

5. Righteousness by Faith – Gospel Mechanics

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Father in heaven, truly, there's no other friend like your Son to us, to bring us to you, our Father, the revelation of the Father's love. And as we enter into the Sabbath, as we talked about the other night, Jesus, as you rest in the bosom of your Father and the sweet rest that you are experiencing, we now come unto you because we have labored and been heavy laden through the week. And we're determined to receive your rest. There is no other place that we can receive it. Thank you for the portion of your Spirit, the living bread from heaven. Feed us because we are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked. And give unto us your righteousness that we may be filled. And we thank you in Jesus name, amen.

It's interesting that I read a book. I remember the title of the book. The title of the book was It's Hard to Be Lost and It's Easy to Be Saved. And my response to the title of that book, well if it's easy to be saved, then why is the way straight and narrow and few there be that find it. So easy to be saved, really? Hard to be lost? I have come to that conclusion within the correct framework. But until you come into that framework, it's easy to be lost and hard to be saved when you don't know the truth. Only the truth sets you free. This is the problem. Once you know the truth, it's easy to be saved. It's very easy to be saved. But we have to come to some conclusions, and that is simply this. Romans 3:10 *As it is written, there is none righteous.*

Is that right? It doesn't say there are those who begin life not being righteous. There is none righteous, that's what it says. No, not one. There is none that understand. Do you understand? Not according to this. "But this is for unbelievers," right? There is none that seeketh after God. Are you seeking after God? This says there is no one who seeks after God. Present tense, present continuous, there is none that seek after God. So if you are seeking after God, then what is actually happening? God is seeking after you. Christ is the source of every right impulse. Steps to Christ, page 26. Which means that if you're feeling the drawing impulses of the Spirit of God to come to Him, it is only because he is drawing you. Not because you are desiring him.

The only reason we go on pilgrimage is because He is the one that already was on pilgrimage to reach us, to come and find us the lost sheep. We were lost. Or where is the lost coin? Did the coin know that it was lost? No. The sheep knew it was lost, coin didn't. Didn't have the capacity, but it was still found. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable. There is none that doeth good, no, not one. Hang on a minute. Hey, I do good things, don't I? Says there is none who do good. Their throat is an open sepulcher with their tongues that have used deceit. The poison of asps is under their lips. "Not mine. No poison under these lips." Really? Is that so? Maybe you need a new pair of glasses, Adrian. Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness, their feet as swift to shed blood. Destruction and misery are in their way, and the way of peace they have not known. There is no fear of God before their eyes.

Now we know that what thing soever the law saith, it saith to them that are under the law that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore, by the deeds of the law, there shall no flesh be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin. And it is on the basis of this text that the majority of Seventh Day Adventist will be lost, because rightly or wrongly, I came to the understanding that by the deeds of the law that I could be saved by being a vegan vegetarian. By being a Sabbath keeper, by believing in the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. And believing faithfully the creed of Adventism, that I would be saved. How did I come to this understanding? Well, we need to turn to another story. But before we turn to that story, we need to read the rest of this passage. For by the law is the knowledge of sin.

Verse 21, but now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested. How did this righteousness come? In Jesus Christ. Did it come with the law? It came without the law. Now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets. The law has its function. The law "looks" at the righteousness of Jesus Christ. Yeah, that's the real thing. I recognize this. This is good. The law recognizes it. The righteousness of Christ, even the righteousness of God, which is by faith. What's the next word? Of. Whose faith? Jesus' faith. The faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe, for there is no difference. The righteousness of God by the faith of Jesus. Let's come over to Galatians 2:16. Galatians 2:16, this is giving you a little bit more clarity on this process, knowing that no man is justified by the works of the law.

But by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law. For

by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified. So we believe in Jesus, that His faith, the faith of Jesus, His righteousness is what saves us. The faith of Jesus. So it is not technically righteousness by faith, it is righteousness by faith of Jesus. You see the difference? I have confidence in who Jesus is. All I have to do is believe who Jesus is, the Son of God. In believing on the name of the only begotten Son of God, I receive His faith. The faith of Jesus. Righteousness by faith of Jesus. The faith of Jesus. Yes. And as Jesus put it, repent and believe the gospel. Do you know that you cannot believe the gospel unless you repent? This is the great thing. It's for us to have to acknowledge that we're not seeking out to God that, there's nothing good within us.

We're only saved by the goodness of God. It is the goodness of God that leads us to repentance. And this is why the way is straight and narrow, and few there be that find it because for the human soul to acknowledge their sinfulness and their weakness is a hard thing to do. It's all right to do when you're a young person, and you've been out in the world and you've been swinging and drinking, and doing all the things in the world. And then you can humble yourself and acknowledge, and then give yourself to the Lord. And after two or three years of reading your Bible and attending church, then you can dust all that stuff off and I'm doing pretty good. You can leave all that confession stuff behind. And in order to keep yourself diverted from the ongoing sinfulness that you have, you can set up your own standard and compare other people by that standard. Anyone? No, don't raise your hand.

We come to Luke 18:9. This is the parable for Seventh Day Adventists. Us. He spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous and despised others. We are not Babylon. We are God's chosen. Called out in the Millerite movement, set on a solid rock. We are God's chosen people. We have the prophecies, we have the health message. We have it. Those that trusted in themselves that they were righteous and despised the daughters of Babylon. Two men went up to the temple to pray, the one a Pharisee, the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God I thank thee that I am not as other men; extortionist, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week. I give tithes of all that I possess. And the publican standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast saying, "God be merciful to me, a sinner."

I tell you this, I tell you this man went down to his house justified rather than the other, for everyone that exalts himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted. And I want to read to you from Christ's

Object Lessons, page 152. A little bit of commentary on this, for us to work with. Christ's Object Lessons. *The Pharisee and the publican represent two great classes, into which those who come to worship God are divided. How many classes? Two. All those who come to worship God are in these two classes. Their first two representatives are found in the first two children that were born into the world. Cain thought himself righteous. Isn't that interesting? Have you ever thought of Cain as being a Pharisee? I didn't really think of him as a Pharisee, but this is what it says. He thought he was righteous. He made no confession of sin, and acknowledged no need of mercy. But Abel came with the blood that pointed to the Lamb of God. He came as a sinner, confessing himself lost. Abel confessed himself lost. His only hope was the unmerited love of God. The Lord had respect to his offering, but to Cain and his offering, he had no respect. The sense of need, the recognition of our poverty and sin is the very first condition of acceptance with God. And this is why straight is the gate and narrow is the way, and few there be that find it. You must confess yourself lost. Confess yourself helpless, but throw yourself upon the mercy of God. Where sin abounds, grace does much more abound. This is the science of salvation.*

So we see that in Abel offering his lamb, he's offering his lamb and he's not going, "Cain, you see, I'm offering the lamb. You're not offering the lamb. I'm doing what God told us to do. You're not doing what God told us to do, I'm better than you." He's not doing that.

What is he doing? Confessing himself lost. That's what he is doing. Lord, help me. I need your grace. I mean doesn't that get tired after a few years? This constant groveling around? Is that what he's doing? Obviously, after he has confessed himself lost and asked God to give him grace, he comes into newness of life, doesn't he? The assurance of salvation comes into him, there is the joy of salvation. There is the freedom and the joy that comes with that, but it is a constant process. It says in the book Great Controversy, the work of sanctification is progressive. The closer we come to Christ, the more sinful we appear in our own eyes. Really? I mean, wow. But the more sinful you appear in your own eyes, the more dependent you can become upon Christ. This is the paradox. This is what it's all about. And the prayer life becomes more natural, because the dependence becomes more real.

When you feel your lostness, your prayers are more earnest. Not manufactured, not trying to... I remember as a young man thinking Jesus prayed all night. Okay, I'm going to pray all night. Go to two o'clock in the morning, I'm so tired need to go to sleep. But I said I'd do it all night. Out of context, isn't it? To do it in that way. Two classes of people, you have to choose

either you're the publican or the Pharisee. You're righteous by your works or by the faith of Jesus. Trusting in the merits of God's grace. I would like to come over to ... Well, before that I want to share just a little bit of my own experience. Having been raised, having the great, great privilege of being raised in an Adventist home and to sit at the feet of those who preached the third angel's message as we had understood it in the 1970s. To read Arthur Maxwell's Bible story, and to Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Well, I tried.

It was hard, all the things that I couldn't do, but I wanted to do. All of those lovely gluten steaks that messed up my digestive system. But it was meant well, to get me off the meat foods and all those things. But my experience was such that when I was 12 years of age, in 1979 before 1980. Yes, before 1980. I went forth in baptism, I was asked by my pastor if I'd like to do baptismal studies to prepare for baptism. I said, "Yeah, that sounds good." And so I did the baptismal studies, and I prepared for baptism in what I would call a process of all that the Lord had said I will do. My baptism at 12 years of age was I promise God. How could I find myself in such a state while at 12 years of age? My capacity to comprehend my own sinfulness was rather small, particularly in the environment that I had grown up in.

A sheltered environment growing up in the idyllic Yarra Valley, outside of Melbourne in an Adventist outpost where there was a publishing house, a school, a lifestyle center and a hospital in this idyllic beautiful little valley where this beautiful river was flowing out of the mountains.

My first memories of life come from that valley. Being born into the heart of the blueprint of Adventism. I was dedicated in the church there in Warburton, and that's why that place is such a special place to me. I always love to go back there. And this year, I had the privilege. I had the great privilege to baptize three people in that beautiful Yarra River, right around the corner from I think it was some American missionary had planted all these redwoods. [inaudible] in the banks and they're growing tall. And I used to climb those as a child when I used to go to school there. And I had the privilege to baptize these beautiful people right behind the science publishing house, which is still operating there today. The school no longer operates. The hospital no longer operates.

The Sanitarium Health Food Company no longer operates there. All closed down. Just empty buildings of a bygone era. What happened? We gave up the blueprint, didn't we? We tried to compete with mainstream medicine. This is quite a bit of a side note, but my wife actually was the head of the

hydrotherapy department in the Sydney Adventist Hospital. Hydrotherapy, back in the '90s they still did hydrotherapy. But because they could not claim the hydrotherapy treatments on the health funds, they shut it down. So my wife was the last head of the hydrotherapy department in the Sydney Adventist Hospital. Is that something we should cheer about? Not really. That's what our sanitariums were about. Using simple remedies, to heal people. Anyway. So having grown up in this environment at 12 years of age, I promised God and I meant it. I really did mean it. I wanted to do the right thing by my parents, by God. And I wanted to serve Him.

And some of you have heard me say this before, but my beautiful experience with God after I was baptized lasted about three hours. Because just around the time the sun was setting, my father came out and said, "Adrian, go and wash the dishes. Come on." "Why? I mean I did it last night. Why can't my sister do it? Why do I have to do it?" I promised God. Okay. It was so hard. I wanted to do the right thing, but I found Romans 7. The things that I wanted to do, I couldn't do. And the things that I didn't want to do, I kept doing. Wretched man that I am. But rather than coming to the next part of Romans 8, as a young person I slowly began to lose my interest in spiritual things. Picking up the Bible was simply a reminder of my sinfulness. I didn't want to be reminded of my sinfulness, so I began to watch other things like movies, and play games and entertain myself. Play sports, do whatever.

I still would go to church, sit at the back of the church and endure the torture waiting for 12 o'clock. At 16, and 17 years of age, because I had this fear. I had this fear. If there's one thing about being an Adventist, you can't give up the Sabbath. I came from a community, you have to understand the community I came from where I was in grade two. And one of the children went down to the local store, and he bought a can of Coca Cola. "Could you believe that? We're all in shock. Wow, that's sinful." That's the community I grew up in. Ring a bell with anyone? Now I don't recommend you drinking Coca Cola. That's bad stuff, but it's the whole context in which this is being understood. How do we have righteousness? Righteousness by avoiding Coca Cola. "I thank you, God, I'm not like other men. I do not drink Coca Cola." You see, this is the environment that I grew up in. My parents were not particularly devout in their faith, which as I look back was a great blessing.

Growing up in the environment that I was growing up in, we had only a few Spirit of Prophecy books. We had Patriarchs and Prophets, we had Desire of Ages, Great Controversy, Steps to Christ. Maybe a few others, but they were never really presented to us in our home. So that I remember at the age of 14

or 15, this guy kept on talking about this book called The Spirit of Prophecy. And he's quoting from this part and this part of the it. "That must be a huge book." I thought. I didn't know there was several books, hadn't worked that out at 14 or 15 years of age. But thankfully, I did not have the Spirit of Prophecy pressed on me like many of my fellows had it pressed on them. So that when we had the eruption at Glacier view in 1980, a lot of my friends just marched out of the Adventist message. Threw out the Spirit of Prophecy, sold them, burned them. But because I didn't have the Spirit of Prophecy bearing down on me, my first encounter with the Spirit of Prophecy was when I was 17 years of age.

After five years of "I promise God," and just totally giving up on trying to be a good person, I couldn't do it anymore. That my life as I began to drift into the movies and the music, and began to listen to heavier and heavy music. I knew that I was drifting away from my moorings, and I no longer could contain the sinfulness that I was feeding myself with. The seeds of sinfulness began to manifest themselves. And this is where I begin the book Identity Wars in a confrontation with my mother. When my mother came into my room and said, "Son, your room is a mess. Please clean it up." And all of the music that I had been listening to, Queen, AC/DC, all these things began to erupt in my soul. Who are you to tell me what to do? I turned and I looked at my mother, and I scowled at her. I said, "Leave me alone. This is my place." My place?

Who's paying the electricity, who's paying the rent? But no, we own that house. Who bought the house? Was it you? No. *My place*. Distorted perspective. God in His great wisdom was able to help my mother to restrain herself. We would sometimes get into a banter, and back and forth. You know that slanging, some of you. Conflict, but this time she didn't because what I said was so offensive that she simply put down her head, and she shut the door. And then I felt really bad. I hurt my mother. And I knew I hurt my mother. And that made me feel awful. And the Spirit of God spoke to me. He said, "Adrian, is this the kind of person you would like to be? Would you like to change? Do you want something better?" Jesus speaks so gently to the human soul, doesn't he? He didn't condemn me. He didn't say, "You wretched sinner, how dare you speak to your mother like that?" I said that to myself, but he didn't say that to me.

He whispered to me. Is this the life that you want to live? Would you like to go on a different path? Guilt pressed itself upon my soul. The law was my schoolmaster to bring me to Christ, because I knew the commandment which said honor your father and your mother. And I had not honored my mother.

The commandment brought that conviction upon me, and it drove me to Christ. So I went back to my mother and I apologized. And I said to her, "Mum, I'm tired of the hypocrisy. I want to be a Christian." And she handed me the book Steps to Christ. Bless you, mum. She handed me the book Steps to Christ. Now I'd been exposed to the book Steps to Christ when I was 14, but I was rich and increased with goods and didn't have need of anything in that particular time. And as I'm looking at the book, back to the TV, back to sleep. But by the time I was 17 years of age, something had changed.

I couldn't stand the hypocrisy in myself. When you talk with your friends and you're paying out on somebody, "the guy is a jerk." All the time, the Spirit of God is like, "Is that the way you should be talking about people? Is that what Jesus would do?" This twinge of guilt, and you're trying to push it away, push it away. And so I took the book from my mother and the guilt, the guilt that I had done, I didn't want to do these things anymore. I was desperate. I don't want to talk to my mother like this. So I began to read the book. Chapter one, beautiful. This is my first encounter with the Spirit of Prophecy. Hallelujah. A desperate soul thirsty and hungering for truth, opening those pages filled with the love of God. And I read it, page 13 Steps to Christ, behold Him in the wilderness. Behold Him in the garden. I had heard the story. I'd heard many preachers present that story to me. I had read.

As one of my Pathfinder honours, I had to read the Gospels. So I read through Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, I got the badge of honour. So I had read, I had understood the story. But now that story comes to life, the Spirit of God speaks to me through the story. And as it were, I am standing looking at the Son of God and He is sweating drops of blood. And I have this realization that the weight upon his shoulders is somehow connected to me. That I am partly responsible for the suffering that he's experiencing. Then the word said, "Behold him on the cross." And my mind immediately changes, and I see Christ on the cross. Now in every other avenue of my life where I had caused other people difficulty, I always saw the look of frustration. Again, "like really? Did you have to?" So I'm beholding Jesus on the cross.

And the Spirit illumines my mind as I'm looking upon the cross, and I look into the face of Jesus. And what I saw there changed my life forever. I saw love. I saw this beautiful face that just looked at me with love. No condemnation. No hatred, no irritation. Only love. All this I did for love of you, Adrian. Beautiful, because I looked at that face illumined by the Spirit. I was standing before the cross. And as I understood then I was looking at the cross of 2000 years ago, but no, the reality is daily Christ suffers the agonies of crucifixion. The cross

that he was upon was the cross that I had nailed him to, by my rejection of His commandments and his statutes. And to walk and to choose to walk in my own way, and to do my own desires and my own inclinations. And to hell with everybody else, because I'm going to do what I want to do.

This is what was nailing Him to the cross, and there was no condemnation. There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, and there beaming from His face this love and acceptance which totally blew my mind. How can you forgive me? I was lost, a sinner without hope in the world. And in the eyes of Jesus, I could see acceptance and love and that pierced my soul. And instantly, instantly in my spirit, I took hold of him and I hung on to him. And I said, "Lord Jesus, please come into my life. Please help me. I'm a hopeless Christian. I've completely failed. I embarrass my parents, I watch evil things. I say evil things." And at that moment, I could feel this peace. This peace that came over me. A peace, because Adrian believed God and it was counted on to him for righteousness. I believed that I was forgiven.

Just had a big memory. Not a song I recommend. But at the time in the 1980s, it was a musician by the name of David Meece, and he sang the song Forgiven, no matter what you've done. I played it over and over. Forgiven. Yes, yes. Not by works, not by any good thing that I had done, but by the blood of Jesus Christ. He was suffering in my place. I had the assurance of the forgiveness of my sins. I knew that I had eternal life. And instantly as that peace came over me, my whole life changed. The things that I once loved, I now hated. For before I used curse words all the time. I loved to watch movies, and see violence and immorality. These things I enjoyed, and now this new Spirit had come into my life, I could not stand them. When I would hear the name of Jesus taken in vain, it was like an arrow that pierced me. I couldn't bear it. I couldn't listen to it.

I couldn't listen to the music that I once listened to. It grated on me. It was repulsive. It was repugnant to me. So great was the change in my life. And some of you have heard this, but I always like to tell the story because it is evidence to me of the work of grace in the human soul. After I had this tremendous experience and I began to devour the Bible, I couldn't get enough. And suddenly, whereas before I could read whole chapters of the Bible, it felt boring. Now I read two verses, and my brain would be blown completely. Wow, this is incredible. The Spirit of Jesus renovating, reworking, remodeling, rechanging. He that is in Christ is a new creature. Old things are passed away, all things have become new. Remember the story when finally I had to overcome the disease of Saturday night fever. My friends ring me up and say,

"We're going out to see the latest James Bond movie. Are you going to come?"

"Oh, no, no, no. I'm not, no, no, no."

What? You're not coming? We're coming to pick you up. All these lovely Seventh-day Adventist young people coming to pick me up to take me to see latest James Bond movie. Come on! I said, "No, I don't want to go." "Are you sick? What's wrong with you? Come on. Get in the car." I didn't want to tell them I was reading the book of Philippians. I didn't want to stop. Go see some dumb movie, there are people killing each other. And they're like, "Come on." They're really putting a pressure on. I said, "Look, I want to just read my Bible, okay." They left. Repellent. Something had changed. My friends at school before, I loved to play jokes on people and be the center of laughter and merriment. And one of my friends came to me and he said, "Adrian, how do you do this? You are playing. I know you you're playing the role of a religious nutter. How can you do this? You've been doing it for days now, and everyone is convinced. You're so funny, how are you doing this?"

And I just said to him, "It's no joke." It was like I punched him in the face. He's like, "Whoa, I got to go." Too bright. This is no joke. Part of the conviction of sin. My mother, thank God for my mother. She worked in the background to get me into the church, into the school choir. And because I had a bass voice, I was selected to sing bass in the male quartet of that group. And we would go and we would sing in churches, and sing Just A Little Talk With Jesus. And all those other beautiful quartet hymns and songs, and this is before I'm converted. I'm going back before I was converted, and we're at the back of the church and I can't quite get my part right. And I'm cursing and I'm swearing, and I can't get my part right. Then we'd get up and we'd sing just a little talk with Jesus makes it right. And after I finished singing, I'm like, "I can't stand myself. This is crazy."

I'm singing about Jesus up the front and I'm like, "Look at yourself, Adrian. That's crazy. What are you doing?" I couldn't take it anymore. God allowed sin to be magnified in my life to bring me to repentance. And so when our quartet changed and we sang in front of the heritage singers. Yeah. That was cool. And then we made an album. That was even cooler. But the one had been the craziest in the group suddenly he's putting his hand up and saying, "I'm not going to sing music with drums anymore. No." What? Complete change. I don't like it, I couldn't. For six months of my life I didn't listen to music. I had to hit the reset, because I didn't know what was good and what was bad. I just loved the rhythm. I remember I spoke to one man when we were going door to door

once and I spoke to a man. He says my religion is rhythm. Well, yeah I remember that.

I think today they call it oonch, oonch, oonch. Is that a familiar term to you? You got to know the next generation. The next generation. I have a friend whose son, his number plate is oonch. It's just the driving, all that kind of stuff. So rhythm, it's the religion. But when I gave my heart to Christ, and I sat down and I'd educated myself on movies and music, and now I'm going to sit down and read the Bible. Okay, let's read the Bible. He that being often reprov'd hardeneth his neck shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy. I got to do something. This is so boring. It's hard to change your tastes, to sit and read the Scriptures when you've been filling your eyes and your senses with tantalizing things that please the flesh. And then you have to read the Bible. Now in order to try and walk this new line between my new life and my old life, I got rid of most of all of my worldly music. Now that was quite a battle actually. That was quite a battle to get rid of that.

But thank God for Christian rock. Do you remember Petra? God Gave Rock 'N' Roll to You, I can still hear it. Oh, God forgive me. God Gave Rock 'N' Roll to You. So I'm trying to read the Bible. I'm trying to, and I can hear this tune. And the Pied Piper and I'm going over to ... we only had tape decks in those days. And I go to press the button on the tape deck to listen to that piece of music, and I stopped and I heard a voice. "Adrian, that music is completely incompatible with this, my Word." Don't tell me that now. Not now. Okay, all right. All right. Come back. Sit down. Okay, we're going to read the Bible. Read another verse. Lord, this is hard. Just a little bit. Okay, all right. All right. Come on. We'd go back and forth, back and forth, back, forth. And inside my head its going, "Why is this such a big deal? It's just a piece of music. I mean who really cares? It's not really a big deal, is it?"

And I'm pleading with God, "Please just let me listen to this music. Just once." I'm not taking control. I'm just telling you, Adrian, this is completely incompatible with my Word. And if you love me and you want the truth, then you're going to have to leave that and study this. So finally, I knelt down. I said, "Lord, I can't do it. I love that music. I can't give it up. You're going to have to help me." But I still like that music, and I got down on my knees and I prayed. I said, "Lord, please help me. Please help me. I want to do what's right. I choose to do what's right. I believe that you will help me." And it was like at that moment I could hear the chains came off. And I stood up and I went over and I grabbed that tape and I smashed it on the ground. Whoa, freedom. So all the tape, all gone. Everything went through smashed, everything destroyed. Gone.

I'm not going to listen to music. I'm just going to leave everything till I can ... I don't know what's good and I don't know what's bad. You'll have to teach me slowly. And slowly we begin to write our own music. I thank the Lord for how he was being so patient with me. So patient. I remember another time when this is just before my conversion as well, I loved to play basketball. To play and, do I see a hand up there? And we're playing and we're just behind this other team. It's getting very close in the game. And at the critical moment, this guy went to make this lay up. Just got my hand in there without touching him flicked it out, beautiful, foul. No, injustice. I didn't touch him. I went over to that referee one of my school teachers. I went right up to his face, and then I just cranked up the volume. And I told him what I thought of his refereeing.

I lost perspective of where I was, because of the injustice. Because the injustice of what he did demanded atonement. And so he blew the whistle again and said, "Adrian, you're not only removed from this game, you are banned from the competition." And I'm walking off the court, and I heard a voice. "Are you okay, Adrian? Are you all right? Is this the life you want to live? Is there possibly another path?" Just really gentle, really soft. I'm like, "Man, why did I do that? What am I going to tell my dad?" Just chewed out one of the teachers. It was these events that led me and of course, rather than go to God, I went back to my music to try and get some comfort. And that drove me deeper. And that's when I had that conflict with my mother. The rest is history. How God reaches out to our hearts and our souls, and speaks to us and leads us. There is only two groups of people.

I would like to say that I stayed in that place. I, after that experience, I moved to a church where there were people who wanted to study the Bible. The previous church I'd been to would had been a big church, a liberal church where they had music. It was almost what I enjoyed. And all the kids went there, it was a big social scene. But they didn't really study the Bible. So I went to another church where they studied the Bible. I used to get to the church at 8:30 in the morning, I couldn't wait. I couldn't wait to get to church. And I sat there in my car, and I prayed and I read my Bible and I waited for an hour for the people to come. And we stayed there. Sabbath School, church, we'd have lunch together then we go out door knocking and handing out material, and singing to people. Then we would have dinner together. And then we would go into the city, and we would hand out material to people in the city. And then I'll get home at 11 o'clock.

That was my Sabbath week after week, after week, after week. Thank God for the Seventh-day Adventist Church. That's where I began my journey as a young

Christian, in that kind of an environment. Learning to love the word. But as I started to love the Word, as I started to get into it and one of my friends had said to me, he says "Adrian, I'm memorizing scripture." Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to thy Word. Hide His Word in the heart. So he said to me, I'm memorizing the Book of Romans. What? I looked it up. Dude, that's 435 verses. You're memorizing the whole book of Romans? Yeah. You want to join me? Okay. And so we developed this whole system. We would memorize 10 verses a day. It's based on the bench press idea. Three times, I'd go over the 10 verses three times, three sets of 10. I got through the whole book of Romans, memorized the whole book of Romans.

But the problem with doing things like that is that knowledge puffs up, because there were moments where I would listen to people speak. And then I'd go, watch this. I'd just start quoting, quote, quote, quote, quote, quote. I wish I could quote scripture like that. Yeah, you watch this. You haven't seen nothing yet. And suddenly, I'm being caught. I'm being caught, and I'm going from the helpless and lost and grateful and thankful column to the I thank you, God, I'm not like other men. And all those types of things. And now my condition was worse than it was before, because before I knew I was lost. Now I was lost, and I didn't know it. How great is that darkness? I could quote scripture. I could preach. I could teach. Dangerous. I was more lost than I was before. I was praying. I was faithful. I was a vegan. I was militant in what I was doing. Determined but cheese police. What's this in the fridge? Yeah. Stuff like that.

And that's when my dad began to give me a little bit of dose of reality. So anyway, the Lord once again, the more I go down that line I began to feel that disconnection of closeness. And this is the thing is that my conversion experience, I had thrown myself on to Christ. I had had an experience where that if I would not think about him for two or three hours, I felt that I was missing something. Lord, I've been thinking about other things other than you. First love, joy, freedom. I just had to read the Bible, I had to memorize it. As I was driving my car, I had it in my steering wheel. Forget about mobile phones. I was doing that in the '80s. I was texting with my Bible. But it slowly began to fade. And I became more and more critical of other people who were not keeping up to the standard.

I began to erect the false standard of righteousness, in which I didn't have to be confronted with my own sinfulness anymore. I could just focus on other people's sinfulness and condemn them. And so we find in Romans 5:16. And not as it was by one that sinned. Who was the one that sinned? Adam. So is

the gift, for the judgment was by one to condemnation. Who was that one? Where did judgment come from? Adam. Judgment to condemnation comes from Adam. Just keep that in mind for the next presentation. Judgment came by one man, Adam. But the free gift is of many offenses onto justification. For if by one man's offense death reigned by one. Why does death reign? Because Adam judged and condemned. And in his condemnation, those who he condemns are worthy of death. And here we are, everyone condemning everybody else, considering that person worthy of death but we do not have to.

We do not have to today put people to death. How we put people to death today is you know what? I don't want to ever see you again. That's how you put people to death, isn't it? You never want to see them again. Stay out of my life. Get away from me. Or we just say, "I'm tired of this person. Go somewhere else." Death. Verse 18, therefore as by the offense of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation. How did judgment come upon all men to condemnation? Through who? Adam. Adam was the one that brought judgment to condemnation. This is really important for Daniel 7. Through one man, Adam, the judgment came to condemnation. The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree and I did eat. If anyone is going to die, it's going to be you and her, not me. That's where judgment to condemnation came from. Came from Adam, and we are the sons and daughters of Adam.

We have received this spirit of condemnation, the spirit of judgment to condemnation. Verse 19, for as by one man's disobedience, many were made sinners. So by the obedience of one, shall many be made righteous. The obedience of how many? One, one. And here we have more over the law entered. That word entered is privately. It enters into your conscience. It is a spiritual thing. Because when it says the law of entered, we must remember Romans 7:14, for the law is spiritual. And if the law is spiritual, it must enter the mind. It must enter the spirit of the person. Moreover, the law into the mind that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound. And this is what the sealing is going to be all about. This process. If you in your process of your Christian life, when you are confronted with your sinfulness, what are you going to do?

Are you going to blame somebody else, or you're going to say Lord, have mercy on me a sinner? More and more I see this playing out on a daily basis. Are you going to blame someone else? Well, if he hadn't had done this then I wouldn't have done that. It's not my fault. I'm trying to push away the conviction. Why am I always the one that has to say sorry? When we can face our sinfulness

and acknowledge our sin, and still believe in the forgiveness of God, then we can be sealed. When you are faced with all of the sins and you want to think about what we studied last night, the thoughts of the vibrations of your mind and the actions that go with those vibrations that have gone out, how much of your thoughts and actions have affected the universe, the earth around you? How much has your life, how many other people have been led into sin and to their death because of the things that you have done?

When we see Jesus, when we are preparing, when we are in the time of Jacob's trouble, all of our sins will be brought to our remembrance. All of our sins, everything that we have done will come back to us. And if we have a wrong understanding of the character of God, we will think that Christ is our enemy seeking to destroy us because of our sinfulness. But the only reason that Christ brings to our remembrance all of our sins, is that he wants to know if we believe that he is freely willing to forgive all of those sins. And when you can look all of your sins in the face, all of them with all their weight pressing down upon you. When you can face all of those sins and say, "Lord, I believe that you forgive me, despite all of these things." It's not going to be a blind experience. You're going to sweat, your face is going to become pale. You are going to wrestle, because your own natural justice system will say crucify him, of yourself.

You will want to call for the rocks in the mountains to fall upon you, but those who have found the righteousness of God or the faith of Jesus Christ, that faith of Jesus that could say, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do. Into my hands I commit my spirit." Those words, into thy hands I commit my spirit, are the words that God's people who are sealed will say when they are faced with all of their sins. Into thy hands I commit my spirit, because I know you, my God. I know you are merciful. I know you will forgive me. I know it by the faith of Jesus Christ. And once you've gone through that process and you have faced all of your sins, and you have looked death in the face and you have said, "Lord, I believe that you forgive me," then Satan can do no more to you. No more. Hallelujah. That's the process of righteousness by faith.

And there are many more things for us to learn on this journey, but I pray, I pray that the things that we have shared tonight, whenever I find the way hard I remember that night when I looked into the face of Jesus. And I saw that love, that love that was so accepting. And I always find comfort in that place that happened to me so many years ago. It is as if it happened yesterday. I never, never will forget that day when I looked upon the face of the Son of God and I believed that I received the forgiveness of my sins. It is the foundation upon

which I have staked my eternal life. I'm going to pray. I feel the spirit of the Lord in this place, and so I encourage you to absorb as much of it as you can. Take a moment to do a check on your soul, and to spend time with God. And to thank Him for the gift of Jesus. Shall we pray?

Father in heaven, what a joy it is to call you Father. Thank you for sending forth the Spirit of your son into our hearts that we may cry Abba Father. Words can never express the thankfulness that I feel for the forgiveness of my sins through your mercy and your grace. I pray for all of my brothers and sisters that they too will make their calling and election sure, that they will stand with me on the sea of glass. And we will sing Redeemed by the blood of the Lamb. Thank you for your patience and your forbearance. Thank you for putting up with all the garbage of my life. And Lord, I confess myself as completely lost without you. And I thank you for the gift of your spirit. I thank you for the assurance of the forgiveness of my sins. And I pray that very soon, we will enter into the heavenly city to no longer be tempted with sin.

No longer will our heart stray from you. No longer will we have to wrestle with the doubts that Satan seeks to put upon us now. But we thank you for the faith of Jesus, who conquers all that we may have the righteousness of God by the faith of Jesus Christ. And I thank you, Father in Jesus' wonderful name. Amen.