

GRACE AND PEACE COMMUNITY CHURCH

Grace and Peace Home Worship Guide for September 20, 2020

Opening Prayer

Call to Worship

Psalm 52:6-9

Song¹

“Lord I Need You”

Scripture

John 9:35-41

Sermon²

“Coming To Faith & Evangelism”
Pastor Jonathan

Prayer

Giving³

Song

“His Mercy Is More”

Benediction

Romans 15:13

¹ Lyrics are provided in this PDF.

² A full transcript of the sermon is provided in this PDF.

³ You can give online through our website, our church app, or by mail.

Lord I Need You

Lord I come, I confess
Bowling here I find my rest
And without You I fall apart
You're the one that guides my heart

CHORUS:

Lord I need You, oh I need You
Every hour I need You
My one defense, my righteousness
Oh God, how I need You

Where sin runs deep Your grace is more
Where grace is found is where You are
And where You are, Lord I am free
Holiness is Christ in me

CHORUS

So teach my song to rise to You
When temptation comes my way
And when I cannot stand I'll fall on You
Jesus You're my hope and stay
And when I cannot stand I'll fall on You
Jesus You're my hope and stay

CHORUS 2x

You're my one defense, my righteousness
Oh God how I need You

His Mercy Is More

What love could remember no wrongs we have done
Omniscient, all knowing, He counts not their sum
Thrown into a sea without bottom or shore
Our sins they are many, His mercy is more

CHORUS:

Praise the Lord, His mercy is more
Stronger than darkness, new every morn
Our sins they are many, His mercy is more

What patience would wait as we constantly roam
What Father, so tender, is calling us home
He welcomes the weakest, the vilest, the poor
Our sins they are many, His mercy is more

CHORUS

What riches of kindness He lavished on us
His blood was the payment, His life was the cost
We stood 'neath a debt we could never afford
Our sins they are many, His mercy is more

CHORUS 2x

Stronger than darkness, new every morn
Our sins they are many, His mercy is more

GRACE AND PEACE

COMMUNITY CHURCH

September 20, 2020

“Coming To Faith & Evangelism”

Pastor Jonathan Olsen

Hi everybody. It's Pastor Jonathan here, and it's been so great to sing with you and pray with you today. I'm so grateful we're all together in this worship service. Some of you will know that next week we will be livestreaming our service on Sunday at 9:00 AM. We will also record it so if you need to participate at a later time, you can do so. And then God-willing, two weeks from now we will be moving from exclusively having electronic worship services, and we will go to livestreaming, recording, and in-person worship services again, so be praying for us.

But for now, today we're going to continue to study Jesus and his salvation as it comes to us from the Gospel, the letter of John. And we'll be studying John Chapter 9, the big numbers in the Bible we refer to his chapters, verses 35 through 41. We refer to the smaller numbers in the Bible as verses. John, chapter 9, verses 35 through 41. That will be on the screen for you, as will be a response after I read God's Word. John, chapter 9, verses 35 through 41. Hear now the living Word of the living God:

Jesus heard that they had cast him out, and having found him he said, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?” He answered, “And who is he, sir, that I may believe in him?” Jesus said to him, “You have seen him, and it is he who is speaking to you.” He said, “Lord, I believe,” and he worshipped him. Jesus said, “For judgment I came into this world, that those who do not see may see, and those who see may become blind.” Some of the Pharisees near him heard these things and said to him, “Are we also blind?” Jesus said to them, “If you were blind, you would have no guilt, but now that you say, ‘We see,’ your guilt remains.”

The grass withers, the flower fades, but the Word of our God will stand forever.

Praise God from whom all blessings flow. Amen.

Well, coming to faith and evangelism. Those are definitely churchy words. It's churchy language, but in layman's terms "coming to faith" means "to trust in Jesus and what he has done for one's personal salvation with God," and "evangelism" is simply "the sharing of the good news of Jesus, salvation for people." There is no coming to faith in Jesus unless his good news is first shared, unless someone is evangelized. Well today we see Jesus evangelizing, sharing the good news of his salvation and one coming to faith in him.

And by way of outline today, we see in verses 35 and 36, **Coming to Faith: Pre-Evangelism, Coming to Faith: Pre-Evangelism**, that's verses 35 and 36. And then in verses 37 and 38 we see **Coming to Faith: Proper Evangelism. Coming to Faith: Pre-Evangelism, Coming to Faith: Proper Evangelism**, and then lastly in verses 39 through 41, **Coming to Faith: Problematic Evangelism. Coming to Faith: Pre-Evangelism, Coming to Faith: Proper Evangelism**, and **Coming to Faith**, what I've called, **Problematic Evangelism**.

Now we studied two weeks ago about a man who was born blind, but who had been healed by the mighty power of Jesus. He was given sight, healed of his blindness. But sadly this man's neighbors and even his pastors, the religious leaders of his day, the Pharisees, and even his own parents, did not celebrate this miraculous grace from Jesus. He was unjustly questioned. He was unjustly isolated and hurt. And he was even cast out of his religious community as we studied last week. And yet today we see Jesus coming to him physically, and we see this man spiritually coming to faith in Jesus Christ

Coming to Faith: Pre-Evangelism, verses 35 and 36:

Jesus heard that they had cast him out, and having found him he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" He answered, "And who is he, sir, that I may believe in him?"

Now after Jesus heard that the man was cast out of the synagogue declared an unbeliever and infidel, now a rejected outcast by all of the Jews, Jesus found him. He initiated the relationship once again with this man. This man didn't cry out for Jesus. He didn't plead for help after he had been cast out of the synagogue, and yet Jesus showed up at the exact moment when this man needed him most. Jesus knows exactly *when* and *how* to show up in the sufferings of his people. As we feel by ourselves, just like this man, know that if you know Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and Savior, even when you feel all alone, by yourself, you're never alone. He is always with you

And so it's good for us to ask, "When, why do you feel alone, as if no one else is there? Isolated, abandoned by other people who should love you? Rejected by those who should hold on to you?"

Jesus is present with you, and he is present *for* you if you are his. This is true because of the pain and the sin that others might do against you, the pain that others cause you because of their sin against you. But listen, it is also true that Jesus is with you, and he is for you even with the sin and the hurt that you exercise, execute, and cause with others. Jesus is with his people, especially when they are suffering.

Now it's interesting, if you were to go back to verses 1 through 7, you see the miracle. After the man washes his face, he returns, but we never see him communicating with Jesus. That doesn't pick up until verse 35, right here today. So it's possible, maybe likely, that the man had actually never seen Jesus' face until right now. It's certainly possible he would recognize his voice, as Jesus seemingly says here out of nowhere, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" Now the Son of Man is a reference to the first part of the Bible, the Old Testament, the book of Daniel, chapter 7, when the Redeemer, the Messiah, the Christ, the Anointed One from God, would come and reveal God and reveal his salvation. That's who the Son of Man was.

But you know, Jesus asking, "Do you believe in the Son of Man," it's kind of a contextless question. There's no context. Sometimes I'll get an email or a text without any context, without any context whatsoever, just, "My problem is..." or "Do you think I ought to..." without any context at all. They just jump right in and that's OK to not have any context, although context would be nice sometimes, but that's this man's experience here. There's no context whatsoever. Out of nowhere, Jesus shows up and says, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?"

It's a contextless question, but it's far from a pointless one. Jesus' pre-evangelism tactic here was to deliberately ask a contextless question of this man. For us a contextless question that we might ask others, we may be hanging out with some friends or something, and we might seemingly out of nowhere ask, "Hey, what do you think will happen when you die? Sadly, we're all going to die. What do you think will happen?" Or, "What do you think you need in order to gain heaven, to get into heaven?" Contextless questions but far from pointless ones.

You know, this man had already testified, as we studied, that Jesus was a prophet, but he doesn't equate that or connect that to Jesus also being the Son of Man, the anticipated Son of Man from the Old Testament. So his reply to Jesus is, "Who is he, sir? Who is this Son of Man, sir?" Literally, "sir" means "Lord or master or teacher." "I will listen to you. Who is he so that I can believe in him?" He's *willing* to believe in the Son of Man, but he needs to be told who he is. "In whom is it that I must believe? Who is this Son of Man?"

John, chapter 9 is very similar to Acts, chapter 8, where a eunuch was in his chariot reading in the Old Testament, the book of Isaiah. And then we read

And the Spirit said to Phillip, [an early church leader] "Go over and join this chariot." So Phillip ran to him and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet, and asked, "Do you understand what you are reading?" He said, "How can I, unless someone guides me?" He invited Phillip to come up and sit with him. And the eunuch said to Phillip, "About whom, I ask you, does the prophet say this? About himself or about someone else?"

The eunuch needed to be told who it is, who is this, that I'm reading about. So he asked, just like the man here in John, chapter 9, "Who is it?" You know, there are people in our lives, maybe many more than we realize, people in our lives who may be in the same place, ready to believe, but they need to be told of whom. We never know. People maybe in the exact same place, and the only way to find out if they're ready to believe, is to ask them questions, just like we see Jesus doing here.

Jesus had healed him of his blindness, but that physical healing, that physical blessing, was not enough for him to be saved with God, and our religious experiences and anyone's religious experiences, any tangible blessing, every tangible blessing, our service of God, even our knowledge of the Bible, those things are not enough for us to be *saved* by God, to be *rescued* from our ultimate problem of sin and rebellion with God. Only believing in the Son of Man, only believing in the Redeemer-Savior, only believing in him, is how we can be saved. And so, who is it?

Well, that's what we get to next in **Coming to Faith and Proper Evangelism** in verses 37 and 38:

Jesus said to him, "You have seen him [this is his answer to the question], you have seen him, and it is he who is speaking to you." He [the man] said, "Lord, I believe," and he worshipped him. He worshipped Jesus.

Now, we don't know how much time had elapsed from when he was blind and then healed, until now. We know that he had engaged both his neighbors and the Pharisees and even his parents in the synagogue, and he was cast out. But Jesus' reply is, "You have seen him. "Who is it, that I may believe?" "Well, you've seen him," which would, of course, greatly limit who it could be because he'd only seen X amount of people for X amount of time.

But then Jesus goes on to answer his question even more specifically when he says, "He who is *speaking* to you is the Son of Man. *Me. I. I am the Anointed One. I am the Redeemer. I am the Messiah. I am the Son of Man. I am the One the first part of the Bible, the Jewish Scriptures are all pointing to. You've seen him, and it is me.*" You see, proper evangelism must speak

more of just believing in a higher power or God in general or even just of a savior. It must specifically speak of Jesus as the Christ, as Jesus as the Anointed One, as Jesus as the Redeemer.

In John, chapter 4, similar to John Chapter 9, when Jesus was engaging a woman at a well, he said he was the Christ, he was the son of God, he was the Redeemer, he was the One the Jews and the world had been waiting for, when he said to her, “I who speak to you am he,” referencing the Christ because she had brought up when the Christ comes, and then Jesus says, “I, I who speak to you am he. I am the Christ.” And then going back to Acts, chapter 8 with Phillip and the eunuch who said, “Who is it that the prophet Isaiah is speaking about?”

Then Phillip opened his mouth and beginning with this Scripture [the scripture of Isaiah], he told him [the eunuch] the good news about Jesus.

Phillip told the eunuch of whom Isaiah spoke of. It was Jesus. And then he shared the good news, he shared the gospel, he evangelized him, he told him that Jesus was God, and he'd come here on earth as a as a baby, as a human being, God and man, living life under the law as the Messiah, as the Christ, as the Son of God and the Son of Man, the Redeemer. He came here and lived obediently, according to all of God's ways. And everything that Jesus said and did and didn't say and didn't do, he perfectly kept God's law as a human being, not just to be our model for obedience, although he certainly was our model, but to be our substitute for our disobedience. Because some 30 years or so into Jesus' life he was led to a Roman cross where he was executed. He died. He breathed his last. He breathed his last under the judgment of God. He was *judged* bearing the guilt and shame and sin for all who would believe in him. He came as a substitute, and his sacrifice was acceptable to God because his obedience was perfect before God. He was perfectly obedient. He died as a substitution to offer free forgiveness, to remove guilt and shame and sin off of the souls and out of the account of anyone who will believe in him, and he was buried, Hallelujah, three days later he was raised from the grave. He was raised in victory over sin and death for anyone who will trust in him as the Son of God, the Son of Man, the sufficient Savior, the one and only Redeemer, the Christ, the Messiah, the Anointed One, who's come to rescue every soul who will believe in him, every guilty soul who should bear God's judgement and wear it for all eternity. Jesus did that for *you* if you will trust in him. This is what Phillip spoke of when he talked to the eunuch, and this is what Jesus was explaining to this man when he said, “I am the Son of Man, the Anointed One. I am he whom the entire world has been waiting for, the *only* rescuer there is.”

You know, Jesus had given this, this man the blessing of physical sight, but now he tells the man of whom he must believe in for eternal life. “Me,” Jesus says, “the Son of Man, the awaited Redeemer.” Have you believed in him? He's being offered to you right now, to trust in as your personal Lord and Savior if you have not done so. And if you have, he's being held out for you to re-trust in his miraculous and saving powerful grace.

You know, the man was utterly powerless over his life. All of the blessings that Jesus had poured out upon him were by his grace. And you and I are powerless over our lives as well. Every blessing, every good thing that we have in this life, they're not from luck or from chance or ultimately from, from someone else or even ourselves. They are from the grace of God, whether they are tangible or they are spiritual.

You know one of my personal pre-evangelism and then evangelism tactics is to give a good news response when someone says, "Oh, don't say that. You might curse it." You know, maybe talking about football game. "I think the, the birds, the Eagles are going to win this week and here's why." "No, no, no. Don't say that. You're going to curse it." Well, I like to reply with something like this: "Well, I wish I had that kind of power, but I don't have that kind of power to bring curses upon things." I don't have it. We don't have ultimate power in our lives, but *Jesus* does, which of course, that usually brings about silence or some kind of awkward response, but it's meant to be a pre-evangelism and evangelism tactic, getting to talking about Jesus and his power and his grace in his Salvation.

You know, the man was being evangelized by Jesus, and it was decision time. Will he believe? And it's decision time for you and me as well? Will you believe? He's being held out to you for you to respond to, for you to say yes to. Will he believe? Well the man replies, "Lord, master, I believe that you are the Son of Man. I believe that you are the Redeemer." And what does he do? He then worships Jesus. This has to do with prostrating, bowing down, maybe even with his face on the ground. He finally found what his heart had longed for, even more than the cure for some kind of physical suffering, he'd found the Son of Man, the anticipated Redeemer. He'd found his Savior, and of course, this kind of prostration, this bowing down, this, this worship is a symbol of reverence and submission. "You are my authority." We're not told that he had just a mental agreement with Jesus. No, he had a heart-life commitment, a worship of Jesus.

How is prostration, submission, worship of Jesus, seen in your heart? How is it resident? How is it gripping your heart, your desires, and your, your mind, your thoughts, the way you meditate upon yourself in this life? What about your life in general, and even your body? How is prostration, Jesus' authority, a heart commitment, the worship of him, how is that seen in your life, when much like this man, you're isolated, unjustly treated, rejected, and hurting? It doesn't mean the rejection goes away or the hurt goes away or the isolation goes away but can you still prostrate yourself, worship Jesus in the mundane and the pain in this life? How is faith in Jesus and in his good news, more than just eternal life and forgiveness of sins, praise God it is eternal life of forgiveness of sins, but how is it also manifested in worship through the mundane and pain that you experience in this life?

Well lastly, we see **Coming to Faith and Problematic Evangelism**, in verses 39 through 41:

Jesus said, "For judgment I came into this world, that those who do not see may see, and those who see may become blind." Some of the Pharisees near him heard these things and said to him, "Are we also blind?" Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would have no guilt, but now that you say, 'We see,' your guilt remains."

Now, true evangelism, the sharing of the good news, must include hard and problematic truths for it to be complete and for it to be true. Now Jesus had already said that he had not come into the world to condemn the world. He said that earlier in our studies in the Gospel of John, and he said he didn't come to condemn the world because *the world is condemned already*. We live in condemnation unless we have found life in Jesus. But he has also said that he has come into the world, by the Father, for judgment because he is the Son of Man. He hasn't come to condemn, but he has come to judge. In John, chapter 5:

He [the Father] has given him [Jesus] authority to execute judgment because he is the Son of Man.

He is the Son of Man, the Redeemer, the Savior, the One who purchased, purchases you back to God if you will trust in him. He's the Savior for all who believe, but he's also the judge for all who will not and do not believe. And it's illustrated here with this man and the Pharisees, the religious leaders. He believed. They did not. Jesus has come into the world to those that don't see, those that are spiritually blind might see by his grace, might have spiritual sight, just like the blind man, by *faith* in Jesus Christ, trusting in him and worshiping him. But he's also come into the world that those who see, that is, those who *think* they see, who *think* they are OK, who *think* they understand this life, who are fine with life as is, who think and say even they have no need of Jesus, while he's come that those who "see," those folks, well, that they would become blind, that their blindness would be displayed, that they would remain in their darkness.

Again, in John, chapter 3, as some of us have heard before:

And this is the judgment, the light [Jesus and his good news] has come into the world and people have loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil.

Many of us know people who love the darkness and blindness of their sin instead of the light of the good news of Jesus and his salvation. But the question for us is, we might acknowledge people who love the darkness and their evil deeds, but have they even heard of the light of Jesus? Have you and I even shared it with them, giving them an *opportunity* to see the grace of God in Jesus Christ?

Now, some of the Pharisees were near, and they overheard what Jesus was saying to this blind man. It's very possible these were the ones who, a few weeks ago we studied, "is this man, how can this man heal, if he's a sinner?" The Pharisees were conflicted, they were confused. "How can he do such a great thing if he's a sinner?" Maybe these were, this was, these were, these were, there were those Pharisees. Maybe they followed the man after he had been cast out of the synagogue, and they're kind of eavesdropping and watching Jesus talk to him. And they ask, "Look, are we also blind?" And this is *crazy* because they thought of themselves as the guide to the blind, and it's also daring for them to ask Jesus if they were blind because he was considered a sinner and a false prophet, but it's a good question nonetheless.

It's a good question to ask Jesus. It's a good question to ask others. It's the ultimate question we should be asking: "Am I spiritually blind?" Listen, if you're not yet a follower of Jesus, cry out to Jesus, "Am I blind? If so, help me to see!" It's a good question for us to ask others as well: "Am I blind, am I blind as it pertains to salvation? Do I not see it correctly?" or "Am I blind with how salvation is not working itself out with how I live?" Maybe we're blind practically. We may be a believer in Jesus but blind to really living for him with all of our minds and hearts and souls and strength. Am I blind? Are you blind positionally and relationally with God and practically with how you live?

Jesus replies, "Look, if you were blind, you'd have no guilt" or, literally, you'd have no sin. "If you were blind and you knew it and you cried for help to have sight, then you're without the guilt or the *sin* of unbelief, of not believing. You would be displaying a willing and soft heart to want an outside help in order to see. But because you say, Pharisees, "We see," you have the pride of feeling good about yourself. You have the pride of feeling satisfied with this life without Jesus. You have the pride of saying I don't need Jesus. And so your guilt, your sin of unbelief remains. You are without forgiveness until you see that you are blind and that you need Jesus alone for your salvation."

And you know, my friends, if you don't see and you *die* without seeing Jesus as the Son of Man, as the Redeemer of your soul, as the only sufficient Savior there is from God, if you die without seeing this, then you will spend an eternity in hell under the punishment and judgment of the Judge, of King Jesus. Your guilt will remain with you. Your guilt of unbelief will remain with you forever with no opportunity to be forgiven and redeemed by the Son of Man or have the eyes of your heart enlightened. The Judge has come as the Son of Man, he's come as the Redeemer, he's come as the Savior, to evangelize, to good news the world with his work and his message. He came as the innocent One to be the guilt and sin bearer, not of his own guilt and sin, but of yours and mine and all who will believe. This is the good news: the substitution of the Son of Man for sinners—men, women, and children—like you and me. This is the good news: that he lived perfectly, died as a substitute, was buried and raised from the grave as the Son of Man and

the Savior of the world. He's come to seek and to save the lost, to open the blind eyes of our hearts, just as with this man. Do you see him?

If so, do you acknowledge him before others? In Luke, chapter 12, Jesus says:

And I tell you, everyone who acknowledges me before men [that is, believes in me and shares me with others] the Son of Man will, will also, will acknowledge before the Angels of God. But the one who denies me before men will be denied before the Angels of God.

Do you believe that Jesus is the Son of Man, the sufficient Savior, your personal Savior? Is he your salvation? If so, if so, then there are others out there who need to hear about him, and that's our job as those who believe, to acknowledge him before others.

Let's pray: *Lord Jesus, we give you praise as the great I am, the Son of Man, our Redeemer and all-sufficient Savior. Thank you for coming into this world on a rescue mission to save sinners such as us. Thank you for seeking us out and for meeting us at our spiritually blind estate and by your matchless power and grace, opening the blind eyes of our hearts to see you and your salvation. You are the great evangelist. And we thank you as well that you, indeed, know how to meet, meet us in our every isolation and rejection and pain. Help us to believe this more and more. And Holy Spirit we pray that you would burden us for the family and friends and neighbors you have placed in our lives who do not yet believe in the Gospel. Help us to see them as those whom you have made, our God, so that we might also see them as those whom you can save, just as you've done with us. To that end, we now pray for our financial tithes and offerings that we give to you this week. Please help us to feel the joyful privilege that it is to partner with you and caring for your people and supporting the work of local and global evangelism. We love you, our God, because you have first love us. In Jesus' powerful name we pray, amen, amen.*