



## Salvation is All of Grace

*Series: Acts -- Worldwide Witness to the Worth of Jesus Christ*

Acts 11:1-18

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Some moments hold much greater significance than at first appears. January 29, 1989 – first date with Gretch...This is one of those texts in Scripture that a lot of preachers and commentators simply skip over. At first blush, it seems, as compared to other texts, like it is relatively less important. Much of the text is repetition from the chapter before and so it seems rational, I guess, to quickly move past it. But that is a great mistake. In fact, I would go so far as to say that this text is one of the most important ones in the book of Acts. Let me tell you why.

It is true that on the surface, this text seems to be nothing more than an account of Peter's dustup with the Jerusalem church as a result of his unsanctioned (by them) mission trip to Caesarea. It looks like a defense of his setting aside of the ceremonial law to preach the gospel to Roman Gentiles and then doing the unthinkable and actually eating a meal with them, with men who were uncircumcised. And in a way, it is about those things, about Peter giving a defense of his actions and attempting to reorient his Jewish brothers to his way of thinking. But in reality, this passage is about something much more fundamental.

This text is really all about defending the truth of the gospel, defending the gospel from corruption. It is about the defense of justification by faith alone in Jesus Christ alone apart from works, apart from the law, apart from religious traditions. This passage is all about the defense of the true gospel – the power of the saving work of Christ, the power of His blood -- the gospel that Paul so concisely explains in Romans 3 when he writes: "But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it— the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his

divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus. Then what becomes of our boasting? It is excluded. By what kind of law? By a law of works? No, but by the law of faith. For we hold that one is justified by faith apart from works of the law. Or is God the God of Jews only? Is he not the God of Gentiles also? Yes, of Gentiles also, since God is one—who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith. Do we then overthrow the law by this faith? By no means! On the contrary, we uphold the law.” (Romans 3:21–31, ESV)

What we see declared in these verses from Paul and we see upheld before our eyes in this confrontation of Peter with the Jewish saints in Jerusalem are these eternal truths: God has provided a righteousness for all sinners apart from the Law and has made it known; This righteousness becomes ours, solely and exclusively through faith; This righteousness is only for those who know they are sinners, and answers their greatest need – redemption from sin and justification (a declaration of not guilty but righteous in Christ) before the Holy God; It is entirely of God’s grace – it is a gift not a matter of merit or something earned; It is available exclusively through faith in the redeeming work of the Lord Jesus Christ who has lived a righteous life, suffered, bled and died for the sinner as his substitute to turn away the wrath of God that every sinner deserves; It is a way of salvation that is entirely consistent with God’s character; It is a way that gives all of the glory to God and none of the glory to man; It is a way that shows that God is the God of the whole world and not only one nation; It is a way that honors and confirms the Law of God.

That gospel, the true gospel, is defended and upheld in this text that we are looking at this morning. What we have before us in this conflict of Peter with the Jerusalem saints is more than a minor misunderstanding. The Jewish church had a problem with the evangelization of Gentiles as Gentiles without first bringing them to embrace Judaism by becoming Jewish proselytes and cleaning them up a little. They wanted to make the gospel exclusively Jewish and exclusively tied to Judaism. And in their attempts to make the gospel exclusively Jewish, what was going on behind the scenes was nothing less than a satanic attempt to confuse the gospel, to gut the gospel of its power and of its universal scope that offered salvation to all repentant sinners from every nation regardless of their nationality or their relationship to Judaism, on the cusp of the gospel’s great missionary thrust into the world. Satan is seeking to weaken the gospel by sowing confusion, by obscuring Christ’ sufficiency to save with religious tradition and even with the Law that had come to its ultimate fulfillment and completion in Christ. It is a subtle and clever ploy and it is one that Peter soundly defeats, not with religious rhetoric or

arguments from human logic, but with the plain speaking of the truth. Let's start to understand this text by first,

Identifying the Real Issue (1-3) Pick it up in verse 1 with me: "Now the apostles and the brothers who were throughout Judea heard that the Gentiles also had received the word of God. So when Peter went up to Jerusalem, the circumcision party criticized him, saying, "You went to uncircumcised men and ate with them.'" (Acts 11:1-3, ESV) it is hard to imagine that the leader of the Apostles would actually be called on the carpet for preaching the gospel to the lost, but that is exactly what happens. News of Peter's trip to Caesarea and the response of the Roman Gentiles to the gospel of Jesus Christ spread like wildfire throughout Judea, just as had happened when the gospel went to the Samaritans. But the response of the church was decidedly different. When they heard that the Samaritans had received the word of God, they sent to them Peter and John, but when they heard about the Gentiles they were angry and indignant. The church as a whole is upset. That translation "the circumcision party" is an unfortunate one. Literally it says "those of the circumcision" meaning the Jewish church as a whole. In fact, the circumcision party would actually come into existence as a result of this confrontation. Those that would not receive Peter's instruction would form the group known as the Judaizers that would be such a pain to Paul in the future. No, it the whole church, or most of it, that is in view here.

On Peter's return to Jerusalem, rather than the church rejoicing that the plan of Christ as outlined in Acts 1:8 was moving forward -- "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.'" (Acts 1:8, ESV) -- instead they were troubled by what was going on, that the Gentiles were hearing the gospel and responding as they were.

Like I said, the real issue that the Jerusalem church was struggling with was the Gentiles' salvation as Gentiles and not as proselytes of the Jewish religion first. If they had been Jewish proselytes and had submitted to circumcision and a kosher diet and the rest, this would have been no big deal, but they weren't it was an offense to their religious tradition and to their Jewish prejudice, their ethnicity and religious culture. Gentiles should not be able to be saved apart from becoming Jewish first! That is the heart behind their complaint that: "You went to uncircumcised men and ate with them." To eat with the Gentiles, with uncircumcised men, meant to receive them into Christian fellowship, to accept them as co-heirs of God's blessings. How could Peter do that if they were not culturally and religiously Jewish first before they

heard the gospel? And how could Peter eat non-kosher food and remain faithful to Christ as the Jewish Messiah? How could he be a saved Jew and do that? You see, for the disciples still in Jerusalem, Jesus was an exclusively Jewish Messiah for those who were ethnically Jews or those who had become Jews by choice.

But what we need to see is that this is far more than an issue of pride or bad manners – it was gospel confusion; it was a challenge to the gospel truth of justification by faith apart from the work of the law. The big question on the table was “How was someone saved and received into the family of God?” By faith in the shed blood of Christ and His work of redemption in addition to keeping the Jewish ceremonial law or by faith in Christ alone? How was someone saved? By faith AND adherence to Jewish religious customs or by faith in Christ alone? Peter had dealt with these questions in his own heart and by God’s intervention, by His grace to give him illumination, had come to understand the full truth of the gospel, had come to understand that salvation was a gift of God’s grace alone, repentance unto eternal life a grace from God, that he gives to whomever He chooses, through simple faith in Christ alone.

These Jewish Christians needed to understand that. The Jerusalem church had to see that salvation in all of its respects is a gift from God, a gift of grace. The truth is that even the fact that they, as Jews had been given the oracles of God and granted the Law, that the apostles among them had been chosen by Christ to share His life and ministry on this earth and to hear His teaching and His miracles, that they had believed on Christ as Messiah and Lord, and that they all had received the blessed outpouring of the Holy Spirit was all a gift of grace not a right, a gift of grace not something they earned by merit, a gift of grace not a right of inheritance as a result of race, not a result of their spiritual heritage or of religious position, not a point of human pride but of humility.

Being Jewish or being circumcised into the Jewish Law did not make someone especially savable, nor did it establish as a chief candidate for salvation any more than Gentiles. It never occurred to them that God purposed to save Gentiles without having them first become a Jewish proselyte complete with circumcision and obedience to the law and their traditions. To these Jews it would have been a massive shift in thinking. It was for Peter. And in what follows Peter was going to trace how God changed his thinking and refined and sanctified his understanding.

Ultimately what the Jewish church needed to reckon with was the truth that the gospel is only for those who are spiritually unclean and know themselves to be unworthy of it. This is who Christ makes clean by faith. The truth is that despite all of their advantages, they were themselves once as unclean as they supposed the Gentiles to be. They did not themselves deserve salvation. God had granted them salvation in their Jewishness and had granted salvation to the Gentiles apart from any Jewishness. That is what we see explained in

Peter's Straightforward Speech (4-18) There is a great humility and a great deal of patience in Peter's response to the Jewish brethren. Rather than bow up and assert his position as chief apostle and tell them if they didn't like it they could pound sand, Peter opens the truth to these Jewish brothers who needed to understand it.

"But Peter began and explained it to them in order: "I was in the city of Joppa praying, and in a trance I saw a vision, something like a great sheet descending, being let down from heaven by its four corners, and it came down to me. Looking at it closely, I observed animals and beasts of prey and reptiles and birds of the air. And I heard a voice saying to me, 'Rise, Peter; kill and eat.' But I said, 'By no means, Lord; for nothing common or unclean has ever entered my mouth.' But the voice answered a second time from heaven, 'What God has made clean, do not call common.' This happened three times, and all was drawn up again into heaven." (Acts 11:4-10, ESV)

Peter begins by telling them of the vision that he had received from the Lord as he was communing with him in prayer. He emphasizes God's initiative and His putting away of the ceremonial law regarding diet, once and for all, as we saw last week. The ceremonial law, the sacred cow of the Jews, was no longer in effect. It is important for the Jewish Christians to see that Peter did what he did because of a word from the Lord and not out of his own reasoning. He once thought as they did, but God had changed his heart and his mind and the beginning of that process was God's word to him in this vision. He was in a place to receive God's instruction – abiding in Christ and praying – when God spoke to him.

I want you to notice that as he relates what is taking place, especially God's word to him -- 'What God has made clean, do not call common.' – he does not tell them that God was speaking on two levels, about food and the human soul that has been cleansed by the blood of Christ. Instead he trusts in the Lord to give them understanding as he relates the rest of the story.

That he grasped the importance of this vision is made clear by what he says next. “And behold, at that very moment three men arrived at the house in which we were, sent to me from Caesarea. And the Spirit told me to go with them, making no distinction. These six brothers also accompanied me, and we entered the man’s house.” (Acts 11:11–12, ESV) None of the Jewish brothers he was addressing would ever have thought to do something like this. Neither would Peter before the Word of God came to Him like this. He tells them that the Holy Spirit instructed him to go with these men, Gentiles, and to do so “making no distinction” – that is “not disputing or striving against what God was instructing nor treating them in a judgmental manner.” And Peter was obedient. He knew it is strange, knows it is important so he takes six brothers with him to establish everything.

He then relates to them the providential work of God as it regarded Cornelius. “And he told us how he had seen the angel stand in his house and say, ‘Send to Joppa and bring Simon who is called Peter; he will declare to you a message by which you will be saved, you and all your household.’” (Acts 11:13–14, ESV) God was already clearly at work in the life of Cornelius, right? But Peter adds a detail here that we were not told in chapter 10. The angel told Cornelius to send for Peter because he would declare to you a message by which you will be saved, you and all your household. Do you see the emphasis? It is not on a religious system or a process of becoming Jewish and then laying hold of the Jewish Messiah. No, the emphasis is on the message, on the gospel, on the words of eternal life that Peter would speak to them by which they would be saved!

“As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell on them just as on us at the beginning. And I remembered the word of the Lord, how he said, ‘John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.’” (Acts 11:15–16, ESV) As he began to speak, or while he was speaking before he had a chance to fully complete his message, something like Pentecost took place. The Spirit of God fell upon them. He saw with his own eyes and heard with his own ears the salvation of the Gentiles by faith and their reception of the promised Spirit from Christ. But notice how he explains this. He does not take the experience simply at face value. He does not do what so many in our day do -- which is to uncritically and without proper discernment accept anything that seems spiritual as a work of God. No, he checks what he is seeing against the Word of God, specifically against the words of Christ to ensure that it is true. He remembered the words of Christ, how he had said - and the sense in the Greek is not that He had said it once, but that He used to say it frequently – how the Lord “used to say,” in other

words -- John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit. Peter saw what happened as he preached the Word and it squared with what Jesus said and with the experience of His people.

What had happened? Simply this -- as a result of Peter's preaching, these Gentile converts had experienced repentance unto life, as the Jewish brothers would affirm in verse 18, ""Then to the Gentiles also God has granted repentance that leads to life."" (Acts 11:18, ESV)

They received repentance unto life --the gift from God, the saving grace that leads to eternal life. It is part and parcel of saving faith. There is no salvation apart from it. It is always faith and repentance that lays hold of eternal life. That's why the first words that Jesus came preaching were: "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."" (Mark 1:15, ESV)

What exactly is repentance unto life? As I have said before, repentance and faith are two sides of the same gospel coin. There is no repentance without faith born of conviction and there is no faith that is absent repentance. The word repentance is so often minimized, reduced to simply changing your mind about Jesus – it does require that, but it is far more.

Repentance is a change of belief, a change of belief about who you really are, about the just wrath of God that your sins deserve. It's seeing your personal guilt before God, the defilement of your sin, the repulsiveness and damning nature of it. It is a change of your emotions – a sorrow for sin committed against a holy and a just God, pain at offending God and treating Him with such contempt; and it is a turning away from sin, from yourself, from your self-rule to embrace the only One who saves, Jesus Christ, as both Lord and Savior; turning from sin to God with a desire to obey Him and have Him regardless of the cost. Repentance is a complete change of heart, a spiritual about-face. True repentance clings to no self-dignity and by faith fully trusts Christ as the only way of salvation and clings to Him for life and does so gladly and thankfully. This is the repentance, repentance into eternal life that these Gentiles to whom Peter preached had experienced.

The great marvel and wonder of God's mercy is not only that He provides the way of eternal life and calls men to believe the gospel, but that, by His grace, He makes men willing to be saved. God gives His Son and punishes Christ as the propitiation for our sins, providing forgiveness and

spiritual cleansing for His lost children. He sends the preacher, like Peter to declare the salvation found only in Christ. The Holy Spirit then quickens the conscience, makes alive the heart, and causes the one who was once far off and alienated from the life that is in God by their sin, to love and trust in Jesus. And this is not by force, not against the will, but by the sweet, regenerating, repentance-granting, faith-creating, work of the Holy Spirit changing the will. How amazing that is.

And all of this is the ground from which Peter makes his point -- that what makes a Christian is not conforming to Jewish practices and traditions plus faith in Christ. The gospel is not become a Jew and repent and believe in Jesus Christ and continue to be Jewish. It is not Christ plus anything. The gospel is repent and believe in Christ, in all that He is and all that He has done, who is Lord of both Jew and Gentile. The crucial components of true salvation involve trusting in God's Messiah as Savior and Lord over all, turning from the former life of sin to the one true God in Christ and receiving the salvation that is offered through His sin-atonement death and resurrection, and receiving the Holy Spirit who will lead you in all truth and enable you to live and walk as Jesus did -- to the glory of God. For Peter, eating with these men and women was not a contradiction or a compromise, not a denial of the gospel or disobedience to Christ, but an affirmation of the gospel truth that these Gentiles were cleansed by the blood of Christ. It was an affirmation of the power of Christ to save.

Peter makes this plain when he says: "If then God gave the same gift to them as he gave to us when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could stand in God's way?" (Acts 11:17, ESV) The inference is plain. To stand on tradition and to reject what God was so clearly doing in bringing salvation to the Gentiles was to be found opposing God, rejecting the gospel, and devaluing the saving work of Christ. Peter's conclusion was that he had to change his own point of view to God's point of view, and to bring his own actions into alignment with God's actions. He was compelled to see that God thought and acted differently than he, and it was he who must change, so as to bring himself into submission to God's truth.

The Jewish brothers seem to have come to understand this truth by God's grace and instruction. They respond to what Peter has said. Verse 18 says: "When they heard these things they fell silent. And they glorified God, saying, "Then to the Gentiles also God has granted repentance that leads to life."" (Acts 11:18, ESV) Their mouths are shut. What can they say to this? All of the opposition, at least vocally, falls away and it is replaced with praise and worship of God for His exceeding grace and goodness to save sinners of all stripes.

The Jewish church as a whole is convinced that God is not only the God of the Jews, but of the Gentiles as well. And they are convinced that salvation consists in the response of the human



heart to the gospel of Jesus Christ and not their Jewish traditions or Judaism at all. The confusion regarding the gospel is lifted and the truth of justification by faith alone in Jesus Christ alone apart from works, apart from the law, apart from religious traditions is upheld. It is no exaggeration to say that the purity of the gospel is preserved; the gospel that saves is itself saved from corruption. The gospel was guarded from error and rescued from confusion and destruction and God did it through Peter.

To us who have been raised on and who have heard the true gospel preached faithfully and accurately, we ought to be very thankful for what Peter, led by God, does in this passage. If he had not stood firm, the gospel would have been lost at the very beginning of the church.

We also need to see what a seismic shift in thinking this was for the Jewish brothers in Jerusalem. It turned their theology and practice upside down. This text shows how God changed the thinking of these Christians on a matter that was essential for the spread of the gospel. If the Gentiles had been required to adopt Jewish rituals and ceremonies to be saved, the gospel would not have spread around the Gentile world as it did, and it would be a different “gospel” – a gospel that does not save, mixing grace with works of the law.

Here is something else that the salvation of the Gentiles indicated: The center of church life would no longer be in Jerusalem. The focus of attention, the central point of the church, would no longer be Jerusalem. For over a thousand years Jerusalem had been the center of all things religious. It was the place people would travel to. It was the place people wanted to be buried. But the gospel would not be contained to one place, one region or one people. God is expanding the geography of His church. It's going to move beyond Jerusalem, and it's going to move beyond Judea, and it's going to move beyond Samaria, and it's going to move to the ends of the earth to places that folk in Jerusalem had never heard of. The gospel, Christ as Lord, was not something for them to hoard for themselves. If the gospel is God's promise and God's possession, then it is His to give, to whomever He chooses. The gospel was for sinners, Jew or Gentile. The gospel was God's means of providing salvation for the whole world, and not just for the Jews. God's salvation was for the Jews, but it was not for them exclusively. It was for them to accept and then to proclaim to the nations. Salvation was through the Jews, principally in that Jesus was a Jew, it was through this “seed of Abraham” that salvation would come for all peoples. Those who are saved have nothing to boast about, other than in Christ who saved them. And those who receive salvation are stewards of the gospel, with the responsibility and duty of sharing it with others. God's vision was for the world, not just the Jews. As Jesus had

told the Samaritan woman in John 4: “Jesus said to her, “Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.”” (John 4:21–24, ESV)

Not everyone in Jerusalem was convinced of course. There were those who were determined to oppose the truth about the gospel even from within the church, who would insist on Jewish exclusivism, who would mix the gospel of grace with works, who would insist that in order to come to a saving faith in Jesus Christ, in order to be reckoned amongst the covenant community or God's church, you must be circumcised. This would become the “circumcision party” or the Judaizers who would hound Paul. And listen, this is no small disagreement over which we can “agree to disagree” – it is a matter of gospel faithfulness. Salvation is by grace alone, through faith alone, in Jesus Christ alone. So serious is this that Paul said to the Galatians who had been plagued by these Judaizers who claimed that one had to be circumcised and follow the ceremonial law to be saved: “I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting him who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel— not that there is another one, but there are some who trouble you and want to distort the gospel of Christ. But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed. As we have said before, so now I say again: If anyone is preaching to you a gospel contrary to the one you received, let him be accursed.” (Galatians 1:6–9, ESV)

This text that we have looked at this morning, far from being an insignificant one, is in reality a watershed in Christian history. It is the day in which the true gospel of salvation by grace alone, through faith alone, in Jesus Christ alone, was saved. The church would not follow the path of Israel and hide the light of God’s grace from the rest of the world.

#### Points of Application

First, the presence of the Holy Spirit in the church and in the life of a saint does not produce instant maturity, doctrinal accuracy or spirituality. That is clearly seen in this text today – both

in the way that Peter needed to mature in Christ and in the way that the Jewish believers in Jerusalem needed to have their sinful thinking renewed by the Holy Spirit. We should take heart, however, in these words from Paul that apply to us today -- "And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ." (Philippians 1:6, ESV) We must always be seeking through the application of the means of grace – prayer, God’s Word, worship, fellowship with the saints, the preaching of the Word of God, the application of the truth to our lives – to be growing in maturity, in doctrinal understanding, in obedience to Scripture and in the grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ so that we may be found faithful and progressing in our walk with Christ, so that we are not found standing in God’s way.

Second, the single most important division in humanity is not Jew and Gentile, but between those who repent and believe the gospel, who trust in Christ alone for salvation and who follow Him as Lord and those who do not. The great division is not church of unchurched, ethnicity or class, not age, not socio-economic levels, not political affiliation, not educational attainments, not physical beauty, not morality, but one thing – what you believe about Christ, the true Christ, as He is given to us in the Word of God.

Third, we must guard against the very real temptation to confuse the gospel with our own traditions and additions. The gospel is not and never has been repent and believe in Christ and ascribe to certain extra-biblical requirements – not believe the gospel and look and dress like me, listen to the same music as me, have the same personal convictions as me, and be able to explain in detail every aspect of reformed theology in six weeks. It is repent and believe the gospel and receive the forgiveness of sins, eternal life and gift of the Holy Spirit and grow in grace. Do not confuse the gospel or cloud it by extra-biblical requirements. Trust in God to do the sanctifying in the hearts of those who truly are His and who faithfully seek His face.

Fourth, we must guard against the thought that there are classes of sinners in the world that are beyond the reach of the gospel of Christ. We all have them, certain groups that in our minds are beyond the grace of God, but, beloved, that is simply not the case. As Paul would affirm to the Corinthians: "Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God."

(1 Corinthians 6:9–11, ESV) People are only beyond the gospel if we fail to preach it to them. We cannot be found to be opposing God in this way.

Fifth, and I know I say this a lot, let these words continue to grow in you a heart of worship and awe of our God. Think about it like this: Christ has, by his death in my place, made me righteous when I was unrighteous, gave me peace with God when God's wrath was upon me, and has taken away the guilt of my sin when that guilt would have condemned me to hell forever and He did it without any help, assistance, merit, or religious effort from me. That truth should fuel all the love, and all the devotion, and all the gratitude, and all the reverence, and all the fear of God, and all the worship, and all the sheer amazement at the mercy and the eternal love and the goodness of God, that my soul can muster.

Last, and I say this with full knowledge that there are some here who have not yet repented of their sins and turned to Christ, there is only one way of salvation, only one way for you to escape the judgment that is to come – One Way, Jesus Christ, God's Son, slain for sinners and raised from the dead. Where are you with Christ today? I implore you now, by the mercies of God, be reconciled to God by trusting in Christ who has made a way. Come to Christ now. Eternity is before you. Heaven or hell awaits you. Behold God's infinite and rescuing love revealed in the sacrifice of his dear Son, and know that God is gracious, merciful, and willing to save sinners. Behold Christ's finished atonement, and know that God in Christ has made the way to deliver sinners, even you, if you will repent and believe. All of your sins forgiven, your life made new, your very nature transformed. Lay aside your sin, admit your need, confess your brokenness and know that God can be and is both just and the Justifier of sinners who believe on his Son. Behold his amazing, almighty, saving grace, and know that our God is a God who is able to save and then lay hold of Him by faith. "For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God." (2 Corinthians 5:21, ESV)

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