

It is not by works but only by His love

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Greetings everybody... It's a great honor for me to be here today and I trust that you are going to be deeply blessed by the message that we have. We want to thank everybody here, the Pastor and his wife, for everything that you have been doing for us in assisting us to preach the Gospel in this area and bring the Good News of Jesus Christ. Amen.

I have a vision in my heart and that is to preach the Gospel of God's love for us, to preach the Gospel of Grace. We want to preach a message that was preached by the Apostle Paul, something that can bring a sense to our life. Today I am going to be talking about the righteousness that is a free gift to us all so that you can know that you stand righteous before God. You are qualified before God, not by your works but by the grace of God... Only by the love of God! God did not come to bring laws whereby we are saved. He has come to bring His grace.

The grace of God is not just a part of the Gospel of Jesus. The grace of God IS the gospel! Amen! We don't have an angry God. We don't have a God that looks at our lives, looking at what's wrong so that He does not have to bless us! God knows that we are just human beings. God knows a human being will commit sin. God knows that a human being is not perfect. Therefore, He is not expecting perfection from us. What God is doing is He is promising us HIS perfection. The only way that we can be perfect as our heavenly Father is perfect is by God making us perfect... not by our own works.

Now, with that in mind, we are going to look at **Psalm 150:3**. Before I read this verse, I want to say this: The world needs the message of God's grace! Amen! The Church needs the message of the love of God. The Church does not need the message of how much we must love one another. No! The Church has forgotten the first love. The first love is that God first loved us!

The second love is the love we have for one another BECAUSE God loves us! The Gospel is not the message of how you must love your neighbor! Even in the Old Testament it was already preached that you must love your neighbor. That means that when Jesus came it had to be something different than the commandment to love your neighbor. The Gospel is not how you must love your neighbor. The Gospel is not even about how much you must love God. That is not the Gospel! The Gospel is not, "You must love God!" That is not the Gospel!

The Apostle Paul explains the Gospel and nowhere where Paul explains the Gospel does he use the message that we must love God! Neither does he use the message that we must love our neighbor as the Gospel. The Gospel is not about your love for God. The Gospel is not about your love for your neighbor. The Gospel is not about how you worship God. The Gospel enables us to worship God but the Gospel is not the message of how we must worship God. When we preach the true Gospel, the message of "No Condemnation", the message of God's love for humanity, I'm sure we will find more people get saved. All the people, including the Church, know they cannot live perfectly by their own lives. The Gospel is not about your commitment towards God. If the Gospel was based on your commitment towards God, there would be no Gospel! The Gospel is built on the Rock, Jesus Christ!

The Gospel is not built on you! It's not built on how you love your neighbor. The Gospel is not built on how much you fast or pray. The Gospel is not built on your giving in the Church. The Gospel is the message that Jesus died and that He rose again and He promises you eternal life! Paul preached the Gospel as Jesus that rose from the dead and through the faithfulness of Jesus, He promised you, everyone, eternal life. All we do is believe! That is all! As we believe, we find God bring love to our hearts.

The Gospel is not about how you praise God! It's not about your commitment to God. It's not about your faithfulness. If the Gospel is about our faithfulness towards God, then God has wasted His time because each one of us will find, somewhere in our lives, that we are not faithful enough.

Psalm 130:

3 *If you, LORD, kept a record of sins, Lord, who could stand*

4 *But with you there is forgiveness, so that we can serve you with reverence.*

If the Lord keeps record of sin, who can stand?

Now, the scripture says that with God there is forgiveness and the forgiveness is there for a reason... so that we might have reverence for God. The only way that you can have reverence for God is based on your understanding of how He gives forgiveness as a free gift. Amen

So, it says here that if God takes account of sin, no person can stand. So, God brings forgiveness. He offers deliverance so that when we see how He gives forgiveness by His love, then we will respect Him. You remember that Peter was complaining to Jesus because there came a woman and she washed the feet of Jesus. Her tears were on the feet of Jesus and then she used her hair to dry His feet and they complained to Jesus about it. Jesus said, "When I came to your house, you gave me nothing but look at the beautiful thing that this woman has done."

Why did the woman do that? He says, "Because she was forgiven much, she loved much. But he who is forgiven little, loves little." Now, Peter didn't think that he was such a big sinner but he thought the woman was a big sinner. This scripture here teaches us that the more we can see the forgiveness of God the more we will love God. The commandment that God has towards us is not to love Him but to receive His forgiveness.

The more you receive His forgiveness, the more you find love comes naturally from you. God wants us to love Him as what I want my wife to love me. But I cannot command my wife to love me. I have to do things to her that will bring love in her heart for me. If I tell my wife, "You must love me otherwise I will divorce you", you'll find that she will do good things but it's because she's scared. "Where will I live?" She will wonder where she will live because I'll chase her from my own house. She will think that maybe she must go back to her parents and then she will be afraid of me. She will cook for me. She will be friendly, but all of that would only be because she's afraid of punishment.

I never told my wife that she must love me. I just love her. That is all. I just loved her and then the love that I bring to her brings love in her heart to me. How much more God! We were made from the dust of the earth. How can dust love! The only way that dust can love is if love is poured out into the dust by the One who made man from the dust. You can take one bucket of sand and then you tell that bucket of sand, "Love me!" You'll be disappointed every day because dust cannot love. The only way that dust can love is if the love that I have can be put inside the dust and a man can be formed that is filled with the love I gave it.

Psalm 103:

13 As a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD has compassion on those who fear him;

14 for he knows how we are formed, he remembers that we are dust.

Amen! God knows that He has to have compassion on us as a father has on his children for He knows that we are just dust but by our own ability we can never be righteous. That's why it says in **Psalm 130:7 Israel, put your hope in the LORD, for with the LORD is unfailing love and with him is full redemption.**

So, we see the Psalm writer is saying the following, "If the Lord looks at our sins, who can stand?" Nobody! That is why He has a relationship with us based on His forgiveness. The more we see His forgiveness, the more we will have respect for God. Many times, I hear people say that we must love God, that we must worship God. If that must be said to somebody as a commandment, it means the person doesn't know what God has done for him. John says that we love Him for He first loved us. If you don't love God, it's because you don't know how much He loves you!

We need to put the focus in Kalabo on how much God loves people! We should not have one message in our ears that is not focused on how much God loves us and that is very, very important. We need to understand the Gospel is about God's faithfulness towards His creation. The Gospel is Good News! When we preach in the market, when you preach to the sinners, and when they hear the Gospel, they will say, "This is very good news! It is **good** news!"

You know, when you go to people that are in the bar drinking, what would be the good news for them? It is that God loves them, that God accepts them! It would be a message of no condemnation where the focus would be on the death and the resurrection of Jesus. The focus must not be on how committed they are to beer. The focus must be on God's love for sinners. Jesus Christ was a friend of sinners. The Bible says, "The sinners loved to be around Jesus. But the Bible says that the Jewish pastors did not like to be around Jesus. Why? Because Jesus was giving the sinners everything for free! He loved the sinners! That is what He did. He healed the sick. Those were sinners. He touched the lepers which was not part of the custom of the day. The Greek women came to Jesus and Jesus said to her, "According to our culture, you are a dog." But then she said to Jesus, "Even if I am a dog, then I am Your dog and You care for Your dogs!" You can be a dog. It just depends on whose dog you are! If I am God's dog, you'll find I will live better than a king in the kingdom of the devil. The devil cannot care for his kings as good as what God can care for His dogs. Amen

So, even if you think you are just a dog, you just say, "I am Jesus' dog!" Jesus said to the woman, "Your prayer is answered. Your faith has made you whole." What did she believe? She believed that she was not a Jew. She was not qualified according to the law but she believed that Jesus was greater than the disqualification of the law. According to the law she was just a dog. According to the law she was just a sinner. But what she said was, "God, You can even be good to a sinner!" Her prayer was answered. But the Pharisees that were there, who were looking at the law, their prayers were not answered because they did not believe in the goodness of God. Their focus was on their commitment to the kingdom of God.

The Bible says that the kingdom of God is like a man who went and he sowed some seed in the ground. Then one day he sees the seed came out and then you find more leaves coming, and then you find the fruit coming. It says that it grows but no one knows how. It just grows by the power of God.

We don't have to try to grow the Kingdom of God! The Kingdom grows by itself! The Bible says that Jesus advances His kingdom. We who are saved, we are the place where we see the advance of His kingdom. The kingdom of God will grow anywhere. So many times, as preachers, we want to put our focus on how the members must grow the Kingdom. I'm not saying that we cannot do anything in the Kingdom of God. I mean, I've come here from South Africa. So, we are busy. But I'm not doing it from a commandment. It's the fruit of the love of God. Nobody can say, "Look at Bertie. Look at what a good person he is!" No! This is not done by my own willpower! It is God that brought it forth! It's like the Apostle Paul was saying, "It is not I who live but Christ who lives!" It's not about our commitment to the Kingdom. It's about a loving Father loving His people, and we receiving the love of God. Amen!

I want to read from Romans chapter 3. Remember, whenever you hear a message that makes you tired, you know it is not the Gospel. Many times, we hear messages from the pulpit and then when we go home, we feel tired. You can say, "God, I already have a lot of problems. Now I go to the church and now I get more problems." It's almost like you come to the hospital and when you are at the hospital now you must work at the hospital. I don't know about your hospital, but in South Africa, the patient is not the one that's cleaning the hospital. The patient is not the one that's cleaning the hospital! No, it is the one that is being healed by the doctors. Amen!

I've mentioned it here last time that when you go to the doctor, you are not scared because you know that you are going to get healing from him. Many of us are not scared of the doctor, even if you have HIV. If you have HIV, you want the doctor. You are waiting for the doctor. When you go to the hospital, you cannot wait... "Why is the doctor taking so long!" But, when it comes to Jesus, we say, "Oh, Jesus mustn't come today because then you are in trouble. Maybe He can come in five years, but not today. We first want to prepare ourselves for His coming. We are scared of the judgment of God!" No! You don't have to be scared of the judgment of God!

God's judgment is like this: He judges you as righteous by the mercy in His heart and then He gives you the gift of eternal life! I want to be judged by God because His judgment will bring me healing! It's like going to a judge and he's a righteous judge! You know He will not punish you, especially if you are righteous. By Jesus Christ we have become the righteousness of God. By the law, we cannot. But by the grace of God, we are being made the righteousness of God in Christ... not by our own works, not by what we do, but by believing on Him!

What must we believe upon Him? We must believe that He loves us. How did He love us? He took away all our sin in Jesus Christ and now He has put us inside Jesus and we are washed with the very life of Jesus. He has made us clean and then when we go to Him, we go as people that have been cleansed by Jesus. We are righteous by HIS doing!

Romans 3:

19 Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be silenced and the whole world (may be) held accountable to God.

20 Therefore no one will be declared righteous in God's sight by the works of the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of our sin.

So, the purpose of the law is to show you **your** sin so that you can know that only by the love of God can you be saved. Amen! The law is not to help you to live holy. The law is there to help you that you know that you cannot live holy, so that you can turn to Jesus so that He can give you eternal life as a gift.

Whenever you read the Old Testament, after reading, you must say, "Okay, by my own works I can never be saved. By my own works I cannot even live holy. Thank You for Your forgiveness, oh God, and a holy life is a gift from YOU. It is not something that I must do."

The fruit of the Holy Spirit is the fruit of the Spirit. It is not the fruit of your willpower! The Bible says, "Love is kind. Love is patient." That does not mean that you must now try to be kind. It does not mean that you must try to be patient. The Bible says, "God is love... and love is kind." That means God is kind. God does not get angry quickly. The Bible says, "Love keeps no score of evil done to it." It says that God is love. That means that God does not keep score of the evil that we have done to Him.

Whenever we read the Scripture, Old Testament or New Testament, we don't read it as an instruction to our action. We read it as an instruction of God's love towards us where God promises us His life, where He is the author of good actions in us. I hope you understand what I am saying. For too long the focus was on us and what we must do. We have not seen the death and the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Most of the Church today don't even know why Jesus had to be raised from the dead in order for us to be forgiven! I've got contacts with many pastors. Even if we go to a pastor's conference and I say to the pastors, "Jesus died for our sins, so by the shedding of His blood we are forgiven. Why would the Apostle Paul say in 1Corinthians 15, "Without the resurrection there is no forgiveness of sin." If I ask them, "Why is the resurrection needed for the forgiveness of sin?", I have not found one pastor that can answer that question. Yet, it is the building block of Christianity!

The problem today is that we don't understand the Gospel. The Church doesn't know the Gospel. Pastors don't know the Gospel. The Churches need to get back to the Gospel, the Good News of Jesus! People kind of understand why Jesus had to die on the cross but they don't know why He was raised from the dead. How does the resurrection of Jesus make me live a holy life? Why is it like that? The Church doesn't understand and it is time that we look at the Scripture, not to think how we can have a good service next week. We should seek understanding. What is the Gospel? The Gospel cannot be founded on your commitment towards God because then the Gospel will never exist in earth.

There are so many scriptures but I have to end now.

God gives righteousness as a free gift.

Romans 3:22 *This righteousness is given through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe* (Then it goes on and says), *There is no difference between Jew and Gentile,*
23 *for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.*

Listen to this: **All have sinned and have fallen short of the glory of God. That is why: 24 and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.**

Why are we justified by grace? Why is eternal life only by grace and not our works? Because by our works we are all sinners **and all are justified by his grace through redemption that came by Christ Jesus.** So, righteousness is a free gift. This blessedness... Is it only for the Jews or for everybody? It is for everybody!

My last verse: **Romans 4:**

4 *Now for the one who works, wages are not credited as a gift but as an obligation.*

So, that means, let's say I get someone to help me at my house. When they build the walls, I don't come after they have build it, and then I say, "I have a gift for you. Here is the money." No, the man will not say that it is a gift. He will say, "I have worked and if you don't pay me, I will go to the police." You don't gift your worker. You have to pay him. So, if we work for God and He gives to us because of our work, it is not a gift. It's payment! But salvation is a gift! It says, **Now for the one who works, wages are not credited as a gift but as an obligation.**

Now listen to the next verse:

5 However, to the one who does not work but trusts God who justifies (blesses) the ungodly, his faith is credited as righteousness.

So, in order to stand righteous before God, what must we do? We must believe that God justifies the ungodly. Abraham was ungodly. He was worshipping idols. Then God came to Abraham, while he was a sinner, and He promised him a promise. Then Abraham believed that he can be the father of many nations. When God promised him while he was a sinner, he believed God. What did he believe? He believed that God could justify a sinner and it was accounted to him for righteousness.

If you want to be righteous, you should not try to stop your sin. You should believe in the God that justifies the sinner. His justification, which He freely gives, will then bring a holy life to you. You don't stop your sin to be blessed. You believe that God blesses a sinner and the blessing of God to a sinner is a new life! Do you understand? You are deeply loved by God! Your sin could not separate God from you! Your sin draws God to you. It is the same way as a sickness draws a doctor. When coronavirus came into the world, it drew scientists. It drew doctors. The sickness draws the doctor. Sin draws the One who forgives me. So don't think your sin can separate you from God. If sin could separate God from us, it would be impossible for Jesus to come to the earth. When Jesus was on the earth, there was not one born-again but Jesus was a friend with many people! Imagine that!

The gift of God is eternal life! It's a gift! You cannot work for it! You cannot live holy to get eternal life! You believe and then God gives you eternal life!

And because eternal life is holy, you'll find holiness start to fill in you. Holiness is not a commandment! It's a gift from God! That's how it works.

Church, we will preach this message in Kalabo and we will continue to preach it and you will hear this message continue in the earth until Jesus Christ comes. I can promise you this: all other messages will fall away. They will be removed by the power of God and only the message of God's love will remain in the earth. That's why the Bible says, talking about preachers, they are teachers, "Some build with hay, wood and stubble. Others with precious stones, gold and silver. But, when the fire came, the teaching of hay, wood and stubble was burnt. But the teaching which was of precious stones, silver and gold, remains. Let us build with what is of gold. Our commitment and our works is just like the grass. Today it is there and tomorrow it's gone. But, the pure gold of the kingdom of God is the love that God has for you! Amen!

Let us pray:

I just want everybody that is here, if you are saying, "Lord, Jesus, I want to hear Your good news. I want nothing else!", I want you to stand right now. I want to pray for you. You say, "I just want the Good News and not the law." Those who want the Grace Gospel and not the law message, you can stand up. Let us pray together.

Father, I want to pray for these people here that have stood up and committed themselves to the Gospel of Grace, which say, "Lord, I want understanding." Thank You, Father, that You opened their minds that they may see how high, how wide, how deep and how long Your love is, which is to bring eternal life and immortality to man.

Father, I pray for them that as from today, as they stand up and say, "God, here am I. I want to receive it as a gift. I don't want salvation by my works."

I thank You, Lord, that as I see them stand here and I stretch forth my hand, I know Your Holy Spirit is working in their hearts. And, Father, thank You that as they stand, that Your life floods them, Your goodness floods them, understanding floods them! Thank You, Lord, in Jesus' mighty name. Thank You, Father. I declare them all blessed in Jesus' mighty name. Amen and amen

I want to also thank everybody who listen to this message by YouTube or facebook. Thank you for allowing me to serve you with this Good News. I also want to thank everybody who has helped to sponsor this trip to Zambia and for this message to go out to churches in this area. There are many other churches in this area that just don't know this message. They don't know the love of God. The focus is sin. The focus is what you must do for God. It is guilt. It is condemnation. It is not done from malicious hearts. It is just done from ignorance. People need to hear the Good News. Thank you so much that we can come as a team to Zambia and bring the Good News of Jesus Christ to this place. Amen and amen