



Sermon Transcription • Abbotsford

**Romans 5-8 - September 16/17, 2017 - Jeff Bucknam
In Adam and In Christ - (Romans 5:12-19)**

[Please Note: This transcript has been lightly edited for ease of reading. Also, some headings have been added in square brackets to aid the reader in locating portions of the sermon.]

I don't know if you like Major League Baseball. Some of you do not and the reason that some of you don't like Major League Baseball is because it is boring [laughter]. Now, I love baseball and I like Major League Baseball, but in order to like it, you have to really like the intricacies of the game, right? You have to like watching the pitch and then watching, waiting and looking at the face of the guy and thinking about the next pitch and what is he going to throw? Then he didn't get it right, but that was a good choice and here are the five reasons why that slider was a better choice than this. You have to like that kind of thing; the details of it and figuring out how they're going to shift the infield to protect against this batter. But for most people who aren't really into it, they're just kind of newbies in it, they look at it and they're like, "I could have a sandwich and a nap between each one of the pitches. So, I'm done." There is this thing though, here in --I'm not a Blue Jays fan, but the Blue Jays, the one good thing they do is this "Blue Jays in 30." I don't know if you know this, if you like baseball, it's this 30 minute show after Blue Jays games where they just show you every important moment in the game. Like, every out, so the *last* pitch when the guy strikes out, or a pitch where the guy gets the hit, stuff like that, and it lasts only 30 minutes. Actually, it's only usually about 12 minutes of actual game time, but they fill in the rest with commercials. But highlights can be enormously helpful in this way. If you don't want to get involved in the cumbersome details, the highlights are fantastic.

Now, I'm telling you that because studying passages in Romans can sometimes be like watching an entire Major League Baseball game. Paul, he piles up phrase on top of phrase on top of phrase; and each phrase has massive theological importance. You could stop after each phrase and preach entire sermons on it. We could do that here, but I want to talk about the highlights. I want to give you a highlight package. Particularly this passage. One of our pastors actually here (Darcy Kuhn, he's our pastor of community) tells a story about how when he was a kid growing up in Winnipeg his pastor spent 12 years in the book of Romans, right? 12 years. So, you're welcome [laughter]. We're going to do the highlights from Romans 5:12-19. Hopefully you'll get a feel for the whole of it by just the highlights. I want to read it to you though, just kind of so that you get a feel for how theologically rich and detailed it is, okay? Don't be worried if at four words in you're like, "Whoa, wait a minute. What? Who? Where? I don't..." Romans 5:12:

"Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all people, because all sinned - To be sure, sin was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not charged against anyone's account where there is no law.



Nevertheless, death reigned from the time of Adam to the time of Moses, even over those who did not sin by breaking a command, as did Adam, who is a pattern of the one to come. But the gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died by the trespass of the one man, how much more did God's grace and the gift that came by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, overflow to the many! Nor can the gift of God be compared with the result of one man's sin: The judgement followed one sin and brought condemnation, but the gift followed many trespasses and brought justification. For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ! Consequently, just as one trespass resulted in condemnation for all people, so also one righteous act resulted in justification and life for all people. For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous."

Clear, yeah? There's two big points he's making here:

1. There is a problem with being in Adam
2. There are pleasure with being in Christ

The problem of being in Adam and the pleasures of being in Christ. So let's tick those off in order, okay?

[The Problem of Being in Adam]

I just want you to go back to verse 12, the beginning of it. Here's how it reads again:

"Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man... [this is referring to Adam, right? And he sins in the garden of Eden] ...and death through sin... [so prior to him sinning there was no death] ...sin entered the world through one man and death through sin, and in this way death came to all people, because all sinned..."

Wait a minute, how does the sin of one guy mean that all sinned? Paul is working with a concept here called federal headship. If you use that this week in a conversation, just out of nowhere, you get extra points, right? [laughter]. "The problem is that he's our federal head." A federal head is a representative whose actions extend to all those on his team or in that group. All those associated with the federal head inside the group that the federal head is the federal head of, what he does, what he chooses, what happens to him, happens to everyone. So in the ancient world, a father of a family was like this. So the father of the family goes and he makes a land arrangement with another father of another family or tribe, that extends to the entire family. If you're the son in that family, you made a land arrangement. "No I didn't. I wasn't there." "Yes you were, in your father you were there because you are part of the group and he is your head."



Now, you and I, when we hear that stuff we think, “Well, we live in the western world where we’re beyond this. We’re individuals, right? What I do affects me and me alone.” But, there are some places in our society where federal headship still takes place, right? That representation takes place. The most obvious one is probably the government, right? You elect a representative who then goes to the government and they make decisions as your representative that affect you. They might go there and they might say, “We should go to war!” and you say, “What? I don’t want to go to war.” Doesn’t matter. It doesn’t matter what you want because they are the representative. They made that decision and so their decision has impact on you. You say, “Yes, but I’m not at war. I am an individual.” Right, see how that goes. When the enemy comes and they come to your house and they start to invade your house, you stand at the door and go, “I didn’t vote for this.” They won’t care. They will say, “No, we’re at war because you made the deal with your leader.” What your leader does, what your federal head does, is what you do.

Another good example of this is what happens in a championship football game, right? Do you know what I mean? Like a championship football game like the Grey Cup or the Superbowl or like just a Pee-wee football game (which is kind of like the Grey Cup) [laughter]. It is. So anyway, you have a championship football game. You know they send out their representatives at the front for the coin toss (the captain). The coach might be on the sidelines saying, “Call heads, call heads, call heads.” The captain of the team goes out there and says, “Tails” and it’s heads and you loose and the kid might come back and the coach might berate him, but what the kid, that captain, chose is what the team chose. You lost the toss because your captain, who represents you, lost the toss, so all of us lost it. And listen, at the end of the game, when you win the championship, and even though you are the worst player on the team. They don’t even give you a helmet because they are afraid you are going to use it to hit yourself in the head. You sit at the end in your pristine uniform, you get people water, that’s your job. But when you win the championship and they come around and they give the rings with the diamonds in it, *you get one!* Why? Because your representative head, and in this case the team which represents you, what they accomplished is what you accomplished. And when your team wins, as a fan, you say, “We won!” “We did?” “Yes, I won!” because you associate yourself with the representation of the team. So look, we have this all over the place. The point that I’m making here though, is that what Paul’s doing in this verse is he’s basically saying that Adam was appointed by God as our representative, so what he did is what we did. Read the verse again,

“Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man [Adam], and death through sin, and in this way [then] death came to all people [who are on his team], because all sinned [in Adam]...”

So just so we’re clear about the theology here, the sin of Adam is what we call, what theologians call it, is imputed to us because he is our federal head. We all sinned in and through him. Every child of Adam is born a sinner, guilty and deserving of judgment. Just think about that for a minute. He’s arguing that everybody who is in Adam, which is everybody who has ever lived, every human being, is born guilty. Now, the objector inside of me is freaking out at this point, right? “That’s not fair.” We say that, “Why am I being held accountable for something I didn’t do. I’m an individual and what I do reflects on me. It doesn’t reflect on everybody else. God should treat me just on my own. He shouldn’t



appoint somebody else to have bearing on me.” Yet that is what this passage is saying. “And so you’re saying that every person who is born now is guilty of something that they themselves did not do?” “Yes.” “How in the world is that possibly fair?” Now, let me interrupt a little bit with Objector Jeff here. “Objector Jeff, you’re assuming, by your objection that this is not fair, you’re assuming you would have done better than Adam.” [Isn’t that the objection in the end?] “Well I don’t want Adam’s failure to have any bearing on me. I should be counted on my own. If I were in his place I would have done way better than him. Stupid Adam.”

This is something we do all the time with people who are leading our groups, right? “Those people are dumb. They don’t know what their doing and if I were in the situation that they were in I would make a way better decision than they would and it would have lead to peace for everyone.”

My kids and my wife and I went for a bike ride a few years ago. You know, if you ride bikes with your children, especially when they’re young, it is like an ordeal. It’s like an hour long thing to get them going. So you have to plan it out specifically. If you have to go in line you have to find the right *place* to ride and it can’t be too long, right? Because you have to pack snacks (like an entire Subway) in your backpack. You have to pack drinks. You have to pack everything because one kilometer into it they are going to be freaking out. “This is too long and my legs hurt and I need something to eat and I’m so thirsty.” So, you’ve got to plan. So I went all morning and I was planning. “Okay, we’re going to go for this bike ride. I looked online and found this place out in the valley near the river and it looks great. It says it’s great for kids and it’s not very long.” We get all the kids in the car, we head out there and park my car. They said that there was a parking lot there but it didn’t look like one, but I was like, “Whatever, it’s fine.” I get the bikes and everything hooked up, right? Tires inflated, oil on the chains, first snack of the day before we go, and then we start riding.

One kilometer into it everyone is happy because it’s a nice trail and then all of a sudden the trail starts to disappear and it goes into this grass. There’s this rut, it’s not a trail, it’s a rut that goes down the hill. “Like, I don’t know, okay.” Looks like it’s going toward the river so we go down the hill. We get to this area that has a whole bunch of ponds and as I’m riding toward it it’s like there’s this mist that comes up like this [gesture] and I’m like, “That’s odd, mists that come up like that.” So I get closer and closer, and my little girl is in a little front seat in front of us, and so I’m riding along and all of a sudden I look down at her and she’s covered in mosquitos. It’s like Winnipeg has moved onto my daughter, right? [laughter]. I’m like, “Ah, and they are all over me and I’m freaking out and yelling to my wife who is behind me, “Turn around! Turn around!” and I’m turning around trying to wipe it off my daughter and running up the hill, my boys are crying, and we get to the top. We’ve gone one kilometer, we go one kilometer back and when we got back my wife looked at me, after I put the bikes away, and she said, “Really? That’s as good as you could have done?” [laughter]. “All morning long you had to plan this whole thing out. Had I been planning it out, she said, I probably wouldn’t have come here would I?” [laughter]. And what do we say gentlemen, when our wives say stuff like that to us, we say in our own defence, “Well, I’d love to see you try.”



We have a habit, all of us, thinking, usually looking in hindsight with our 20/20 vision, we have a habit of thinking that if we were in the position of making the decisions, everything would go better because we are better.

I was watching a soccer game the other day and this guy on my team, the ball falls to him, and he's like five feet from the goal and he kicks it over the bar. It's hard to do that. He could have blown it into the goal. So I'm watching on T.V. and I jump out of my chair and I say, "*It's not that difficult! Just kick it!*" and then I fell over, right? [laughter]. The point here is that look, if you had been there, if God had chosen you (Steve or Joe) as the representative head, you wouldn't have done any better. "Yeah but surely" you say, "There's somebody that God could have --maybe I wouldn't have done better, but surely there is someone like Gandhi or, I don't know, Mother Theresa, or my neighbor who always picks up the poo in the yard, somebody. God could have appointed that person as our representative and we would have been fine, right?" No, Adam was the best. Just think about him. He's perfect. He's the perfect man who is in perfect harmony with his wife and with his God and he failed. You think somebody else is going to come along and do better? The best fail. "Yeah, but I don't like the whole system. It's stupid. What God should do is just count everyone on their own merit and make it so that everyone is fine and everyone on their own merit." Right. Fine. If the best of us failed being counted on his own merit, how are you going to do? And before you get really upset with this representation thing, do realize that the fact that God appointed a representative head in whom we all sinned and whose guilt is attributed to us, the fact that this system is in place means that there is a possibility that somebody could come along and actually fulfill the law of God, obey God completely, and he could be appointed our representative head and we, in him, could be alive, yeah? So, it's funny how we get really frustrated with this idea of federal headship or representation when it's Adam's sin being imputed to us, but when it's Christ's righteousness being imputed to us we're like, "Yeah, that's pretty good. I like that. It's a good idea" [laughter].

I want to talk more about what it means to be in Christ. Before we do that though, I just want to press in a little bit in terms of application on what it means that we are born in Adam. More specifically, I believe that the fact that we are all born in Adam explains a lot about the problems in our world. I mean that I don't think that the real issue with our world is that we don't have enough education, even though in places we don't have enough education, and that would help. But the core issue is not more education, it's not more vision, it's not better leadership. The core issue is that there is something fundamentally flawed about us that bends us in on ourselves. It makes us selfish and we elevate certain things about ourselves and denigrate those things in others so that we are seen as better. There's something about us. We do that. You know the song John Lennon's *Imagine*? Listen, if you're young here you might not remember, but John Lennon was one of the Beatles and he had this song in the 60s called *Imagine*. You might not remember it but you've heard it because you've ridden in an elevator at some point. It's always playing in elevators. [laughter] The song is interesting. It kind of gave Lennon's vision for the world. The song goes, here's the lyrics, <singing> "Imagine there's no heaven. It's easy if you try. No hell below us. Above us only sky. Imagine all the people living for today, aaay..."<singing/> [laughing and clapping]. Yes, there's more where that came from, right. The point is, imagine if we just got rid of all the kind of religious doctrine in the world and the idea of heaven and hell and we just all live for today. He goes on in the song, he says, "Imagine there's no countries. It



isn't hard to do. Nothing to kill or die for. And no religion too. Imagine all the people living life in peace." Look, if you just get rid of religion and get rid of our nationalities and just approach the world as a blank, secular slate, finally we will all get along. Yet, the problem is, at every point in the history of the world where people have tried that, like Soviet Russia or Mao's China, violence ensues. Something happens when we get together and we try-- even if we have a common vision about a particular event or idea, we end up fighting with each other. Something inside of us just wants to be right and better. It's like we're born with this brokenness.

You might not know the name of Pierre de Coubertin. I said that pretty well. Pierre de Coubertin was a Frenchman who was the founder of the modern Olympic movement. It was the late 19th century, early 20th century. His idea is, "You know what? Look, if we just got together through sport, if we just got together and had these competitions in the spirit of the ancient Greeks, we would all agree. He actually wrote a poem called "Ode to Sport." It's his love song to sport. Here's how it goes:

"O Sport, you are peace! You forge happy bonds between the peoples by drawing them together in reverence for strength which is controlled, organized and self disciplined. Through you the young of the entire world learn to respect one another, and thus the diversity of national traits becomes a source of generous and peaceful emulation."

If you want to have peace in the world, sport is the answer. Now, if you're a referee in this room, I just want you... [laughter] let's just reflect together. When you're in the middle of the floor or field or ice or whatever and you hear the verbal abuse coming from both sets of fans and the players, are you thinking in this moment, "This is pretty peaceful" [laughter]. "Note the happy bonds between the competitors. This is the way forward for all of us, this sport." No. Look, there is something that happens. "I hate that fan base because they're evil. That player he's wicked." We have something inside of us, before we even get there. We can write poems all we want, but there's something going on inside of us that stops us from actually embodying the greatest hopes we have. We are born in Adam and it's ruined everything. And unless somebody comes and releases us from that condition, unless there is another federal head who can keep a law and obey and do the perfect things that we all know we should be doing, unless another one comes on our behalf, we are all hooped.

[The Pleasure of Being in Christ]

Which leads me to the second part. There's a problem with being of Adam, but there are pleasures of being in Christ. I want to jump to verses 15-19. I am going to read those again. It's probably the section, when I read this, that you got a little bit-- it's hard to follow. But here's what I want you to see when I read it this time. All Paul is doing here is trying to juxtapose, he's trying to put next to each other what it looks like to be in Adam and what it looks like to be in Christ and how much better it in Christ is. So we'll go back and forth - in Adam, in Christ, in Adam, in Christ, in Adam, in Christ. Verse 15,

"But the gift [of being in Christ] is not like the trespass [of Adam]. For if the many died by the trespass of the one man [Adam], how much more did God's grace and the gift that came by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, overflow to the many! Nor can the gift of God [in Christ] be compared with the result of one man's sin: The judgement followed one sin [Adam's sin]



and brought condemnation, but the gift followed many trespasses and brought justification. For if by the trespass of the one man [Adam], death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ! Consequently, just as one trespass resulted in condemnation for all people, so also one righteous act resulted in justification and life for all people. For just as through the disobedience of the one man [Adam] the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man [Jesus] the many will be made righteous."

Isn't this great? Federal headship goes both ways. If you have the imputation of sin from your federal head Adam, you can also have the imputation of righteousness from your federal head Jesus... if you receive it.

Being in Christ is amazing. In fact, I want to just point out as we finish through this section of Scripture, I want to point out three aspects of being in Christ that he highlights. Not every word and phrase, but three aspects that I think are particularly important. Here's the first: being in Christ is a gift. Now, when we use language like "gift" it's really common for us to say stuff like, "You know, gifts aren't earned." Which is true, if you're the one who receives the gift, right? But it's not true if you're the one giving it. If you're the one giving it, gifts are eminently earned. Let's imagine that you give me a gift. This is a good thought experiment. You give me a gift [laughter]. I like chocolate and coconut and BMWs, so let's put those together. You're going to give me a chocolate, coconut BMW [laughter]. So you go and you buy this thing and the next week you come back and say, "I want to take you outside. Look, it's chocolate and coconut, you can lick it while you drive." And I think, "This is amazing. Thank you so much" and I receive your gift. Now, I say to my friend who is standing there, "Look, it's a free gift!" and you're thinking to yourself, "No...it wasn't free. It's a BMW, I mean it actually costs a lot and I had to go and work a long time to go and get the money to now pay for this gift and now I'm going to give it to you." So gifts are free for the ones who receive them, but they are earned by the ones who give them.

So look at the language of the passage here - the gift is called "the gift of righteousness" in verse 17 and it's said to be earned "through the obedience of the one man [Jesus Christ]" in verse 19. This gift, in other words, is a gift that was earned through Jesus' obedience, so he comes and he gives it to you, but it costs him an awful lot. It's a great image. He's basically saying that what Jesus did is he died on a cross after living a completely sinless life. He earned God's blessing because of his obedience and now what he's done is he's gone to the store and he's gotten you a gift certificate. He's put your name on it and he's come and he said, "Look, here, I want you to have this. It cost me a lot but it's free for you. You take it and when you stand before God at the judgement, when you stand before my father, you present this and God, because he is just, is obligated to fulfill its promises. It promises blessings evermore, this gift certificate. That's what it's worth. And God the Father *has* to give it to you. He's not like a really rotten-- have you ever been to a rotten merchant or somebody in some store and you've got a gift certificate and you show up and you say, "Hey, I've got a gift certificate for this" and they're like, "Well, that doesn't count because that one is good on July 1st and July 19th and that's it." And you're like, "What? Where's that written?" "Well it's in this microscopic stuff on the..." and you're like,



“Well that’s unjust!” God is not going to be like that. God, who is just, is obligated to give you what Christ deserves and has given to you. That is crazy talk. Do you understand how crazy and scandalous that is? This has huge implications regarding the way that we see our future. You know that. If you have that gift certificate, it has huge implications.

J. Gresham Machen is the name of a theology professor and writer from the early 20th century. He sent a telegram when he was on his deathbed to his friend John Murray. In this telegram, here’s what he writes. Some of his dying words from this guy, typically theological. He says,

“I’m so thankful for the active obedience of Christ. No hope without it.”

What he means by active obedience is theological talk for what I just said - that Jesus will fulfill the law and he has now given you a certificate that you might present before God and, because God is just, he owes you. One historian, when he was reflecting on Machen’s words, he wrote this. He said,

“Here was Machen’s strong comfort in death. He knew that the meritorious work performed by his Savior had been reckoned to his account as if he had performed it. God must certainly bestow on him the glorious heavenly reward, for Jesus had earned it for him and God’s name is just.”

My Grandmother, when she was dying, my mother would go to the hospital repeatedly, day after day to visit her and when she would go, she would sit across from her and hold her hand and say, “Are you ready to meet God? Are you prepared to meet a Holy God? What have you done with Jesus? Have you followed him? Do you have the certificate? Are you in Christ?” My grandmother would say, every time, “I’m trying.” My mother would come home and she’d be pulling her hair, “There is no *try*. Jesus did it! He tried and He succeeded! You’re always going to fail. You’re in Adam, just like him. Jesus succeeded! Here’s the certificate.” There’s great hope on your deathbed in those moments when you know that you’re in Christ and that God, because of it, owes you, because He’s just. It’s so crazy! Being in Christ is a gift. Being in Christ results in us reigning. You notice that language, I hope, this is the second piece of this and the second highlight I want to bring out. Verse 17:

“For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned [now, listen to the language: death reigned] through that one man [Adam], how much more will those who receive God’s abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ!”

So, in Adam death was reigning over. It was your king, it was your despot, your evil ruler. It was killing you, but you have been freed from that so that you are headed toward reigning in Christ. You will reign with Christ. Rags to riches. An illustration is the best way that I can show you this. I want you to imagine that you work in a really horrible place and it’s soul-killing how bad it is. This won’t be hard for several of you, right? Like, you go to work every day and the only thing that keeps you there is the knowledge that if you lost the job you would probably have to lose your house and everything. You feel really trapped. “I’ve got to keep doing it. I’ve got kids and dependants and all sorts of people who



are depending on me. It's awful, no choice here." This happens day after day, year after year, just killing you. Well, one Tuesday, in through the door walks this South Pacific man in a grass skirt with all sorts of markings all over him. He's a warrior and he's there as an emissary from a kingdom in the South Pacific and he announces himself, "I am Koomaboomaboo from the kingdom of Oomagoobagooa [laughter]. He there and he shows up. "I am here to see (fill in your name here) Jeff Bucknam." And you walk forward, "Yeah, that's me." And he said, "Ahhh! We have searched long and hard for you and we have finally found you. You are the last remaining inheritor of King, I don't know, Kamoogabooga. His kingdom in the South Pacific, an island, here's a picture of the island and this is your palace, this is the beautiful beaches. Come with me, we have a plane waiting. You must come and inherit all that is yours." Hmm, so you turn and you say a few nice things and shake hands around the place. To your former despot, "Thank you very much for your chastening job" and you walk out the door and you get on this plane. You have now left behind the rule of death and you are headed toward reigning in life and you are on the plane. This is the situation that every Christian is in in this world. You know that. You are on the plane to reigning in life with Christ, having left behind the kingdom of death. So tell me, how much complaining should happen on that plane? "My ankle, it hurts. I don't know if I like the hot...it's going to be awkward." What? The only complaining that you're going to do happens when you forget where you're going, right? <whispering> You shouldn't forget where you're going </whispering/>. Christian, you shouldn't forget where you're going. You shouldn't forget the fact that you're on the plane headed toward reigning with Christ. It should change everything about the way you view your world. You've got that certificate in your pocket. You're on that plane. You're not in Adam. There's a lot of hope there.

Look, the last thing that I want to point out about this: being in Christ is a gift, it results in us reigning and finally, it has to be received. That's what it says here in verse 17,

"If by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life..."

It's a gift, therefore it must be received. My son just received a gift from his grandfather. It's a blue pickup truck, manual transmission, 1997 Toyota Tacoma, rust on it. It's awesome. Perfect first car given completely freely to my son who's thrilled with it. There was a moment when we went down to pick it up in Lynden and my father-in-law was walking around the car with my son, showing him all the intricacies of 97' Toyota Tacomas. "Here's where the spare tire is, here's the ignition, it's a little fiddly here." There was that moment when he got out and pulled the key off of his chain and he held it out to my son. "Here, it's yours." My son's like "Thank you!" and hugging him and looking at me and hugging again. This is the thing with gifts: there's this moment of reception that needs to take place.

Look, this is what this passage is essentially saying. Is, look, the glories of being in Christ, the pleasures of being in Christ, that are the solution to the problem of being in Adam is not actually yours until you take it. It's all been done. No barriers stopping you from taking it. Jesus is offering it to you. Listen, there are lots of different kinds of people who come to our church and I don't know where you are in your spiritual pilgrimage. You might, when I'm talking about certificates and being in planes and



the joys of looking ahead, be thinking, “Yeah, that’s my future because I know I’m in Christ. I know I have willingly received what it is that he’s offered.” You should have hope today. But if you’re not like that, if you have not received the gift of righteousness, I’m going to tell you man, you don’t have hope. You’re future is filled with wrath and death and sin. You’re still in Adam. So what I want to do, we’re going to finish and I am going to pray, and in the middle of my prayer I’m going to stop and I’m just going to pray a prayer that if you have not received Christ, if you have not received the gift of righteousness that’s in Christ, you just pray with me in your mind. Let’s pray,

Father I’m thankful for your grace and for all the words of this passage. It’s so rich and filled with truths that would explode in our hearts, in those of us who are Christians. And those of us who are not, it is an invitation to be released from the dominion of darkness into the dominion of God’s dear Son. I pray Father, that that would happen now.

So, if you are someone here who has not received Christ before, you just pray this in your mind: Heavenly Father, I’m thankful for the gift that you offer. I confess that I am in Adam and I would not have done any better than him. I’ve sinned against you, but I want to receive the forgiveness and the righteousness that is due me because of what Christ has accomplished. So I want to turn away from my former manner of life and I want to turn to you to receive all that you have to give. I thank you. And all of God’s people said, Amen.