

Ephesians - Commentaries by Robert (Bob) Thonney

The Christian Shepherd: 2000, Meditations of a Father: (f) The Armor of God (6:13-18)

(Ephesians 6:13-18)

First Piece of Armor: Loins Girded

"Loins girt about with truth." Nothing strengthens a person like the truth. How important is the daily reading and meditating on the Word of God. Lies are so common in our culture, and while at times from our limited perspective they may appear convenient, it always and only complicates and weakens us. The enemy well knows it and tries all he can to get us from the simplicity of the truth as it is in Jesus. Cultivate love of the truth—it will strengthen you.

Girding it on simply means making it practical in life. Don't just talk about it; do it. If you find you have been ensnared in some area by a lie, be truthful about that too—don't cover it up. Set your face toward the Lord Jesus, for He is the truth. How wonderful to have the Word in our hands written in black and white for us to read. The Lord Jesus said to His Father, "Thy Word is truth." In this way truth is completely objective and absolute. Remember, our experiences and feelings are not the norm.

Second Piece of Armor: Breastplate

"Having on the breastplate of righteousness." This is simply keeping a good conscience. You know well that, when your conscience accuses you of something wrong in your life, you are in no shape to face the enemy. Paul said in Acts 24:16, "Herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offense toward God, and toward men." He did not make a blanket statement, "I have a good conscience," but rather, "I exercise myself, to have." That is a continual exercise. Even in Hebrews 13 he says, "We trust we have a good conscience." Conscience is not a good guide—the Word of God and the Spirit of God guide—but it is a good policeman, so don't ignore its voice. Face things squarely in the light of God's presence. You only hinder yourself, if you refuse to judge yourself there.

Third Piece of Armor: Feet Shod

"Your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace." The feet speak of our walk. It is important to walk what we talk, if there is to be power in our testimony. If we walk in the peace of God, it will be evident in our demeanor, and people will listen when we give them the gospel of peace with God. The storm may be raging around us, but that cannot disturb the peace that surrounds God's throne and our own souls, as we walk with God.

Fourth Piece of Armor: Shield

The fourth piece of armor is very important: "Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked." It is, simply put, implicit and entire confidence in God. When every outward circumstance seems to indicate otherwise, but we have a positive word from God, we choose to believe God.

Paul in the midst of the storm in Acts 27 was told by an angel of God that "God hath given thee all them that sail with thee." Based on that word from God, he could further say, "Be of good cheer: for I believe God." You might have said to him, "Be reasonable, Paul; look at where we are!" But God had spoken and therefore the storm had ceased in his soul even though it yet raged around the ship.

Fiery darts are doubts that the enemy hurls to knock us down. We should mistrust ourselves and may have reason to mistrust others. But we should never allow mistrust of God. Hang on to His infallible Word. He will always be true to it. We need to let Him fulfill His promises as only He can and will. Sometimes we get our ideas on how He should come through, based on His Word. But His thoughts are greater than ours and His way far better all around.

Fifth Piece of Armor: Helmet

This is "the helmet of salvation." In 1 Thessalonians 5:8, it says, "For an helmet, the hope of salvation." Here it is broader. It simply means that when we enter the battle armed with this, we know (it covers the head) that whatever may happen, we will come out victorious in the end. We are "more than conquerors through Him that loved us." This gives confidence and liberates us from fear.

Hymn 16 in the appendix of the Little Flock Hymnbook puts it well:

Sixth Piece of Armor: Sword

This piece is the only offensive piece (not defensive as the first five)—"the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." It is not our sword, but the Spirit's sword. When we learn to use it under the direction of the Spirit of God, it is effective. The Lord Jesus used it in that way when being tempted forty days of the devil. Even though as the very Son of God He could have used His reasoning power to defeat the enemy, He, as a dependent Man, only and always simply said, "It is written." The devil could not stand before the piercings of that sword and left Him for a time.

It shows the extreme importance of not only reading the Word daily, but also of letting the Word of God abide in us. It is what gives strength to the young men in 1 John 2:13 so that they can overcome. If we are walking in the power of an ungrieved Spirit, He can bring the right Scripture at the right moment to give us the victory.

Seventh Piece of Armor: Prayer

The seventh and final matter concerning the armor of God is "praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit." In the warfare that we are in each and every day, we only advance in the spirit of continual dependence on God. Someone has said we advance on our knees. It is so important that nothing should take precedence over this. Martin Luther was known to say, "I have so much to do each day, I dare not spend any less than three hours in prayer." No wonder God used him as a mighty instrument during the Reformation.

R. Thonney (adapted)

Chicago Conference: 1989, Gospel (2:1)

Gospel—R. Thonney

Like to begin tonight by reading in Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians chapter 2. You have a Bible with you might want to look it up Fusions chapter 2 beginning with verse one. And you hath he quickened who were dead. In trespasses and sins, wherein in time past. He walked according to the course of this world, according to the Prince. Of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience, among whom also we all had our conversation in time past, and the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and whereby nature. The Children of Wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy. For His great love, wherewith He loved us even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ. By grace are you saved, and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. That in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace. In his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. For by grace are ye saved through faith. And that not of yourselves. It is the gift. Of God, not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus. Unto good works which God hath before ordained. That we should walk in them. Beginning this chapter, you'll notice that the 1st. 3 verses paint a pretty black picture. Of our state by nature, my friend and I. Here this evening as they stand up to preach the gospel of the grace of God. And speak about what our condition is thy nature before God. I cannot make an exception with any in this room, starting from myself and going from one end. To the other. These first three verses are painted of our state by nature, apart from the grace of God. Your condition, my condition by nature is exactly this starts out by saying that we were dead in trespasses and sins. What do you mean by being dead? Something that's dead has no life. But I'm a friend. In this verse, it's Speaking of spiritual death. Death always means in the scriptures separation. It may be separation of the body from the soul and the spirit. That is physical death, but what we're talking about here is spiritual death. Death and results in a man being separated spiritually from God. And many souls today are dead in trespasses and sins. This is my condition by nature, apart from the grace of God, and this is your condition by nature. I say of each one who is sitting here, I cannot make an exception here, for God says there is no difference, for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Those sins of yours, those sins of mine, naturally speaking, have separated between God and ourselves. It has produced spiritual death when Adam, the 1st man that was ever made and placed in this world. Was told not to eat of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.

He was warned, he said. The day you eat thereof, you will surely die. He didn't die physically, but as soon as he ate the fruit. Of that prohibited tree, as soon as he disobeyed God, as soon as he sinned. Immediately there was a separation between him and God. Death came in, spiritual death and all. My friend, if you are here without the knowledge of the Prince of Life, without having Him received Him into your heart, you too, my friend, are dead in trespasses and sins. I was that way until I received for my own Savior. The Lord Jesus Christ. Let's go on to the next verse, next two verses here. Because it continues to show the terrible condition. In which we are found by nature before God. God is the one who's painting this picture. I'm not painting it, my friend. And God sees like we do not see. I can see the outside of you and you're all dressed pretty fine this evening. You all look like pretty nice people. But God does not look on the outward appearance. God looks on the heart, and as he sees you, he looks at all that is in your heart. He examines, He knows your thoughts from afar off. And so here's the testimony, the picture that God paints of us, the human race by nature, apart from His grace. Wherein he says in verse two, in time past you walked according to the course of this world. According to the Prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience. There is a course this world is on. It's a powerful stream that runs through this world. And it's going to destruction, my friend. I'm amazed at the way Satan can get ahold of people with this course, this powerful stream that runs through this world to destruction and he uses something he finds in the heart of man will find it in verse 3. Among whom also we all had our conversation in time past, in the lusts of our flesh. Fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath. Even as others the third verse, you'll notice that it speaks. Of the lusts and the desires of the flesh and of the mind. Lusts are uncontrolled desires, the enemy of our souls. Who is here called the Prince of the Power of the Air, has nearly 6000 years experience on how to control man, on how to lead him the way he wants him to go. You may think you are a free moral agent. But I say, if you do not know the Lord Jesus Christ as your Savior, you are presently under the control of the devil himself. Oh, my friend, this is a serious thing to consider. But he's using those very uncontrolled desires that are in your heart to steer you where he wants you to go. You may say, I'm going to decide my destiny in. My friend, we have to tell you on the ground of the truth of the Word of God, that you are not in control of your destiny if you do not come to the Lord Jesus Christ to accept Him as your Savior. There is no such thing as controlling your destiny if you do not know the Lord Jesus Christ. I sometimes give the illustration in South America where I live most of the year round. Of a horse. Before we get on the back of a horse, we put a bridle in his mouth. And then we mount the horse, and that horse is looking directly ahead. He's not looking at us. And he may think that he's going pretty much like he likes, but really it is not.

He is going like he likes. He is going according to how we guide him. By means of that bridle that is in his mouth. And the enemy of your souls has a hold of you. Not every man is controlled by the same sin. Not every woman is controlled by the same sin. But we all have sins that the enemy of our souls likes to get ahold of them and try to carry us down that course to eternal destruction. I'm amazed. And how he does it sometimes. Last night her brother was speaking about. That he was baptized and he was. Not saved. And I really believe that there are a lot

of religious people in this world. People who have been baptized, people who have partaken of the Lord's Supper, so-called. And never, never been saved. To me it is a real burden this evening, as I said, looking into many of your faces to think that maybe some of you were passing as Christians are on your way to a lost eternity in the lake of fire right now. And my desire is that you might be wakened up before it's too late. I think I've told the story to some, but it shook me to the very core. When we first moved to Bolivia after we were married. I contracted a man to build a house for me in the city of Montero, in the Amazon basin area of the country of Bolivia. And there was another young man who has subcontracted to help out in the building of the house. He seemed to be a believer. He professed to be. He was baptized. He was breaking bread at the Lord's Table. I had no reason to think that there was. In any problem with him, well, the house got finished in time. And he went off to work in another area and gradually I lost complete contact with him for several years. You've ever been in the city of Montero? They have, besides the regular taxis, they have motorcycle taxis, their motorcycles in that town. If you want to go somewhere, you can get on the back end and they'll drive you to a certain part of the town you want to go to. Well, it was after a number of years that these men began to appear dead. These men that were working as motorcycle taxis out in the jungle, sometimes one place and another, and they could never figure out who had done it. One day a man appeared on a road who had been shot through the head and the bullet must have gone around to one side. Because it didn't kill him and he was picked up and brought to the hospital and he denounced who had done this crime and it was this very person. His name was Jaime. And Jaime was taken into custody by the police and the people. The town of Montero were so incensed at what he had done. That they mobbed the jail. And he had to be taken by the army to the larger city of Santa Cruz. And under the police examination, he confessed. To having killed 12 People. Not only killed. But drinking their blood? I was shocked. To the very core. Is it possible? Is it possible that he occupied? That place where we remembered the Lord. And I broke bread with him. And this happened. It happened, friend, it happened. It was a military government in Bolivia at the time. And under military government. They do not often give a very adequate trial. He was out in the taken out by the police one day to investigate some of the areas of his crime. And. Police, they're not always that careful. And he got away and started running for the woods.

And they called for him to stop, and he didn't stop. They pulled out their pistols. And Jaime went into eternity. The man that I broke bread with. Who I really believe is burning in hell fire today. My desire is. That those of you who are younger. Some of your playing around. With Satan's world. I say it's an extremely dangerous thing because if you think you want to do your own thing. There is a master at his art in leading men to destruction, eternal perdition. Who is right behind you and you're not aware of it? I'd like you to wake up tonight. Oh, it's a solemn thing we have in the story. Of the Gospel, one of the very disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ. Who is controlled by a desire that he had in his heart. He accompanied with the Lord Jesus for 3 1/2 years of his public ministry. He heard the words of the Lord Jesus. He saw the miracles that he did. And he even evidently did many miracles himself. His name was. Judas Iscariot Judas had a real love of money in his heart. He loved money. And the scripture tells us the story. How that on the a few days before the Lord Jesus was betrayed? There was a supper made for the Lord Jesus in the city of Bethany, and there were the Jesus and his disciples were there. And there was a woman in that house, her name was Mary, and she brought a box of perfume. And the very expensive box of perfume and broke it and poured it on the Lord Jesus. And Judas was the first one to say. This is waste. This money could this thing could have been sold, we could have given it to the poor. And the scripture says it wasn't because he was careful for the poor, it was because he had the bag, the money bag that the disciples used to buy their supplies. And he was a thief because he took out for himself. Judas Iscariot love money. Judas must have thought, must have seen many times when the enemies of the Lord Jesus came around him. To capture him and to take him away, to kill him. And how the Lord Jesus had walked through their midst and had gone his way. And Judas came up with an idea. He thought, I'm going to go and betray. Jesus to those people who want to kill him, and I know I'll get the money in my pocket. And then when he comes to be bound, why he will. Just continue to walk through their midst and go away, just like he has done so many times before, and I'll have the money in my pocket. That money was what Judas loved and the enemy of his soul. Was taking Judas. Although he was so close to Jesus, he was taking him right down the road to eternal destruction. And so he did it. He went and made a contract to sell Jesus. For 30 pieces of silver. And then he came at the right moment. And gave Jesus a kiss and betrayed him to his enemies, and they came. And they bound him. Oh, my friend, I say Judas didn't realize that he was being controlled. By another agent far more powerful, Judas never never had opened his heart to receive Christ in. Truth. He was a disciple of Jesus, but not in the heart. And Judas after he saw that Jesus wasn't going to escape. And saw the terrible infamy of what he had done. He brought those pieces of silver that could not console his tormented conscience. And he threw him down. That money could not comfort him at that moment. And he went and hanged himself. Satan was successful.

In taking another soul to eternal perdition. I remember. One time in the mining town of Siti Tsuyos in the mountains of Bolivia. We went to a series of conference meetings like these. When we got there, the brethren told us a story of a young man. Something that had happened just the day before us. Sorry. Story of a young man who liked to drink. And he came home one day. He was only 20 years old. Came home one day and his mother, although she wasn't a Christian. She didn't like to see him drunk all the time and she got on his case. She really gave him a scolding and he got mad, really mad. And he said to his mother, mother, you're going to be sorry for doing this. And he went out of the house and he started up the road. This town of Siete Suyos is built on a ravine all the way around, kind of a ravine in the middle. And he went up to where there is a siren. That they used to blow at noon in the mines, and it's right up on a rock above the ravine. And as he went up, he went up muttering to himself. My mother is going to be sorry for this. Took off his hat and threw it down. Took off his coat and threw it down. Took off his shirt and threw it down when he got up to the point of the rock. The blue whistle blew for noon. He took a dive into the ravine. Ended up a mass of broken bones and flesh. Satan got his bridle into that young man, took him right down the road to eternal destruction. And I'm afraid you say my case isn't the same. It's true your case may not be the same. Maybe you like some other sin. Maybe some other sin is appealing to you. But I say, if you have not come to the Lord Jesus in true repentance. And faith in His name, the enemy of your souls, is taking you softly, subtly, right down that same Rd. To eternal destruction, friend, my desires that you will wake up tonight before it is forever too late. Satan is a master at his heart, A master. And so he uses the lusts of our flesh and of the mind. We were by nature children of wrath, even as others children of disobedience. It says in verse two, children of wrath. It says in verse 3, disobedience is the characteristic thing of the day today. Do your own thing. Doesn't matter what anybody else says, do your own thing. That's the characteristic of a person who Satan is leading. Down the road to destruction. Now we come to verse 4, friend. Notice it please. But God. Oh, to me these are tremendously wonderful words. But God who is rich in mercy for his great love wherewith he loved us. The 1st 3 verses are pretty bleak picture of our condition by nature. But it's important that you understand where you stand by nature before God, because if you do not understand your lost condition. You will never have any appreciation for God's salvation. But here we have God's salvation. God comes into the picture. Everything changes. But God, who is rich in mercy. I love that expression. Rich in mercy. Oh my friend, the God that we preach is not a poor God. So many who profess to preach the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. And at the same time, they're preaching that gospel are begging for money. My friend, I say God does not need your money. He is too rich to ask of you. He gives, and he gives freely. God is rich in mercy for his

great love wherewith he loved us. For God so loved the world that he gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have ever.

Lasting life, That's God's love. Oh my friend, there's no love like it. People in this world speak of love, but their love that they talk about as a different love. It's all of you if you be nice to me. But if you do something rotten to me, I'll do something rotten back to you too, and maybe a little bit worse, so you don't do it to me again. That's the love this world talks about. But God's love is different. God's love is love that loves when there is nothing lovable in us. It's love that loves because God is love and is very person. God is love. God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son. I'd just like to take a moment here to tell that God sent his own son into this world. There was only one who could save this poor soul of mine. There was only one who could save you, my friend. It was. The very Son of God, the very creator of the universe, came down into this world and was born. Through the normal channel, the way we came into the world, he came into the world. The only difference was that he was without sin. The Angel that announced to the Virgin Mary that she was to have a child. Said That holy thing that shall be born of thee shall be called. The Son of God. The Lord Jesus was born here. When he was born, there was number room for him. In the end he had to be born were the animals were eating. There was number room for the Creator of the universe as he came into this world. God, in the person of Jesus, walked through this world. For 33 1/2 years showing nothing, manifesting nothing but the love of God. His mercy, His truth, He preached the Gospel on every hand. He raised the dead, He healed the lepers. He raised those. That were on beds of sickness. He gave the sight to the blind, and every hand dispensing, blessing, preaching the gospel to the poor, every hand feeding the hungry. That's what his work was in this world. At the end of 33 1/2 years, God allowed. Men, mainly, at first religious men. But they have delivered him up to Pilate, the political authority in that day. Of the Roman Empire in the land of Judea, where Jerusalem was. And they took Jesus and they gave him a false trial. And they condemned him to death, the soldiers. Spit in his face. They stripped him. They crowned him with thorns. They put a scarlet robe on him. They blindfolded him. They took sticks, they beat him on the head. They used their fists in his face. Till his face was so marred more than any man's. They took him outside the city of Jerusalem. They nailed him to the cross. They hung him up between heaven and earth. And left him there to die. Oh my friend. He What had he done? Pilate had to admit this man has done nothing amiss. The thief who was nailed by his side had to admit his innocence as well. But there he was dying. Why, friend? Why? Because he wanted to show you how much he loved you. God, who is rich in mercy for his great love wherewith he loved us. Oh, my friend, that's God's love. I often think if I were to look out the window of my house someday and see somebody. Mistreating my boy. I don't think I could take it. I don't think I could take it. I'd run out.

I'd say, hey, don't hurt him. You want to beat somebody, beat me instead. You know my friend God. Saw exactly what those men were doing. As they pounded the face of the Lord Jesus Christ, as they crowned them with thorns, as they beat His head, as they mocked Him, as they scourged Him, He saw it all and He didn't do anything about it. You know why? Because God is interested in your salvation. And if you are going to be saved, those sins of yours must be accounted for. They must be paid. And so. When the Lord Jesus was on that cross, he hung there between heaven and earth, scorn and ridiculed by men for three hours, from 9:00 in the morning till 12 noon. And then everything got dark. And in three hours of darkness, when nobody could see what was happening. On Calvary's Hill. God took our sins and laid them on Jesus, and God punished him as if he were the guilty one. He bore our sins in his own body on the tree, Isaiah the prophet tells us. He was wounded for our transgressions. He was bruised for our iniquities. The chastisement of our peace was upon him. And with his stripes we are healed all we. Like sheep have gone astray, we have turned everyone to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. Jesus bore my sin on Calvary Cross. He suffered. The just penalty from the hand of God for my sins on the ground of his redemption work on Calvary. God can forgive a poor last Sinner like myself. He cannot pass over sin lightly. Not the least of those sins of yours, my friend. He cannot. Impossible. God must do everything in accordance with the holiness of His own nature. But when Jesus hung on the cross of Calvary, he paid the debt in full, so that you can now come to receive a full and free salvation from the hand of God Himself. Because. Jesus died. Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures. He was buried. He rose again the third day according to the scriptures. The Lord Jesus died. Think of it, friend to me. It is tremendous to think that this, the creator of the universe, the Lord Jesus Christ, hung dead on the cross for me. A soldier came up and to make sure he was dead. Shove the spear in his side, and out came blood and water. The precious blood of Jesus is that which can wash our guilty souls from every stain of sin in the sight of God. The blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanses us. From all sin Jesus died. They took him down. They buried him, but after three days in the grave. God raised him from the dead. God was so satisfied with the price. That Jesus paid for the question of sin, That he couldn't leave him there. He raised him from the dead the third day. And tonight it is our privilege to tell you, friend, that we announce a living Savior, a Savior of real flesh and bones who's alive in the glory of God tonight. Powerful to save all that coming to him by faith. Have you come, friend?

Have you come? This is the richest of God's grace. You know, I think of that terrible thing that men did to the Lord Jesus Christ. I say God would have every right to turn around and say. OK, you miserable creatures, to hell with all of you. And not in this light sense of it. He would have every right to say it. What does God do? God turns around and he says now. I can offer through what my son has done on the Cross of Calvary. Free and full salvation to everyone. That believer, this is the richest of his mercy, the richest of his grace. Oh my friend, this is the God we're telling you about tonight. He's not a God who's the fabrication of the human mind. He's a God who is revealed in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ. Now notice in verse 5. Even when we were dead, and sins hath quickened us together with Christ. By grace are you saved? That word quickened means to be given life. Somebody that is dead needs life and my friend, you don't know what life is really about. Until you know the Prince of life, our Lord Jesus Christ, you may think I'm having a great time living it up. I tell you, my friend, you're miserable in comparison to what you can be if you accept God's Son, the Lord Jesus as your Savior. He has given us life and then what it has gone to say it says in verse 6. Hath raised us up together. This is resurrection. Why does it say it seems like the same thing? He's given us life to dead those that were dead. In our trespasses and sins. He's given us life, but then he's raised us up together too. You know there was a man that the Lord Jesus raised from the dead when he was here in this world. His name was Lazarus, he was already in the grave and they uncovered that grave. The Lord Jesus said Lazarus come forth and he came out of that grave. Did Lazarus continue to live in the graveyard? No. That's not the place for living people, that's the place for dead people. And when God? Gave you life. If you have accepted the Lord Jesus as your Savior, he completely took you out of that position. You no longer occupy that position of death any longer. You've been raised up. That was not the place that Lazarus lived after that. And I say maybe there's a young person here who is dabbling with the world, I say. My dear young person, if you have accepted the Lord Jesus and truth in your heart. God has raised you up together with Christ. He's brought you right out of that position in this world. And if you're walking there, you're walking still in the graveyard. But it doesn't stop there, it says. And he's made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ. It's written in the past tense. What does this mean? I thought we were seated here. In this hotel. What does this mean? Seated together in heavenly places in Christ? You know, my friend. When a person truly receives the Lord Jesus Christ as their Savior God. The salvation of God is so sure that it's as if. He already sees you there. It's so sure, and so he puts it in the past tense. He's

made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ and then verse. Seven, that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace and his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. Oh, that's what's ahead for the believer in the Lord Jesus. He's going to see in the ages to come. The exceeding riches of His grace and His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus have him think of the Lord Jesus when he was tempted by the devil. It says that the devil took him to a high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory in a moment of time.

It only took a moment of time to see all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. Having said. Of a wealthy man. Came and said, come, I want to show you all my riches. How long would it take? I don't know. I don't know how wealthy people are, but it might take a few days, it might take a couple weeks. Might take a month. I don't think I'd go beyond a month. But when God starts to show his riches, friend, it's going to take ages and ages and ages. That's what they had for the believer in the Lord Jesus, that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace and his kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. Now we come to verse 8. For by grace are ye saved through faith and that. Not of yourselves, It is the gift of God. What does this mean? Oh friend, how can you come into this blessing that we're talking about tonight? Or by grace, are ye saved through? Faith. Faith is a simple trust. In the person of our Lord Jesus Christ, there are people in this world that have faith in themselves. There are people in this world that have faith in other people, but I tell your friend. Any mortal human is not really worthy to be trusted all the way. No, there's only one who you can trust all the way. And that's God's Son, the Lord Jesus, and so faith. Is the hand that reaches out to take the gift that God offers of salvation. You say I believe I take it for myself. That's faith, for by grace are ye saved through faith. There's no power in itself in the faith, but there's the power in the person that we have faith in. Sometimes they illustrate it like the terrain that runs down the track, all the cars. That run behind the locomotives don't have any power in them themselves. Still, they go at the same speed as the locomotives. What is it that makes them go at that same speed? Is there any power in them? No, no power whatsoever. But there's something that's called the coupling that unites them to the power that there is in the locomotive, and faith is that. Hand that reaches out to take hold. Of the Savior to receive that gift of salvation. Full and free, or by grace are ye saved through faith. Where does that faith come? That not of yourselves. It is the gift of God. God can give you the very faith you need to believe in His Son. How's that? The scripture tells us in another place. Faith. Comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. Are you hearing tonight, friend? I'm not talking merely about your ears and your head. I'm talking about the hearing ear of your heart. I've often seen people who listen to the gospel, the message of the gospel of God, and it's evident that they're listening with their ears, their head. Yeah, they're polite and they're listening, but it's evident too, by the expression on their face. That the ears of their hearts. Are roadblocked. There's no way that word is getting into their hearts. I want to ask you tonight, friend, if that's your case, to take down that roadblock to open up. You say you cannot believe. You say you can't. You don't feel faith to believe. I say simply let the word of God penetrate into the deepest regions of your heart tonight. Oh, that message of God's love, that God is rich in mercy for his great love wherewith he loved us. Not of works, lest any man should boast. No man will ever get to heaven. And be able to boast there that he made it. Know all those who are at home in heaven are going to sing glory to Jesus.

That's the song that's going to be sung there. You get there and sing glory to yourself. It wouldn't work. You'll never do it. God has ruled out that option. There's no way it's going to happen. Not of works, lest any man should boast. Before I close, I just want to read a couple verses in Second Thessalonians chapter one of warning. Because we're living in days when this world is on the edge of going to pieces. I think anybody who has a fair evaluation of things in this world realizes that this world is getting to the point of no return. The economic structure, the political problems. Are tremendous in this world. And friend, by the word of God, we have to advise you that there is awful. Awful judgment ahead for this world. This world has not seen anything yet like is just. About to happen. It's a time that the Bible calls Great Tribulation, and Jesus, the only man who never told a lie, said there will be no time like it after, nor was there any time like it before. And at the end of this period of great tribulation. Jesus himself is coming to judge this world. If you do not accept God's offer of mercy and salvation, you must meet God anyhow, and you will meet your God in the person of Jesus. You will meet him face to face. Two Thessalonians, Chapter One. Verse 7. The middle of the verse speaks of. The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels. In flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power. I just want to read that. To sound an awful, awful warning, my friend. I wouldn't be. True to you as a friend if I didn't tell you the awful danger that lies ahead. I got out to go in my car tonight down the road and you knew there was a danger down there. I know you would come up and tell me. And I'm telling you, my friend, there's a danger ahead for you if you do not accept the Lord Jesus Christ as your Savior. Everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord for those who do not know God and who obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. It's because of this friend. You've been invited here tonight and we want to say with all that's in our hearts. Please stop tonight. Stop in your tracks. Take. A moment to reflect on the way that God sees you, because it is the true picture of you that we've been talking about tonight. And I ask you in the name of the Lord Jesus to come to him tonight to receive. Your salvation from eternal destruction.

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