



## BELIEVERS CHAPEL

6420 Churchill Way | Dallas, Texas | 75230 | t 972.239.5371 | believerschapeldallas.org

The Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

Various

John Bunyan Conference, Lecture XIII

TRANSCRIPT

[Introduction of Dr. Johnson] Over supper this evening Pastor Rich Edwards, where are you? There he is. Brother Rich told us an interesting story, but it's actually a story that could be repeated many, many times over. He said that when he was young in the Christian faith, this was back in the early 60's. He was a new Christian. He was on ship in the U.S. Navy, and it wasn't a big enough ship to have a chaplain. And so it was asked who would like to lead in church services. And he got involved in that, and somewhere in that whole process he was learning the Christian faith from a tape ministry in Dallas, Texas. And who do you think was the speaker on the tapes?

Dr. Johnson holds the record for being the speaker who has spoken here the most years in a row. Each year we have you fill out a survey, and we ask for your input, your criticisms, and whatever about the conference, and any way we can help it. And each year we receive comments on the survey form about Dr. Johnson and they are always positive. And everybody for some reason really likes him. [Laughter] And I suspect it is not just because he's a nice guy, but he is a nice guy. How many of us have learned so much from him over the years, from the tape ministry from Believers Chapel, through reading his articles that he's written. His ministry has been wide, and it's been effective

and the Lord has used him, and we have been privileged to have him. And we are glad to have him back again this year. Dr. Johnson.

[Johnson Lecture] I can only imagine that Martha has been sending out requests for the tapes from Believers Chapel or writing comments and so on to have so many favorable comments [laughter] being made. And I'm not even sure about her to tell you the truth. [Laughter] But I do appreciate that, that at least I've lived long enough to appreciate what it is to be here and have an opportunity to preach to you from the word of God. I want to say something about a little book that has meant a good deal to me since I read it. And I'm told that there are a number of copies out there that have not been sold, which really is something of a scandal for this conference for Reformed theology, and you have not recognized good Reformed theology which is just sitting out on the table there, and no one has bought it. These books, they are not real expensive.

They are written by someone that you know and like, and I want to tell you that it has meant something to me, because there is a particular understanding of a certain part of Isaiah and the servant prophecy of Isaiah 52, 53 that I think is extremely clever, to use a British term for a good interpretation. And an interpretation, incidentally Tom, that has effectively given a response to some Scottish theologians who have sought to use some things in Isaiah 52, 53 to support an Arminian philosophy and the use of the Old Testament there. So I want to recommend *A Price for a People* by Tom Wells. It's simple, and Tom writes clearly and simply, the way everybody ought to write but few of us can, and yet at the same time deals with the issues that are significant. It's a pleasure to recommend that book, and as a matter of fact, I try to read everything that Tom does put in print for that very reason. I've found them helpful to me.

Now I must confess getting old is an interesting experience. [Laughter] And it's interesting for preacher too because you are not able to do what at one time you did from a physical standpoint, not able to do what you thought you were able to do from a

mental standpoint. And the problem of preaching to an audience of this, which is knowledgeable, is really something of a problem to us older servants of the Lord. I had a hard time deciding on what I should speak on. Well I've spoken here a number of times and so that eliminated a lot of things [Laughter] but I thought possibly something that might be useful might be apropos, something useful in the light of what is happening today in the Christian world. And my thoughts recently have gathered around the kind of theology that apparently has become very popular, openness theology.

It's remarkable to me that openness theology is the kind of theology that the premier, I guess we could see this; the premier Christian popular journal should be supporting it, pushing it, advertising it. For *Christianity Today* has been doing that through the articles that have been written. *Christianity Today* is not the only Christian support for openness theology, a number of books have been written on openness theology. In fact, I thought about just speaking on openness theology, but there were so many books I had to read before this conference before I felt I could feel I had a hand on everything that was being said, that I decided to push that aside and deal with one of the things that is characteristic of openness theology and it is freewill theism. And since freewill and the doctrine of freewill is so important for what we believe is the teaching of the word of God concerning Calvinism, sovereign grace, and related truths. That's what I would like to do in the time that is mine. I would like to speak to you on the subject of "Augustine, the Will, and Freewill Theism."

It is a kind of hot topic, and I've been reading a lot of books. I still have one or two more that I have not been able to finish. And I encourage you to read them yourself, because I think you'll have, ultimately if you keep the Bible before you and the truths of Scripture, you'll ultimately come to a proper negative response. It is an important topic. And it turns out that openness theology is an attack upon the determinism of Calvinism sovereign grace. And I think it's fair to call Calvinism, consistent Calvinism, as a truth with a strain of determinism within it, determinism in a good sense, although they like to

use it in a negative sense. And this attack upon Calvinism's sovereign grace and its concomitant doctrine, I think it's a concomitant doctrine of the bondage of the will, is extremely important. I've just been puzzled; to be perfectly frank with you, why there has been so much of a turn of evangelicals to this kind of theology. I don't want to guess as to why this is so. I feel that some of it is a simple reason, that is that we are living in a day in which the Christian church, inclusive of us here too; we are not reading our Bibles as much as perhaps as a body we at one time did. At least it seems that way to me, and in the church of which I am a member I think I can see the same thing transpiring. We just do not read the Bible like we should have, and so consequently we do not recognize things that really are a problem.

Now my quarrel is not with theism, because belief in one personal creator God distinct from the world is something that all of us probably in this audience would give adherence to. My quarrel with freewill theism is with the will part of freewill theism. And the reason I have a problem with it is because of its disharmony with the sovereignty of grace in human salvation. Now, I think I can best make the case, my case, against freewill theism by simply retracing the story of Aurelius Augustinus, Aurelius Augustine who was born in 354 AD and died in 430 AD, and his opponent Pelagius who was born around 354 AD and died around 430, a year or two perhaps after that, but the date is not certain.

Pelagianism is of course the product of Pelagius, and it is the daughter of legalism, which leads to deism. So let me start out by saying a few words about Augustine, the man and his career. And then I want to say a few words about the Pelagian doctrine of the human will. I know there are many of you here who know this subject perhaps better than I do, but there are many of us perhaps who need a review. And then I want to say a few words about the Augustinian doctrine of the human will from the standpoint of the Bible.

So first of all a few comments concerning Augustine, the man and his career. And this is only a reminder to some of you, and to others I hope it's at least an introduction to the chief features of one of the greatest of the theologians of the Christian church in spite of what we would now see as many failings. Augustine was of mixed Pagan and Christian background. His mother's name was Monica, and his experience has been so publicized that many people know his mother's name. It was Monica, and she was a Christian. Augustine was a rhetorician who lapsed into skepticism in 383 AD. He was born in 354 AD; he was converted to Catholicism in 386 in Milano, or Milan. He was thirty-two years old then when he was converted, that's encouraging for us who were converted a little later. I wasn't converted until I was twenty-five and I thought that was real bad. So I was converted younger than Augustine.

He was converted to Roman Catholicism in 386 in Milan and he had a most memorable conversion. And I'd like to read just a few things from his conversion. Some of you are very familiar with this, but some of you may not be. And so let me read just a few things with reference to it. Augustine in book 8, chapter 12 of his *Confessions* describes his conversion and the experience of it. "Having prayed to the Lord he prayed forth a shower of tears that admonished by a voice he opened the book and read the words of Romans 13:13 and 14." "Let us walk properly as in the day but not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy, but put on the Lord Jesus Christ and make no provision for the flesh to fulfill its lust." He said, "No further would I read, nor did I read, for instantly as the sentence ended by a light, as it were, of security infused into my heart, all gloom of doubt vanished away." He and Elipius a friend of his sought out Monica and told her what had happened and she rejoiced over the event, which really was an answer to the prayers of this godly woman.

Augustine by the force of his own place in history was a man divided by two doctrines, by the doctrine of the church which he received of his predecessors with all the faults of the situation in the church of his day, and then that of free grace, indispensable,

prevenient, irresistible, indefectible, which was his own according to Warfield who has written a very interesting section in his works on Augustine. As Warfield says, "Two children were struggling in my mind. As the bishop of Hippo he lived out his life to death on August 28, 4:30, 'in this simple framework.' In this simple framework was lived out the life of one who had been strikingly called, incomparably the greatest man who between Paul the Apostle and Luther the Reformer the Christian church possessed." So when we are talking about Augustine we are talking about a man who is tremendously important for the Christian church. After his conversion he became perhaps the most influential Christian of his day. He had been influenced by Catholicism's ecclesiology and now influenced by Protestantism's theology of grace.

In fact Warfield has some things to say about him in connection with that. He says, "Two children were struggling in the womb of his mind, there can be no doubt which was the child of his heart. His doctrine of the Church he had received whole from his predecessors, and he gave it merely the precision and vitality which insured its persistence. His doctrine of grace was all his own." And I think we'll see just only briefly in what I'm going to say, but you will see it very, very obviously if you will read a few of his treatises. "His doctrine of grace was all his own; it represented the very core of his being and his whole progress in Christian thinking consists in the growing completeness with which its fundamental principles applied themselves in his mind to ever department of life and thought. In his gradual subjection to them of every element of his inherited teaching it was inevitable, had time been allowed, that his inherited doctrine of the church too, with all its implications, would have gone down before it, and Augustine would have bequeathed to the Church, not 'problems,' but a thoroughly worked out system of evangelical religion." And again, the latter part of that statement is traceable to Benjamin Breckinridge Warfield who has written some significant things about him. So there were within him then two children, the child of legalism and the child of free grace. And the doctrine of grace became the overmastering doctrine of Augustine's life.

Now, let me say just a word about his opponent, Pelagius, again just a simple review. Incidentally if you know something about Pelagius you will find in a lot of modern day theology remnant of Pelagius constantly arising, for I have some friends who are good theologians. We frequently read the same things and I hear some of them saying, "What he says is just Pelagianism," and that is I think what anyone will experience if he learns what Pelagius believed and what he's reading in much of supposedly evangelical theology today. There are strains of Pelagianism that are just as common as anything in the doctrine.

Pelagius, who was he? Well he was a British monk and his name was Morgan. His name was related to the word for see, but his Latin name was Pelagius. He was a heretic who had arrived in Rome at the opening of the 5th century. The Pelagianism doctrine was related to the fact that Pelagius, a well educated Britain, had been trained in law. He was active in Rome in the years 383 to 409 or 410 AD. He denied the ruin of the race. He was inflamed by Augustine's prayers, particularly the prayer in which he said, "Give," as Augustine prayed to the Lord, "give what Thou commandest, and command what Thou willest." This was the essence of it. In fact when that prayer of Augustus was repeated by a person to Pelagius they got into quite a quarrel over it. And I imagine if it was modern times they would have gotten in a little fist fight over it ultimately as to what was ultimately behind it.

But at any rate, what Pelagius did was he denied the ruin of the race, inflamed by Augustine he prayed and inveighed against the implications of that statement of Augustine in his prayer. "Give what you command. Command what you choose." That's a marvelous little prayer isn't it? "Give what you command. Command what you will." The plenary doctrine of man was the doctrine of Pelagius. There are three corollaries, all might be sinless if they choose; all of us might be sinless if we choose properly. Second, no original sin; and third, no need for prevenient help for our weakness. No need for some ministry of the Holy Spirit, for example, to move us to right thinking in biblical

matters; Augustine, of course, believed something entirely different. He believed that the race was in bad shape.

And I wasn't going to tell you that I have read a prayer of Augustine, I think I had read this before but there are sometimes when things that you they particularly impress you and you remember them. I don't think I'll ever forget this prayer of Augustine, or this statement of Augustine I think I should say. Augustine has said, "Take away diseases, take away wounds, and there is no reason for medicine. If the great Physician came from heaven, a great sick man was lying ill through the whole world. That sick man is the human race." What a marvelous statement that is. I've read this half a dozen times to Martha already, she's probably sick of it. [Laughter] But I just think it, it just has gripped me tremendously, "Take away diseases, take away wounds, and there is no reason for medicine. But if the great Physician came from heaven, there is a great sick man was lying ill through the whole world. That sick man is of course the human race." Well I thank Augustine for that great thought.

Now in the third part of this message, I don't want to say finally, because I hope you're not going to get through with me in the next five or ten minutes. I want to go just a little longer. But I want to talk now about the Augustinian doctrine of the human will. After all this subject is always relevant. Every time a new generation comes we have to go back over the same kinds of things. It's relevant because it's related to the doctrine of the grace of God. Luther said, "If any man ascribe ought of salvation, even the very least of the free will of man, he knoweth nothing of grace, and he hath not learned Jesus Christ aright." I believe that. I think that's true to the New Testament, and it's so important for all of us.

There's a tremendous amount of difference between if you will and God makes you willing. And if we had time I'd like to turn to a few passages that have to do with us. I perhaps would just like to turn to one or two, but then I want to look at a few passages in a moment in order, but let me first turn just to John chapter 6, and if you want to turn



along with me it may be helpful. John chapter 6 and verse 44, you know the verse, and verse 65. Our Lord says, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day." "No man can come to me, unless the Father which hath sent me draw him." Do you see what that means? That there is no such thing as an independent coming to the Son of God, "No man can come to me." It's not "No man comes to me," "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." That's efficacious grace. That also is tremendously under attack today by freewill theists who do not like the idea of irresistible grace. They don't mind grace. They don't like irritable grace, but that's what our Lord speaks about. "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day."

And then 65th verse says, "Therefore said I unto you," the Lord's speaking, "that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father." There is a whole of difference, my Christian friends, between if you will and God makes you willing; all the difference in the world between if you will and God makes you willing. What the New Testament teaches is that it is God who makes us willing. There is no independent coming to the Lord God. "No man can come to me except the Father which hath sent me draw him."

I have a friend, I haven't seen him in a long time, but I know he's still living, and he knows I'm still living too. But he has a lovely little statement that he used to give so constantly, which was so wrong. [Laughter] He spoke about how people could of themselves independently get on positive volition. And in the case of people who were not living as they ought to in his mind. He was simply say, "They are not on positive volition." He was Arminian. He didn't know why, or at least he didn't want to recognize why they were not on positive volition. They're not on positive volition because they're on negative volition, that's why. [Laughter] And it's natural to us, and even after we have

become believers, negative volition is what we have to contend, and fortunately we can through the gifts that God has given to us.

So the condition of fallen man, well according to the Augustinian doctrine of the human will, sin has deprived man of the freedom of his will, hence he cannot respond favorably with that diseased, enslaved will. So he needs liberating grace. We know that liberating grace. You can find it in passages like Romans chapter 3 verse 21 through verse 24 and 25. I'll just read the verses. I'm not going to expound them, but in verse 21, the apostle after discussing the advantages of the Jew in the earlier part of chapter 3 then says, " But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." Well because of that there is a necessity of liberating grace. Grace is God's liberating agent. Prevenient, gratuitous, given on the ground of infinite undeserved measure, the gift of saving faith. Freewill, faith, grace coexist without voiding any of them. Warfield's statements regarding these things are worth reading. I suggest you look them up and spend some time with them. By freewill we believe that only when grace moves us do we use freewill in believing. Faith is then the gift of God.

Now what I want to do now is to turn with me to a few passages of Scripture. And I'm going to be looking at them as well. And first of all I'd like for you to turn to John chapter 3 and verse 27. In John chapter 3 and verse 27 John writes, "John answered and said, A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven." "A man cannot receive anything, except it be given him from heaven." I'm reading the Greek text. It may not be exactly what you have, but that's what he says.

John chapter 6, and verse 37. In John chapter 6 and verse 37 our Lord again is speaking, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me." It's important to be given to the Son by the Father isn't it? "Everything that the Father gives shall come to me, and him

that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." It's a very emphatic expression, who may with subjunctive. We all know if you've had a little Greek you know that's a very emphatic negation. And so he says, "I will by no means cast him out."

1 Corinthians chapter 4, verse 7. By the way if some of you have access to some of Augustine's writings, I suggest that you read some of his short treatises. For example, *The Spirit and the Letter* is one good one to read. There are six or eight of them in most editions. They are filled with Augustine's exposition of texts that touch on just what we are talking about now. And you'll understand why Augustine had such a tremendous influence on people. He was a biblical student as well as a theologian of his day. Now 2 Corinthians chapter 4 and verse 7, let me find it, you've already had a chance to find it, the apostle writes, "For who makes you to differ from another? And what do you have which you have not received?" Do you notice that? That applies to faith. That applies to saving faith. "What do you have which you have not received? And if indeed you have received it, why are you boasting as if not receiving it?" How true that is, do you see what he's saying? That what we have with reference to faith totally comes from God, so we remember that, we keep it always before us.

Ephesians chapter 2, verse 8 through verse 10, now I'd like to spend just a few more minutes on this, because it has been the subject of discussion in some of the recent books that have been written by freewill theists. The other day one young man who teaches, I assume he's a young man I haven't seen his name in things that are written having to do with New Testament exegesis up until a relatively recent time. But he has some things to say about Ephesians 8 through 10 that I think are, they come from a person who knows Greek, but I believe in this instance they are erroneous. Listen to what the apostle writes in Ephesians chapter 2, verse 8 through verse 10, "For by grace have you been saved through faith; and this," now I'm translating this literally, "this not of yourselves," not of you literally, "God's gift it is," emphasis on *theos*, God. "God's gift it is, not of works lest anyone should boast. For," and here the word *his* is emphatic, thrown

forward for emphasis, "for his work are we, created in Christ Jesus for good works," not by good works, "for good works, which God has prepared beforehand that we might walk in them."

Now, what I want to say about this text is simply this, that when he says "For by grace have you been saved, by faith, and this not of yourselves, it is God's gift." What's the gift? Well we are inclined to say the gift is faith, particularly if that's what we want it to say. And there is a little bit of question about the precise way to render this. Actually there is something of a little problem. If you are on the Arminian side I want to tell you exactly what I would say, because it has been said by some of them who know a little Greek. And what they say is simply this, the word for faith is feminine in gender *pistia* but now verse 8 says, "For by grace have you been saved through faith and this not of yourselves." But the "this" is the demonstrative pronoun which is neuter in general.

And there is one article, I thought this was kind of cute myself, having taught Greek for many years and even learned Greek in college before I was a Christian. I couldn't help but laugh about this because he thought he really had us, "For by grace have you been saved through faith," because his friends say the faith is the gift, the gift is faith. So he said, "Ah, but faith is feminine and the demonstrative pronoun is neuter, not feminine. And so if it's strictly a reference to faith the this should be feminine in gender." Do you see the point? He's right, he's right about that. But what he has forgotten is that the *toutos* is a demonstrative pronoun that refers more than to the word faith. It refers to the preceding statement. The preceding statement is, "For by grace ye are saved through faith," and this preceding statement about salvation through faith, this is that which is not of ourselves, it's the gift of God. It's not that faith is the gift of God; it's that the whole activity of salvation by grace through faith is the gift of God. The grace is the gift of God. The faith is the gift of God. The salvation that comes is the gift of God. So to use the neuter pronoun is exactly what Paul wanted to use and it works out fine. And my friend

is embarrassed or would have to be embarrassed. Faith is the gift. Salvation is the gift. In fact, the whole work is the gift of God, that's the point.

It almost a temptation to stop at that point, but I don't want to do it, because I want to make one point more. In chapter 6 in verse 23, I say one or two points more, in verse 23 of chapter 6 of Ephesians we read this, "Haste be to the brethren and love with faith." Notice that, "and love with faith from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." "Peace to the brethren, and love with faith from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." As you can see, the faith also is something that comes from God the Father; with faith the gift of God.

Philippians chapter 1, verse 29. I hope you don't mind this little exercise in just reading the text. It's even more effective when you're reading the original text, of course. But nevertheless the point's made in English as well, generally. Verse 29 of Philippians chapter 1, "Because it has been given to you on the behalf of Christ, not only to believe in him, but also to suffer in his behalf." Notice "it has been given to you," and that verb is the verb that means to give by grace, *charizomai*. So it has been given grace not only to believe on him, faith, faith is given. It has been given us as a work of grace to us, a work of grace on God's part to give us faith, to believe in him and to suffer for his sake. In other words, the gift of faith is something that one find throughout all the Pauline letters.

1 Corinthians chapter 7 in verse 25 the apostle writes, I hope you don't mind this. I like this because we're dealing now right with the text itself and what it says. That's so important to me, verse 25 of 1 Corinthians 7, "Now concerning the virgins, I do not have a commandment from the Lord. But I give an opinion as one who has been given mercy by the Lord to be faithful." Do you notice it, has been given mercy by the Lord to be faithful. That being faithful is the product of the gift of the Lord. This is not the triumph of man's freewill. This is something that has been given us of the Lord.

Now, you who are preachers of sovereign grace, if you are like I am, these things come to be things that are very precious to me. I must confess I love to come to these

texts which underline the fact that all that we have from the Lord God is the gift of divine grace. And it's something that we can really rely upon and say this is the word of the apostle of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ to me. Now, I want you to turn to another apostle, John. This is not something Paul is responsible for alone. He with the others belongs the same biblical apostolic truth. 1 John where does the work of salvation begin? What begins first, our faith or God's work? You know we naturally think that it began with us. I went to hear Donald Gray Barnhouse preach. I had been badgered by members of my family, and so I finally went. And you come home and you think, well I believed, I'm responsible for my salvation. I didn't feel that way because Dr. Barnhouse was a man who believed faith was the gift of God and underlined all of that. But it's so easy to think of salvation in that way.

Now 1 John chapter 2, verse 29 reads this way, these translations that I am giving are all inspired, you understand; [Laughter] inspired by an old man, not by the Holy Spirit. 1 John 2:29, "And now little children," I look out and I say, "Well there they are, the little children." "And now little children, abide in him. That if he shall be manifested," it could be rendered when he shall be manifested, "we may have boldness and not be ashamed of him at his coming. If you know that he is righteous, know also," you know, I'm reading the wrong text, but I think it's all right to go ahead and do it, "you know that he is righteous know that everyone who does righteousness," No I'm not reading the last word is the important one, "that everyone who does righteousness has been born of him." "Everyone who does righteousness," present time, "has been born of him." No activity of righteousness acceptable to the Lord is acceptable which has not been preceded by the new birth. In other words, there isn't anything that you or I can do until we've been born again that is pleasing to him. That's what John says plainly as day. "If you know that he is righteous, know that everyone who does righteousness, has been born of him," not is born, "has been born of him." Do you understand that? Well what you need is emphasis,

so turn over to chapter 4 and verse 7. [Laughter] I'm really treating you like kids now, but you are kids as far as I'm concerned. [Laughter] Maybe you're a kid in Greek.

But anyway, verse 7, "Beloved let us love one another, because love is from God and everyone who loves," here it is again, "has been born of God and knows God." "Has been born of God and knows God. But notice, everyone who loves has been born of God, there is no person who truly loves in the biblical sense who has not been born, has already been born of the Lord God. Do we get it? In other words, any act of love is the product of God. Any act of righteousness is the product of God. Oh, if Augustine only had known this, that is this one thing that I'm talking about.

Chapter 5, verse 1 the apostle writes, "Every one who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God." Now what comes first the new birth or faith? Which comes first? New birth, every one who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God. In other words, it's the work of the Holy Spirit preveniently to bring us to the knowledge that Jesus Christ is the Messiah, by the new birth as we then confess him as such.

Now as you can see there is no place for freewill, not the freewill of man. This is the sovereign will of God, over and over. It's rather striking that the Greek term in each of these three places is the same term, *genna* , same word, not even a different tense or form it's the same word, "Has been born of God." It's almost like John likes to repeat it, *genna* , *genna* . If you do righteousness in the biblical sense you've been born of God. If you believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God you have been born of God. If you have faith you have been born of God. I couldn't say than plainer than just to read those texts and point out that which the apostle is saying.

Augustine has not left us with no questions. Why has God delivered some and not others? I've been reading a couple of commentaries on Romans recently. I had the privilege of teaching the Epistle to the Romans, that is in the Greek text, about thirty plus times when I was doing exegetical work. So I'm fairly familiar with that text, but when a

new commentary comes out, I like to read it. I've been reading the commentary of the man who spoke to us last night over the last day or so. And there's another significant one that's been published by an evangelical, and there are questions of course that arise about a lot of things in the word of God. And you find that as people write further questions arise, and no doubt we'll find some other questions. But one question that has come up in both of these two new commentaries by evangelical men, and they have slipped in the words on Romans 5, is what Paul is talking about fair? Fair, now that's like a red flag to a good old Calvinist. Fair, where in the Bible do we have any statement to the effect that what God does must be fair according to human standards? So tomorrow I want to say something about that.

Augustine has left us with some questions. Why has God delivered some and not others? Well there are ways in which one may want to respond to that, and we all I think know something of that. Augustine himself didn't claim to know everything. I have a statement of his here that I would like to read for you, because it's rather an indication of how the man felt about things that all of us should feel about. I hope you don't get the idea that I think I know everything. I don't. Not by a long shot, although there are some things I think I know. But Augustine has an interesting statement. I close with this statement. He says, "And thus whatever it," he's referring to the soul, "whatever it possesses and whatever it receives is from God. And yet the act of receiving and having belongs of course to the receiver and the possessor. Now if any man should be for constraining us to examine into this profound mystery why this person is so persuaded as to yield and that person is not, there are only two things occurring to me which I should like to advance as my answer. 'Oh the depth of the riches,' and 'Is there unrighteousness with God?' If the man so displeased with such an answer," he is so displeased with such an answer, "he must seek more learned disputants, but him beware lest he find presumptuous ones." Not a bad way to remind us of Augustine's own humanity and frailty.



Well I think the apostle gives us some help in Romans chapter 5 and we'll talk about that tomorrow, the Lord willing. Thank you for staying with me for so long. It's a pleasure to me to point out that faith, trust in God, is the gift of God and we who believe are the recipients of a magnificent work of the triune God. That means our eternal happiness and salvation. Let's bow in prayer.

[Prayer] Father, we are thankful to Thee so much for the marvelous way in which the Holy Spirit guides us as we make our way through the word of God studying the things that the Spirit calls to our attention and giving us answers to questions that often trouble us. But we thank Thee too for those marvelous passages in which we find plainly set forth how gloriously and graciously Thou hast dealt...

**[RECORDING ENDS ABRUPTLY]**