

LESSON 3

ANCHOR 3

Respond to the love of God by surrendering my life and will to Jesus Christ.

Galatians 2:20: - My old self has been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. So I live in this earthly body by trusting in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

PRAY

Ask God to speak to you as you read His Word. Ask the Holy Spirit to give you a revelation of God's truth and love and give you understanding of what you are about to read. Pray that you will have an Encounter with God as you earnestly seek Him. Don't rush through reading everything and don't rush through praying. Take some time to stop and listen so you may hear anything God wants to say to you.

After you read the scriptures, ask:

- "God, what are You saying in these scriptures?"
- "God, what are You saying to me in these scriptures?"
- "God, how do You want me to apply this to my life?"

Write in your journal as you spend this time with God.

This Anchor is all about your response to God's love.

If you have decided that you want to get well and have stopped playing God, and you have believed that God is who He says He is and can do what He says He can do - that His love and power can restore hope and healing in your life - you have hopefully reached a point where you are ready to decide how you are going to respond accordingly to such love.

The book of Romans is full of insight as to how the Apostle Paul instructed the Roman believers and instructs us about how we should live our lives in response to what Christ has done for us. While the writers of the Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John) tell about the life of Jesus Christ, the writer of Romans, the Apostle Paul, tells us how significant the death of Christ (His sacrifice) is to us. For that reason, it is sometimes referred to as the gospel according to Paul. It magnifies the Good News of the Gospel and helps us to understand why we should surrender our life and will to the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

Read the following verses from the book of Romans to help you grasp some of this. The New Living Translation is particularly insightful. The reading is lengthy, but rich in content. It gives you a concept of how seriously God views our sin and the importance of recognizing that we can never do enough in our own strength to save ourselves from our sin.

Romans 1:3-6 - The Good News is Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

Romans 1:16-20 - God makes Himself known to us through His Word and His creation.

Romans 1:21-25 - We make idols out of things and people and we try to play God ourselves.

Romans 3:10 - We all have a sin problem.

Romans 3:22-31 – Faith in Jesus Christ, alone, makes us righteous.

Romans 5:6-8 – God sent Jesus to die for us, even while we were still sinners.

Roman 5:15-21 – We were all born into judgment and death by Adam; Christ gives us the opportunity to be born into forgiveness and life. Jesus gives us freedom to respond to Him in love and obedience.

Romans 6:1-23 - Sin is no longer master to the person who surrenders their life and will to Jesus Christ. We become a slave to whatever we choose to obey. We no longer live under the law, but under the freedom of God's grace; we are free from the slavery of sin and have become slaves to righteous living. We are now free from the power of sin and have become slaves of God. We have a choice; we can choose sinful ways or we can choose godly ways. It goes on to say that the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Romans 8:3-4 - Jesus' death on the cross as the sin offering replaced the need to sacrifice innocent blood under the requirement of the Law.

Romans 8:31 – If God is for us, who can be against us? Paul recognized the magnitude of the amazing love and grace of God.

Read **Ephesians 2:1-10** to supplement the above verses. Once we were dead because of our sins, but we were made alive in Christ. Salvation is a gift from God and we cannot earn it.

Yes, the bad news is that we all have sinned and we are all in need of a Savior, whether we realize it or not. But, in His great love for us, God brought us the Gospel of the Good News, Jesus Christ! The only way things can be made right between God and us is through the blood of Jesus Christ. We can all choose this Good News. It is the key to understanding the love of God, to understanding exactly what He did for us by sacrificing His only Son, Jesus, upon the cross.

Throughout the bible, the sin and depravity of humans is on display. That sin separates us from God, who is Holy. We all are in need of a Savior because no human could ever do enough to bridge the separation that our sin causes between us and God. It is impossible to keep the Law of the Old Testament. If we break only one commandment, we are still in the same boat as those who have sinned by breaking more than one, or breaking them all. We are all in need of being made right with God because our sin separates us from Him.

In the Old Testament, the Prophet Isaiah foretold the coming of the Savior, Jesus Christ, when he said in Isaiah 53:4-6, Surely He took up our pain and bore our suffering, yet we considered Him punished by God, stricken by Him, and afflicted. But He was pierced for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on Him, and by His wounds we are healed. We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all." Isaiah knew that the future sacrifice of Jesus would be the only way for the human race to attain salvation.

In **John 10:11**, Jesus gave us a foreshadow of His coming sacrifice when He said, "I am the Good Shepherd. The Good Shepherd sacrifices His life for the sheep."

God loved us so much that He provided the only way, the only acceptable sacrifice, to be sufficient to pay for our sins and the brokenness that separates us from Him. Probably the most famous verse in the bible is **John 3:16** - For God loved the world so much that He gave His one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life. You may recognize the verse, but in what way have you responded to such amazing love?

Through Jesus, salvation is possible. It was, and is, a gift from God. It was a costly gift, but a gift nonetheless. The impact of that gift changed the world forever. When we believe and receive that gift it can and should change us forever.

The beauty of God's gift of salvation is that it is for everyone. No one has gone too far, become too lost or sunk too deeply into sin to receive the gift of forgiveness for our sins and eternal salvation through Christ.

Read **Hebrews 10:11-18**. When Christ became the ultimate sacrifice for all sin on the cross, He became the Good News for all who would believe.

The shed blood of Jesus Christ transferred His righteousness onto all who will believe Him and receive that sacrifice as a substitute for their own sins. Righteousness is proof of worth or value. We have no such worth and we cannot earn such value based on our own human merit. Righteousness is the worth of Jesus given freely to us as a gift.

Read **Philippians 3:7-12**. In verse 9, Paul is saying that God places the righteousness of Christ onto the believer who repents of their sin (turns away from their sin) and receives the love and forgiveness of Jesus.

In **2 Corinthians 5:21**, we see that God places our sins upon Jesus, who had never sinned. This enables us to also be rewarded for the 'right' things Jesus has already done. We get the benefits of His righteousness.

He declares us 'not guilty' of our sin and shame. The blood of Jesus gives us a clean slate. We don't have to work for it or live our life doing things to attain such a blessing, but we can know that the gift of salvation through Jesus Christ is the blessing that allows us to live a life of freedom.

We don't have to be all cleaned up and perfect to come to God. We come to Him just as we are, all muddy and dirty from our sin, and He cleans us up.

Why wouldn't everyone want to receive such a gift? Here are some possible reasons:

- They love their sins and don't want to walk away from them.
- They don't believe in Jesus Christ and don't believe He can save them.
- They have a false perception of God. They think He may be like an earthly father – maybe a punishing God, a condemning God or a God that will leave them.
- They don't believe they have a sin problem.
- They believe they are good people and that is all it takes to go to heaven some day.

- They don't believe in hell because, if God is a loving God, why would He send people to hell? Many self-professed Christians think this way. They believe a God of love will not leave people who resist Him in hell forever. They have no fear of a just God.
- They see people who say they are Christians living a double life or living hypocritically to what they say they believe as a Christian.
- They believe in a worldly view and are influenced by a culture that says there are many different ways to God and to heaven.
- They are deceived by Satan, the god of this age. Read **2 Cor 4:4** Satan, who is the god of this world, has blinded the minds of those who don't believe. They are unable to see the glorious light of the Good News.
- They are overwhelmed with guilt and shame and believe they don't deserve to be forgiven.
- They don't want to give up control of their own lives. Pride keeps them in denial, so they play God, instead of surrendering to Him and trusting Him.
- Maybe they think that they are the exception to what Paul pointed out in **Romans 3:23** when he said, "For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God's glorious standard."

God's free gift of salvation has both heavenly benefits and earthly benefits for the believer and follower of Christ. It is an "All In" plan that opens up the heavens for us to experience the abundant life that Jesus died for. God's desire is for us to go all in with Him because He gave His all for us!

Read **John: 19:30** – Before Jesus died on the cross He said, "It is finished (Tetelestai)." With that, He bowed His head and gave up His spirit.

A man by the name of Ray Pritchard wrote the following about the Greek word 'Tetelestai':

Tetelestai comes from the verb teleo, which means "to bring to an end, to complete, to accomplish." It's a crucial word because it signifies the successful end to a particular course of action. It's the word you would use when you climb to the peak of Mt. Everest; it's the word you would use when you turn in the final copy of your dissertation; it's the word you would use when you make the final payment on your new car; it's the word you use when you cross the finish line of your first 10K run. The word means more than just "I survived." It means, "I did exactly what I set out to do."

But, there's more here than the verb itself...Tetelestai is in the perfect tense in Greek. That's significant because the perfect tense speaks of an action, which has been completed in the past with results continuing into the present. It's different from the past tense, which looks back to an event and says, "This happened." The perfect tense adds the idea that "This happened and it is still in effect today."

When Jesus cried out "It is finished," He meant, "It was finished in the past, it is still finished in the present, and it will remain finished in the future."

Note one other fact. He did not say, "I am finished," for that would imply that He died defeated and exhausted. Rather, He cried out "It is finished," meaning, "I successfully completed the work I came to do." That means He left no unfinished work behind.

When you understand the finished work of Christ, you realize that, when God forgave you of all your sins, that included your shame and guilt, so you can be free of condemnation. When you get this into your spirit it changes everything!

We read in **Romans 6:6-7** that the finished work of Jesus on the cross also crucified your old self and your capacity to sin! "For we know that our old self was crucified with Him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin—because anyone who has died has been freed from sin."

The evidence that you trust in the finished work of Christ on the cross is that you have had an encounter at the cross and that your old life of sin was crucified there as well:

- You crucified your past...You crucified your old nature...You crucified your mind...You crucified your desire to control other people...you crucified your sins...You crucified your shame & guilt...You crucified your pain...
- You crucified your addiction...You crucified your character defects...You crucified your anger, your lust, your eating disorder, your porn addiction, your codependency...your insecurities, your broken relationships...
- You crucified your bitterness and un-forgiveness...you crucified your old identity...you crucified your fear, your doubt, your wisdom, your knowledge, your plans...and you crucified your life on the cross.

Believe by faith that all of those things were nailed and buried and the only thing that came back to life is Christ alive in you! "For me to live is Christ and to die is gain." **Philippians 1:21**

The remaining 10 Anchors of Hope will have no impact unless you trust in the finished work of Christ.

The key to living in freedom is 'trusting' in the finished work of Christ for your salvation, for the forgiveness of your sins, for your shame and guilt, for your pain, for your past and for your problems.

You either trust in the finished work of Christ or you trust in yourself. When you don't trust in what Christ finished on the cross, you will try to accomplish things in your own strength and fail every time, because you're either trusting in the finished work of Christ or trusting in your own willpower and own sense of righteousness.

Galatians 2:20 - My old self has been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. So I live in this earthly body by trusting in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

And so, we begin to live a life that resembles **Galatians 2:20**, a life lived out of gratitude for what Christ has done for us. He loved us so much that He gave Himself for us. We cannot work to earn something Jesus has already freely given us, but neither should we use that free gift of grace as an excuse to keep living in our sin. We can only truly experience freedom and the life of Christ when we receive the gift of salvation and die daily to our selfishness and our sinful nature. We come to realize that our old nature must die and be crucified, so that our new nature, that of Christ, may live in and through us.

God is Love and His love is pure and holy. God made us in His image. Adam and Eve sinned and it ruined everything. We inherited that sin and live in a broken world. Because God is holy, He cannot be in the presence of sin. Therefore, sin separated us from our loving God and gave us a death sentence that declares us guilty. We were incapable of fixing our sin problem and separation from God.

Separation from those you love the most will make you do outrageous and radical things. Our Father did just that. He came up with the greatest plan ever:

- A plan that would restore our relationship with God and bridge the gap back to Him
- A plan that would forgive anyone for all their sins so they could have a permanent residence in heaven for eternity
- A plan that is free to us, but cost God everything as He sacrificed His one and only Son for payment of our sins
- A plan that solved our sin problem when God's Son, Jesus Christ, took on our sins, became our sins, died for our sins and defeated our sins on the cross and from the grave
- He did that for us! He did that for you! What is your response to this outrageous act of unprecedented love?

If you have never believed and received Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, will you please pray this prayer out loud to God:

Father, I am a sinner. I have sinned against you, others and myself. I repent of my sins and turn from my sins. I trust in Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of my sins and the free gift of eternal life. I believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. I believe that He died for my sins and rose from the dead so I can live with Him forever in heaven and for Him here on earth. I acknowledge Jesus as my Savior and my LORD. It is my desire to love Him back by fully devoting my life to Him. Fill me with your Holy Spirit so I will have the power and grace to live the life you planned for me thousands of years ago. Thank You for loving and forgiving me. Thank You for welcoming me into Your family and making me a child of the one true King.

If you just prayed this prayer, congratulations and welcome to the Kingdom of Heaven!

QUESTIONS FOR YOU:

1. How have you responded to the love of God? Is anything keeping you from receiving His free gift?
2. What part of your past and present have you not crucified with Christ and surrendered to His Lordship?
3. Are you experiencing less of you and more of Christ in your life? Why or why not?
4. In what ways have you recognized that you are not trusting in the finished work of Christ?