

The Nature of Temptation and God's Goodness

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Studies in James

By Richard Warmack

Bible Text: James 1:13-18

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Grace Baptist Church

c/o Richard Warmack

900 Wedgewood Dr.

Ruston, LA 71270

Website: www.gracebaptistofruston.org

Online Sermons: www.sermonaudio.com/graceofruston

Let's take our Bibles this morning and turn back to the book of James. One of the things that I thought about as I was preparing for this message is that when most people read the book of James they never envision the absolute sovereignty of God and the responsibility of man being revealed in the book of James. But I am quite confident as I am going to try to deliver this to you this morning that this was exactly what the Holy Spirit had in mind through the servant James when he begins to tell us these glorious truths that He is going to reveal to us concerning temptations as opposed to trials.

Now it has long been debated and I have told you several times, I just don't debate and argue with people anymore. I found out over time and I think wisdom has proved me right that there is no need to argue and debate with anybody. "*But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.*"¹ So you can't argue somebody to your position. So this is the thing: This is not about arguing somebody to a position.

I told a young man this week that called me: "One of the things that has meant more to me is this is that if I can convince you that this is right, I am telling you there is somebody out there that has more information and more persuasive than me that can convince you that it is wrong." Now you have got to be convinced of God. That is to say, I can't convince you. If I can convince you, somebody else can turn your mind to another one. That is where we run into so many people that are tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine. They are influenced by personalities and arguments and that is why I am just not about arguing.

Now concerning the issue of reconciling the absolute sovereignty of God with your will, (and He is absolutely sovereign) I am not going to argue that point with you. If you don't like that, well, take it up with him. I know this. "*But our God is in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased.*"² "*And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as*

¹ 1 Corinthians 2:14.

² Psalm 115:3.

*nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?”*³
Now if I didn't have but two verses and I had those two, I would want to throw one more in there. *“Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?”*⁴

But the problem comes with this. The argument they always make is: Well, God is absolutely sovereign, but what are we going to do with man's responsibility. If God is absolutely sovereign and He is, what about man's responsibility?

In this debate men and women usually take one of the three positions. The first position is they just simply deny the absolute sovereignty of God. I have had so many people tell me through the years that I have known the gospel, “If God is that way, I don't want anything to do with him.” So basically they say, “God is not in control.” I can't envision living life like this. To think that everything in this life depended upon men to make it come to pass. I tell you this much: If the destiny of the United States of America depends on what is going on right now in Washington, DC, we better just hang on folks. Does it give you comfort to think that... I can't even pronounce his name. I like the way they call him “Mahmoud I'm a dinner jacket”. Doesn't it make you comfortable to know that that guy just can't of his own free will and accord decide to shoot some nuclear warhead over here at us? And the same is true of this. I don't worry about who is in the White House.

And I am going to tell you what. There is nothing going to happen to me and there is nothing going to happen to any of God's elect unless God almighty has purposed it to come to pass. Now I believe that and I believe I can back that up with this book. But they say, “Well, you know, it is all left up to us” They want to argue and they say, “What about our will? What about our way? What about man's free will?” Well, I tell you what. As free as man's will got, it was in Adam in a garden in a perfect situation in a perfect place working, walking in perfect fellowship with God almighty. And what did he do? They take the position that man is captain of his own destiny and he can pull himself up by his own bootstraps and he is the determiner of his own fate according to the exercise of his free will. What is wrong with that? What is wrong with that kind of a position? Well, it denies the Scriptures and it denies the God of the Bible. The Bible teaches us that God is absolutely sovereign in all things and that He is the God who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. Turn to **Ephesians 1:11**. I would encourage every person to read over and over and over and over again Ephesians 1. Read it until you get it.

The point the apostle Paul makes to those Ephesian believers is that this has to be true or there is no salvation. You think about it. He worked all things according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself. Think about it! It seems the God of this universe that most men worship, the god of their imagination, they have god at their disposal. But listen to me now: We are the creatures of his hand. He made us, did He

³ Daniel 4:35.

⁴ Romans 9:21.

not? And since He made us, He can do whatever He wants to with us. People say, “Well, I just don’t believe that.” I don’t got no problem with that. That is bad English, but I Don’t have any problem with that. If He has got the ability, **and He does**, He is what is keeping Richard Warmack breathing right now. He is what is keeping that Ahmadinejad breathing, too. He makes his rain fall on the just and the unjust.

How many profitable people in this planet actually hate and despise the God of the Scriptures, yet God gives them liberty and freedom and life and wealth. What do you have that you didn’t receive? They hadn’t pulled the hoodwink over anybody’s eyes. Whatever they got, God gave it to them. And, see, we believe, those of us who believe this gospel, we are assured and comforted by the absolute sovereignty of God.

Listen. Every single solitary thing in my life is ordered by God almighty, everything. I had cancer six years ago. Where did it come from? It wasn’t Satan. It was God’s purpose and will. I don’t understand it. I am glad He gave me grace to go through it. And how that I look back on it, it was one of the hardest and best times of my life. It taught me a lot about the importance and the value and worth of things.

The other position they take is the exact opposite. There is a lot of people they go to this extreme and this is our friendly Primitive Baptist people that we know. They go to this thing. They deny man’s responsibility. They say man is not responsible. God is sovereign. Whatever will be will be. But I tell you who else takes that position, the Muslims do. Isn’t it amazing? Primitive Baptist ideology and Muslim ideology run hand in hand. Well, at least they both say “what will be will be.” I always think back to when I was a child and the Doris Day Show used to come on with here singing: “que sera, sera, whatever will be, will be.” That is the way they look at it. They say, “Well, if God is sovereign, then I have no responsibility. If He has predestinated everything that is going to come to pass, I can’t be held accountable.” They say, “It is God that made me this way, therefore I can’t do anything else. If God has purposed it, I cannot thwart it.” Well, what is wrong with that position? Well, do you know what that does? That makes God the author of sin. The Bible teaches us very plainly that God is not the author of sin, but it also teaches us that man is totally accountable and responsible for his sinful actions so much so that God said through his Word, “*That every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.*”⁵ You are responsible for your actions. I don’t care whether you believe God is sovereign or not. **He is sovereign.** You are still responsible. Now I can’t explain that, but I know it to be so. And so some people take the third position.

Now this third position is the thing that James is going to teach us this morning. This third position is the one that most people take. They just ignore it. Now I can remember people making this argument. I had a man tell me one time he said, “The sovereignty of God and the responsibility of man are like railroad tracks. They run side by side and they never come together because if you pull the two tracks together you would have a train crash.” And so they take that position. They look at it like a parallel. They say, “Well, if Scripture teaches the sovereignty of God and if the Scriptures teach the responsibility of

⁵ Romans 3:19.

man, we cannot and we must not ever seek to merge these two together.” Another man made this statement. He said, “Friends don’t have to be reconciled.”

Well, what is wrong with that? Well, it just simply skirts the issue and fails to provide any Scriptural answer to the question. I want answers, don’t you? God gave us inquisitive minds and intellectual minds. He gave us wisdom and knowledge. And I will tell you what, I don’t want to skirt the issue, but I don’t want to avoid the issue either. I don’t want to go any further than what God has given me the insight to go into the Word of God. But I will tell you, He has given us some things in the Scripture that let us know these things. The Bible tells us that God declares the end, **where?** From the beginning. But He isn’t responsible for our sins. You put that together. I like the way Moses put it, or better how the Holy Spirit put it through His servant Moses. He said, “*The secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law.*”⁶

So there are some things that are clearly revealed and that brings us to this passage that I want to look at this morning. Let’s notice the nature of temptation. Notice what he says here in **verse 13**.

He says:

*Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man. But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.*⁷

Now listen. He has talked about trials in the first 12 verses of this chapter. I hope you paid attention now. Every trial comes from God. Remember what he says about this? He told us that knowing that this: “*the trying of your faith*” in **verse 2**, he wrote: “*My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into [different] temptations.*”⁸ The word there is literally trials, trials of your faith. So he has talked about the trying of our faith. And then he begins to talk about temptations. And in **verse 13**, the first part of **verse 13** James adamantly denies that sin is from God. Now we have got to get that in our mind this morning. God is not the source of sin and he is not the author of sin. And when we sin, do you know where sin comes from? It comes from us. We can’t blame God even though God is absolutely sovereign and even though God has determined the end from the beginning. We can’t blame him for our sins. Now we can’t! And the second part of **verse 13**, this denial stated in the first part is vindicated by showing that God who is holy and righteous and good, He can’t be tempted with evil and He cannot tempt any man with evil.

⁶ Deuteronomy 29:29.

⁷ James 1:13-15.

⁸ James 1:2.

Now in verse 14 James strongly affirms that we are absolutely responsible for our sin. Now listen. We can't and we must not ever blame anybody else for our sin. The only person we can blame is who? **Me**. Experience teaches us that passing the buck is second nature to us, isn't it? When it comes to taking responsibility for our own actions we evade it, deny it, shift it, or we ignore it, but God says we are responsible for our sins. Our sin, and that is what he is talking about here, our unlawful desires come by our own direct personal agency. They don't come from God.

Now I want to make that clear to you this morning. And if you will notice what he says here because this is important. Again, this is where we have to dig a little deeper than just reading things typically in the King James, typically in the King James version. He says this and he uses a preposition in **verse 13-14**. In **verse 13** he says, "*Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of...*"⁹ **O F**, a little word, right? Tempted of God. In **verse 14** he said, "*But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of ...*"¹⁰ Same little word, right? Now you and I, we read it and immediately it is just kind of like what is the definition of "is is" and what is the definition **OF** is, ok? And you say, "Of means of." No, it is doesn't. In the original language in **verse 13** that word translated "of" would be better translated "from." Now read it. "*Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted [from] God.*"¹¹ In other words I am not tempted from God and I am not tempted from outward circumstances as if I am some kind of a robot or a victim of circumstances.

But in **verse 14** it is translated where it says, "*But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust.*"¹² The word is "by." So now where does the problem lie? Temptation to do evil and by evil here we are not talking about the trials that God sends. We are talking about evil propensity to sin, that's what we are talking about.

See, we need to understand. We see here James is shifting his thoughts from the truth about trials that come into a believer's life by direct agency of God as stated in **James 1:1-12**, to the truth about temptations that come into a believer's life by direct agency of our own sinful desires. **Big deal of difference.**

Remember, as we have seen in the Greek, the word temptation means different things in different places and the context always determines the meaning of the Word. The first one that we looked at back up in **verses 2-12**, the word is translated temptations means external pressures or afflictions or persecutions or ordeals that assault us from without including that which we suffer for our faith.

That is what he said: "*My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into [different trials].*"¹³ Trials of what? Of your faith. When you are put in a position to compromise the gospel, **COUNT THAT A JOY.** Those trials, where do they come from? God sends them our

⁹ James 1:13.

¹⁰ James 1:14.

¹¹ James 1:13.

¹² James 1:14.

¹³ James 1:2.

way. Those are the trials that make us take the position that if any man loves father, mother, brother, sister more than me, he is not worthy of me.

Now the second meaning is the one that James uses here in our text. The word best translated temptation, do you know what it has to do with here? **It has to do with inner solicitation to do evil.** God is, indeed, the source of external trials if such trials prove our salvation. And they work for our growth in grace. But God is not the source of any inner solicitation to do evil. God doesn't tempt you to lust. Remember, He doesn't tempt you to steal. God doesn't tempt you to murder, Bart. He doesn't do that. Where does that come from?

And, see, this is the thing. God does try our faith, his people's faith. But He doesn't try them with evil intent and He does not tempt you with sin. You say, "Oh, yeah, well, what about when Abraham went up on that mountain and God tempted him to murder his son?" No, the trying of his faith was what occurred up there. God stopped the evil propensity to sin. But it proved his faith. What was his faith? He loved God more than he loved his own son and he would have taken his son's life which would have been murder, but God stopped it and God forbade it, did He not? The trial of his faith was to prove to Abraham: "**Abraham, you love me more than you love these.**" But God doesn't tempt us with evil. Now he just doesn't. Nobody can blame God of those inner solicitations to sin and for our failures in such temptations. Blaming God can take a lot of different forms. Now I tell you, it is tragic when people take these positions and they say, "Well, God is sovereign. Therefore he is to blame." God is sovereign, but He is not the author and He is not the source of your sin. **He is not.** And James affirms both of those truths in this Scripture. Some blame God for circumstances. They say, "Well, I steal because I was born in slum areas, right? I was born in a poor area. Never had anything and that is why I am a thief." Some people take this position. They say, "Well, I commit adultery. I commit fornication because God cursed me with such a big sex drive." That sounds good, doesn't it? God does not tempt any man or woman with evil. Now he doesn't. Adam, what did he do in the garden? Do you remember what we said? What do we do with temptation or sinfulness? We shift it or we deny it or we lay blame. Where did Adam lay the blame at in the garden? He... boy, he went right to the source, did he not? "*The woman that you gave me caused me to do this thing.*" So ultimately, who did he blame? He looked at God and you tell me men aren't evil and wicked to the core. He said of the one true God, "It is your fault that I am in this shape." And yet men say, "Well, we are not that way."

We are out of the same mold. Except Adam didn't have however many thousands of years of depravity looming over him. He was a perfect man in a perfect situation and he couldn't stand, how much less us?

Some people say, "Well, why did God give me such a bad temper?" Well, I tell you what. What are you supposed to do? What does He tell you to do? "*Be ye angry, and sin not.*"¹⁴ Isn't that the command? People say, "Well, why did God put more on me than he could handle?" God won't put more on you than you can handle. He knows where your

¹⁴ Ephesians 4:26.

handling point is, doesn't He? So if we flake out on him somewhere in the midst, it is not from Him putting too much on us, what is it? It is our own selfishness and self righteousness and our own greed that causes a problem.

The Bible is clear. The individual human heart is the source... every sin that came into this world, do you know where it came from? Man. Not God. You consider God's character. God is holy, is He not? He is holy, harmless. Our Lord Jesus Christ, holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners. God's holiness can neither sin nor tempt to sin. My stars, He is of purer eyes than to look upon it. How in the world would He tempt you with it?

When we think of things we go through in the providence of God, we have to consider that there is no sin in any external circumstance. God put Adam in that garden, did He not? God told Adam, every tree here, they are yours, right? **Except one**. The tree that is in the midst of the garden, the tree of the good and evil. You can't eat of that one because in the day you eat what are you going to do? You are going to die. Now, was there any sin in that tree? Anything wrong? Was there anything in there beckoning and saying, "Come to me and do evil"? What did it constantly hearken to them? **Don't come near me because God has commanded you leave it alone**. It stood as a beacon that you better avoid it. Did it not? And what do they do? What does Satan say? How does he approach the woman? He makes them begin to look and begin to desire because of what is in us by nature?

Sin comes from within ourselves, does it not? Evil cannot proceed from God. The responsible agent in this matter is man, not God. Man is the source and listen, he is drawn away from with his own lusts, unlawful desires of his old human heart. And that would include any desire that is contrary to God's glory and God's revealed will by way of commandment. It includes selfishness and pride and self righteousness. And do you notice what he says here? He says, **Every man**... notice what he says. "*Every man is tempted when he is...*"¹⁵ :Here is the thing: "*when he is drawn away of his*"... how is he drawn away? "*Of his own lust and enticed.*" Drawn away describes how the sinful heart responds to the temptation. The manner in which our desires turn to sin. Just like a fish. Bart fishes all the time. What do you do to catch a fish? You just put a hook down there, right? No, you don't just put a hook down there. They won't come to a hook, will they? Why? There is nothing enticing about it. What do they do? You put a worm or a minnow or a fish. You throw it down there. And just like that hook, now, with that bait on it, the bait and the desire of the bait, what does it bring with it? That fish sees that fish twitching there in the water and he says, "I want the fish."

But what comes along with the fish? The deadly hook! We could consider by way of contrast how that the Lord Jesus Christ when he was tempted by Satan He didn't sin because He wasn't drawn away by any sinful desire. He had nothing in Him. **We do**. **We do**. That is why you ought to be careful about your friends, young people. Choose your friends wisely. I am going to tell you this. You say, "Well, I can run with them because they are not going to affect me." Even as a child of God you have got something

¹⁵ James 1:14.

in you that can be drawn out still to them. **Now I am telling you.** They have got nothing in them that can be drawn to the one true God by nature.

I am going to tell you what. Every time that you fool around with folks that hate the gospel and do not believe and rest in Christ. I am going to tell you who is going to lose. I am going to tell you who is going to be affected. You are not going to affect them. Now you are just not. But I am telling you, they will seriously affect you. They will.

Now notice the process. Notice what he says here. “*Then when lust hath conceived,*”¹⁶ what does it do? “*It bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished,*”¹⁷ what does it bring forth? “*[It] bringeth forth death.*”¹⁸ This is a pretty logical process here. What does he say? He says the first thing that we do is we look and we lust. And, see, James shows us the end or the goal of sin in and of itself is to show that God is not the author of sin. That is what he is trying to show us here. What is sin, folks? Sin is a surrender of the will to the solicitation of an unlawful desire rather than the surrender of the will to the guidance of the Holy Spirit in the Word of God. And once unlawful desire conceives and receives the consent of my will, I see something and I lust after it and I consent my will to do it. What does it do? It brings forth actual practice and sin. And when it is finished, when sin is finished, what does it bring forth? All these temptations that we are talking about, lust, greed, murder, adultery, fornication, anything you can think of sinful and evil, what do they all do, where do they all to? All those temptations that come from us, where do they ultimately carry you to? They carry you to death, right?

James isn't saying here that sin lies only in the outward act, because our Lord Jesus Christ says if you look and you lust what have you done? If you hate a man without a cause, what have you done? Somebody says, “Well, if that is the case, I need to just go ahead and do it.” No, let's don't compound it. We don't throw caution to the wind and say, “Well, since I have lusted I might as well go ahead and have the affair.” See, James is showing us here the whole process of temptation in order to trace it to its source, not to God. The source is man. See, the goal of sin is what? It is death which is the opposite of life. And listen. Life is the goal of the trials God sends our way. Go back and read the first part of chapter one. Remember what he said?

*Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.*¹⁹

Do you see what trials do? What do they bring you? **They bring you toward life.** What do temptations do? **They bring you toward death.** Temptations to sin are from within ourselves and where do they always aim to carry us? They aim to carry us to the grave. Trials sent from God they work patience and are aimed toward the crown of life. Temptations within ourselves, sin find their completion, if they are left alone, if it wasn't

¹⁶ James 1:15.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ James 1:3-4.

for God's mercy and grace, what would we find? We would find death. Every sin deserves death, does it not? "*The wages of sin is death.*"²⁰ But now James is not saying here that believers are liable to death. That is not what he is telling us here. Because you think about it. Even as justified sinners, don't we still continually sin? If we have done the best we can possibly do what do we have to cry? We are unprofitable servants. We have only done that which is commanded.

Ok, we are to fear death no longer. We have been justified based on the blood and righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. And I tell you. We ought to thank our God with every breath that we take that sin doesn't have its completed work in us. Just this week, just this day. Thank God that our whole salvation is sure and certain based on the blood and righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. That is why He moved the apostle Paul to write, and I always think about this one. They always read it at the grave and it doesn't mean anything to anybody but God's children. "*O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin...*"²¹

I have never understood this until I understood the gospel. The strength of sin is this. **It is the law.** "*But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory...*"²² But He gives us victory one way. **How?** Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Now look at the nature of God's goodness, because this is what sums up this thing. Trials sent of God lead us to patience and joy in our salvation based on the blood and righteousness of Christ. Temptations from within, if left unchecked, where do they lead us? They would lead us to death and eternal condemnation. But James warns us, **verse 16.**

*Do not err, my beloved brethren. Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.*²³

Now let me give you this real quick. James deals here with the relationship that God has to trials and testings in his people. He has told us that God sends these trials in order to conform us to be more like Christ, and our response should be one of patience and one of joy based on the knowledge of that true wisdom. And that is in direct contrast to what he has taught us in **verse 13, 15. Verse 16** is kind of a bridge between the two thoughts of this paragraph. And basically what he is telling us here is for us to not be wrong about either situation. Yes, God is the source of everything that is good. And, no, God is not the source of anything sinful and evil. So how do we understand it?

Notice what he says here. He says, "[*For*] every good gift and every perfect gift,"²⁴

²⁰ Romans 6:23.

²¹ 1 Corinthians 15:55-56.

²² 1 Corinthians 15:57.

²³ James 1:16-18.

²⁴ James 1:17.

where does it come from? It is from above. Do you know what he is telling us here? He has shown us here the immutability of God's will, His doing good towards all without exception, even unbelievers, even the ungodly. Everything that anybody has is good, even physical life. Where did they get it from? Every good gift and every perfect gift comes down where? And this is the thing that jumped out in my mind this morning. I wrote it in my notes right before I left the house this morning. You think about this. He says, *"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above."*²⁵ *"The wages of sin is death."*²⁶ **Right?** What is the next part of that verse say? *"The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."*²⁷ *"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from..."*²⁸ **where?**

You see, this is a gift. What does a gift mean. It is given, not requested. It is given. Now I tell you, the best gift of all is which gift? I love my wife. I love my children. I love my life. I have been blessed of my God, haven't you? Now that is not the best gift. What is the best gift? What is the only gift that is going to last forever? It is definitely the gift that keeps on giving. You can't take this one away from me. *"Every good gift and every perfect gift..."*²⁹ *"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."*³⁰

And I see that. Notice what he says in **verse 18** and we will quit here. This is another one of those that proves the absolute necessity of God doing the work. Read **verse 18**. *"Of his own will..."*³¹ Now find yourself or man's will anywhere in that verse. *"Of his own will begat He us,"*³² caused us to be born again. How did he cause us to be born of God? *"...with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures."*³³ Now listen to me. He is referring here in **verse 18** to the new birth. And I'm telling you: The new birth has got to be one of the most misunderstood things in common Christendom today. Most people think that a man or a woman believes in the Lord Jesus Christ and then they get regenerated and converted. That is not what he says here. You can't even defend that from the Scriptures. Go to the book. Go back to **John 1:12 -13**. Start right there. Go to **John 3** where he talked to Nicodemus and told him, *"Except a man be born again, he cannot see and he cannot enter the kingdom of heaven."*

So regeneration is what he is talking about here. Regeneration and conversion. And they can be distinguished, but listen. They can't ever be separated. A person can't be regenerated and dead at the same time. It is impossible. And he can't be under God's wrath and blessed of God at the same time. Conversion is the first evidence, the fruit and the effect of the fact that what has already occurred. You have been regenerated. Regeneration is not the result of faith. Most people say, "Well, a man believes and he is

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Romans 6:23.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ James 1:17.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Romans 6:23.

³¹ James 1:18.

³² Ibid.

³³ Ibid.

regenerated.” My one question to you is if you believe that regeneration comes based on your faith is this: If you can believe, what do you need to be regenerated for? You have already got everything you need. “*For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.*”³⁴ What is the gift of God? **Faith.** And it is all the gift of God, not merit, all according to his free and sovereign will. God is the source of this life and, listen. The only ground of this life is found once place. It is found in Christ and His righteousness alone. It is the only place, the only hope we see in all time. My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus’ blood and righteousness. And I always like the next one. That is important. That is the most important. This is the thing that is a result of that. I dare not trust the sweetest ‘frame. What is that? My will? Not my way, not my ability. No, I dare not trust the sweetest ‘frame, but wholly lean on what? Jesus’ name.

Why do we lean on Jesus’ name? Because He told us, “*For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.*”³⁵ What is his name? There is only one. Jehovah-Tsidkenu, the Lord our righteousness. Is He yours? I hope and I pray that he is your righteousness today.

Let’s stand together and we will be dismissed. I appreciate your presence this morning. The Lord bless you and keep you until we see you Wednesday night.

³⁴ Ephesians 2:8.

³⁵ Romans 10:13.