

Give Up On Self, Trust in Christ Alone!

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James: Some of you might be thinking right now, what was that video about? What was the point of that? It's to show you the situation that you are in right now. You are charging head on against your sin, and you think you're going to beat it. The kid on the train tracks - that's you. The train is your sin. And for some absurd reason, you believe that you can kill sin; you can kill pornography; you can kill masturbation. After we put the video up a couple days ago we got so many responses from different people. And the biggest thing we want to watch out for is that people don't go head on into a works-based salvation of trying to kill sin through self-effort. And we mention that some in the video. But I want to emphasize that again. This is not about what you can do in your own strength. It's totally about what Jesus Christ did on that cross, and having faith and looking to that.

Many people will hear: Well, I've got to repent. But instead of looking to Christ, you're looking at your repentance. You're looking at your work to see, am I doing the right works? Does my life look like someone who is saved? Now yes, we should examine our lives, but more importantly, we should be staring at the glory of God.

My friend, the simple fact, what happened in my life and every other person who's been saved is that we saw Christ. We saw what truly happened on that cross. And there is no way I'm going to turn around and look the other way once I've seen Christ. I'm going to gaze upon Him. I see the glory of God. And the reality is, as a sheep, we might fall into the mud at times. But we are going to get out of that mud because it's not our nature to stay there, and we're going to continue on the narrow way by the grace of God. He will break us. He will discipline us. He will chastise us.

And maybe God used that very video to break some of you; to chastise you; to show you you have got to get desperate. There's a war out there to fight. If you're still going home and looking at pornography and living in masturbation, and maybe some of you are truly born again, this is the time, this is the hour to get desperate; to realize you have got to get free of this and leave it in the past and run faster for Christ. As it says in Hebrews 12:1, we've got to let go of the weight.

What's entangling you? And some of you, what will entangle you from running this race; what is entangling your legs right now is your self-effort, your self-reliance. So let it all go. Please, just give up. It's incredible the freedom you get when you finally give up on trying to free yourself and you look to Christ. You look to faith in Christ and you rely solely upon Him.

So we just felt like sending this out. Some people also asked the question: "Well, if I masturbate again, am I saved still? My friend, you don't lose salvation if you have it. The question is not: can

I lose my salvation? It is: were you ever truly saved? Have you truly had the grace of God shed abroad in your life? And if you have, justification by faith is true. It is a reality. And this week, we had Tim answer an "Ask Pastor Tim" question. And at the end of the question, he hit hard on justification by faith. So we want to show that to you right now because we want to have a massive emphasis on this. We are saved by faith alone; by looking unto Christ, looking unto Him, not relying on our own strength; not our self-effort, but it's in Christ and Christ alone.

So all of you guys out there, all you girls as well - we had many girls sending us emails who are in bondage to pornography. And if you're someone else and you haven't contacted us yet, feel free. Give us an email. We want to talk. I care about you guys. This is real. There's true freedom and more important there's true salvation in Christ. So I pray you'll be blessed by Tim exhorting on justification as all of us at the Bible study were. May God have mercy.

Tim: If indeed that man had ever truly trusted Jesus Christ - let me tell you about the doctrine of justification. Basically, justification - probably one of the most precious verses on justification in all the Bible is found in Romans 4:5. Let me read it to you. Romans 4:5 "To the one who does not work but trusts Him who justifies the ungodly..." Listen to that right there. "...Him who justifies the ungodly." If you don't understand what that means, let me tell you about it. The "Him" is God. What does He do? He justifies. Who does He justify? He justifies the ungodly. Who are the ungodly? Ungodly people are people who are not in submission to God. They're in rebellion against Him. They're people that hate God. They're people that don't keep His commandments. They're people that basically live their own life selfishly to themselves and with no respect to the fact that God ever gave them any commandments. They don't have fear of God in their heart. They don't seek God. They're ungodly wretches. They're ungodly people. "Him" - God - justifies them.

What is justification? It means a legal declaration basically in the courtroom of Heaven. God is declaring the ungodly person absolutely perfect. That's what the Gospel is all about. The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation. In it, we find revealed the righteousness of God. What is that? It's the righteousness that God requires in you, that you never kept - perfect law obedience. And Jesus Christ came here and He lived perfectly under that law. He earned, He sweat, He fought out, He battled, He sweat, He bled, He took that obedience all the way to the cross, and He earned a righteousness for His people. And the first moment that true faith is exercised in Christ, that righteousness becomes mine. And nothing takes it away. Listen, God justifies the ungodly, and because I was ungodly to start, when Christ died for me and earned that, and it's given to me, and the ungodly are justified, if that happens when I'm ungodly, certainly, no ungodliness can take it away. He does it by faith. It's not by works. Works doesn't get it for me and works can't lose it. And suicide is a work. And in the same way that no positive works - no baptism, no good work, no helping little old ladies, no giving money can ever get me justified, only faith - in the same way, no work can ever cause me to be unjustified. No suicide.

Listen to me, justification is so thorough, it is so certain, it is so radical, it is so much a clean slate, that the moment you're justified, all your sin - past, yes - and all the sins you will ever

commit are totally forgiven. They're totally erased. That's what justification is all about. It is taking a righteousness from Christ for yourself in the courtroom of Heaven. God looks at you and says, "Perfect." Even though practically you will commit more sins in your life. And so what? I was saved 19 years ago. Have I committed any sins in that 19 years? You better believe I have. But you know what? They're all under the blood. And even if I've committed adultery and murder like David did, they're under the blood. How in the world do you think David's in glory right now? How do you think he could say what he said in Psalm 32 or in Psalm 51? That's repeated, by the way, in Romans 4. "Blessed is the man whose transgressions are forgiven." Folks, why is it so blessed? Why did he even say those words? Because he had committed sin and they were under there. Look, there are Christians in this room that have committed some pretty bad sins while they've been Christians - not just before. The fact is a man can commit suicide and if he's a true Christian, he will go straight to glory. But the truth is, he wasn't characterized as a murderer. He may have fallen. A righteous man can fall. But I mean, that's the story on the guy. Can a true Christian commit suicide? Well, of course they can. They can. Just like they can commit any other sin and it's still under the blood. Now, they can't practice that.

James: Our prayer is that in one of these clips of exhortation, God will use something to hit you in an area that is the stumbling block for you. May the Lord have mercy! In Acts 20:21 it says repentance towards God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Now think about this. Repentance towards God - it's not repentance towards your repentance. It's never a looking at self. It's never a relying on our own strength. Remember the psalm? Psalm 116:6, "The Lord preserves the simple. When I was brought low, He saved me." God saves those who get this simple mindset that come as a child calling "Abba, Father." "I need Christ." "I can't do this on my own strength." And they give up on self. It can be so easy to sit here and to analyze, to think of things, to look at ourselves and go, is everything okay? Am I right before God? You're not right before God if you're looking at self. But when you're looking in faith at Christ, oh, you are going to be right before God. Because it's not a matter of self-effort. It's not a matter of works. But it's a matter of: this is what Jesus Christ did and I'm looking unto Christ.

We try to kill sin on our own effort. We try to rely on our own strength because we believe that in ourselves we have some ability to kill sin. My friends, that is works salvation. And Romans 3 is clear. "No human being is justified by works of the law." So you have to give up on that. You have to let it go. It's very easy to say, well, I'm saved by faith alone. I know it's believing in Jesus Christ. Repenting and believing in Him. We can say that. I mean, I can ask tons of people out here in this world, are we saved by faith? And they will say yes. But when you look at their life, they're living in a works-based salvation. They believe they are saved because of what they do. It's not about Christ. And so many people are entangled up in this. Some of you guys like me and my friends, you've grown up in the church your whole life, and that is the big stumbling block you're tripping on. Because you've got to let all that past stuff go and you've got to look ahead to Christ right now. So look at Christ. There's life. There's freedom. And there's this life where it's not about what do I have in myself? What can I muster my own strength up? Because my friend, your performance on killing sin in your own strength is absolutely pathetic and it will

get your nowhere. But when you rely on the Spirit of God, you look to Him for your salvation more importantly, and then once you're saved, you continually look to Him, as He breaks you down to the ground and humbles you and shatters your life to mold you to His image... there's freedom, there's life. Look to Christ.

Read the Word of God. And think about this. If you're in love with someone, and they send you an email or they send you a letter, right when you get that email, you're going to read it. Right when you get that letter, you're going to read it because you care about the person and you want to know them. But many of you here today, rather than reading God's Word, rather than opening that letter of the Bible, you're going to man first. You're going to someone else first for help. If you truly love God and you want to know Him, oh, I plead with you, open the Word of God. It's real. It's incredible. It's loving. Isaiah 43:4 "Because you are precious in My eyes and loved and honored, I give men in return for you; peoples in exchange for your life." Have you ever heard that verse? I heard that verse - it blew my mind away. It punctured my heart. It ruptured it with this reality. God, not only did He send His Son on the cross, He gave other men in return for me. That's incredible. That's love. But how did I find it out? We have to read the love letter from God - His Bible that He has given us.

So I plead with you, don't run to me first. Don't run to man for answers. Run to God. Look unto Christ. Because the Lord has given us the Word for a reason. And if you're reading it and it feels like it's dull; it feels like I'm not getting anything out of this, I'm reading the Bible and there's nothing, oh, my friend, just keep pounding into the Word of God. The simple fact is if someone called you right now and you didn't pick up the phone, but they really, really wanted to talk to you, they would call you back. They would never stop calling until you picked up that phone. And the same you should be with Christ. If you truly want God; if you're truly calling unto Jesus Christ, don't stop after one call. You call until He answers because He says He will answer. "And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved." You can bank on that promise because it's from God. And you can bank on the promise that if you have faith in Christ, you will be changed. You will be free. And you will be walking in the light. And yes, my friend, a sheep will fall in the mud at times, but you are no longer a pig. You will not live in it. You will walk in the light as He is in the light. And you will have fellowship with Him. Praise the Lord for what He's done. God is so good.

Listen, so many of you out there, you feel empty inside. You're just depressed. You just can't believe that you keep falling back into this sin and the depression, the emptiness, it's just overwhelming you. You know what? The sin you might be holding on to, if you realize you're lost and you're not in Christ, it can be the sin of self-pity. What can keep you from coming to Christ, and I know many people who are in this situation, what keeps them from coming to Christ is their self-pity. They feel so bad about their emptiness, about their bondage. They have all the head knowledge. They've got the doctrine. But what they're not doing is looking unto Christ. And some people will sit back and they know the doctrines of grace, and they sit here and they go "Oh, I'm not elect." "Oh, God's not drawing me."

My friend, if you realize your state, if you have some type of grief for your sin, how can you sit here and go, "Oh, I'm hardened to my sin." That's absurd. That's ridiculous. Run to Christ. Run to Him and come as a child. When we were kids, we didn't know how to cook our food. We didn't know how to go to the refrigerator. We didn't know where the food came from. We were totally blind to those things. All we knew is that if we called upon our father or our mother, they would give us the food. They would watch out for us. Do you look at Christ like that? Do you come to Him as a child? Because it says in the Word of God, if you don't come as a child, you're not going to Heaven. Why? Pride. The pride of man says, "I don't need anyone's help. I can do all this on my own. You know what? Who cares? I don't need help. I got it. I got it." You don't have it. You might have it for a month - the self-effort, but then you fall right back into your sin, right back into the bondage. It's all about giving up on self and looking unto Christ and truly seeing what He did. While you were weak, He bore the wrath of God on that cross and became sin for you. And if your faith is in that, oh, my friends, not only will you be saved, you'll have an assurance and a confidence and a joy and peace while you're walking in that light with Christ and Him alone.

When I was brought low, He truly did save me. And if you haven't been brought low of all your pride, and you're still living in your pride, how do you profess to know Christ? Because you've got to come as a child. And more importantly, you have to come to Him. Don't look at your state and go, am I a child? Am I walking like a child? Just rely on Him. Look to Christ. May God have mercy on you. Again, we're here for you, but first I plead with you, go to the Word of God and go to God in prayer. Call out to Him. If you really want Him just call! Don't stop. You truly want Christ? Don't sit there and try to pray for 30 seconds or even 30 minutes and just go, "God didn't come" and give up. You cling to Him. You call to Him. You will not be put to shame. The only excuse - if you say, "Oh, God didn't come," you cannot blame God. God says if you call, He will come. And if you say you called and He did not come, it's because you truly did not call. You might say, "I called." What you're saying is calling is not what the Bible says is calling. You might be calling fully out of some worldly grief and it's all about self. It's so selfish that you don't even realize you're not calling on God, you're calling on the idol of a god. Again, don't get confused with analysis, get brought to your knees and look to Christ and plead with God for mercy.

As it says in Matthew 11:28, we're coming to Christ. We're taking this burden of our sin, this grief, this realization that we've sinned before a holy God, we're taking it to Christ. It can be very easy to run to people, to confess to people. It's very easy to send me an email and say I'm going through this, and I'm not saying not to send me emails. That is fine. Praise the Lord. We've got to be authentic, we've got to take the mask off and live in a transparent world and a transparent lifestyle by the grace of God. But, the important thing is I can't save you. I can send you some verses and you can read that and you can know Christ, and in that knowing of Christ, it should spur you on to a love of God, to look to Him and God will save your soul. Jesus Christ is the only way. Repentance towards Him. Faith in Christ. Just resting on Him, knowing He's watching over us. And He has put these promises in the Word of God that are real. I mean, you heard me testify about it in the other video. You've heard other people testify about it. I mean, this is real. God will save you. Don't let this conviction - maybe you've seen the other video or other videos -

don't let that conviction just die away. Don't just go a week and you're running for a week and then you fall. Listen, you might be two years down the road and you might be in the same boat you are right now watching this video, because you're unwilling to let go of your self-effort and submit to God and be humble. You've got to get brought low and realize I've got nothing. My total and sole reliance is upon Jesus Christ my King. That's it.

So may God help you guys. I mean, this is such a war. And I know. I was there. I mean, something I think I mentioned on the other video, I spent three years straight in my self-effort. I spent three years of my life trying to free myself from my pornography and my masturbation as a lost person. I had the filters. I did the courses. I had it all. I was authentic. I had accountability partners. But what I did not have is Jesus Christ, my friend. I did not have Christ. And I spent three years. That is a long time once I think about it. And then finally, one night, I leave a Bible study. I get home and God smashed me to the ground and He broke me and I finally had that godly grief and I finally looked to Christ and I stopped looking to my own strength. I gave up. So give up. And you might say, "oh, he's saying to give up. I've already tried that. I've already tried giving up. It sounds so easy, but it's so hard when it comes to the action." My friend, giving up is looking to Christ. It's very easy to look to Christ, to pray, to read the Word of God, to be around those who love Christ. It's real easy to look at yourself and go, well, I'm looking to Christ, when you're looking to yourself to see if you're looking to Christ you're not looking to Christ. Look to Christ. He will save your soul. He'll put you in that light. And to have joy - God saves! Praise the Lord for what He's done. Run to Him. Run to Him. Get that rest. I mean, this is the day. If you're not going to turn today, will you ever turn? Now or never.