

# A Declaration of Those Things Which Are Most Surely Believed Among Us

## An Expository Study of **The Gospel According to Luke** **Chapter 5- Luke 5:1-11** 57- The Divinity of Jesus- Part 2

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November 29, 2009

### **Luke 5:1-11**

Now one of the most insidious attacks against Biblical Christianity that has been carried out in recent years is the revival of ancient Gnostic writings that have filtered into secular books and movies- most notably the two books by Dan Brown called "*The DaVinci Code*" and "*Angels and Demons*" that have to do with a so-called conspiracy in the Roman Catholic Church to suppress the personal moral failings of Jesus and to hide His sins and His marriage to Mary Magdalene.

Now to be clear- I am not about telling you what to read or what to watch or what to look at- that is between you and God- but I am all about warning you about things that are patently sinful so that you may know what God would have you to do. The books and movies that without apology challenge or outright attack Biblical Truth- especially as it pertains to the Divine Nature of Jesus Christ are blasphemous and evil works from evil people who hate God and who want to poison the minds of people about Who Jesus really is- and you are not being broadminded and tolerant when you read these books or accept what they say- you are simply being foolish and you are allowing words and concepts into your mind that will cause you harm in your walk with God later on.

In fact- all Gnostic writings are nothing more than an attack against the Divinity of Jesus Christ and should be rejected by the believer.

But the damage done by things like this are huge and they do have an enormous effect on people over time because according to a recent survey among college age students who were raised in

Evangelical homes- less than 22% believed that Jesus was sinless and only 4% accepted the Biblical claim that Jesus was God. So we who believe God's Word is both Absolute and True are facing an enormous challenge in our day to uphold the claims that Scripture makes concerning the full Divinity of Jesus Christ.

Now I preached about this at length during our time spent on the miraculous virgin Conception and Birth of Jesus back in **Luke 2**- but this issue cannot be dealt with too much. The full Deity of Jesus Christ is not a side issue or simply a theological discussion between academics. The Deity of Jesus Christ is the foundation of Biblical Christianity. The Christian Church has laid claim to Jesus being God since the very first sermon by Peter on the Day of Pentecost and for over 2,000 years- we have been very vocal and unapologetic in saying that Jesus Christ is God in a body. You take away either Jesus' full Humanity or His full Divinity and you do not have Christianity any more- that is how serious this issue is. And those people who deny the full Deity of Jesus Christ are not Christians, they are not saved, they are not going to Heaven, they are not our brothers and sisters in Christ, and we should pray that God will grip their hearts and save their sinful souls.

Now in the passage that we are studying right now- there are five Divine Attributes of God Almighty that are clearly manifested in Jesus. And this makes Jesus to be Divine and it proves His Own Divinity, or in other words- these five Characteristics prove that Jesus is not only fully Human- but that Jesus is also fully God.

Now when you think about the Nature of God- you must think about the Attributes of God- that which is true or characteristic of God's Own Divine and Eternal Nature- and those are the very things that you see here.

1. Jesus is Divine Truth
2. Jesus is Omniscience
3. Jesus is Omnipotent
4. Jesus is Holy
5. Jesus is Merciful

And we went over all five of these Divine Characteristics last week. and I was also telling you that Jesus was absolutely relentless in preaching and teaching the Gospel. No matter what the situation- no

matter what the difficulties, no matter how much the press of the crowd is- Jesus never stopped teaching. He simply found a way to keep teaching the people- because this is at the heart of why Jesus came. He came to seek and to save the lost in order to bring them the Truth because you can't be saved apart from the Truth. Lies do not and lies cannot save anybody. That is why we who are in ministry are commanded to preach the whole counsel of God and that is why there are such terrible consequences for those who twist the Truth or who shy away from the Truth or those who are ashamed of the Truth or those who try to change the Truth. Lies do not save anybody; false teaching does not save anybody; doctrines of demons cannot save anybody.

It always amazes me to hear the argument that people give as to why we don't need Sound Biblical Doctrine. These people argue that we don't need doctrine- that all we really need is love. But my response is that true love proves itself through obedience and it is practically impossible to obey Jesus without knowing and believing what Jesus said, and it is practically impossible to worship Jesus without knowing Who Jesus is, and the one single place on earth that we can go to that teaches us Who Jesus is and what Jesus said is the Holy Scriptures. So by reading and studying and rightly interpreting Scripture- by knowing Sound Biblical Doctrine- we will know Who Jesus is and we will know what Jesus said, and through that knowledge we can genuinely worship Jesus in Spirit and in Truth, and we can obey Jesus which proves our love for Him.

So, Sound Biblical Truth is not a hindrance to loving Jesus- not at all. Sound Doctrine that is not man-made but which is right from the Holy Bible is the road that gets us to the place where we can love and obey Jesus.

Now it is interesting to see that no difficulty ever interrupted Jesus' teaching and preaching. And this is critical. You can set all the miracles aside and you can set all the casting out of demons aside and you can set all the supernatural wonders aside, but you cannot set the teaching aside.

And so, Jesus must continue His teaching. He must continue to preach to the poor and the prisoners and the blind and the oppressed who need to hear the message of forgiveness and the Kingdom of God.

And Jesus sat down, it says in verse 3, in a traditional, rabbinical posture for teaching, and continued His instruction, teaching the

multitudes from the boat again the Word of God. Now let me just inject this, folks, and I don't want to beat a dead horse to death- but this particular horse isn't dead yet. I keep reminding you, and I just did that series on deliverance and I was telling you in that series on deliverance that there is a rapidly exploding movement within the "evangelical Church" to deny that it is necessary to hear the Gospel to be saved. But Scripture declares that this teaching is just flat out wrong.

No matter how many people in our day put down Biblical teaching and expositional preaching, and line upon line and precept upon precept teaching from God's Word- no matter how unpopular serious, deep Bible Study is in our day, no matter how many people minimize the importance of Sound Scriptural Doctrine- the fact of the matter is that Jesus was relentless about teaching. He was relentless about the proclamation of the Truth. And He told His disciples- *"When I'm gone- you leave the comfort of your own homes. and you leave the security of your own environment, and you allow this radical-God sent Love to inconvenience your lives, and you abandon your own places and you set aside your own ambitions and you go out into all the world,"* and do what? Jesus said, *"You go to every creature on the face of this earth and you preach the Gospel to them"*

And it is wonderful that you feed lost people and that you clothe them and that you try to befriend them- that's all okay- but I want you to preach the Gospel to them- and that is the main focus that Jesus wants from all those who belong to Him- for us to preach the Gospel.

And I told you last time that there is a movement within Evangelicalism that essentially says people are going to be saved and they are going to get into Heaven and they're going to get into the Kingdom of God from all different points of belief, and without the Bible and without the Gospel.

And I just want to take a minute or two to show you that although we are confronted with this real bad teaching every day from the pronouncements of the modern snake oil salesmen on the Hay, Wood, and Stubble Television Network- this heresy is not new. This is an old heresy. This is an old heresy that is a part of the Roman Catholic Catechism. And this heresy goes back to a man named Thomas Aquinas back in the 13th Century- when he *invented* this heresy called

"natural theology", and I suppose you could even call it "rational theology"

And this is the false teaching that a person can get to God through *natural* means- and not through the Gospel. Aquinas taught that people can get to God through their own rational mind so that wherever you are in whatever culture and whatever religion and whatever particular system of belief or non-belief you are in- if you follow your own rational thinking back to the fact that there must be a God, and you live a "good life"- then you will eventually become saved and you are going to come into the Kingdom of God and go to Heaven- even if you never see a Bible or never hear the Gospel or never trust in the finished Work of Jesus Christ.

Listen, the Roman Catholic Church has believed this heresy for almost 1,000 years. And it is in their official Catechism published by the Vatican in the section called, "I believe and We believe". And that is why the Vatican welcomes Hopi Indian witch doctors and embraces them. That is why they have confabs with Buddhists and Muslims and everybody else and all religions- because they buy into the natural theology lie. And this is why the pope can embrace a Muslim cleric and say that they are both "pilgrims on the same journey". Well that may be true and the pope may be on the same journey as a Muslim cleric- but Jesus wasn't and I'm not and I pray that you aren't either.

Jesus never bought into natural theology and neither should we. Jesus said to go and preach and teach the Gospel, and He went to great lengths to give us this Gospel, and so we are to prove our love for Jesus by taking this precious Gospel and preach it without fear or fail, and without ever being ashamed of it to every creature. And Jesus Himself set the best example for all of us by being relentless in His Own Preaching and Teaching.

This is the motivation behind the latest attempt at "bringing us all together" called The Manhattan Declaration put forth by Charles Colson and others. The Manhattan Declaration is yet another attempt by Colson and others to try to get us to ignore what the Scriptures teach about Salvation by Grace alone through Faith alone in the finished Work of Christ alone and embrace Roman Catholics and Mormons and other conservative religious people simply because we agree about abortion and the other social issues of our day. I have issued a paper on why I am not signing The Manhattan Declaration and it is on the table

out front.

Now just to verify this to you- this quote is from the L.A. Times from just a few years ago. It says,

"Pope John Paul II said this week that all who live a just life will be saved, even if they do not believe in Jesus Christ."

Now this is not new- dear friends- this is exactly what Vatican II taught. And what is happening in the modern Church is that weak and undiscerning people say, *"Oh, we need to embrace everyone and we need to put our arms around them and we need to get together with these people because that's the loving thing to do because we are all one in Jesus Christ."* But what they are really doing in these efforts is simply embracing this old heresy of Aquinas' called, natural or rational theology.

The LA Times goes on to say,

"The Pontiff addressing thirty-thousand pilgrims in Saint Peter's Square strongly asserted the Second Vatican Council's liberal interpretation of the Bible's teaching on Salvation."

And then this is a direct quote from the Pope himself:

"The gospel teaches us that those who live in accordance with the Beatitudes- the poor in spirit, the pure of heart, those who bear lovingly the sufferings of life, will enter God's Kingdom- regardless of what they believe or don't believe,"

So this has always been there. And the Protestants are the wayward brethren to the Roman system- but, if we do good- even though we're Protestants- we'll get into Heaven, too- but so will the Muslims and so will the Buddhists and so will the pagans and the animists and whoever else is trying to "do good".

And that's why I told you, beloved that this is not a naive discussion by just a few people- this is a nearly 1,000 year old theological error of serious proportions that has deceived many, many people.

And the main apologist for the heresy of Aquinas in our day- is a man named Peter Kreeft- who is the professor of Philosophy at Boston College- who wrote the book Ecumenical Jihad- which was agreed to by Charles Colson and JI Packer, and there are others like Clark Pinnock- who are the "main line" Protestants who are leading the way for reconciliation with Rome without Rome repenting of their abominable teaching on Salvation.

And these men have all embraced this heresy of natural theology and they have all capitulated with this ecumenical marriage with Rome and they are not only accepting Rome's view of Salvation in Christ through human works in the Sacraments- but they also are embracing Rome's perverted view of Salvation *without* Christ!

So I pray that you can see that we're talking about a very serious issue here- one that is far more important than any social issue of our day. And I just want to throw a footnote into this- just in case you may have wondered what I'm talking about.

Jesus taught, and you know this- if you believe the Bible- that true, genuine Salvation comes only by hearing the Word of God. That is **Romans 10:17** that says:

**... faith** (the kind of faith that it takes to be saved- *saving* faith) **comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.**

Now what we have to understand is that nobody is born with the Faith that it takes to be saved. This kind of *saving* Faith must be graciously *given* Sovereignly by God to the individual before that person can ever be saved in the first place. The Fall of Adam so radically and negatively ruined Man- that he is not able, nor is he willing in himself to repent and believe for Salvation until God does something for that person first.

That is what **Ephesians 2:8&9** are all about. Now I want you to follow with me closely on this so please turn with me to **Ephesians 2:8&9**, which says:

**8 For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God;**

**9 not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.**

Now the way that the Greek is written here in this verse is called an "exclusionary phrase". The way that the verbs are arranged here shows us that Paul was making a very exclusionary statement here. Let me show you what I am talking about. The first part of verse 8 says:

**For by grace you have been saved through faith ...**

And that means that Paul is saying here that "it"- Salvation- is by Grace *alone* through Faith *alone*- the word "alone" being the unspoken meaning of the *exclusionary* part of this verse.

So the Apostle Paul teaches here that Salvation is *only* "by" the Grace of God, and it is *only* "through" Faith- meaning that Salvation is not "by" anything else *but* Grace, and salvation is not "through" anything else *but* Faith.

Nothing can be added to Grace and nothing can be added to Faith for us to be saved- not any good deeds, not any human works, not any partaking of Church Sacraments, not baptism, not speaking in tongues, not Communion, not Confession, not giving money, not Church attendance, not any effort at being a nice person- nothing that we do can in any way add anything to either this Grace or this Faith.

So the Infallible Word of the living God says that Salvation is only *by* Grace and Salvation is only *through* Faith.

And as much as Colson and Rome and everybody else want to change this- the Word of God is crystal clear about how lost sinners are saved, and so we should be just that crystal clear about it, too.

Now secondly- Paul is also teaching here that the Faith that it takes for us to believe does not *normally* or *naturally* belong to human beings. Read the next part of verse 8 with me:

**... and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God**

Well, what is "not of yourselves"? And just what is "the gift of God", Salvation? No. Faith. The Faith that Salvation is "through" is not "of yourselves"- it is not ours by nature- we do not possess this kind of Faith in and of ourselves. Well, why don't we possess this kind of Faith- Adam had it- why don't we have it-? Because we lost it in the Fall.



Well, where in the world can we get this kind of *saving* Faith that is takes to rescue our sinful souls? God must Sovereignly and graciously and mercifully give this Faith to us- the Bible says here that **"it"**- the saving Faith that Salvation is **"through"** is **"the gift of God"**.

And because this saving Faith is a gift from God- therefore, you cannot earn it, you don't deserve it, and you can't do anything to ever be worthy of it- it is simply a gift. You can't work this Faith up, you can't build this kind of saving Faith up or pump it up through emotional pleas or through lively music or through any kind of human reasoning or intellectual stimulation. The Bible says that this Faith- the kind of special Faith that it takes for lost people to be saved is a **"gift from God"**.

Now please remember- Paul is not talking about Salvation being a **"gift from God"** as so many people teach today- no, no, no- it isn't Salvation that is the gift here- it is the Faith that Salvation is **"through"** that is the gift.

So Paul is *not* teaching here that Salvation is a gift that some people can willingly *accept* if they want to while others can willfully reject if they want to- not at all. That is *not* what Paul is teaching here at all. Paul is saying that the devastating effects of the Fall were so enormous and so great and so far reaching and so all-encompassing that *nobody* can willfully receive this glorious and eternal Salvation based on their own human choice unless and until God Sovereignly and Supernaturally and Graciously *allows* and *empowers* and *enables* that person to come to Him- that's the Grace part. Jesus said in **John 6:44**:

**No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him...**

No man can come- no man has the ability or the power in himself to come to Jesus unless and until the Father graciously and mercifully allows or draws or enables or empowers that person to come- so this is the Grace part of Salvation. It isn't that God simply invited everybody to come and some voluntarily chose to obey while others voluntarily chose to reject the offer- the Bible does not teach that.

The Bible says in **The Acts 17:30** that God *commands* that all men everywhere repent and be saved, and God graciously enables some people to be so blessed as to be able to actually obey that command and escape Divine Judgment. That is the Grace part of this verse.

But the Faith part of this verse is still not something that we do. No, Salvation is not a cooperation between God and Man where we do part and God does part- that is not what the Bible teaches either.

The Bible says here that God mercifully *grants* to us this special, unique kind of *saving* Faith so that we may have the privilege and the ability to believe. And the Bible teaches that the Fall was so great and it so radically and negatively affected us, and we are so sinful and so wicked and so unwilling and so weak and unable by nature that if God doesn't give us this Grace, and if God doesn't grant us this Faith- nobody would ever be saved in a million years.

And that is true because of verse 9- read it with me:

**not as a result of works, so that no one may boast**

What is "**not of works**", Faith? – no, Salvation. Salvation is not of human works- it is not of *any* human works- none, zero. There is absolutely nothing you can do or not do that can add or take away from the Grace and the Faith that God has to Sovereignly provide. And because that is true- not even your belief in Jesus is a "work"- it is simply a response to the gift. So even our desire and ability to believe and be saved is not something that we can take credit for or boast about in any way- but our ability to believe is something that God must give to us- or else we will simply remain lost forever.

You see if we contribute *anything* to our own Salvation- then by rights we would be entitled to some or part of the credit. If God does part and we do part- then we are rightly entitled to share in the Glory, and we would then be correct to boast in the part of the Glory that we are entitled to. If God does 50% and we do 50%, then we are rightly entitled to 50% of the Glory, and even if God does 99.999% of everything pertaining to Salvation and we only do 0.001%, then by rights we would be entitled to 0.001% of the credit and the glory and the honor. And if we are entitled to 0.001% of the Glory- then we would be wrong not to boast about the part that we are rightly entitled to.

But Paul says here that God is so passionate about receiving all the Glory for Salvation, that Salvation is not of *any* human works- none. And that means that we are not entitled to *any* credit and cannot boast about *any* part of Salvation- no matter how small or insignificant. We cannot boast- not because we would look arrogant to do so- but we

cannot boast because we have nothing to boast about- we were the unworthy recipients of both the Grace and the Faith that is takes to be saved- that is why we cannot and must not boast about *anything* that we did.

Now, here is how all this ties back in with what Jesus was doing here in **Luke 5**. God has chosen a single method by which unworthy sinners receive the Faith that they need to be saved and justified and made fit for Heaven, and that one single way is through the foolishness of the Word that is preached.

So without hearing the Word of God- nobody has the faith to be able to repent, and nobody has the desire or the ability to believe, and nobody has the power and the will to trust in Christ for Salvation. So everybody who is saved- is saved through the faithful and full preaching and teaching of the Word of God.

So preaching is not some side issue - it is the only way that people can be saved. That is why it is so evil to teach or believe in "natural theology" that says that Salvation can come in any number of ways other than the Word of God being preached.

Now please look just a few verses above **Romans 10:17** and read with me **Romans 10:13-15**:

**13 for "WHOEVER WILL CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED."**

**14 How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher?**

**15 How will they preach unless they are sent? Just as it is written, "HOW BEAUTIFUL ARE THE FEET OF THOSE WHO BRING GOOD NEWS OF GOOD THINGS!"**

So how are they going to hear if we don't preach? Jesus knew that, and so God had one Son in Whom God was well pleased, and that Son was a preacher, and He preached the Word of God and only the Word of God throughout His entire Ministry.

And then this well pleasing Son appointed Apostles- who would also preach. And then this Son chose gifted men to be preachers, pastor/teachers and evangelists all down through history because how are they going to hear if we don't preach?

And then Jesus gave us a commission to send people to the ends of the earth to proclaim the Gospel because there isn't any Salvation apart from preaching this Gospel.

And so this is such a serious error that has come in that redefines not only the Gospel, not only redefines Salvation- but it also redefines the works of the Church and the missions of the whole world.

But Jesus knew what was really important. So to Jesus- Divine Truth preached was important and the Gospel was important, and so Jesus preached and He taught relentlessly. And if it got difficult- Jesus figured out a way to do it anyway.

And there were a number of occasions when He had to get into a boat to get away from the crowd- but He kept right on preaching and teaching. Jesus taught everywhere He went. He never went anywhere that He didn't preach and teach the Gospel. He taught in the temple, as we'll see later, and He taught in the synagogues. Jesus taught in a cemetery in **John 11**, and He taught by the side of the lake. He taught in houses. Sometimes they had to tear open the roof to let people down to where Jesus was- the crowds were so big.

And anywhere and everywhere all through His life- Jesus preached because that is necessary for Salvation. You cannot come to the Kingdom of God unless you believe, and in believing the Word, the Word then has the power to give you saving faith so you can stop being a child of the devil and become a child of God.

So that is the first thing that we see in Jesus here in Luke 5- that Jesus not only spoke Divine Truth- He Authored it. When Jesus spoke- it was God speaking.

Now I need to interject something here that is the second biggest threat against Biblical Christianity in our day. If it is true that nobody gets saved unless the Gospel is preached- if that is true- which it is- then it becomes very important then that we define just what the Gospel is. Because if we are preaching something besides the Gospel- then people will still not be saved. So for example- if we are preaching a false gospel, or "another gospel" as the Bible puts it- a "gospel" that's sounds great but which is not the true Biblical Gospel- then lost people will remain lost- but now they will be deceived into thinking they are saved. And it is the development and preaching of these false gospels that constitutes the majority of the work of demons in the earth today. Fallen angels develop false gospels, and demons deceive people into

accepting and believing these false gospels. That is why the Bible was given to us by God- so that we would know what God has said so we could be discerning and not be deceived, and so we could reject every false way.

Many people today teach that confrontation is wrong- that it is un-Christ-like and unloving, and even ungodly to hold people accountable to the Word of God. And this position stems from a very popular false teaching that says that it doesn't really matter what you believe as long as you love Jesus. That Salvation is all about Love, and love has no bounds, and love never requires anything from anybody, and that is simply nonsense.

Love and Truth are always connected because God is Love and God is also Truth. So there is no genuine Love without Truth, and so the very essence of Divine Love, therefore, is Divine Truth. Without loving Truth- you do not love God, and if you do not love God- you will love something else.

And that is why Jesus preached and taught Truth relentlessly. He never stopped speaking Divine Truth until the day He ascended into Heaven. And before He left- Jesus chose men to invest this Divine Truth in, and empowered and enabled them to write this Truth down so that it would be preserved forever, and we have that very same Truth today and it is called the Holy Bible.

And Divine Truth is found in no other location on earth besides this Book, and that is why a good Pastor will always teach that those who say they love God should be in this Book on an ongoing basis, and they should know and learn this Book so they will not sin against God.

Because there is another heresy that is being taught in our day that says that Jesus came to save us and allow us to go into Heaven- but we don't need to change anything about the way we live here on earth. People have the misguided notion today that somehow actually serving God and obeying God and escaping the tyranny of sin is optional- that *some* people who are saved live holy lives while others who are equally saved do not live holy lives and they continue to live like they have always lived before they were saved. And this false teaching is an ancient 2,000 year old heresy called Antinomianism, and it, too, is a perversion of the Grace of God.

The modern Church has come to believe in the warped idea that Salvation is only the granting of eternal life but not necessarily the

liberation of the sinner from the bondage of his own iniquity. And that idea is unbiblical. We tell people today that God loves them and has a wonderful Plan for their lives- and that is true- but that is only half the Truth. The same God that has shown Mercy in Christ on the Cross is also the same God Who hates sin and Who will judge all sin and Who will punish unrepentant sinners with eternal damnation in a lake of fire- that's the other half of the Gospel that has become very unpopular in our day.

But we must know, dear friends, that the true Biblical Gospel has not been preached if we refuse or conceal that fact that God values His Justice against sin as much as He values His Mercy toward sinners. Any Gospel that fails to define and confront the severity of personal sin is not the Biblical Gospel. And any Salvation that does not expect and demand a lifestyle that is struggling to be found faithful to Scripture is not the Salvation that God's Word speaks about.

Now hear me closely, dear friends. I am not saying that Christians do not sin. We do. I do. But I *am* saying that we should all be struggling daily *not* to sin, and when we *do* sin- it is a tragedy, and it breaks our heart, and we quickly confess that sin and we quickly turn away from it and we learn from that failure and we step on top of it and we fix the problem- we strengthen that weakness, we shore up that troubled area, we confirm our knees and we hold up our weak hands and we go on up the Mountain with God.

But for anybody who confesses to be saved to be totally unconcerned about their own personal sin and to continue on in it and to not be grieved over it and to not struggle against it- is to simply prove that their Salvation may not be real after all and they may only be deceived into thinking they are saved.

Sin is not a peripheral issue as far as Salvation is concerned- it is *the* issue. In fact- the distinctive element of the Christian message is the supernatural Power of Jesus Christ to forgive and to conquer our sin. Of all the realities of the true Biblical Gospel- none are more wonderful than the great and glorious news that the enslaving grip of sin over my life has been utterly and eternally shattered by the risen Christ. This Truth is the very heartbeat of Christianity. And no message that excludes this Truth can be called the Gospel, and no messenger that will not say this can be called a man of God.

It is patently ridiculous to suggest that anyone can come into contact with the Holy God of Scripture and be saved without coming to grips with the horror of his own sin and without turning from it. In the Bible- those who truly met with God were invariably confronted with an overwhelming sense of their own sinfulness.

The great Apostle Paul wrote this in **1 Timothy 1:15**:

**It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost of all.**

After 41 Chapters of pleading his own cause- Job finally stood before the very magnificence of the Glory of God, and he said this in **Job 42:5&6**:

**5 “I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear; But now my eye sees You;  
6 Therefore I retract, And I repent in dust and ashes.**

After the prophet Isaiah saw the Glory of God and he heard the seraphims cry out, "Holy, Holy Holy", after Isaiah saw the posts of the door move at the Presence of God and he saw the smoke fill the house- this golden tongued prophet said this in **Isaiah 6:5**:

**Woe is me, for I am ruined! Because I am a man of unclean lips, And I live among a people of unclean lips; For my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts.**

The reason why everyone who saw an angel, including Mary- the mother of Jesus, was afraid was because they knew they were sinful and they knew that God was holy and that He hated sin, and they were ashamed at their sin and they hated their sin and they grieved over their sin and they thought God had sent the angel to kill them because of their sin.

And right here in **Luke 5** Jesus performs this miracle, and although they had fished all night long- they had caught nothing, but they obeyed the command of Jesus and they cast their nets of the right side and they caught so many fish the boats were going to sink and Peter responded this way in **Luke 5:8**:

**But when Simon Peter saw *that*, he fell down at Jesus' feet, saying, "Go away from me Lord, for I am a sinful man!"**

Peter just got the biggest catch of fish in his entire life, and instead of being excited over it, and instead of making plans to franchise his catfish restaurants- Peter was convicted about his own personal sin and he repented right there on the beach.

We need to remember that although we are saved by Grace alone- we are not saved by Grace that is alone. Salvation by Grace alone means that we now no longer live unto ourselves, but we live our lives in total abandonment to the Glory of God. We strive daily to live in such a way that will reflect honorably on what Jesus did for us by saving our wretched souls. We live our lives in such a way that Christ's death is not a mockery. We live our lives in such a way that does not bring shame on Jesus, and that does not make Grace to appear to be nothing more than leniency.

The true Gospel is first of all a mandate for repentance. Beginning with John the Baptist and going all the way through Jesus and all the Apostles- that was the first word out of their mouths- "Repent!" No one who neglects to call sinners to repentance is preaching the true Gospel of Jesus Christ.

We are making a huge mistake in the modern Church not to place the very same demands on believers that Jesus does. I do not want to load you down with legalistic burdens that are not Biblical and God willing- I will never do that. But I do want to expect out of you the same thing that Jesus expects.

So as we strive hard not to be legalistic- we must acknowledge that Antinomianism is not a fix for legalism. Antinomianism- the belief that because we are saved by Grace we are now free to do what is right in our own eyes is equally a heresy as legalism, and it is just as evil and just as unbiblical and just as wrong.

Make no mistake about it- Jesus makes demands on all who are His. If you belong to Jesus- then Jesus expects certain things out of you and He will inconvenience your lives and He will limit your behavior and He will restrict your actions and He will command you to go and to do and to say and to teach and to refrain from things that displease Him.



And if you are yet in your sins- those restrictions will bother you and they will bore you and they will seem foolish to you and they will provoke you, and the commands of Jesus will make you lose your joy and you will have no peace. And that is a sign to you that you are not saved and you are not born from above and you have not been indued with Power from on High.

And if you are saved- those restrictions and those commands and those expectations will be the very source of a joy that is unspeakable and full of Glory, and you will have a peace that passes all understanding because you will see the commands of God as being a manifestation of God's Love to you because the Apostle John said in **1John 5:3:**

**For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome.**

Periodically some preacher will arrogantly say that he does not preach on sin because he is far too loving and far too compassionate to talk about sin. But in reality that preacher is simply far too cowardly and far too lukewarm and far too backslid and far too ashamed of the Gospel to preach about sin.

A few years ago - Robert Schuller wrote a book in which he redefined sin as being nothing more than a poor self-image. *"The way to reach people"*, Schuller wrote, *"is to build up their self-esteem- not to make them think they need to repent about their sins"*. But we need to know that there is no such Gospel like the one that Schuller preaches.

The message of Schuller and others will keep lost people enslaved to sin and send them to hell. But the Truth of the glorious Gospel of Scripture is that the only ones who can be saved are those who quickly confess their sins and come to God in desperation- begging for Mercy.

The magnificent Love of God will reach up to the highest star and down to the lowest hell and it will rescue broken and penitent sinners. And it doesn't matter how bad you have been, how long you have sinned, or how dirty you are- if God has been gracious to grant you grace, and if the Gospel is rightly and fully preached, and God has Sovereignly given you eyes to see and ears to hear and a heart to believe, and God has granted you with saving faith through the Gospel

that you have heard preached- you can come to Jesus and He will save you to the uttermost.

But to those who are unwilling to admit their sin- Jesus has nothing to offer them but Judgment, and the same Lord Who is gracious to save repentant sinners is the very same Lord Who will cast unrepentant sinners headlong into a lake that burns with brimstone.

Will you come to Jesus today to be saved?

Let's come and pray.

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The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. Be watchful and quicken your pace. Soli Deo Gloria. For the Glory of God alone.