

Let's start. If you can all hear me, let's pray. Dear God, our Father, we thank You for the Lord's Day. We thank You for the opportunity to come here and learn more about You, Lord. Understand the scriptures what the scriptures what we're to believe concerning you and what duty you require of us Lord that you would Make them real to each one of us individually you make it personal Lord God that you would come by your Holy Spirit illuminate our minds and keep me from error and keep me Faithful to your word and Lord prepare our hearts for worship in the coming hour in Jesus name. Amen Okay, we're back into Westminster Confession of Faith study, as you know.

Two weeks ago we did Chapter 9. Chapter 9 is of free will. By the way, that's on page 854 in your hymn book if you want to look at it. Chapter 9 is of free will. We're gonna run through a quick review there, just so, because it jumps, they flow, okay? Man's created with free will, okay? What does free will mean? It means an unforced, unmoved upon, nobody's making you make a decision, okay? That's what it means.

And it remains free in all four states of man. So there's four states of man, each one of the paragraphs explains that. Those states are innocency, In innocency, man is mutable, he is changeable, he is able to sin. Then there's the fallen state. Adam and Eve chose sin, they fell. In our fallen state, which is what everybody is outside of Christ, you are not able to not sin, according to Augustine.

I think that's the best, the shortest, succinct way of putting it. So you'll never choose God. You're free to choose God all you want to. You do not have the ability to choose God. That's what, a lot of people hear free will and say that the Reformed faith does not believe in free will, but they're confusing freedom with ability. Man will never choose God, never. We choose to be good, we can look right, but we do not choose Christ, okay, in our fallen state.

Thirdly, the state of grace. In God's kind mercy, he comes and he saves us. The next chapter is gonna deal with that. God reaches down and saves his people. And by his grace, we are given the ability to not sin. We don't always do that, because when you and I sin, those who have received grace, we chose to sin. Okay? We choose to sin. We choose to obey God. We have the ability to not sin, though. We do. We are still corrupted internally. The old man is at war, as we talked about. There's a fight going on. Galatians 5. The flesh and the spirit are at war with each other.

So, real Christians do some really wicked things. But they're real Christians that do it. After they're Christians, don't get this as some past life. After they're Christians, Christians really sin. Christians really believe in heresies. Christians really, and repent. The one caveat there, they always repent at some point.

Okay. And then fourthly is glory. What a state that is. Heaven, you are unable to sin. You're not even able to sin. One of the glories of glory. Christ is all the glory, but there's so many trinkets He gives, and one of those is His people can't sin anymore. We can perfectly love.

So anyway, that was chapter 9. We move from chapter 9 to chapter 10, which is of effectual calling. Now, I'm going to really run through those first two chapters, because we're going to get to 3 and 4 today. In the shorter catechism, it's question 31, which is on page 871 in your hymn book.

What is effectual calling? Effectual calling is the work of God's Spirit, whereby convincing us of our sin and misery. Listen to these words. Convincing us, there's a verb there, convincing us of our sin and misery. Enlightening our minds in the knowledge of Christ. Woe is me, I am undone. Okay, the realization of who you really are. That is a gift. To understand there's no good in me. That's a gift.

People go to churches every day and you hear them talking about how good these kids are and all this stuff. To come with a woe is me, you rarely hear that anymore. The melting of God where you're convinced of your sin and misery. And then you're like the people in Acts 2 who said, what must I do to be saved? There's a crying out. That's what part of effectual calling. It may not be out loud, but internally, okay?

Convincing us of our sin and misery, enlightening our minds in the knowledge of Christ. Here's God's provision. Christ Jesus enlightening our minds, renewing our wills. Dead men can't do it. You're dead in your sins and trespasses. You need to be raised up with Christ. We need a resurrection. It takes resurrection power to do this, okay?

And it's John 3. He comes and changes our hearts, okay? He changes our hearts. He renews our wills. He doth persuade. In other words, you still got free will, right? He's persuading and enabling us. to embrace Jesus Christ freely in the Gospel. The Gospel says, here's Jesus. He's the solution. You don't believe you need Him. You don't want Him. The Holy Spirit has to come and act upon you and persuade to say, yes, I really need that. and enable. You won't do it. You still don't have the ability. So there's a change. There's a new man. There's a new man. Okay. So that's effectual calling. God saves sinners. Look, they're very unapologetic in this chapter 10 because it's straight out of the Bible. God saves sinners. He saves the elect.

Okay? Effectual calling is the first phase of the application of redemption. We talked a little bit about the *ordo salutis*, and we'll talk about that in a minute later. But we said predestination, calling, okay? inside of effectual calling is you have the new birth and regeneration, then conversion, justification, adoption, sanctification, and glorification. Now, some of those happen instantaneously. Okay? When you are effectually called, you immediately believe and repent of your sins, and you are immediately stamped justified and you are immediately adopted into the family of God.

We are going to get there. As you can see, those are subsequent chapters. We are coming there. And then immediately you begin. The Holy Spirit begins the work, which is a lifelong process of sanctifying you, making you die more and more into sin and to live more and more into God. OK, he begins that process. And all that happens in an instant. But it starts with effectual calling. OK, well, that's where we are. The effectual call is the call of God Himself to His people. It is irresistible.

You may have sat in church a billion times and heard somebody actually tell the truth of the gospel. But until God comes through the Word with His Spirit, it is by the Word and Spirit. It has to be by the Word and Spirit, or the, I'm gonna go back to this word. Listen to this one, I said ordinary. They're the ordinary means, and we're gonna talk about the extraordinary means today. But the ordinary means is the preaching of the Word, and the Holy Spirit comes with power through the preaching of the Word, and thereby it calls you effectually, okay? It is by Word and Spirit, and the ordinary means is typically they are linked, they're never separated. As Van Dixhorn says, stated

openly, no man, woman, or child ever lives in heaven without the effectual call of God on earth. Okay, that's the succinct way of saying this.

Effectual calling opens our eyes, Acts 26, 18. This is review, so I'm going fast here. It not only deals with our minds, it deals with our hearts. It changes your heart. You are given a new heart. Ezekiel has those great passages where he promises to come and take out your heart of stone and put in a heart of flesh where he can pierce you with his word. That sword won't pierce a rock. The sword of the word pierces flesh and it sticks right through you.

And that's part of the effectual call. Second paragraph, you look in there, in chapter 10, this effectual call is of God's free and special grace, not from anything at all foreseen in man, who is altogether passive therein, until being quickened, made alive, that's what it means, quickened, being made alive, and renewed by the Holy Spirit, he is thereby enabled to answer the call and to embrace the grace offered. This paragraph begins by reviewing a basic fact.

It's God's free and special grace alone. It's God's free and special grace alone by which we're called. It's free. God has no obligation to do this. He's got freedom to. You don't look so good that he wants you. He's free to not to do this. He is not coerced. I had a really good daddy. You had a really good mama. You know, you're really nice to your wife. He is under no obligation to do this. He's free. Okay. And in fact, we talked about this.

There's no obligation for God to love his enemies. You know, there's no obligation for God to love his enemies. And that's what you are if you're not in Christ. You may look good on the surface. You may do all these things. We talked about this last week. You are His enemy. And God's call is to reconcile us out of love. Jesus can command us to love your enemies. Because He did. He loved you. But He wasn't obligated to. He loved you. This calling is not only free, but it's special, personal, and direct. It's for you individually. We talked about the why me. We said the graciousness of this call dominates the New Testament epistles.

It's highlighted or underlined repeatedly by setting it against our helplessness. While we were yet helpless, while we were yet helpless. We were dead in our sins and trespasses. Ephesians 2, Romans 5, 2 Timothy 1, Titus 3, 4, 5. The baseline of scripture is always about what God has done, not what we might do. We were helpless, dead. It describes us in so many ways. We couldn't go to Him.

We need a new birth. That's what it's telling you. We need a new birth. Jesus tells Nicodemus, you must be born again. Must be born from above. We need a new heart. Okay? Williamson, in his book, which I hope y'all have, he has a good little part about what the new birth, some of the ways the new birth is described, and I'm gonna give those to you. There are four ways he describes it. It's provenient.

What does that mean? It precedes all spiritual activity of man per salvation. In other words, before all faith, before all repentance, before any of that happens, you have to have a new heart. You will not do it. So it's first. Secondly, it's monergistic. There's actually a website called Monergism. It's solely the work of the Holy Spirit. Okay, we're going to talk more about that in a minute. It's mysterious.

You can't observe the work. In other words, you can't see the Holy Spirit changing a man's heart. Jesus said the wind blows where it wills. You can't see the wind. He describes the Holy Spirit as the wind in John 3, right? You can see its effects, but you can't see the wind. It's mysterious.

Fourthly, it's sovereign. It takes place when and where it will by God's decision, okay? It may be, hey, he was in church 40 years and he just became a Christian. Well, in God's mercy, he went to church for 40 years, okay? But the bottom line is we don't know when God's gonna act.

He's sovereign, has the right to pick the wins and the wears. He sometimes uses preachers that aren't preachers. He sometimes uses preachers that are wrong. But there's a nugget of God's Word in there and He draws us to Himself. He is the one who sovereignly chooses where the wind will blow and when and how then.

And fifthly, it's effectual. It always produces the desired results. When God makes the call, nobody has ever said, I'm not going. They come. He come, they come. Okay. We left off there. So we're at 10-3. Not as fast as I want it to be. I'm going to read this and then I'll let you read the 4 on your own. This is 10, paragraph 3. are regenerated and saved by Christ through the Spirit, who worketh when and where and how he pleases.

So also are all other elect persons who are incapable of being outwardly called by the ministry of the Word." We just talked about ordinary means, didn't we? God's call is ordinary, but there are extraordinary means. The whole point of Westminster Confession 10 is to remind us that it's God who summons us to salvation. Without His grace, we cannot hear it or respond to it.

And this paragraph reminds us that God's grace extends. Yes, we're all helpless. even to the most helpless. So damaged by the fall, they die in infancy. So damaged by the fall, they have mental incapacities. So damaged by the fall, the most helpless are still capable of receiving the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. Infants who die in infancy, mentally incapable persons, all of the elect are regenerated and saved by Christ through the Spirit.

I know you don't want me to read, but I think I will on this one. We should not be surprised by this. Some Christian traditions give the impression that Christianity is really just for adults, and that the developed confession of an old man is more to be trusted than the fumbling testimony of a young child. We listen to some Christians explain the gospel and suspect that they might have told Nicodemus to grow up rather than to be born again. Don't be that way.

Our Lord is of a different mind for He tells us in the gospels that the kingdom of heaven is well represented or characterized by children. In fact, there's something in a child's dependency that pleases the Lord and even calls for our imitation. Jesus was willing to give His blessing to the children of those parents who believed that He could do them good. Perhaps for that reason, Peter could assure the quieted crowd at Pentecost that the promise of salvation was for all whom God would call, not only for those who would repent and believe, but also for their children, even though Peter had no idea of how old their children could be. The emphasis is on the power of God's call, not on the age or the abilities of God's people. So effectual calling, the emphasis is on the call. It's the Holy Spirit. It's God.

Normally, ordinarily, the Spirit unites us to God in Christian faith. by preaching of the word. Usually God's people grow up to confess Him, repent of their sins, and set out to live their lives for the kingdom. His ordained means we established as preaching. We established that that is God's ordained means to bring about His kingdom on earth. That is His ordinary means.

You hear us talk about we want to be an ordinary means of grace church. What are we talking about? Well, the central focus is preaching. Okay? And we have simple worship. We have prayer. We sing Psalms and hymns. We have confession of sins. We have assurances, confession of what we believe.

Just simple means of grace. Not trying to add a bunch of show into it. Not trying to entertain you. We're trying to go to God. We're praying that God will come to us. That being said, we want to say here that God is not tied to any means. Okay? That's what he's teaching here.

And John 3.8, Jesus essentially says that, where am I?

I'm at John 8.3 instead of John 3.8.

The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but do not know where it comes from and where it's going. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit. That mysterious part is real. God does mysterious things. He redeems His elect. All elect persons, notice my wording, all elect persons who are incapable of being outwardly asked, called by the ministry of the Word, can, that is they are, can still be saved through Jesus Christ.

There are no limits to the effectiveness of the effectual call of God. There are no limits to it. Not a baby in a crib or a womb or a person who can't read or write, a person who can't think. There are no limits to the effectiveness of God's call. All elect persons who are incapable can still be saved. Remember what paragraph two says. This effectual call is of God's free and special grace alone, and not from anything foreseen in man. But nevertheless, in this paragraph, the confession wisely limits itself to saying a word.

They said elect, okay? You and I don't know who the elect are, even in this room, even though all of us have made professions, okay? I personally would say everybody is here, but I don't know that any more than I know what baby was, okay? But all the elect, all of God's elect, that's what the confession of faith, they limit themselves to that. They will be effectually called. They limit that. You can know that for certain. Only the elect are affectionately called. Often people drop the qualifier elect when discussing babies. It's a very common thing. Baby died, must have gone to heaven.

We don't know that. We can assume that God calls particularly the children of believers. We know that He does. But apparent innocence does not rise to the height of eternal entitlement. I love that line because I wanted to read it right. Van Dixon said that and I thought it was great. Apparent innocence does not ride to the height of eternal entitlement. Chad Van Dixon. Only the righteousness of Christ merits that. Only the righteousness of Christ. Only the righteousness of Christ.

And also be clear, the Westminster Confession of Faith is not saying that they are elect or saved because their infants are handicapped. They're just like any other elected person. Okay? They're just like any other elected person with the only difference being the manner in which they called.

Because the foundation for salvation never changes. Never changes. It's Christ's blood and righteousness. Ordinary means in this instance is replaced by an extraordinary, but the basis of salvation remains the same. Their basis for being saved, their basis for being in heaven is the blood and righteousness of Christ.

I'll read another little section from him here. I'm gonna leave that off, move on. Okay, so that's the extraordinary means. And we'll move to paragraph four here. Paragraph four deals with those not elected. So basically, this is coming at everything we've been talking about from a different angle, okay? Same thing, different angle. The same point at the last paragraph from another angle.

There are no limits to the effectiveness of God's call. And some are actually able to hear the call of the gospel and yet not effectually called." Okay. There are people here who preach the gospel on Sunday morning, but they are not effectually called. Okay? Matthew 22, 14, they reform their lives, enjoy good preaching.

I see there's a movie about Whitfield out, kind of his relationship with Benjamin Franklin. You know, Franklin liked to go here and preach. I'm not sure Franklin ever was converted, but he loved to hear Whitfield preach. You know, the story's famous that I'm not going to give that preacher any money. And he sat down in there and listened to Whitfield preach. He started asking people to borrow money so he could give it to him. You know, so he liked to hear good preaching.

But liking to hear good preaching will not get you to heaven. Reminds me of John, John Prine song, that flag Drake coffin won't get you to heaven anymore. You know, those little flags, just because you're American, they're not going to get you to heaven.

Matthew 13, 20, 21, rocky ground here. Some here, they show some evidences and then they wither away. They don't genuinely love Jesus Christ. There is one acid test. If you do not love the Lord Jesus Christ, you are cursed and still under condemnation. 1 Corinthians 16, 22. It is not natural to love the Lord Jesus Christ.

Because remember what happened that effectual call? Convincing us of our sin and misery, enlightening our minds in the knowledge of Christ. He persuades, enable us to embrace Jesus Christ freely offered to us in the gospel. It's a loving embrace. It's a I gotta have it embrace. is that you're the only one embrace. That is not natural, okay? Outward performance can be natural. I'm gonna keep moving.

Ephesians 2.12 says to be without Christ is to be without hope and without God in this world. So I'm gonna close up that section of effectual calling with that. You know, we talked about reading this, and not just reading it, but

reading it devotionally, and if this is true, what does it mean to me? Well, this is something we need to settle in your own heart. Have I been effectually called? Do I love the Lord Jesus Christ?

Matt just preached 2 Peter 1.10. You know what?

It exhibits itself in virtues. Okay. And varying degrees of virtues, but all the virtues, they're comprehensive. It's kind of like the fruit of the spirit. Somebody says, well, I got love, but I don't have peace. I got joy, but I don't have faithfulness. You have the fruit is one fruit.

You have them all. Now, some you have more prominently than others, but you have them all if you are in Christ. Okay. You must have them all. But the question is, do you love Jesus Christ? We have to answer that. Even a little. Because it's not the degree, but it's the fact. Is it a fact that you love the Lord Jesus Christ? Do you love Him as much as you should? No. Did Peter? No. Paul? No. But do you love the Lord Jesus Christ? Is it real?

If it is, are you growing in those virtues listed in 2 Peter 1 there that we just heard? But you also have reason to believe and rest in and rejoice in the grace of God. It is His grace that has reached out and caused that to be true. That's why 1 Thessalonians 5, 16, two-word verse says, Rejoice always. Rejoice always, because I know a lot of times it don't seem like worth rejoicing. We're going to talk about why today, I hope, if I get there. Affectual calling is the work of God by His Word and Spirit, giving eternal life to His elect.

Okay, we're going to move on. Justification, which is the next chapter. And I'm only going to do the first paragraph, Lord willing. In Romans chapter 8, I want to read this. We can start at verse 28. to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren. And those whom He predestined, He also effectually called. And these whom He called, He also justified. And these whom He justified, He also glorified."

Okay, we're going to talk about justification. You know, we talked about the ordo salutis. last week and the week before that too, which typically is predestination, calling, including regeneration slash their conversion, justification, adoption, sanctification and glorification.

If you have Williamson's book, if you have Williamson's book and you've been reading along or trying to study and you got through with effectual calling, you skip to chapter 14 and 15. Okay, you skip to chapter 14 and 15. And what Williamson does is basically he's putting the effectual call and saving faith, which is conversion. He's putting regeneration together with conversion here.

He basically says the reason that they did the way they did it, the Vines, was because they wanted to get clear what the acts of God were before the response of man. Okay? The acts of God were before the response of man. I mean, he's written this that I'm teaching out of, and he's also written God's Ambassadors, which is the history of the... He's edited the minutes of the Westminster Assembly.

Basically says that what the divines want to do is to stay true to this verse I just read you. Those whom He predestined, He called justified, justified, glorified. They encompass the whole realm of the history of redemption

in your life through that. But that was basically the reason why they did it this way. I'm going to stay with justification.

The assembly connected chapter 10 and 11 with Romans 8.30. They felt free to explain that Paul is promising the blessing, the blessing of justification for all those whom he effectually calls. There's certainty. The apostle is promising that if you have been predestined to eternal life, you will be called to Christ and you will be justified. That is what's happening there.

In Romans 3.24 it says we're justified freely, okay?

So 11.1, let's just read that real quick.

Those whom God effectually calleth, he also freely justified, Romans 3.24, not by infusing righteousness into them, but by pardoning their sins, and by accounting and accepting their persons as righteous, not for anything wrought in them or done by them, but for Christ's sake alone. nor by imputing faith itself, the act of believing, or any other evangelical obedience to them as their righteousness, but by imputing the obedience and satisfaction of Christ unto them, they receiving and resting on him and his righteousness by faith, which faith they have not of themselves, it is the gift of God." As you can see, they quoted a lot of Scripture verses and combined them there. He breaks it down into four things. Definition, the grounds of justification, what this righteousness is and is not, and how we receive the blessing.

Quickly, the best definition you will ever find is, what is justification? I think that was back earlier, right? No, later. 870. What is justification? Justification is the act of God's free grace. wherein he pardoneth all our sins, and accepteth us as righteous in his sight, only for the righteousness of Christ imputed to us, and received by faith alone." It is the classic definition. I don't know that anybody can succinctly say it any better than that.

And I would encourage you, if you get nothing else today, get that. What does it mean that God freely justifies, we're told that, there again, freely, we're not limiting God. He does what he wants to do. There's no obligation on us. He justifies the ungodly. He does not infuse righteousness into us.

Now that is a Roman Catholic doctrine. Okay. That's why they're specifically dealt with that. Okay. that He does not infuse righteousness into us. In other words, they're saying that the declaration of being righteous comes after the infusion of righteousness, okay? And that that's why they're having to go back and get an injection every week, okay?

At mass. He does not declare what is righteous, what is righteous essentially. In other words, they're saying you're already righteous. You're internally righteous and in varying degrees you show up and you have all these ways you earn it. I don't want to get into that right now.

We're going to stay with us. We believe God does graciously work in us to live more and more into righteousness and to die more and more into sin. But that is sanctification. Okay. That's a result of justification. Okay. Which we are touch on that in a few weeks.

The Bible says clearly God justifies the ungodly. He doesn't justify the righteous. I came to save sinners, not the righteous. Jesus is pretty plain about that. He doesn't save righteous people. He saves sinners. That's pretty plain. Okay? He justifies the ungodly. This same God who was the... Remember chapter 2 way back last year? This God is holy, holy, holy. Too purized to look on sin. How can He justify a sinner? Justify is a legal declaration. Okay? It's not a transformation. It's a legal declaration. But the first thing He does, it says here, is He forgives us our sins. He pardons all our iniquities.

In Romans 4, 7, and 8, it says, Blessed is he whose transgressions are forgiven. Van Dixon says a great line here. Forgiveness of sins is the happiness of the Christian. Some of us have really hard providences going on in our lives. But there is a reason to rejoice always.

If you are in Christ, your sins have been forgiven. Blessed is he whose transgressions have been forgiven. You can be happy. You can rejoice in the Lord Jesus Christ that you have sins that are forgiven. You are forgiven. This should be a spring of joy in you. Especially when you're really honest about yourself. Even as a Christian.

He forgives not only what you did before that one day, He's forgiving you to eternity. I've quoted him a thousand times up here, but Jeffrey Thomas, the last time he preached here, said that once. He said, we keep on sinning and He keeps on forgiving. And that should not lead us into more errant lifestyles. It should lead us into more affection for Christ. It's amazing. This should be your joy.

The first thing He does to justify us, He says, is pardon our iniquities. Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven. Lawless deeds. How can righteous God forgive me though? How can He do that? Because He's got to remain righteous. He provides a substitute. 2 Corinthians 5, He made him who knew no sin to be sin that we might become the righteousness of God.

This is part of that double imputation. Jesus takes our sin, we take His righteousness. You see, to be justified is more than what we were taught as kids. I don't know about you, but as kids, one of the first things, when they're trying to teach concepts, I remember, even like a first grader, and you hear the word justified, what does it mean?

Well, that means God treating me just as if I'd never sinned. Y'all heard that? Just as if I'd never sinned. That's the way God treats me. But it's more than that. It is more than that. It is true. That is true. But it's way more than that. He does treat you as if you've never sinned because He treats you as righteous. He treats you as righteous. He counts you as perfectly righteous. Forgiveness and declared perfectly righteous. I know me, and be honest, I know you. That ain't my first thought of each one of y'all, I'll be honest with you, or myself. Man, He's perfectly righteous. That's God's first thought of you in Christ. They look just like my son. He perfectly kept my whole law. They look just like him. God declares it so, so it is.

Justification is a legal declaration by God that you are righteous if you have been effectively called or in Christ. It's a one-time act that affects eternity. This one-time act, this declaration, you can't lose it. It affects your whole eternity. The grounds of justification What basis can a just God justify the ungodly? We've talked a little bit about this. Why are we justified? God's Word tells us the only answer. It's grace. Not anything worked in us or done by us.

Ephesians 1:7. Jeremiah 23 tells us that the Savior will be called the Lord our righteousness. Man, go read Jeremiah. Go read Isaiah. The Lord our righteousness, that's Yahweh our righteousness. Who's your righteousness? Jesus said in John 8:58, before Abraham was, I am. He's saying, I'm Yahweh. The Lord is my righteousness. He is your righteousness. We're accepted through Christ alone. Your righteousness is Jesus. It's not Jesus is righteousness, it is Jesus himself. You get God. You get God.

It may sound as if I keep repeating myself, but God's Word makes no apologies for openly and constantly lifting up Christ. If you don't think that's what the whole Bible is about, that's what it is about. Jesus told those men on the road to Emmaus, it's always been about me.

Okay, what is this righteousness and what is it not? Okay, this is a reiteration by the divines of what we just said. It's not our faith, because there's varying degrees of that. It's not perfect. Certainly not our repentance. It seems like I try to keep repenting of the same sins over and over and over and over again. It's not that. It's nothing plus Christ. Nothing plus Christ. We need Jesus Christ. Not our prayers or evangelical obedience. Not our Bible studies. Not our prayers. It's Christ. They're doubling down on hammering here, okay?

Christ justifies by imputing. He is the satisfaction. He paid the debts of our sins. And He is our righteousness. We're going to come today and celebrate that. God justifies by imputing that satisfaction and obedience of Christ to us. There's absolutely no other way. How can we receive the blessed satisfaction, a blessed justification? We rest on Jesus Christ and His righteousness alone by faith.

I'm going to close with this. Yeah, I definitely need to close. Is not that the way we want it in the end? I want to be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith.

Philippians 3:9. My freedom from sin is found through Jesus Christ. We're saved by faith in another. Salvation is so much a gift and we are so greedy for praise that Scripture comforts and humbles us by announcing that it was by grace you have been saved through faith. Not even that faith you have is yours. It was a gift. That even faith is not something that originates with us. That too is a gift. Do you want to be found in Christ?

Because that's where you receive satisfaction and you are perfectly righteous before the Father. He declares you to be righteous. Now He'll go about making you righteous, but first He declares you to be righteous. Let's pray. Dear God, thank You for the righteousness of Christ. We thank You for the obedience and the satisfactory sacrifice that He gave of Himself, Lord, and that You raised Him from the grave for our justification. You stamped it, Lord God, as good. Thank you for the Lord Jesus Christ. Lord, bless us as we come to worship you. Enlarge our hearts to run in your ways.