

Works or Grace?, Part 3

Scripture: Galatians 3:10–14

Code: 48-14

So open your Bible, if you will. This portion before us perfectly suits our attention being given to the cross. So we're going to stay right where we are, Galatians chapter 3.

Let me just begin reading. And even though we're going to consider primarily the latter part of this scripture down in verses 13-14, it's going to take us a while to get there. So let me start reading in verse 6 so you have a setting.

“Even so Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness. Therefore, be sure that it is those who are of faith who are sons of Abraham. The Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles” – or “the nations” – “by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, ‘All the nations will be blessed in you.’ So then those who are of faith are blessed with Abraham, the believer.

“For as many as are of the works of the Law are under a curse; for it is written, ‘Cursed is everyone who does not abide by all things written in the book of the law, to perform them.’ Now that no one is justified by the Law before God is evident; for, ‘The righteous man shall live by faith.’ However, the Law is not of faith; on the contrary, ‘He who practices them must’ – or ‘shall’ – ‘live by them.’ Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us—for it is written, ‘Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree’—in order that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we would receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.”

Now let me simplify this passage for you. You notice the term “blessed” is used there a couple of times. You'll also notice there are a number of mentions of “cursed.” “Blessed” or “cursed.” It breaks down to this: if you operate in the realm of faith – faith in God, faith in our Lord Jesus Christ – you are blessed. If you operate in the realm of works, good deeds, as a means of salvation, you are cursed. Verse 9 says, “Those who are of faith are blessed.” Verse 10 says, “Those who are of the works of the Law are cursed.”

Now that sums up Paul's teaching in Galatians 3-4. Faith brings divine blessing, namely salvation. Works brings divine cursing, namely damnation. It is that clear. And they cannot be mixed. Verse 12 says faith and law don't go together. The Law is not of faith. They are mutually exclusive. They are not two sides of the same thing. They are not partners; they are enemies. Faith brings blessing; works brings cursing. And by that I mean as a means of salvation, a means of redemption, a means of forgiveness, a means of reconciliation, a means of gaining heaven.

The Bible is crystal clear that justification before God is by faith – and you saw that earlier in what I read you, that clearly, “Abraham believed God,” verse 6, “and it was reckoned to him” – counted to him, imputed to him – “as righteousness.” And then you also realize that faith is the only way that

anyone can be blessed (verse 9). Abraham was blessed by faith. All people who are blessed are blessed by faith. And then down in verse 11, quoting from Habakkuk the Old Testament prophet, chapter 2, verse 4: “The righteous man shall live by faith.” Salvation is by faith alone.

We pointed out last week a pretty amazing statistic, that recently fifty-two percent of evangelical Protestants that were interviewed said salvation is a matter of faith and works. And that reiterates the fact that I’ve been telling you the last number of weeks, that most people in most Protestant churches are bewitched. That’s the term Paul uses for them in verse 1 of this chapter. They are foolishly bewitched about something so basic as the gospel of grace through faith alone and not works; for, “By grace are you saved through faith; that not of works,” Ephesians 2:8 says.

“By the Law,” Romans 3:20, “no flesh will be justified before God.” In fact, the whole of humanity is cursed – we noted that last time – and they are all cursed because of an inability to obey the law of God. The law of God is, of course, revealed in the heart; but it is revealed much more extensively and clearly on the pages of Holy Scripture. And the entire human race since the Fall of Adam have been violators of the law of God. Verse 10 it says, “Cursed is everyone who does not abide by” – that is to say, remain faithful, dutiful, obedient to – “all things written in the book of the law, to perform them.” James 2:10 adds that if you break it in one point, you’re guilty of all of it.

So the whole human race is cursed. All people break God’s law. They break God’s law as a matter of course of life. They break God’s law constantly. Apart from believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, they break God’s law every moment because they have *not* confessed Jesus as Lord. We’re all born in sin; Psalm 51, “conceived in iniquity.” We come forth as sinners. Our lives are marked by corruption; they’re marked by sin. And the proof of it all is that everyone dies, everyone dies.

Back in Ezekiel 18, “The soul that sins will die.” And they all do. In the book of Romans, Paul says, “The wages of sin is death.” There’s no arguing that we’re all sinners, because there’s no arguing that we all die. That is a fact, and that is the evidence that everyone is cursed.

Now Paul here is boldly and faithfully doing what all preachers should do, and that is tell people that they’re cursed by God, and that the curse is going to lead to death and eternal hell, conscious suffering forever. That is the truth about the human condition, and that is the truth that Paul is writing, and that is the truth that we are speaking. The whole human race is cursed by God. They have violated His law. They have rejected His way of salvation in Christ alone, and they are headed for the consequence of that curse: eternal punishment in hell.

Now in the passage before us, particularly in verses 10-14 which we’ll look at, there are two curses, and we gave you the first one last week. There is the divine curse on all men, the divine curse on all men. That’s what I’ve been talking about.

Verses 10-12: “Cursed is everyone who doesn’t abide by all things written in the book of the law, to perform them.” That’s the curse on all men, the entire human race. And the reality is so bad that it is really without human remedy. There is nothing that man can do. No matter how noble his moral efforts, no matter how extensive his religious efforts, no matter how many rituals, ceremonies, sacraments he goes through, there is nothing a man can do to come out from under that curse.

In fact, his condition is delineated in Romans 3 – you’ll remember these verses – starting in verse 10:

“As it is written” – this all comes from the Old Testament – ‘There is none righteous, not even one; there is none who understands, there is none who seeks for God; all have turned aside, together they have become useless; there is none who does good, there is not even one. Their throat is an open grave, with their tongues they keep deceiving,’ ‘the poison of asps’ – or ‘snakes’ – ‘is under their lips; whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness; their feet are swift to shed blood, destruction and misery are in their paths, and the path of peace they have not known. There’s no fear of God before their eyes.’” So every mouth is closed and the whole world made accountable to God. That is the true human condition.

It’s a popular thing today to have people say, “You know, we believe that people are basically good, and they are well-intentioned, and they’re noble. And, you know, we see some of the evidence of the fact that people care about other people in some of these disasters.” We’ve seen a certain measure of human kindness, and no one is denying that. But if the motive is not that pure desire to glorify God, then whatever people do fall short of being a truly righteous act.

In fact, for anyone who hasn’t come to Jesus Christ and confessed Him as Lord and Savior, nothing that person does is counted as righteousness. It’s all some kind of human goodness. It’s a kind of bad goodness that marks fallen creatures.

The whole human race, again, is under the curse of God, results in death – conscious, eternal punishment. Horrific to think about it, particularly in the light of the things that we look at when we see all of these disasters going on around us. We’ve been focused pretty much on hurricanes down in the Florida area and the Caribbean. But there have been disasters in Mexico City where many people were killed in an earthquake. There are disasters in the Far East where people are being killed in natural holocausts of one kind or another. And it’s one thing to think about the loss of cars, and the loss of houses, and the loss of jobs, and all of that. The far worse thing is to think about the eternal loss that comes to souls who perish.

Jesus actually said – and these are His words - “Depart from Me, you cursed, into everlasting hell.” I’m waiting for some Christian leader, some Christian preacher in the public media to quote that verse; I don’t think we’re going to hear it. “Depart from Me, you cursed, into everlasting hell.”

Most preachers, I fear, avoid that truth like a deadly plague. They are trying to shelter God from bad press. They’re trying to preserve God’s reputation. And some will go so far as to lie about God’s true attitude, to lie about reality, saying only that God loves everybody. That half truth is also a means not only to sort of shelter God, but to maintain the preacher’s popularity, because as soon as the preacher starts telling the truth about that, his popularity’s going to disappear very rapidly in many places.

But the fact that the whole human race is cursed is evident, because everyone dies, everyone dies. And why are they cursed? Again, because it says in verse 10, they break God’s law. God’s law is holy, just, and good. And all of us break that law. Therefore, God has a standing curse on everyone who has even once broken God’s law, and everyone has, and death is the proof.

And that’s the bad news. And the bad news needs to be proclaimed; that warning needs to be given. People need to be aware of the terror of the Lord. “Knowing the terror of the Lord, we persuade men.” We don’t terrify sinners enough.

One of the things that happens if you're a Bible expositor is you end up having to preach what's in the text, and you can't dance around it. And what it does is allow for the terrifying of sinners, because many places in the Bible, sinners are the target of terrifying threats from heaven. And if you're going to be a Bible expositor and you're going to tell the whole truth from the Word of God, then you're going to terrify sinners. Hopefully you're going to terrify them into fleeing to God for salvation.

So there is the first curse in the passage. We looked at it in verses 10-12. It is the curse on all men, the curse on all men, because all have broken the law. And the only way to remedy that curse is by believing. Verse 11: "The righteous man shall live by faith." The just are just because they believe like Abraham the believer.

But the question then comes, "How can God then declare sinful people just?" How can God do that? How can He declare them righteous? How can He impute His own righteousness to them? How can He be covered by our sin on the cross and we be covered by His righteousness? How can God do that? Now let me just back up a little bit and help you to understand that there is a real dilemma there.

In Nahum, the prophet Nahum, we read, "The Lord will by no means leave the guilty unpunished" (Nahum 1:3). "The Lord will by no means leave the guilty unpunished." That's a blanket statement without an exception.

All of us are guilty; all of us are to be punished. How do we get around that? Our punishment is severe. Ephesians 2:1-3 says we're "children of wrath"; we're of our father the devil. That's the truth about humanity. The whole world is in the kingdom of darkness. They're all children of the devil, and they're all targets of divine wrath, they're all cursed in that way. And as I said last time, it's not that they're cursed by Satan; they're cursed by God, because they're part of Satan's kingdom.

So how can God then just leave the guilty unpunished? He can't. He "will by no means leave the guilty unpunished." Listen to what it says in Proverbs 17:15. "He who justifies the wicked and he who condemns the righteous, both of them are alike an abomination to the Lord." That's really an amazing statement. Let me read it again: "He who justifies the wicked and condemns the righteous, both of them alike are an abomination to the Lord."

That is precisely what God did. That is what God has done. He has justified the wicked, us, and condemned the righteous, Christ. And yet, Proverbs 17:15 says that is an abomination. Further, Proverbs 24:24 says, "He who says to the wicked, 'You are righteous,' people will curse him."

This puts God in a very serious dilemma. Is God going to do what He says is an abomination? Is God going to do something that will cause people to curse Him? Is God going to justify the wicked and condemn the righteous? That is exactly what God does. He condemns His Son, the Righteous One, and justifies us, the wicked.

How can God do that and not be Himself unrighteous? And the answer, of course, is 2 Corinthians 5:21. "He made Him who knew no sin" – Jesus – "sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him." The guilty are not unpunished. The guilty are punished, but a substitute takes the punishment. A substitute takes the punishment. God only can justify the ungodly,

in the language of Romans, God only can justify the wicked, in the language of Proverbs, if He punishes their sins; and He has chosen to do that in the Righteous One, Jesus Christ.

This is the glory of the gospel, and this is the second curse. Go back to verse 13-14. The first curse: the divine curse on all men. Now the second curse: the divine curse on one Man, the divine curse on one Man. The divine curse on all men, that's the bad news; the divine curse on one Man, that's the good news.

Verse 13: "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us." "Curse of the Law" simply the curse from God for all law-breakers; and that's the whole human race. "There's none righteous; no, not one."

The curse of the Law is the violation of the law of God. But God has redeemed us, bought us back from that curse through Christ who became a curse for us. That is how God justifies the ungodly, as Paul says in Romans. He became "a curse for us." No sin goes unpunished. But in the grace of God, we're not punished for our sins; Christ is punished in our place.

Man's sin has to be punished; justice has to be satisfied. God requires it; it's not whimsical. But man's spiritual deadness, man's spiritual inability, man's spiritual unwillingness leaves him unable to pay the penalty for his sin without going to hell forever. So God has appointed His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, to take the place of sinners and receive their punishment. And in 1 John 2:2 and 4:10 it says, "He became the propitiation for our sins; and not ours only, but the sins of the whole world."

It simply means "satisfaction." God's justice has to be satisfied. And in the death of Christ, justice was satisfied, because divine justice meted out full punishment for all who would ever believe, through all of human history, on Christ. All the sins that we will ever commit were paid for. He is the propitiation, the satisfaction of divine justice.

"Propitiation" is used again in Hebrews 2:17. It's used again in Romans 3:23-26. It's a critical word. God's justice must be satisfied; it must be satisfied. He can by no means clear the guilty. He cannot justify the wicked and condemn the righteous, unless the sins of the wicked are paid for in full so that divine justice is satisfied. Simply stated, 1 John 3:16 says, "Christ laid down His life for us." "Christ laid down His life for us." This is pictured in the Old Testament.

In the book of Exodus, the judgment of God was going to come on Egypt in the plagues, and God sent the word that if the Jewish people would sacrifice a Passover lamb, and take the blood of that lamb and spread it across the door – top of the door and the sides of the door – the angel of death would come by in that night of slaughtering all the firstborn and pass by the house where the blood was splattered. A Passover lamb had to be killed; a Passover lamb's blood spread to protect Israel from the execution of God's judgment in Egypt.

The same is true of Christ. That is why 1 Corinthians 5:7 says this: "For Christ our Passover has been sacrificed." He is the true Passover Lamb; and when His blood is spread over our lives, the judgment of God passes by. As the blood of the Passover lamb protected Israel from the execution of God's judgment in Egypt, so the blood of the slain Lamb protects His people from the wrath of the Father in heaven against their sins.

Christ's death was a sacrifice. It wasn't the death of a sympathetic man who wanted to show that you ought to die for whatever cause you're committed to. It wasn't the death that He didn't plan, but things went wrong. No. It was God who planned it all in every detail. As Isaiah 53 makes very clear, and other places in the Old Testament that predict the details of His death, it was God who predetermined this (Acts 2). It was God who predetermined it (Acts 4). It was always the plan of God that every Passover lamb of every Passover and every other sacrificial lamb through the whole sacrificial system in Israel's history pointed toward the one true Lamb, who by the offering of Himself once for all would provide a full sacrifice for sin.

All the just wrath of God, all the holy fury of God was unleashed on Christ. He literally paid the penalty for all the sins of all the people who would ever believe through all of human history. Massive, incomprehensible debt was meted out on Him in the fury of judgment in three hours of darkness on the cross.

But that's why He came. He says in Mark 10, "The Son of Man has come to give His life a ransom for many." He came to die for the ungodly. Nowhere is this more beautifully laid out than in the tenth chapter in the gospel of John. Turn to it for a moment; John chapter 10, a familiar chapter on our Lord as the Good Shepherd.

But while we understand the shepherding aspect of it, the heart of this passage is about His giving His life for the sheep; and that is what is emphasized most strongly. He talks about being the True Shepherd in the early part, and then He comes down to verse 11 and says, "I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep, he lays down His life for the sheep."

Down in verse 14, He says, "I am the good shepherd; I know My own, My own know Me, even as the Father knows Me and I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep. I have other sheep, which are not of this fold" – meaning "Gentiles" – "I must bring them also; they will hear my voice, they will become one flock with one shepherd. For this reason the Father loves Me, because I down My life so that I may take it again. No one has taken it away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up. This commandment I received from My Father." He laid down His life for the sheep.

Go over to verse 27, the same chapter. "My sheep hear My voice; I know them, they follow Me; and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand." What is obvious here is that the Lord is the shepherd who has sheep. He knows His sheep, He knows who they are; He gives His life for His sheep. He lays down His life for His sheep. And His sheep, when He calls them, will hear His voice, and they will come, and they will follow Him, and He will keep them and protect them and guard them, and no one will ever take them out of His hand. He gives them eternal life, and they will never perish.

This is the commitment of the great Good Shepherd to His sheep. And, of course, when He died on the cross there were millions of sheep that hadn't even been born yet who belonged to Him; and He will gather them to Himself. They will hear His voice. He will rescue them, because He has provided an atonement for them at the cross.

He redeemed us all. He redeemed His sheep. Peter says – I love this – "You're redeemed not with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your fathers, but with

precious blood as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ.” Again, Peter seeing Him as the slain Passover Lamb. He is the One providing the true and final offering.

Isaiah 53, “He was wounded for our transgressions. He was bruised for our iniquities. He was chastised for our peace. The iniquities that we committed have fallen on Him.” This is substitutionary sacrifice. The curse falls on Jesus. And if you understand the massive character of this curse that is on all humanity for the violation of God’s law, just sum up in your mind how many times has God’s law been broken. Incalculable. And yet heaven keeps a record. It’s all in the books. And for all believers of all ages, the punishment for all those sins are meted out in divine fury on Christ in the darkness of Calvary. No wonder He says, “My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?”

This is the gospel. The curse on us falls on Christ. And this, of course, is why we have such animosity, along with the apostle, for systems of works, which somehow assume that the death of Christ was either insufficient or incomplete.

Listen to Romans 5:10. “While we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son” – stop. “We were reconciled to God through the death of His Son.”

The atonement is an objective atonement. That is, it is a work accomplished in history by a real person in a real place on a real cross in the divine plan. An objective atonement. Not mystical; objective, historical. It is also a final atonement. It is final. Nothing, nothing can be added to it.

Listen to Hebrews 7:26. “It was fitting for us to have such a high priest, holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners, exalted above the heavens; who does not need daily, like those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the sins of His people, because this He did once for all when He offered up Himself” – “once for all, once for all.”

The ninth chapter, verse 25 of Hebrews, “nor was it that He would offer Himself often, as the high priest enters the holy place year by year with blood that is not his own. Otherwise, He would have needed to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now once at the consummation of the ages He has been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. Once,” verse 28, “Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many.”

And as if it’s not yet exhausted, the plea of the writer of Hebrews goes on into chapter 10: “Every priest stands daily ministering offering time after time the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But He, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, sat down at the right hand of God...For by one offering, He perfected for all time those who are sanctified.”

This is a blatant condemnation of the Roman Catholic Mass, which is the re-sacrifice of Christ again, and again, and again, and again, and again, which is nothing but a blasphemous and pagan exercise when Jesus made purification of sins once He sat down at the right hand of God. It is an objective atonement; it is a final atonement; and it is an efficacious atonement.

“Call Him Jesus,” Matthew 1:21, “for He will save His people from their sins.” It will be an efficacious atonement. It is not a potential atonement; it is a real one. He really died for the sins of all who would ever believe in Him through human history. He didn’t just potentially pay for your sins. He actually paid for them, because you belong to Him, because He chose you and wrote your name down before

the foundation of the world.

Why does God do this? What is causing God to be willing to place a curse on His Son? He made the angels, and when the angels fell, He prepared eternal fire for them. Never thought about restoring them, recovering them. When man fell, why does God come together with Christ and say, “We’re going to redeem these fallen people. We’re going to gather a redeemed humanity, bring them to heaven”? Why does God do this? Why? Well, the answers come even back in the Old Testament.

Listen to Psalm 106:8. “He saved them for His namesake, that He might make known His mighty power.” “He saved them for His namesake, that He might make known His mighty power.” He puts salvation power on display; that means mercy, grace, compassion, lovingkindness, forgiveness, redemption, substitution – all of that.

Listen to Isaiah 48:11. “For My own sake, for My own sake, I do it; for how shall My name be profaned? My glory I will not give to another. I am all-glorious, and I do this work of salvation to put My name on display.”

In Ezekiel 36, it’s worth making a comment or two. You have a well-known passage on the new covenant, the prophecy of the future new covenant by which Israel and the nations will be saved. But I want you to kind of catch the context of Ezekiel 36 in verse 22.

“Therefore say to the house of Israel, ‘Thus says the Lord God, “It is not for your sake, O house of Israel, that I’m about to act, but for My holy name, which you have profaned among the nations where you went. I will vindicate the holiness of My great name which has been profaned among the nations, which you have profaned in their midst. Then the nations will know that I am the Lord,” declares the Lord God, “when I prove Myself holy among you in your sight”’” – and then comes that glorious new covenant – ““I will sprinkle clean water on you and you’ll be clean. I’ll cleanse you from all your filthiness and idols; give you a new heart, put a new spirit in you; remove the heart of stone from your flesh, give you a heart of flesh. I’ll put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes; you will be careful to observe My ordinances. You will live in the land that I gave to your forefathers. You will be My people, I will be your God. Moreover, I will save you from all your uncleanness.”’” Why does God do that? For His namesake, for His namesake, for His own eternal glory.

Ephesians chapter 1 – look at it for just a moment – talks about all that we have in Christ. We’re blessed with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies. Talks about being chosen, being predestined, being redeemed, being forgiven, being granted wisdom, insight – all of these precious things – an inheritance.

And why? Why does God do this? Why? Verse 12, the end of the verse, “to the praise of His glory.” Verse 14, the end of the verse, “to the praise of His glory.” That’s why Jesus in His high priestly prayer in John 17 said, “Glorify Me, Father, with the glory I had with you before the world began. I have glorified You on earth, now glorify Me with You in heaven.” Salvation is God’s design to bring to Himself eternal glory, eternal glory. That’s the divine motivation.

Now let’s go back to Galatians and just kind of wrap up our thoughts. To make an illustration of this curse, Paul reaches back to a text in Deuteronomy 21:23; verse 13, “For it is written, ‘Cursed is

everyone who hangs on a tree.” He’s referring to an incident that is laid out in Deuteronomy 21:23 that reflects on a Jewish tradition.

When somebody was basically a blasphemer, somebody was an abomination to God, when capital punishment was executed against someone like that, they would stone them to death. They didn’t crucify them, they stoned them. But after they stoned them, it was their habit to tie them to a post, that is the corpse, or to a tree as a visible sign of rejection by God, visible sign of rejection by God. It was not that a person was cursed because they were tied to a tree; it is that because they were cursed by God, they were tied to a tree.

And here, Paul is saying, “This is Jesus. In a sense, He’s the ultimate fulfillment of that picture. God cursed Him. God killed Him, tied Him to a tree.” This is the curse of God.

You want to know how severe the curse of God is? It brought all the sins of all who would ever believe on Jesus, and He took the full fury of the punishment, and He was even openly, publicly, blatantly the picture of one cursed by God. The Jews would know that. They would know that somebody tied to a tree was cursed; they knew their Scripture. Jesus was cursed by God.

But there was a purpose on our behalf as well. Not just the glory of God, but look at verse 14. Here’s two purpose clauses: “in order that” and “so that.” Very simple: “in order that in Christ Jesus the blessing Abraham might come to the Gentiles.” Christ died on the cross to provide salvation for the whole world through faith, regardless of whether they knew the law of Moses. If salvation requires adherence to the law of Moses and circumcision, most of the world can’t be saved, because they don’t know that.

No. Christ was cursed so that punishment for sin was completely exhausted; and for all who turned to Christ, there is the blessing of Abraham. What is the blessing of Abraham? Salvation, righteousness. Righteousness was reckoned to him, imputed to him, credited to him, accounted to him by faith. That’s the blessing of Abraham.

The blessing of Abraham can come on Gentiles, come on all nations, because it’s by faith, not by being a part of the Jewish people or the nation Israel, or understanding the Mosaic litany. So salvation is by faith in order that in Christ Jesus where you place your faith, the blessing that came to Abraham could come to the whole world regardless of what they know about Moses and the law.

Secondly, so that we would receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. Through faith we – faith is the beginning. Justifying grace brings sanctifying power. Justifying grace through faith brings sanctifying power through the Holy Spirit. I love the fact that it ends there, “through faith, through faith.”

Final word, 1 Corinthians 16:22, “If anyone doesn’t love the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be cursed.” The curse remains if you do not love the Lord Jesus Christ.

Father, we have come through such a profound portion of Your holy Word. With these thoughts on our mind, and we understand the cross and the curse that was meted out there, may each of us desire with all our hearts that You would cleanse us from all sin and transgression, and You would set us on a path of holiness and righteousness. And we ask these things in Your mighty and powerful

name. Amen.

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