, "I tried." I tried to be safe - I really tried. Or you t-bone a car in the intersection, the cop comes up and says what were you doing and you say, Oh I ran the red light, but I didn't mean to. Oh, well fine then, forget it, I'm out of here. Go find a criminal. What? You're still guilty. It doesn't matter if you say you try. Trying is not meritorious. Last night we went off on this and I bridled myself in the first service. But you know I know we live in a culture that all that matters is trying. You live in that world too? Your kids get trophies for just like trying. I don't understand that. Do you understand that? They're bringing home trophies - I'm like, what did you do? Well, I showed up. What? You got a trophy for showing up? I don't have room for any more trophies. Do not give my kids trophies unless they do something. Trying doesn't count. I can't stand it. Don't get me started on that topic. You'll be rewarded for keeping the rules if you keep the rules, unfortunately, none of keep the rules. If you keep most of them it doesn't count. If you only keep the big ones and you neglect some small ones, it doesn't count. If you try really hard it doesn't count.

So what's all this with the rules, why is Jesus telling him obey the rules and get eternal life. Here's why, Romans Chapter 3, please turn there with me. I told you this and this is an important statement, the law is a composite of God's glory - God's standard. The law shows me God's glory. Here's what God's all about. He's a God that doesn't lie. He's a God that doesn't steal. He's a God that doesn't take what's not his. He is a God who does everything right. He does all things well. The law is simply a description of God, and if you don't keep it all you are not reflecting God. Right? It's a composite. Why is God giving us all these rules? Here's why. Romans 3:19. "Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law {whatever the law is telling us to do it says to those of us that it's applicable to - we're under the law} so that every mouth may be silenced and the whole world held accountable to God." The point is for you to say, hey, no more excuses. When the Avis guy pulls out the thing that you signed that you never read and says look right here. It says you crash the car you pay for it. Look right here. Read the rules. Then you're supposed to say, I know we don't, Oh, OK I know I'm busted. OK? That's the point the rules are to show me that I've got no excuse and to be held accountable to God. Verse 20.

"Therefore {one of the most important verses in all of the first half of Romans, here it comes} no one will be declared righteous in his sight by observing the {rules} law." Did you get that? "No one will be declared righteous in his sight by observing the law. {the rules}" Now, Jesus had a question, how do you get eternal life? What good thing must I do? Hey, you want to talk about good thing, let's talk about the good things. Do the good things and you'll get eternal life in theory. Do it. Well, it says right here you can't do it. That's the point. Jesus is trying to point out to the rich young self-righteous ruler, you can't keep the rules. Admit it. Get the fact that you can't keep it. He says this. This is so important - underline it. "Through the law {here's the point of the law, are you ready}, we become conscious of sin." We get it - we realize we don't measure up. Did you ever take your kids to Disneyland or Knott's Berry Farm when they were little, and they wanted so badly to go on that roller coaster. And I don't care how

nicely you put the standard. You can put Mickey Mouse's finger in a glove that's really cute and go you've got to be this tall to get into this roller coaster. Remember those? It still made my kids cry. Happiest place on earth became the saddest place on earth because they are too stinking short to get on the roller coaster. And we try everything. Where's those thick shoes. Hey, fold up the map and the pamphlet and put it inside your shoes. Fluff up your hair. Right? We've tried it all. Wear a hat, and they get up there and, sorry kid. Mickey says, no, and you can't get on. Sad thing if you don't measure up. Picture this guys. Here's the bottom line. When it comes to the law, it is God's little pointy figure to say, here's what you gotta be. You do this you get to heaven. You do this you get eternal life. Picture it this way though. It's like having on this pillar here, God says if you are this tall you get to go to heaven and it's at 10 feet, let's make it 15 feet. Be this tall and you get to go heaven. OK, we're going line up guys. Who's first? You guys over here, stand here, Oh nope, sorry, uh, sorry. What's the law for? To show you you do not measure up. That you, to put it another, famous verse two verses later, verse 23. You fall short. Let's look at it. "For all have sinned {great line} and fall short of the {what does it say} glory of God." How would I know the glory of God? It's called the law, the rules. I only know the glory of God as it's reflected in the moral code of God. Here's the glory of God - you've got to be 15 feet tall to get into this roller coaster called eternal life. You want a good after life - 15 feet tall, come on step right up, measure yourself. Everybody wants to know what good thing they must do to inherit eternal life. The answer is, do all the good things and you'll get it. You don't? Are you sure? Can you admit? Step up here and measure yourself against the commands of coveting. Go ahead. Stand up here let's see. The point of the law - go back up to verse number 20, bottom of verse 20, "through the law we become {what does it say} conscious of sin." I know that I've failed. And failures, lawbreakers - let's put it back to the Avis or Hertz scenario at the airport - they must recompense the wrong that they've done. They must pay him back. They pull out the sheet and say look at the rules you said you crash it, you do this. Here's what you've got to do. You've got to pay for this. OK?

Number 2 on your outline, Jesus was trying to get the rich young ruler here - he would not go there with Christ. He wanted him to measure himself up to the 15 foot - be this tall. He wouldn't do it. He wanted him to do it. He wanted him to admit this to be very specific - number 2 on your outline, here it comes...

2. Admit That Rule Breakers Should Be Punished

And I use the word punished though it's an active word. There is an active element and a passive element in it. Think through this with me. Rule breakers should be punished. Go with me to Matthew Chapter 13. Rule breakers should be punished. If I don't measure up, Ok, just to use that analogy I should be excluded. And if I've really wrecked something, the glory of God, I should have to pay it back. Now let's just start with the first part of that the passive part of it. I know punish seems very active, but let's think of the passive part of it. The passive part of it is, hey kid you don't measure up, you can't go on this ride. Go away. That's the passive part. And hell, by the way, let's talk about hell - fine topic for Sunday morning before your lunch - are you ready? Hell, by and large in the scripture, now I know there's a very active part here, is presented to us as a passive reality, and by that I mean, you're excluded into, as Jesus like to say,

outer darkness. Go away. If you invited me over for lunch today, Ok? Come over to my house Pastor Mike and eat big Mexican feast, homemade tamales, refried beans. It'll be great. I'd say great; I wanted to come and visit at your house. So off I come - come to your house, and we start to chit-chat and you start to talk about your life - tell me about - how long you been married - what's it been like - you show me your wedding album. I say, oh you kids that looks great, did they draw these paintings on your refrigerator - oh that's so cool - that's great. Oh are these your electronics over here? Nice TV. Like it - it's great. But all of a sudden about half an hour into it - you're just showing me stuff - you're bringing out family heirlooms and here's this stuff - my kid made - all of that - about half way through it I just start freaking out. Picture that. That may not be too hard to picture. I start looking at your photo album and I start flipping the pages like I don't even care. Then I get to a page and I look at a picture and I say I don't like that and I reach in there and I grab it and I pull it out. This picture - look at this - crunch. Pastor Mike? I'm not done yet and I walk over the refrigerator where you kids artwork there and I look at it and rip, through it away and jam it down into the garbage disposal. Where's the switch for this? There's your kids artwork. Look at your electronics. Go over to the little tower. Boom. I knock it over. Crash. Take a fork off the table go to bit screen TV and I go scratch on the screen. Got it? Got the picture? At some point our time together is going to end and not well. Right? I suspect not well. You are not going to like the fact that I've come into your house and I've not respected you or your stuff. Now you've given me things to be careful with - those are my wedding pictures - and I wasn't. I took things that you son had done and I abused those things. I took things that you treasured and I trashed them. At some point, I mean it may end with handcuffs and 911 - I'm not sure how it ends, but I know it ends with this. Get out of here! That's how it ends, right? It ends with Pastor Mike get stinking out of my house and don't ever come back. That's how it ends. Whether I'm in cuffs with the cops or I don't know what it looks like, but I'm out! That's what you want - eventually you say I'm tired of this. Get out of here. That's hell right there by the way. Look at how it's put by Christ. Matthew 13:40, let's start there couple of verses. "As the weeds are pulled up and burned in the fire {There are things in your garden you don't want there, right? The farmers are always trying to weed everything out. You gardeners, you've got stuff in there - you're get this out of here. And we don't burn them, right. They still do that in some places, but you put it in that little green waste garbage pail because you want to get it out. Take it away. I don't care where you take it. Get it away from my house. You pull up the weeds. It says} just as the weeds are pulled up and {thrown in the green waste bucket in our case or } burned in the fire so it will be at the end of the age. The Son of Man {verse 41} will send out his angels and they will {what a descriptive phrase} weed out of his kingdom {I love that his kingdom} everything that causes sin and {this is not just stuff this is people} and all who do evil." Now what did we just learn in Romans. We all do evil. That would be a pretty lonely kingdom then, right? Well there's more there is good news to this, but it's got to feel bad first. We got to recognize that we deserve the punishment of God and the first aspect of punishment is "away from me." Look at verse 42. "They will throw them into the fiery furnace where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." Why? Because you're out. You've been living in the kingdom of God, but now you can't. Here's the thing about you visiting God's little house. You've been in it your whole life. Did you know that? You've been living in it your entire life. From the time you took your first breath you were breathing his air, you were living on his planet, you were eating his food, you've been living in the kingdom of God. And I know it's messed up with a lot of sinners and a lot of things that cause sin, but one day he's going to weed all those things out including all the rule breakers and first aspect that

will cause you pain is the exclusion from God and his grace because everything good you've ever enjoyed has been the result of God giving it. God gives good gifts even to sinners. But one day, he'll say out of my house. You've been eating my food, sitting there taken the dips and guacamole chips and you've been sitting here chit-chatting with me, you're done. "Away from me you evil doers. Depart from me." Remember those phrases? "Into outer darkness, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth." This is a common theme. Don't think, and we've said this before, that it's like those teenagers, "ah send me to hell, man, I'm going there, we're going to rule, parties, my friends, we're going to smoke. It's be great. Get drunk every night. Party. I don't want to go to heaven anyway." There ain't no party in hell. You realize that. It's described as this, "outer darkness." Let that one sink in. Turn the lights on, man. No, there is no light here. Where are my friends? It's outer darkness, loneliness, exclusion, you will live eternity by yourself in darkness. That's the first part of the reality of rule breakers deserve. You break the rule you're out of the house. And God says, that's what you deserve.

But there is more to it than that. Unfortunately, there's the Avis guy with his list of damages. Right? Here, you've got this and you've got that. And you may not have broken the right front headlight, great you don't have to pay for that, but you totaled the rear quarter panel. You've got to pay for that. You've got to pay for everything you've done. That is broken rules, broken laws. You have to pay for every single one. There has to be an exacting toll because God is just. Well can't he just be nice. Please understand this about God. It is not a matter of being nice. It is a matter of maintaining his holiness. He cannot be holy if he embraces and ingests and approves and becomes intimate with sinners. Right? Can't do it. I can't drain the oil out of my truck, bring it to you and say, come on be nice and drink it. Why won't you drink my used motor oil? Why? Aren't you nice? Can't you get friendly with my 50 weight motor-oil - that's not right. I haven't changed my oil in a long time. 10W-40, is that it? What's the point? You won't do it. Right? You won't do it. It is poison to you. Sin is poison to God. It's not a matter of being nice. It's a matter of him being holy. And if God is not holy he's not God and one more thing if he's not just he's not good. Right? You cannot have someone who's in charge of a certain person, having authority over a certain person like a judge at the Orange County courthouse who must now be responsible for how that person is retributed. That's called a judge. You cannot be good if you're not just. Well I like you - I just want to be nice today. That would be a bad judge. If you're not just you're not good, and if you're not good you're not God. And if you're not holy you're good and if you're not good you're not God. This is a matter of God's holiness and because of that, because of his justice to be specific he has to respond to every damage on the list. Did you lie as a teenager? How about last week in that meeting? Did you lust after a woman that wasn't your wife? Did you steal - take something that wasn't yours? Did you always honor your parents? No you didn't? Last September you didn't. When you were thirteen you didn't? Great. Everyone of those infractions opens up the celestial penal code and God says OK, hum, alright... let's see, mocking your parents, let's see, let's rack up this, oh and then the rear quarter panel over here. Yep we saw how you treated people here at work. Then you've got a list. Here's the list. Who's going to pay for this? Oh, you? OK. That's the active side of hell.

One more passage. 2 Thess 1: And you'll see them both in this passage. Their both there and notice it begins so thoughtfully and logically in verse number 6. Look at the three words that start verse 6. He cannot allow sin to go unpunished and here's why. Rule breaking needs to be

recompensed. "God is just." God is just. He's the God of justice. If he's not just, he's not good. If he's not good, he's not God, and because he is just he will pay back. He's going to have to. In this case, these Thessalonians are being persecuted by people that hated them because of their Christianity and he says, "God's going to pay back trouble to those who trouble you." There will be an equitable repayment. He will not get more out of sinners than they deserve. He will pay them back. {Trouble for those who trouble you and he will give relief to you {How do you get off? Well that's the story of grace and the gospel - we'll get to that.} who are troubled and to us as well." Paul says. "This will happen when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire {Let's just let that one sink in for a second. I know we picture high-fives with Jesus, hugs and kisses, and sparrows. He's coming back, look what it says, in blazing fire} with his {These are not the Hallmark calendar collection. Look what it says.} powerful angels." You would cower in their presence. They're not little naked fat, eighteen month old angels. Right? These are warriors. He comes back in blazing and by the way that might be today. 3:00 I don't know. Maybe Tuesday afternoon? And when he comes back he will come back in retribution. He will seek to settle the score because he is just verse 6. And when he comes back, verse number 8, "He will punish those who do not know God {There's you God of love, right?} and who do not obey the good news.} Euanglian (?) the good message. They haven't responded to it. They haven't appropriated the grace of God - the gospel of our Lord Jesus. Verse 9, they will be punished {retributed} with everlasting destruction {that's the active side - here comes the passive side just so we didn't forget Matthew 13} and shut out from the presence of the Lord {and all his goodies} and from the majesty of his power. Every sunset, every good meal, every love between humans exchanged, every pleasant greeting, every joy, every pleasure comes from the majesty of his power. They don't get any of that instead you get to pay back what you did. Rule breakers deserve to be punished. The rich young ruler wouldn't admit it - how about you? Do you admit that you're a rule breaker and you deserve God's punishment. If you're fighting this right now and I know there are several of you that are, people listening to this, watching it on TV, you're fighting it. You don't think your guilty and you don't think you deserve to be punished because like the rich young ruler you're still making excuses for yourself. Here's what you need, one thing, let me turn you to one more passage.

John 16. What an important passage. Here's what you need. You need three words - the Holy Spirit - that's what you need. If the Holy Spirit got involved in your life you could admit that you're a guilty rule breaker that deserves the punishment of God. That you don't measure up and you need to be excluded and you deserve to pay back the rules that you've broken. If you don't have the Holy Spirit working on you that will never happen. You'll be just like everybody else. Moving through life... well you know I'm better than most and I'm being good enough and I'm hoping and I'm trying and I'm sincere. You need to Holy Spirit. Jesus would help to, but he's not here right now and that was the discussion in John 16. I'm leaving, I'm going away, but when I go away I'm going to send another drop down to verse 8. This paracletes (Gk?), this helper, he's going to come and he will {here's a word you don't like - what's he going to do?} convict. He's going to convict the world of {it gets worse} of guilt. Oh great, that's why I don't like this church. They make me feel guilty. That's the point! The point of the Holy Spirit's ministry is to convict you of guilt in three areas.

Number 1 as it regards sin. As it relates to righteousness and as it relates to judgment. Now lets

think about those. Infractions. The standard (righteousness) and that I deserve to be punished. Wow. Not a fun ministry of the Holy Spirit. No it's not, but you can't embrace the good news until you recognize the bad news. You cannot have a positive prognosis until you accept the diagnosis and the diagnosis is that you are a rule breaker that deserves to be excluded and punished. In regards to sin, he says verse 9 he says, men do not believe me, they don't trust in me, they don't do what I say. They don't embrace me for the savior that I am. Verse 10 in regards to righteousness because I'm going to the Father where you can see me no longer and if I was here you'd see what a perfect... Can you imagine being Jesus' younger brother? Think about it, right? Do you have a brother like that? Always does it right. Gets better grades than you. Hits the baseball farther. Right? Jesus did everything right. He was the standard. Can't you be more like your brother? Can you here Mary saying that to James? No you can't because I know you have this stained glass image of holy family, but you do realize it's tough to live with Christ. He is the standard of righteousness. He always does it right. And he says since I'm not going to be here to show you what you should do - I'm not the visible standard. I'm going to go to the Father. I'm going to give the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit is going to convict you and he's going to tell you you should've done it like this. Right? In regards to sin because you are not embracing the savior not doing what he says. In regards to righteousness cause I'm not here to show you what a righteous standard is. I can't show you the 15 foot mark on the "get into eternal life - look here you gotta measure up to this."

And lastly he says, verse 11, in regard to judgment. Because the prince of this world now stands condemned. There was something about the redemption of Christ excluded Satan from the presence of God - cast out the book of Revelation says. That's the point. I deserve to be cast out and I deserve the same judgment of Satan. As a matter of fact the Bible says that is the end for us. Into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. The point of the place of exclusion was really designed for him and since he was judged that way the Spirit is going to come to convict you of the guilt that you have that you deserve the same thing. Oh, this is a good message - so positive. Do you understand the difference? A gospel that does not walk through the threshold of the conviction of guilt regarding rule breaking and the punishment it deserves is no gospel at all. That's why Jesus said, keep the rules. And if you would finally admit that you can't keep the rules maybe we can talk about grace. But if you can't admit that you don't keep the rules and you don't measure up and you deserve my retribution we can't talk about grace. He went away sad. He wasn't willing to talk about his own guilt and sin. Admit that rule breakers should be punished. You're not feeling that you need the Holy Spirit in your life. The Holy Spirit's first ministry in your life will be to convict you of guilt. Once he's done that and I pray that he does. And I mean that, I pray that he does, not just so that I don't get your angry emails, I pray that he does cause you can't be saved without it. You need to do this, which Jesus never got around to in the discussion with the rich young ruler because he wasn't willing to admit his guilt, but if you admit your guilt, here's what you're called to do. Back to Romans, Chapter 3.

Romans, Chapter 3. You gotta then rely on someone else. And before, OK, this could be the never ending sermon - Oh I've some on the wrong Sunday. At least jot it down - Matthew Chapter 3. Remember John the baptizer, John the Baptist. Jesus shows up and he says, hey, baptize me and John freaks out. What? Me? Why don't you baptize me? He wasn't being

rebellious. He was trying to say I don't get it. Baptism was what? A picture of someone repentant of their sins - saying I hate the sin I've been committing. I want a new life. Now Christ the focus, the Lamb of God wasn't crystal clear, he hadn't been on the scene, he hadn't died for their sin yet, but the picture was I am repentant. And you got baptized. God's economy was calling people in the first century to be baptized as an expression of their repentance. Now, you're the one doing the baptizing. Jesus shows up. The perfect one. Hey, I want to be baptized. What? No, I don't think that's appropriate. And, Jesus said verse 15, "permit it now. Let it be so now for it is proper to do this {here it comes} to fulfill all righteousness." Now think about this. Humans want to go and live in a good afterlife in a place call the new Jerusalem, eternal life. You gotta be 15 feet tall. You're not. Matter of fact, no human is 15 feet tall. So, here's the deal. I'm going to send my son to be 15 feet tall and live a human life as it should have been lived and then we'll make a transaction based on that. But it starts with someone living 15 feet tall. And Jesus comes to do that. Let me do this now, because if it's right for people to be baptized, I know I haven't sin and I'm not repenting of anything, but let me do the right act so that this right act could be accounted to people that haven't done the right act. How many people fail to get baptized in that first century with John the Baptist ... oh, that's embarrassing, you get wet, I don't know, I don't have the right clothes - I don't know what their deal was. But they were refusing to do it many of them. Do you think the criminal that hung on the cross with Christ? Remember that? Do you think he took out time to go check out John's preaching and get baptized - Not even! He's not interested in doing that. How in the world is he going to get to heaven then. When he says "today you will be with me in paradise." You don't deserve to go to paradise. You couldn't even go out and be baptized. Oh, Jesus did it for him, right, that's the point.

Romans 3 are you there. We read verse 20. Let's read it again just so we get the most important verse in the first half of Romans. I know I'll say that about a lot of verses in the first half of Romans, but this is one of them. "Therefore no one will be declared righteous in his sight by observing the law." This is Romans 3:20. "Rather it is through the law we become conscious of sin." You get to realize that you're a sinner. You don't measure up. That's the whole point of the measuring stick. Verse 21. "But, {most important contrasting conjunction in the first part of the book. You don't measure up. That's what the first 3 chapters have been all about. You don't measure up, but here's the deal. A measuring up...} now a righteousness {a perfection} from God {is here. It's now, it's coming from God}, apart from the law {rules} has been made known, {God is revealing. He's giving a righteousness that didn't come from you keeping the rules. Which by the way, the Law (capital L) a part of the old testament and the Prophets (capital P) part of the old testament.} to which the Law and the Prophets testify." They wrote about it. Like Isaiah 53, wrote about some kind of substitute that would be the innocent one taking the place of guilty people. That's, they knew it was coming. It was a little bit veiled, but they had it coming in their minds. Verse 22. "This righteousness {I'm talking about. It's} from God {and it} comes through faith {reliance. You've got to rely} in Christ Jesus to all who believe." Let's right it down, number 3 on your outline. The word faith, believe, pistuo (Gr?), pistas (Gr?). Is to rely. Let's put it down that way. You have to

3. Rely on Christ Who Kept the Rules for You

He did everything right that you didn't do. Let's think about your teenage years. How did you live those? How did those go? You know, 14, 15, 16, 17. Let's talk about it. Got some video we'll show it. How were those years for you? Now how were those years for Christ. We've got your life on this screen. We'll put Christ's teenage years on that screen. How did you treat your parents during those years? How did you treat people of the opposite sex then? How did you deal with your teachers authority? Oh, let's put Christ over here on this screen. Is there a difference between those two tapes? Ooh, yeah, big difference. I need my teenage years to be lived like his teenage years were. That "righteousness from God it comes {to me} through faith in Christ Jesus to all who {would trust him}. There is no difference." And the no difference phrase there in the bottom of verse 22 is because he's been comparing Jews and Gentiles who said I'm taller than the Gentiles. I gotta be six feet at least and the Gentiles are squatty and short and not very moral at all. Well you don't measure up. Remember that. You fall short of the glory of God. Verse 23. "For all fall short of the glory of God." And on the positive side. Here's the grace of God; here's the good news. We are "justified freely {not by our earning it, not by our deeds} by his grace {we didn't earn it} through the redemption {the work} that came by Christ Jesus." He did the work for us. And not only did he live the life we couldn't live what about that list - the Avis guy there with his little electronic clip board - who's going to pay for all that? Well that's the next verse, verse 25. "God presented him {Christ} as a sacrifice of atonement, {that word there if you've got an old translation there or maybe in the margin - propitiation - what's that - it is an atoning sacrifice. It is the payment that was required from our rule breaking. God presented him as that, and} through faith in his blood. { That's our credit. Our bad account has gone to his cross.} he did it {this} to demonstrate his {oh, we're back to this again, his what?} justice {he's a just God} because in his forbearance {in the past you might have thought he was a softy because} he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished--" You go away with a lot of stuff. You saw a lot of people get away with a lot of stuff. Is God like us, all together like us because he didn't zap us immediately? No. It's that now he's going to demonstrate his justice. Verse 26. "He did it to demonstrate his justice at the present time." The cross, I know it is an act of love, but it is a picture of justice. That's why the cross exists. It is a picture of his justice at the present time so as to be just - God is just he can't wink at sin. The Avis guy can't say, well you tried I like you, get out of here. No one will have to pay for this. Someone's got to pay for it because God is just. He is the owner of Avis. OK? And, he's the one who justifies. He's the one who'll pay it; who'll fix it; he'll pay it off. And who's he going to pay off. Those, who's he going to pay for? He's going to pay for "those who have" what's the key word here in this book, the Bible? "Faith" you trust "in Jesus. Where, then, is the boasting?" Can you see that it is gone? If what these people on our video which is just everybody in the world thinks about getting eternal life is true. If I can how do you get eternal life? Well, I try to be good - working hard at it man. Sometimes I get angry, but I withhold my anger and I don't say and you know I try and help people and I give to charity and I do all that. And you get to heaven and God says oh, great you did so many great things. You're so good - I like. You weren't perfect, but you know I don't count all that against you. I'm so glad - you were good. Come on in - come on stand by me. Come on. We've got the next person coming up. Oh, you, you weren't very good. No, no you. What do you think? No, he didn't give any to charity. See his tax return. It's terrible. Mean all the time. Yelled at his wife, kicked the dog. But you didn't do that? Well, no very often. But he did it... well what do you think. Well, OK... no you're out! Go away. Into outer darkness. What is she going to say now? Well, see, I'm here because I was better. I didn't always kick the dog when I got mad. I bit my lip and I

didn't say those bad things. She will have cause for boasting. She'll say I lived a life and it was good enough. I earned it. Where is boasting in this scenario? Well, it's excluded. You don't get it. There is no boasting. "On what principle? On that of observing the law {rules}. No" because it's not about observing the rules. "No, but on that of faith." If you trust someone else to do it for you, you can't boast about it. "For we maintain {as if we didn't get it, verse 28} that a man is made right {is justified} by faith {trusting} apart from observing the law." Rely on Christ to keep the rules for you.

Do you really understand that? I wonder if we do. We say we do. Let me test it for a second. Think of the most vile person you can think of. Maybe it's someone alive on death row right now, in prison. Think about someone you read about in the newspaper or someone you saw on news or some story on Dateline or something and you said that's the scum of the earth right there I want to spit on my TV screen. That's the worse. Picture that person and just before they go sleepy sleep off into sleepy death just at that moment before they go off into to death to meet their judge and be punished forever excluded from the presence of God they stumble across in their mind or maybe some Bible that someone put in their cell and they put their trust in Christ at that last moment. OK? Got it? And because of this truth they get ushered into the kingdom of God and you meet them face to face. If you can't recognize that you get to heaven the exact same way he got to heaven, you don't understand grace. That test your theory of grace a little bit? Do you really understand it's not about trying it's about trusting? I know you don't like that. I know it's uncomfortable. Death bed conversations. I hate those. They shouldn't be in heaven. Why? Didn't you get there the same way. Do you think that's maybe why Jesus in the providence of God's plan made sure there was a death bed conversion right there in the Gospels. Right, you know there was - the thief on the cross we call him. He squeaks in as the door is shutting on his life. He's dying - talk about a death bed conversation - he's on an execution rack and he gets to heaven. Why? Same way you do. Same exact way you do. It's called faith because it's not about trying it's about trusting. Well, I don't like that. I want to earn it. Go ahead, try. Go back to Point 1 and live in Point 1 for the rest of your life. Right? Keep all the rules - Get eternal life. Good luck! See ya. It ain't going to happen. You've got no choice. The only hope we have is to rely on Christ who kept the rules for us. And by the way if I didn't fear your writers cramp I would've made this point as long as it needed to be. Rely on Christ who kept the rules for you and paid the penalty for your rule breaking. See, if I were a real pastor that's how would've worded that point. Rely on Christ Who Kept the Rules for You and Paid the Price for Your Rule Breaking. He lived for you. He died for you. He lived a life you couldn't live. He died a death you deserve to die. Which by the way back to Good Friday and the world's longest sermon. Are you ready?

Remember Good Friday? We talked about erroneous theories of the atonement. Remember that? All of those theories if you think about it, if they were true would be - they would look more like this - the Father reaching down to the Son as he is a martyr or an example of love giving his life for a cause. You would see the Father embracing the Son - helping him through this. Right, isn't that how the martyrs die? John Husk looking up to heaven. Stephen being stoned in the book of Acts. I mean these people relying on the strength of their Father in their deaths. Wouldn't that be what we would see on the cross? Here's one verse that blows all the erroneous theories of the atonement right out the window. Jesus in Aramaic cries out the first

line of Psalm 22. "My God, my God why have you forsaken me." That's not how martyrs die. Martyrs die with their hand being clung by the Father. That's not how Jesus died. Jesus died as the enemy of the Father. He was crushed by the Father because "God made him who knew no sin to be sin for us that we might become the righteousness of God." Think back to one of those heinous sins you thought of when I through the screen analogy up. Whatever you did, that you thought of. Jesus was treated as though he did those things. That's what the substitutionary atonement of the cross, the atoning sacrifice, the propitiation of Christ is all about. Christ being treated as the sinner so that you don't have to pay for it because Christ paid for it on the cross. Rely on Christ Who Kept the Rules for You and Paid the Penalty for Your Rule Breaking. Point for point, sin for sin, punishment for punishment. God looked up all the penal code requirements and punishments for all the things that you did and laid them on the cross, and Jesus became the enemy of the Father as he took the hit of hell for us on the cross. That's the gospel. You've got to rely on Christ who kept the rules for you.

So praise God we don't have to keep the rules. So let's just take the rules and let's just get rid of them man. I'm sick of those rules anyway. Pretty hard to keep. All these people want to be good. I'm glad I don't have to be good. Let's know even be good. Let's stop being good. Right? No. Obviously, the Bible says rule keeping has a place, but you've just got to make sure you're doing it for the right reasons. And if this seems like a footnote - it's not. I'm not done yet. This is not a footnote. This is not some appendix in the book. This is critically important. If you do not understand this you won't understand the gospel. You must understand that when you keep the rules you must do it for the right reasons. If you do it for the wrong reasons your salvation is in peril. Let me put it this way. If you keep the rules for the wrong reason you go to hell. Wow. Really? Yeah, absolutely. You must keep the rules for the right reasons. OK? You have to because if you don't and you misplace your motive for doing good things you're lost your salvation. I'll prove it to you.

First of all let's think to the rule list. If you want to get rid of the rules I hope you realize what a terrible kind of a reality we'd have because Jesus gave rules like this don't commit murder, commit adultery, don't steal. Let's just deal with those three. I'm all in favor of those, how about you? And I think we should do them. Hey, don't kill me today; don't sleep with my wife and don't steal my car. I think we Christians should probably do those things, but if you do them for the wrong reasons you put your eternal life in jeopardy. You must do them for the right reasons. What are the right reasons? Start with the right reasons and then look at the problem of what happens if we do it for the wrong reason. Here's the right reason. To put it in the words of Matthew 14:15 one small verse, here it is. Jesus said "If you love me you will keep my commandments." That simple. Why should I keep the commandments of God? So I can go to heaven? No, it has nothing to do with it. You don't get to heaven by trying. You get to heaven by trusting. So why would I ever try to do the right thing? Because if you love God you will try to do the right thing. If you love somebody, you'll do what they say. That's so simple in the scripture. One passage 1 John 2:3. "We know that we have come to know him if we obey his commands." That's how we even know we're in with God. Wait a minute - we don't do good things to earn our salvation? No, absolutely not, but if you're in with God you're going to keep his commandments. That's how we know we're in with God. Ok? "but he who does not do what he commands is a liar and the truth is not in him. But if anyone obeys his word, God's love

{now you Greek students know when you see a genitive like that it's hard to know what are we talking about. That's God's love for us? Our love for God? What are we talking about? Well, he explains it later in the book, but let me just tell you the answer ahead of time. Our love for God - that we love God. The love of God is made complete in our lives. We show that we love God} This is how we know that we are in him: Whoever claims to live in him must walk as Jesus did." Live like he did. This is not a pedestrian style - this is a lifestyle of morality. You're going to try to live like Christ lived. Then he starting talking amazingly enough about the very commands that Jesus through out for the rich young ruler, specifically Leviticus 19:28 which said "love your neighbor as yourself" and he starts talking about it, it's not a new command, it's an old one. It's one you've had from the beginning. It's an old command - one you've heard. Yeah and I'm writing a new command, it's new in a sense, it's the truth you've seen in Christ and it's true in you and it's all flowery poetic language, but it's all about loving our brother. That's the theme here in Chapter 2 and it gets into Chapter 3 and 4, but it's all about that. Whoever, verse 10 loves his brother lives in the light. Now if I'm willing to do what God said, love my neighbor as myself, I don't steal and I don't do all these other things, I am expressing love for God. This is where I'm going to take you - very end of the book. 1 John 5:3, He says this, "This is love for God {couldn't be any clearer than this}; to obey his commands." Now it's not about earning salvation, it's able loving God. Why should you today try to do the right things that God commanded. Because you love him. That should be the reason. That is the motive. And by the way when you keep people's commands because you love them, those commands then are not a drudgery. "And his commands are not burdensome," 1 John 5:30 "This is love for God: to obey his commands." Which was the theme of Chapter 2. And why is that, we don't have time for all of this I realize, but just jot down these to passages. Genesis 6:6 and Ephesians 4:30. Do those ring a bell? Here's why if we love someone we keep their commandments. Because it says in Genesis 6:6 when God saw the evil I men's heart it says he was grieved. Now he said he was sorry he made man, but then it said he was grieved in his heart. Now that's Hebrew, Old Testament. New Testament, same concept, directed toward Christians. Ephesians 4:30 talking about moral law. He says "do not grieve {there's the Greek work} the Holy Spirit of God who is in you." The point is I don't want to do the wrong thing because I don't want to grieve God. I don't want to make him feel bad. I don't want him to hurt over my disobedience. I don't want to say, hey the car's paid for let's go smash it up some more. That's the argument, by the way if Romans 6, if he's redeemed us from the penalty then racking up more penalty doesn't make any sense.

Alright. You've heard a lot of this let me summarize and I know some of you've seen these equations that I've put up on the board many times, but look at them one more time. If you understand grace as I said to a group this morning, it's more like taking a shower. You don't get tired of that because it's refreshing and it's good and here's the gospel - it should be refreshing to us. The picture of what the rich young ruler came to Jesus and said, hey if I keep the rules do I get eternal life. Jesus said, yes, keep the rules and get eternal life. The problem is you can't keep the rules and would you look a little closer at keeping the rules could you see you don't even keep the first or the tenth commandments of the decalogue. So, it's a futile endeavor. You try and keep the rules and get eternal life it's not going to happen. You won't do it. You will fail. Because of us fall short of the glory of God. So people say well great, here's what I'll do I'll do my best at it and I know most is really not good enough and I know only the big commandments and if I break the small - I know that's not good enough. And I know trying

really doesn't count, it's not good enough, so what I'll add to my trust is some reliance on Christ then I'll get eternal life. By the way and I know some of you have been sitting back this whole series because you are a Sunday school grad and you're like, I know all this stuff, grace I know all about it. Let me warn you right here because here is the place where a lot of people who are church goers that think they know the gospel are going to miss the boat forever. OK, here's where they will miss it. They will miss it because they think, I'm trusting in Christ I'm going to heaven. What they don't realize is that they are also trusting in their good deeds and that's why I tested it with the whole thing about the death bed confession. I know you don't like those, but if you think I'm going to heaven cause I'm trusting in Christ AND I'm living a pretty decent life. That is catastrophic. If you keep the rules to kind of have Christ to kind of - you know I'm 6 foot tall and I do need another whatever that is - I've got to have another 9 feet, but Christ can take care of the extra. If that's your view of the gospel, you don't understand grace. As a matter of fact the Bible says you don't have any benefits in Christ. What's the whole point measure up? I want value; I want righteousness. How do I get it? Trusting in Christ. Can I trust in Christ plus my good works? The Bible says no.

One last passage, I before God tell you this is the last passage. The angels are my witness it will be the last passage I turn you to this morning. Galatians 5:2 "Mark my words! I, Paul, tell you that if you let yourselves be circumcised, Christ will be of no value to you at all." What? Guys does that make you pause a little bit? What a minute? You can smile at that. It means all the girls get to go to heaven I guess, I don't understand this? You do understand that circumcision was the sign that I'm a rule keeper. It was the external sign of Judaism to say I keep God's law that's what circumcision was all about and it was the first thing you did to how you keep God's law - you kept the law of circumcision. Here Paul says, hey if you're going to do that, Christ doesn't count for you. If you're going to stand up and skooch up as high as you can on the measuring board to try and do all the right things, Christ isn't going to jump on top and add to your righteousness. It just doesn't work that way. Matter of fact, he makes it super clear in the next verse. "Again I declare to every man who lets himself be circumcised {you need to know this} is obligated to obey the whole law." You've got to do it all now. Now we're back to equation one which we said was impossible. Equation two you just need to see this, is equally as damnable as the first equation. If you say to someone, how do you get eternal life? Well, I'm trying to be good, we go {rasberries} that's not right. But here's what most "Christians" - church goer's do; I'm trusting in Christ and I'm trying to live a good life. And both of those together - king of mix them up here... look, God, you'll accept me know.

You do understand that little squabble in church history called the reformation. Remember that. That little dispute they had was all about this point. It was about first of all this scripture the Bible alone. Why? Because the church had gotten to the place where they said, hey it's faith in Christ plus good works. And then the cry of the reformation was Christ alone. Right? Because it's not my stuff verses Christ and then just to clarify it's faith alone. Do you realize that? We trust in Christ. It is about trusting not trying and it's not about trusting and doing good works. It's Christ alone and where do we get that from? The Bible. That little thing that went on 500 years ago. That was critically important to clarify the equations. Some people, some "Protestants" still believe this equation. Verse 4. "you who are trying to be justified by the law have been alienated from Christ." He's of no value to you. You may be sitting under the

sermons. You may be thinking you understand grace, but you've fallen away from grace. You don't understand it. You missed it. You've got to obey the whole law or you've got to trust in Christ wholly, completely. Wholeheartedly trust in Christ or wholeheartedly keep the law. It's your resume on judgment day or Christ's - make your choice. Because he's not going to accept 2 resumes - there's only one resume. Who's do you want to offer to God? That's why the whole death bed confession. I want you to test your theory of grace. It's about substituting your life for his. The only equation and the whole point of this morning was to tell you that if you want eternal life you've got to admit you're a law breaker and Rely on Christ. Then you get eternal life and you get a thumbs up. It's a good thing. That is the story of scripture - trust in Christ. And then throw out the rules, right? No. That's the point here. Then we do our best rule keeping. To get eternal life? No, if it's on the wrong side of the equal sign we're in big trouble. That means you're trusting in your good works plus Christ. Doesn't work. I trust on Christ alone, and then I have eternal life. And because I love him now I want to keep his commandments. Be careful because in the church there are a lot of people trying to get it right. Their trying to get eternal life. You ask most people - you going to get eternal life? I'm trying. It's not about trying; it's about trusting.

There's a guy named Ed Kimball used to teach a Sunday school class at the Mt. Vernon Congregational Church on the east coast. He had a Sunday school class like many Sunday school teachers do with people that were all levels of spiritual growth and there was this one guy there that everybody thought, man there is a good Christian man. And they called him a good Christian because they said, this guy's really trying. He came from a sorted background and was kind of rough around the edges, but they looked at this guy and they said if there is a guy in Sunday school that you sat next to who was trying it was this guy. Everybody said he was trying. He wanted the teacher to keep him accountable. They were accountable for church attendance. They were accountable for Bible reading, for prayer, and he did all that he could to try his hardest to be a Christian. Ed Kimball was smart enough to know that it ain't about trying, it's about trusting, and risking his relationship with this student in his class, this churchgoer he went and tracking him down at work one day. The Sunday school student was a shoe salesman. So he goes down to his place of occupation, he waits for a break, he pulls him in the back room, he says, listen I know that everybody thinks you're a Christian because you are trying really hard, and I appreciate the fact that you're trying. But Christianity is not about trying, it's about trusting. And because Ed Kimball was gutsy enough to sit this guy down and say I'm risking relationship with you by telling you stop trying and start trusting, that guy that day became a genuine Christian. His name was Dwight Lyman Moody. Ever heard of him? He changed the world. You never would have heard of him had he not that day been confronted by Ed Kimball who said hey man are you trying or are you trusting. Now, D.L. Moody was not a theologian. He wasn't the most brilliant scholar of the 19th century, but he changed the course of American history because of one simple message and that is guys I learned it when I was working in the shoe store. It is not about trying; it's about trusting. And from that simple legacy of a guy committed to that one message he preached all over America, all over Europe, started a Bible school, Moody Bible Institute. Have you heard of it? It's going now for 125 years. He started Moody Press. Started pumping out books all about trusting and not trying and he tried to make his mark on this planet by saying to people stop trying to earn your way into the family of God. Start trusting. Maybe like Ed Kimball I feel it's a little tough for some people to swallow, but I hope that maybe like D.L. Moody you'll pause long enough to say am I trusting or am I just

trying hard. The rest of the world is trying to be a Christian. You and I can trust to be a Christian and today get it right with God. You won't have to guess. When Bobby Blakely sticks a microphone in your face you can say I know for sure because my confidence is in Christ. I exchanged my resume for Christ's. I trust in him.

Let's pray. God please help us. There's a message that needs to be clarified. It's the answer to the question, how do I get eternal life. And the rich young ruler was shown the law of God which was supposed to reveal his sin, but he refused to see it. Decided rather to end the conversation by walking away - wouldn't allow Jesus to test his theory of keeping the rules because clearly he wasn't and he wasn't willing to admit it. I pay God that by the work of your Holy Spirit that was sent into the world to convict us of guilt that he would do his work in our lives so that we would know that in our understanding of our own broken-ness, our lostness, the fact that we deserve your divine and eternal exclusion and punishment that we would all with the grace that you provide are clinging to the resume of Christ. That we understand that the way a death bed conversion gets access to the kingdom is the same way we do. We don't add Christ to our good works. We trust him completely, and fully, and exclusively to be our salvation. Thank you for the message of grace. Thank you so much for the truth and today we can be sure by placing our trust, our reliance on Christ who kept the rules for us and incurred the penalty of our sin on that cross. In Jesus' name we praise you. Amen.