



Sermon on the Mount
Wk. 1 "The Importance of Getting the Message Right"
By Pastor Jody May 08/25/2024

Matthew 5:1-11 ESV

The Sermon on the Mount

5 Seeing the crowds, he went up on the mountain, and when he sat down, his disciples came to him.

The Beatitudes

2 And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying:

3 "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

4 "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

5 "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

6 "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.

7 "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.

8 "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

9 "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.

10 "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

11 "Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. **12** Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

[READ THE TEXT]

Pastor – "People of God, this is the Word of God."

People – "Thanks be to God."

[PRAY]



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[ILLUSTRATION]

Messages, you and I are innated with them every day. The challenge is not to let our emotions run away with what we are hearing or seeing.

For example:

You get an automatic notification from your child's school about a failing grade, and well, you tell me, what's your response?

You get a piece of junk mail, and it says, "LAST NOTICE", and you start to freak out and wonder should have I been concerned about the first 5 notices?

A message comes across your computer screen, and it says you have acquired a virus, call now before its' too late!

This is everyone's favorite, that check engine light comes on, and you have no idea what it may be, all you know is that your engine will now most likely blow up on the way to work!

How about a Dr. bill, comes in two months later after your app., and you know it's going to tell you that insurance failed to cover 90% of your procedure.

We get messages every day, and it's important though as responsible people to handle the information that comes our way without getting blown away by our emotional reactions as we take in the information.

For the Christian, who's mind is caught up in the Kingdom of Heaven and not in the Kingdom of this World, for them, information is just information. Emotions are to be managed and controlled biblically, for we understand this is our Father's world and messages/notices are simply gauges that let us know what's going on. Messages in whatever form from this world help us to make decisions and we are responsible to give this world our rationale for making rational decisions.

1 Peter 3:15 ESV

but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to **make a defense** to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with **gentleness and respect**,



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On top of those silly daily things we get, let me tell why it is important to learn how to regulate what you feel, how to discern with a Kingdom mindset, because you are not just responsible for yourself.

Here's what I hear at Home:

Stories from School

Stories from friends

Stories from Coworkers

Stories from Family

Here's the question underneath all of it: **How do I respond to it?**

Here's what people hear in the workplace:

Worries about home life

Worries about money and futures

Worries about relationships

Here's the question underneath all of it: **How do I endure?**

Here's what we all get from the media:

If you vote for this person, you can make America great again

A vote for that person keeps the mean orange man out

If you don't pick right, you will help destroy our democracy

Here's the question underneath all of it: **How do I be not afraid?**

So, for every Christian in this room, we have pointed out you have a responsibility somewhere that you need to contend with, so let me ask you, **what will be the message you give to your family, to your coworkers, to your neighbor because there should be the evidence of an eternal HOPE and JOY that is in you? Are you ready as Peter said to give a defense with gentleness and respect?**

I want to propose a message to you today, that above all the other things we heard about already, there is a message to be concerned above all others! **The Sermon on the Mount (Chps. 5-7)**, given by our Lord and King, not only deals with the eternal perspective that we all should have, but **it gives us an answer for all the fear we are experiencing now**. It will help you lead your homes and will give you answers for how to **help your families endure**. It will



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help your coworkers by their witnessing how you endure and in response to that, **desire that ability** for themselves. It will help your neighbors in your community not be afraid as **they see you not afraid of the future**. These next few weeks are going to be instrumental in dealing with this world and I believe the benefit of that is that we all become more evangelistic organically than we ever thought we could be.

MP:

The Sermon on the Mount is not a Message of 'do this' to be a Christian, but it is a declaration that Christians are already this way.

In order to get this message right for the next 3-4 months we need to do some background help to help us understand this message on the whole. **Martin Lloyd-Jones** warned me this week that to take a section of the SoM without talking about the whole is to disservice on what the Lord was trying to accomplish. So, I want to use this week to set up the Sermon on the Mount so we can be assured we are getting the Message right from our Lord. The first part we are going to look at today is the **Context of the Message**; who is it for and what does it answer. Next, we will look at the **Core of the Message**; what is central to understanding the SoM, especially the Beatitudes. Then lastly, we will look at the **Care of the Messenger**; what Jesus had to do so to make this image of the Christian life achievable.

[INTRO. & BACKGROUND]

1. Context of the Message – who is it for and what does it answer.

When reading the Bible before ever asking what is this asking me to do, how can I become obedient to God, is there something here I need to stop or start doing or believing, one must **FIRST** ask **what was the author's original intent of the passage?** You can't accurately apply God's Word to your life, if you jump to conclusions about what it is saying without first trying to understand who it said to and why? That's why Pastor Bill is careful to put in the bulletin weekly the background information of every book of the Bible you would be reading any particular week, so you and I can understand the author's original intent. As well that is why we at HCC have chosen to preach expository style



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so as to keep to the original theme of each text so we can be changed by God's original meaning for the text and not interpret the text making it say what we want.

The author is Matthew (9:9), the tax collector, proper name of Levi (Mark 2:14; Lk 5:27), and one of the 12. He was particular to record not just a phrase or a part of this sermon but was sure to capture the whole thing. You can find the cliff notes version of the Sermon on the mount in [Luke 6:17-49](#). Matthew believed it was important to capture the teaching of Jesus on what are the marks/distinctions/characteristics of Kingdom living, what does it look like in the physical realm, who is in it, because of who he believed Jesus to be which he gives a big clue in 1:1.

1 The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham

Matthew's Gospel's main intention is to educate the Jew that the promises of God have been fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth, He's the Messiah the promised one. He is the one that is the culmination of all the things that are distinctive of those that come from Abraham: a Jew from birth, circumcised on the eighth day, family name recorded in the temple, showing a distribution of land, embracing all of what it meant to be Jewish. Jesus is also the fulfillment of a particular part of God's promise/covenant to Abraham and that is that all the nations of the earth would be blessed through the offspring of Abraham ([Gen 12:3](#)).¹ He also wanted to point out He was the direct heir to David, He's the branch that sprung of from the stump of Jesse ([Is 11:1&10](#)), He's the long awaited for descendent of David that would eternally be on the throne ([2 Sam 7:12-16](#)).² He is the inheritor of the throne and therefore through King Jesus rests all of Israel's future promises, and blessings, for when the King does well the people are blessed!

So the Sermon on the mount is a message to Jews first, but as Paul points out in [Romans 11:11-31](#) the Gentiles are now grafted in, because Abraham's descendants are related by faith, not just physical genealogy. This all means

¹ What is the Abrahamic Covenant? - <https://www.gotquestions.org/Abrahamic-covenant.html>

² What is the Davidic Covenant? - <https://www.gotquestions.org/Davidic-covenant.html>



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the audience is both Jew and Gentile, but the Gentile must learn through the sermon on the mount what it means to live under God's rulership, His Kingdom not there's. Recipients, first the Jews and then the Gentiles by Paul's decree.

Now let's talk about the intent, or what does it answer or why do we want to study it? Well let's go back to our text this morning and lean into those first two verses.

5 Seeing the crowds, he went up on the mountain, and when he sat down, his **disciples** came to him.

2 And he opened his mouth and taught **them**, saying:

Jesus is describing Kingdom Living in the SoM, to people He has already chosen by election to be in the Kingdom, the disciples. They were people that didn't have to do anything to get into the Kingdom, they were with Jesus, they were already in the presence of His world. As Matthew is reflecting on this a couple of decades in the future he sees now, as he is writing this account for the Jews and Gentiles that make up the church in Jerusalem, that he is describing what does it look like when you are already in the kingdom. He's viewing what the church looks like as he goes back and is writing out what Jesus is saying. **This is not a recipe to get into the community of the saints it is a description of those that are already in it.**

This SoM has been taken by the Social Gospel presenters for years now, as they try to use it as a format by which people should copy so that perhaps they will be good enough one day to be called a Christian. What's interesting is that Martin Lloyd Jones in the 50s found the same problem we are facing now. That the Social Gospel protagonists, liberal theologians, the progressives, tend to use this sermon to make people feel guilty because if you can define Christianity by rule following, then you can always hold something over someone's head by using the SoM as a measure for acceptance.

Here's what it is - The SoM is nothing more than Jesus explaining how it looks when you obey the command of loving God first and then loving others ([Mat](#)



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[22:36-40](#)). That's all it is but there is a hidden value in the SoM that we as Christians receive, when we begin to study it. We realize that to live this way is **impossible without the grace of God**, it is **impossible to be this way unless God is the one doing the changing**. So, it makes us pray more, cry more, seek forgiveness more, and fight our sin more but it also makes us rejoice more for a Christian knows that **to hate sin means that God is changing the heart, and that right there is assurance of Salvation!** We all must be confronted with the absolute audacity that it is impossible to accomplish these things found in His Sermon, but they must be done!

As well, when that is happening in the believer's life what a great witnessing tool that is! Nothing **propels the work of evangelism more than a poor in spirit person** that is trying to love people the best they can! When the world sees that it affects them!

It just so happens that Dr. Jones was also watching communism take over Eastern Europe, back in the early 50s, when he was writing out his sermon series on this teaching. He firmly believed that the only thing that can call young people away from the clutches of communism (or the lure totalitarianism of social governments in our day) is to see the sacrifice of Christ for them, and the love for others that it promotes. **True political change does not come through desires to promote social change by use of governmental force, but a true spiritual change WILL produce changes in our society deeply, having a longer-term effect, for the betterment of all.** That comes by the law of Christ, Love God with all you got and then love your neighbor as yourself!

The context is set now but it is not a road map on how to be a Christian. The SoM is a picture of someone living already in the Kingdom of Heaven. This image is what calls the world to come and see. Is that what your life is saying? Does your life reflect someone that has already found everything in Jesus? If not, hold tight Jesus will deliver you if you embrace His words as your Kingly deliverer.

2. Core of the Message – what is central to understanding the SoM.



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As always when you are doing an expositional study, and you are looking for a deeper understanding to what is going on you may need to jump back a few paragraphs and see if you can see the author's intent. In our case there was a specific reason as to why Matthew would want to write out a word for word recounting of the SoM. I believe you can find that simply by going back to Matthew 4.

Matthew 4:17 ESV

¹⁷From that time (right after his victory over His temptations and before His calling of the 12) Jesus began to preach, saying, "**Repent**, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

The first thing at the Core of the SoM is that there is a need to **REPENT**/μετανοέω (*metanoēō*)³, to change one's mind. It means that there was something in the people that they had put their hope in already. Jesus was calling them to not start living a certain way but to start believing that something was changing, they were in the presence of a New Kingdom.

The Gospels all capture what is the thing that needs to be turned from, and it was the **false religion of Judaism** and the teachings of the Pharisees that had taken OT covenantal law and burdened it with their own laws making it impossible for people to find God. The message of Judaism/Phariseeism was, *do this to be in God's good graces*, but Jesus was teaching that God's good grace has come to you, *the Kingdom is near not far!*

That speaks to the compassion of God, that He recognizes sin but still chooses to come to those that need Him. Jesus was always the best at seeing those that needed Him the most, those that needed the message of the Kingdom. It says in 5:1 that He was "*Seeing the crowds...*". Seeing - ὁράω (*horaō*): **pay attention to**, concern oneself with (Mt 9:30); **3. LN 32.11 understand**, as a result of a perception⁴. Jesus didn't just look at the crowds and was like, oh, I

³ L3972 ὁράω (*horaō*): vb.; ≡ DBLHebr 8011; Str 3708–1. LN 24.1 **see** (Ac 7:26; 13:31; 1Co 15:5–8; Lk 22:43 v.r.); **2. LN 30.45 pay attention to**, concern oneself with (Mt 9:30); **3. LN 32.11 understand**, as a result of a perception (Jas 2:24; Mt 12:25 v.r.; Lk 9:47 v.r.); **4. LN 34.50 visit**, go to see (Heb 13:23); **5. LN 90.79 experience** an event or state, the figurative extension of first entry (Jn 3:36); **6. LN 27.5 learn about**, acquire information (Jn 7:52); **7. LN 13.134 cause to happen** (Mt 27:4, 24) – Lesley DiFrancisco, "[Repentance](#)," ed. Douglas Mungum et al., *Lexham Theological Wordbook*, Lexham Bible Reference Series (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2014).

⁴ μετανοέω (*metanoēō*). vb. **to repent, change one's mind**. In the nt, generally refers not simply to changing one's mind but to turning back to God. ~ James Swanson, [Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains: Greek \(New Testament\)](#) (Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997).



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guess I better say something, or that he recognized this was a campaign stop. He saw the crowds, understood their plight, and reacted to it with this particular message. Now that is a message of hope, that is someone that you want to listen to, this man knows your plight, He knows you have been lied to, He knows that those in power are trying to use you, those who lord power over you, and because of that He is called to action for you, and He has the exact answer you need when you needed it the most! At the Core of the SoM is the message we all desperately need, that is, our Lord sees us and His Word still answers our deepest needs for the same way for the last 2,000 years – we must **REPENT!** So at this point keep in mind, that if you want to discern the SoM, seeing it has changed people for centuries, **you too most likely have something you need to Repent**, something you are holding onto, something you have put faith rather than in Jesus.

Also at the Core of this message is what Jesus starts the message with *Blessed*.⁵ μακάριος (*makarios*). adj. **blessed, happy, & fortunate**. He uses this word **9 times** in the beginning here with what we call the **Beatitudes**. The first section here, verses 3–11, are the most important of this three-chapter message, because if you miss dealing with these verses the rest of the SoM is hard to do. At the Core of this section on Christian Character is this word **blessed**, and it has such a deeper meaning behind it than at first glance, and it is absolutely central to understanding the SoM.

*“Nevertheless, it is seriously misleading to render **Makarios** as simply ‘happy’. For happiness is a subjective state, whereas Jesus is making an objective judgment about these people. He is declaring not what they may feel like (‘happy’), but what God thinks of them and what on that account they are: they are ‘blessed’.” – John Stott⁶*

⁵μακάριος (*makarios*). adj. **blessed, fortunate**. An adjective describing a person as experiencing positive circumstances or a happy disposition. This adjective is the usual Septuagint translation of Hebrew אֲשֶׁר ('*asrê*, “blessed is”). It is mostly used in the nt to introduce declarations of blessing, similar to the use of *asrê* in the ot. In the Beatitudes in Matt 5, Jesus declares that people who experience various kinds of difficulty or undesirable circumstances are in fact blessed by God (Matt 5:3–11; Luke 6:20–22). Here the contrast with apparently negative conditions sheds light on the nature of true blessedness. The word *makarios* can also be used to describe God as blessed (e.g., 1 Tim 1:11; 6:15). In at least a few instances, it refers to future favorable circumstances (e.g., Luke 14:14, 15). – Joshua G. Mathews, “[Blessing](#),” ed. Douglas Mangum et al., *Lexham Theological Wordbook*, Lexham Bible Reference Series (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2014).

⁶Stott, John R., [The Message of the Sermon on the Mount](#)/Revised Edition, (Downers Grove, IL: Inter Varsity Press, 2020), P.18.



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At the Core of the SoM, is that **God is the determiner of what makes you happy, not you.** We don't define happiness, God does. Why? Because people are carnal, and we are tied into flesh, God is of the Spirit and is tied into that which is eternal. Meaning what we think makes us happy are the things that make us content according to our physical appetites and stages of life. God instead looks at man's eternal soul and blesses him with the knowledge of their inability to find true joy in the flesh.

Not only that, when the joy of the Spirit comes first, Regeneration/Conversion, entrance into Kingdom living, then joy in flesh/or our physical lives can be achieved in the right way. Happy is the man that finds Himself in desperate need of His God for only then can he be truly happy! That's right, let me say it like this, **Misery is the gateway to happiness.** No one gets into this Kingdom thinking they don't need God, and I mean NEED HIM! *Not I was struck with a pain of guilt one day after a fine sermon and responded to an altar call,* I mean when a person finally gets to the end of their heart, has tried everything, sees they have no way to get to God, they keep failing, they keep falling, **Blessed is that person for now God can fill them up!**

Is that you!? If not perhaps it's just because you don't know what it took to get this message to you, to help you see it. It is in the act of selfless sacrifice that we see the need of getting this message right.

3. Care of the Messenger – what Jesus had to do to make this achievable.

Again, let's go back to who Matthew thinks Jesus is, to help explain what it was that Jesus was going to have to do in order to achieve the blessing of the SoM.

Matthew 4:14-16 ESV (see also [Isaiah 9:1-2](#))

¹⁴so that what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled:

¹⁵"The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali,
the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles—

¹⁶the **people dwelling in darkness**
have seen a great light,



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and for those dwelling in the region and shadow of death,
on them a light has dawned."

So, Jesus even being in the Northern country in Galilee is from a prophecy about the Messiah, and that's important we said to Matthew, he wants them to see this is the Christ. This prophecy also talks of a dark time, where the people are both oppressed, and they are without understanding. Jesus comes into the world as that great light to give hope and understanding. Now after the failure of the Hebrew kings, after the failure of Adam the first king, He now returns as that last King that is better than all that had gone before Him.

Matthew 2:6 ESV (see [Micah 5:2](#))

"And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;
for from you shall come a ruler
who will shepherd my people Israel."

And when a King comes, He needs an announcer.

Matthew 3:1-3 ESV (see also [Isaiah 40:3](#))

³ In those days **John the Baptist** came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, ²"**Repent**, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."³ For this is he who was spoken of by the **prophet Isaiah** when he said,
"The voice of one crying in the wilderness:
'Prepare the way of the Lord;
make his paths straight.'"

Jesus comes as the Lord Messiah and does the work of Salvation. He first encounters the Devil in [Matthew 4:1-11](#), faces the temptations, defeats the Devil by quoting God's Word showing the world that the Kingdom of God has come with full authority to take back His people! Jesus models now what it is to live for the Kingdom of God first, and He lives that way all the way through His earthly life. He does it so well that we are told He grew in perfection ([Hebrews 5:8-9](#)), making the light He shines in the darkness brighter and more glorious.



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He is the foretold shepherd [Isaiah 40:11](#), (*He will tend his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms; he will carry them in his bosom, and gently lead those that are with young.*) of which He claimed to be in [John 10:1-21](#), taking the place of the Pharisees. He enters Jerusalem at the end of His ministry seeing Himself as the King, "*Behold, your king is coming to you, humble, and mounted on a donkey.*" (**Math 21:5** fulfilling [Zech. 9:9](#) and Zech points out He is full of righteousness and Salvation).

He was high and lifted up, so as all could see the cost of the kingdom [John 12:32](#). Because again, the Lord cares about His sheep, the King has come to deliver to people His righteousness, and it was all done to give Salvation to His people, even when He was fully aware he would be rejected as He quoted [Psalm 118:22](#) about Himself in Matthew, "*The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone, this was the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes?*" (**Mat 21:42**)

So, the question I ask us all today, is not a simple **are we happy** with our lives, but I want us all to sincerely consider this inquiry this morning, **are we happy with Him?**

The care of the messenger is that Jesus was the Messiah, He saw Himself as that person, He knew He was the better shepherd for His people, all the while knowing He would be rejected at first, so that God may open the eyes of people to the value/cost of His life. Blessed is the man that sees, perceives/understands/moved to action because they were shown by God that Jesus Christ died for them to bring them into Kingdom life.

Getting this message right from the beginning is so essential for our lives. Jesus wants us to live being happy, **happy in Him**, but it does bring that necessary tinge of knowing you can't do this without Him. But accepting that fact shows you are learning the very important message today.

The Sermon on the Mount is not a Message of 'do this' to be a Christian, but it is a declaration that Christians are already this way.

[CHALLENGE]



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For the next several weeks perhaps, you need to look at where do you need to **repent** of something you put too much hope in. Is there something you go to all the time to make you happy, is there a habit, a person, a substance, whatever that is I want to remind you in Jesus' name, REPENT for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand and Jesus does want you to find it true happiness.

Are you fearful right now? Are you anxious about what is discussed around your dinner tables, do you find yourself avoiding meaningful conversations with coworkers or friends because you don't know what to tell them, that is because perhaps you are still seeking for the Kingdom? If so, then you absolutely know how to pray for yourself now, **open my eyes to see you Jesus**, and you know how to share that request with others in this room.

And if I can offer one piece of advice today, as we begin to study the SoM, remember don't try to take this as something you have to do this to become a Christian or at least become a better Christian. Start first with loving God and others ([Mat 22:37-40](#)) and ask Him to help you do that, and then watch as these chapters come to life in your life, and like me you will see the truth that it is God that is saving you by changing your heart.

Let's pray and ask God to open our eyes now to those areas we need to repent, and let's ask Him, I mean seriously ask Him, make us happy as you see fit for only by your will and grace are we truly blessed.

[PRAYER]

[CALL TO OBEY]

Beloved, **Psalm 37:4** tells us to "Delight yourself in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart." When we obey Him, when we find our joy in Him alone and conform our will to His, He stands ready to give us all that we could ever need or want. Family, may we all discover we have been 'blessed' by God.

[COMMUNION]



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Matthew 26:26-29 ESV

²⁶ Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is my body."²⁷ And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, "Drink of it, all of you,²⁸ for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.²⁹ I tell you I will not drink again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom."

Today when you eat of the bread remember all the things we talked about that Jesus did to display His care, for you. He did them perfectly, He did them to redeem you, He did it with no intent for repayment, He did them in place of your required obedience. Praise be to Him for His wonderful love.

Today when you drink the juice remember He paid the price for a broken covenant with His Father, with His blood. The blood of an eternal King, that will hold its' power for eternity, forever covering you, forever saving you. Praise be to Him for His wonderful love.

[CONFESSION OF FAITH]

* The Congregation will stand

London Baptist Confession of Faith 1689 Chapter 8, section 5
On Jesus' Accomplished Reconciliation

Elder – "Christians, what do you believe?"

Congregation recites:

By his perfect obedience and sacrifice of himself, which he offered up to God through the eternal Spirit, the Lord Jesus has:

- fully satisfied the justice of God
- obtained reconciliation
- and purchased an everlasting inheritance in the kingdom of heaven for everyone whom the Father has given to Jesus.



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32. Hebrews 9:14, 10:14; Romans 3:25-26

33. John 17:2; Hebrews 9:15

[OFFERING+LAST SONG] -

[BENEDICTION]

Go in the name of the Father, that elects to open the eyes of His children, so that they may see the glory of His Son, gifting them with eternal faith.

Go in the name of the Son, that lived a life displaying His love for His father and His people perfectly, forever securing their Salvation.

Go in the name of and power of the HS, that opens our eyes to this truth, that empowers us to live truly blessed lives, now go and share this good news with the world.



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