

# Sermon Outline: The Doctrine of Propitiation, Faith, and the Integrity of God

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## I. Introduction: Preparation for Worship

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- **Silent Prayer and Confession of Sin**
    - Purpose: To confess any known sin and restore fellowship with God.
    - Scripture Reference: **1 John 1:9** – “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”
    - Exegetical Note: Confession is not about feeling sorry or promising not to sin again, but simply naming the sin to God.
  - **Opening Prayer**
    - Thanksgiving for the day and the opportunity to gather.
    - Intercession for Neville’s recovery and for God’s blessing on the teaching.
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## II. The Search for Purpose and Meaning

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- **Illustration: The Finite Universe**
  - Triangle represents the finite universe; circle represents God (infinite, no beginning or end).
  - Progression: Soil → Grass → Animals → People.
  - Each created thing gains purpose from what is above it, but ultimate purpose is lacking without reference to God.
- **Ecclesiastes Reference**
  - “God has placed eternity in the heart of man that he would seek Him.” (Ecclesiastes 3:11, implied)
- **Necessity of Something Outside the Finite**
  - True purpose and meaning require something infinite and personal—God.

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### III. The Nature of God and Comparative Religion

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- **God Must Be Both Infinite and Personal**
    - Eastern religions (Hinduism, Buddhism, New Age): Infinite but impersonal.
    - Western mythologies (Greek, Nordic): Personal but not infinite.
    - Only three religions claim an infinite and personal God: **Judaism, Islam, Christianity.**
    - Only Christianity claims God became flesh in Jesus Christ.
  - **The Uniqueness of Christianity**
    - God entered the finite world in Jesus Christ.
    - Supported by eyewitness accounts, fulfilled prophecy, and historical record.
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### IV. The Doctrine of Faith

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- **Definition and Nature of Faith**
  - Faith is a system of perception, alongside empiricism (experience) and rationalism (reason).
  - Faith is not exclusive to religion; everyone uses faith daily.
- **Why Faith for Salvation?**
  - Faith is non-meritorious; the merit is in the object, not the subject.
  - Illustration: Faith in a sabotaged chair—no matter the amount of faith, if the object is flawed, faith is ineffective.
- **How Much Faith Is Needed?**
  - Only a little faith is required for salvation; the object (Jesus Christ) is what matters.
- **Scripture References:**
  - **Ephesians 2:8-9** – “For by grace you have been saved through faith... it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.”
  - **Romans 3:28** – “A person is justified by faith apart from the works of the law.”
  - **John 3:16** – “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.”

- **Romans 3:27-28** – “What becomes of our boasting? It is excluded... by the law of faith.”
  - **Romans 4:20-21** – Abraham’s faith in God’s promise.
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## V. The Attributes and Integrity of God

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- **Attributes of God**
    - Eternal (no beginning or end)
    - All-powerful (Omnipotent)
    - All-knowing (Omniscient)
    - Omnipresent
    - Merciful, Gracious, Loving
  - **The Integrity of God**
    - Comprised of **Righteousness (+R)** and **Justice**.
    - God’s love is not the point of contact; His integrity is.
    - God cannot compromise His righteousness or justice.
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## VI. The Problem of Man’s Relative Righteousness

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- **Man’s Condition**
    - Relative righteousness (not perfect)
    - Sinful, spiritually dead, lacking eternal life
  - **Barrier Between God and Man**
    - God’s righteousness demands perfection; His justice must judge sin.
    - The Mosaic Law was a “school bus” to teach the impossibility of self-righteousness.
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## VII. The Work of Christ: Propitiation

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- **Jesus Christ: God-Man, Sinless Life, Sacrifice**

- Jesus lived a sinless life, fully God and fully man.
  - Went to the cross as a substitutionary sacrifice.
  - **Propitiation Defined**
    - Scripture Reference: **Romans 3:23-25** – “All have sinned... justified by His grace... whom God put forward as a propitiation by His blood, to be received by faith.”
    - Greek Word: **Hilasterion** – “Mercy seat,” “satisfaction,” “gracious,” “mercy.”
    - Scripture Reference: **1 John 2:2** – “He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.”
    - Scripture Reference: **Romans 5:1** – “Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”
    - Scripture Reference: **2 Corinthians 5:21** – “He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us...”
  - **Result of Propitiation**
    - Sin is paid for—past, present, future.
    - No one goes to hell for sin; the issue is unbelief (rejection of God’s provision).
    - At salvation, Christ’s righteousness is imputed to the believer (Doctrine of Imputation).
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## VIII. The Parable of Propitiation: Luke 18:9-14

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- **Text: Luke 18:9-14**
  - Two men: Pharisee (self-righteous) and Tax Collector (humble).
  - Pharisee: Stands by himself, boasts of his works, trusts in his own righteousness.
  - Tax Collector: Stands afar off, humbly asks for mercy (“God, be merciful to me, a sinner!”).
- **Exegetical Notes: Greek Tenses and Voices**
  - “Stand” (histēmi): Pharisee—passive voice (action received, self-righteousness); Tax Collector—active voice (action produced, humility).
  - Pharisee’s prayer: 29 words; Tax Collector’s: 6 words.
  - “Be merciful” (hilaskomai): Culminative aorist tense, looking forward to the cross.
  - “Mercy seat” (hilasterion): Same word as “propitiation” in Romans 3:25.

- **Old Testament Typology: The Ark and Mercy Seat**
    - Ark contained manna (rejection of God's provision), Aaron's rod (rebellion), and the tablets (law-breaking).
    - Covered by the mercy seat (gold, typifying deity), sprinkled with blood (sacrifice).
    - God's righteousness and justice (cherubs) look at the blood, not the contents (sin).
    - Exodus Reference: God meets with man at the mercy seat.
  - **Application**
    - Pharisee trusted in relative righteousness; Tax Collector in God's mercy.
    - Only humility and faith in God's provision result in justification.
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## IX. The Necessity and Simplicity of Faith

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- **Faith as the Only Non-Meritorious System**
    - Anyone can exercise faith; no merit in the act itself.
    - Salvation is by faith alone, in Christ alone.
  - **Unbelief: The Only Barrier**
    - Not a sin that cannot be forgiven, but a rejection of the only means of salvation.
    - Illustration: Lifeboat in the ocean—refusing the only means of rescue.
  - **Colossians 2:6**
    - "Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him."
    - The Christian life is lived by faith, just as salvation is received by faith.
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## X. The Christian Life: Walking by Faith

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- **Confession and Restoration of Fellowship**
  - Scripture Reference: **1 John 1:9** – Confession restores fellowship and the filling of the Spirit.
- **Spiritual Growth**
  - The Word of God is spiritual food for the new creation.

- The same faith that saves is the faith that sustains and matures the believer.

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## XI. Conclusion and Application

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- **Summary**
  - God's integrity (righteousness and justice) demanded a perfect sacrifice.
  - Jesus Christ is the propitiation, satisfying God's demands.
  - Faith is the only means of appropriating salvation and living the Christian life.
  - Humility is required—recognizing our need and God's provision.
- **Closing Prayer**
  - Thanksgiving for Christ's sacrifice and the provision of salvation.
  - Petition for continued growth in faith and understanding of God's plan.

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## Scripture References in Order Used

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1. **1 John 1:9** – Confession of sin
2. (Implied) **Ecclesiastes 3:11** – Eternity in the heart of man
3. **Ephesians 2:8-9** – Salvation by grace through faith
4. **Romans 3:28** – Justification by faith apart from works
5. **John 3:16** – Whoever believes has eternal life
6. **Romans 3:27-28** – Boasting excluded by the law of faith
7. **Romans 4:20-21** – Abraham's faith
8. **Romans 3:23-25** – All have sinned; Christ as propitiation
9. **1 John 2:2** – Christ as propitiation for the world
10. **Romans 5:1** – Justified by faith, peace with God
11. **2 Corinthians 5:21** – Christ made sin for us
12. **Luke 18:9-14** – Parable of the Pharisee and Tax Collector
13. (Implied) **Exodus** (Ark and Mercy Seat)
14. **Colossians 2:6** – Walk in Christ as you received Him

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# Exegetical Notes (As Presented in Sermon)

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- **Greek Terms:**
  - Histēmi ("stand"): Passive voice (Pharisee), active voice (Tax Collector).
  - Hilasterion ("propitiation," "mercy seat"): Used in Romans 3:25 and in the Septuagint for the mercy seat.
  - Hilaskomai ("be merciful"): Culminative aorist tense, looking forward to the cross.
- **Tenses:**
  - Aorist tense (Pharisee): Point in time.
  - Perfect tense (Tax Collector): Ongoing attitude/result.
- **Typology:**
  - Ark of the Covenant: Contents represent sin; mercy seat represents Christ's atoning work.
  - Blood sprinkled on mercy seat: Satisfies God's righteousness and justice.

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## Application for Teaching

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- Emphasize the necessity of faith as the only non-meritorious means of salvation.
- Teach the integrity of God—righteousness and justice—as the basis for understanding propitiation.
- Use the parable in Luke 18 to illustrate the difference between self-righteousness and humility before God.
- Reinforce the doctrine of imputation and the permanence of salvation.
- Encourage daily confession and faith-rest living for spiritual growth.