

Do you need The Physician?

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Our text today will come from the Gospel according to Mark 2:17. I do stress the word Gospel. This is the Gospel. Mark 2:17,

17 When Jesus heard it, he saith unto them, They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

Let us pray.

Dear heavenly Father, we stand in dire need in this hour, we stand in need of thee, O Lord, to breathe life into our souls. Lord, I pray and I trust in this room thou hast thy quickened people, people, Lord, that thou hast chosen before the foundation of the world, chosen in thy sight. I pray and I ask, O Lord, that thou wouldst make us alive now in this hour and that thou wouldst speak to us and thou wouldst bring us to thy feet, that all the cares and concerns that we have with the world that we live in, for those whom we love, things in ourselves, that thou wouldst be pleased to clear our minds and bring us to thy feet that we would hear your voice, that we would hear the power of thee, Lord. Come to our souls to heal our souls as only thou canst. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

As I read this text this morning and I said at the beginning, this is truly the Gospel that Jesus spoke. "They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." And it seems odd to us because if you're like me and you read the Psalms a lot, David always talked about the righteous and he always talked about sinners but he talked about them in the opposite light. He talked about them being the righteous, being the people of God, and the sinners being the reprobate but Jesus when he addresses and answers the question of what the Pharisees and the scribes had to say, he switches that up. He says, "I did not come to call the righteous," and that challenges us this morning because we like to believe that we are righteous, we like to hope that we are righteous. So as we're brought to this verse this morning, we're challenged on what "the righteous" could mean and what the word "sinners" means. Clearly, I think by now hopefully as you know the Scripture that we're reading this morning, you know that the Lord was talking about those who were righteous in their own eyes and we'll talk more about that in a minute. Then as he referred to sinners, he was speaking of sinners that are saved by grace.

He calls himself a physician. He calls himself "the physician" to delineate, to make himself particular, to make himself singular in the physician that it takes to heal the soul. He is the physician.

As we look at this verse this morning, we are thrown upon the feet of the Lord and brought to the feet of the Lord to see the work of grace, to see the work and the humility of grace. As we read this passage in a moment, we'll see how and what context it was used and why Jesus said what he did. But Paul said in 2 Corinthians 3:5-6, "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves." When grace teaches a child of God, when grace does, the grace of Christ, when Christ works in the soul of the child of God, he is emptied of self. He is brought to the feet of Christ in a need, in a dire need, to hear the voice of the Shepherd and the Shepherd reveals to the sheep that in themselves they have no sufficiency. They have a need, they have a want, they have a necessity, they have almost an anxiousness and all of those things have to be answered by the Shepherd, will be answered by the Shepherd, the faithful Shepherd.

So Paul says, "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God." That's what grace speaks to the child of God. We get in many situations in this life where we need our own strength, we use our strength, we use our intellect, we use our mind, but the Lord is very faithful to his children and his sheep to show them that it's not their strength and it's not their intellect. We could be in the same situation in a week's time or a day later and not have strength and not have intellect and not have intelligence or not have wit or not have direction or not have... Why is this this way? Is it because we've been kicked in the head or we have amnesia or we forget everything? It shows us over and over and the word testifies to this, that we are dependent. We are not sufficient in ourselves, we're sufficient in another.

Paul said our sufficiency is of God and speaking of himself and speaking of the ministers of God, he said, "Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." Keep that in mind when we hear how we got to this point: the letter killeth. We know that the law of God slays the child of God. We know that, but so does the law of man, so does the fallen nature of man, the wisdom of man, the theology of man, the man-centeredness. For the child of God, it's empty husks because the Lord when he fills their soul, he shows them that the letter is what kills them, the "do this and live" no matter what man it is that tells them this, is empty profession to them because they must hear it from the Shepherd.

So as Paul says, "not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." That spirit that Peter said is the same spirit that filled the prophets of old, Peter said that same spirit goes all the way from the beginning of Genesis all the way through the book of Revelation and that spirit, he calls it, the spirit of Christ that filled the prophets, the spirit of Christ that spoke to David, the spirit of Christ that spoke to Noah, the spirit of Christ that spoke to Abraham. And you and I will be no different today. We must hear the spirit of Christ for it's the spirit of Christ that gives life. It's the spirit of

Christ that calls us away from the dead letter of life that's in our life every day because we are fallen creatures.

Paul said later in Romans 5:8, "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." That gives us a little insight into our passage today that Jesus came to save sinners. He came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance. And as I said, when we look in the word and we see the word "righteous" sometimes, we see, "Wow, that's the way I want to be." And David as he spoke of the righteous, he was speaking of those who were righteous in Christ, that same spirit that spoke to David that was in David, the spirit of Christ. That's the seed of Christ that all of his children have throughout all the ages and will past, present and future. The spirit of Christ, it's what's unites the people of God together. It's how the people of God can communicate with one another. Have you ever tried to, if you or if you have the spirit of Christ and you're caught up in the spirit of Christ, have you ever spoken to those that may be walking after the flesh but are the people of God? It doesn't go well. It doesn't because the unity that Christ has for his church is in him alone and that unity has to spread throughout the people of God just as he has throughout all the ages.

That's what we'll see in this passage. If you would turn with me, we're already in Mark 2, start with me back now up in verse 13, right after Jesus healed the one that had palsy that they let him down through the covering and Jesus beheld him and healed him. In verse 13 it says, "And he went forth again by the sea side; and all the multitude resorted unto him, and he taught them." They came to Christ over and over while the Lord was here on the face of this earth and they wanted to hear what he was teaching. Some wanted to hear it because they never heard anything like that before. Some heard because all the masses were coming so they all followed them and they said, "Well, we want to hear him." But as Jesus continued to preach and to teach, we're told later in the Gospels that many decided not to go with him anymore because they started to really hear what he was saying and to start to take what he was saying and to formulate it with the sight that they had and the knowledge and theology that they had at that time and that's death. Death because the Lord had not prepared that heart with grace; had not given that heart grace to receive him.

So we have many and he came and he taught them. "And as he passed by, he saw Levi," we know Levi by the name Matthew. Matthew's name meant "gift of the Lord." Gift of the Lord, meaning grace of God being upon Matthew. Matthew, for you to be called Matthew to come after me, to hear my voice, to hear the power of the Shepherd, is a great gift of the Lord and that's what we see here in 14.

"And as he passed by, he saw Levi the son of Alphaeus sitting at the receipt of custom, and said unto him, Follow me." He did not persuade him in doctrine. He did not try to tell him the way. He with power came to the soul and this is how Christ work sin his people, he comes to their soul with power and says, "Follow me." And as he does that, Matthew's life that he sat at the receipt of custom, as he was a tax collector, as he was looked upon as the scourge of society by the Jews because he was hired by the Romans to take taxes and they were dishonest, they exacted more taxes upon the people so they were hated.

The Pharisees hated them. The scribes hated them. All the religious men hated them. And yet the Lord looked at one and he said, "You're my child," and he called him away from that life of deceit and he called him away and he said, "Follow me." And that's it. That's how powerful grace is. That's how irresistible grace is.

And as the Lord called him and said, "Follow me. And he arose and followed him. And it came to pass, that, as Jesus sat at meat in his house," in Matthew's house. Matthew threw a feast because he was so happy, he was so thankful. He had been called away from a life so who did he invite? The people that he knew. He wanted the people around him to know what grace had done in his life, what the power of the Gospel was in his life. So he called all of those that he knew: publicans and sinners. Publicans that are looked at as the scourge of humanity and sinners.

Well, what made them sinners? What made them sinners? The Pharisees and the scribes and the religious world looked at them and they said, "You don't follow the law of God and because you don't follow the law of God, you're an outcast, you're a sinner. You've been caught in this." Or as James tells us in the book of James, we're not to look upon those that are in really good apparel and look at them and say, "Oh, that one must be shown favor. We must be very nice and loving to them because look how well dressed they are." That's not how, the Lord looks on the heart. We have to be very careful of that, that as we entertain people in this life, that as they come up to us or as we see them, we judge them based on our conceived notions of how they look or how they should look or what box we put them in.

So Matthew, "as Jesus sat at meat in his house, many publicans and sinners sat also together with Jesus and his disciples: for there were many, and they followed him." So here we are at the table. Jesus is sitting with his disciples and he's surrounded by what we're told in the word of God, sinners and publicans.

"And when the scribes and Pharisees saw him eat with publicans and sinners, they said unto his disciples," and there is a big uproar, "We can't stand for this." So they don't go to Jesus, they go to his disciples and they said to him, "How is it that he eateth and drinketh with publicans and sinners?" If this one is the Messiah, how is it he can't tell that those people are the scourge of the earth? We can tell that. We've deemed them unworthy to sit with. We've deemed them and so the Pharisees who believed that God's grace only extended to those who kept God's law by their own obedience, understand that, it wasn't that they didn't believe in grace, they believed that grace came to those who kept God's law and if they pronounced them sitting in there, "You're not keepers of God's law, clearly you can't be saved by grace. Matthew, you can't be saved by grace because you're not a keeper of the law. You've been exacting these taxes upon us. You've been doing these wicked things." And we look at the outwardness of man and we look at those and we say, "The way that you're a sinner, there is no way you can be a child of God." And I tell you just as humbly as I can, I am so thankful that the Lord doesn't look at his children that way. He remembers our frame that we are dust and he came to save sinners.

But they asked this question, "How is it that he eateth and drinketh with publicans and sinners? When Jesus heard it, he saith unto them," this is our text, "They that are whole have no need of the physician." Jesus calls himself the physician. We got a glimpse of that earlier in the Old Testament when Jesus was referred to as Jehovah Rophe, the Lord who healeth us. The Lord who heals his people. Exodus 15:26 says, the Lord said, "If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the LORD thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians," now I love this last part. Just when the law mongers come up and all the obedience people come up and they say, "See, God is requiring perfect obedience," and you're right, he is but it was required in his Son. His Son's perfect obedience is what the child of God can only rest in. The perfect obedience of another. Our sufficiency is not of ourselves, it's of God. And as that was said, the end of this verse says, "for I am the LORD that healeth thee." Well, why would you need to be the Lord who healeth thee if you just gave a commandment that man can keep to do all of these things perfectly? Why would you need to be one who heals? Because the children of God are sick. They are very sick.

The Lord refers to himself as the physician because he is the only physician. "They that are whole," whole in themselves, "have no need of the physician." I pray the Lord in this hour reveals to us how we're justified. Are we justified by what we do? Are we justified by our own minds and how we've obeyed? Are we justified by what we do for the Lord? Is there a mixture of grace and a mixture of what we do? Because if there is, your justification is in yourself, it's not in one who has done all things for you.

We're shown that we're in need of the Lord to stand in our place, of a Lord who has stood in our place, who has indeed incurred the wrath of sin upon sin, because if you're like me and you're sitting in here today, and I pray that I am speaking to sinners, I pray that I'm speaking to the sinners that are mentioned in this passage today, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." If that is the case, we are in dire need to see the one who has stood in our place, who has paid the debt for those sins, to see what the Lord has done. We'll get to that in a minute and how the Lord produces this in the child of God.

Hold your finger there first and turn with me over to Galatians 2. Our old nature must be crucified. It must be put down. It must be put to death and we must be emptied. That's the whole point of this. We have these ones, the religious man coming and saying, "O Lord, why is it you do these things? It's not just in our eyes. We've kept this." We talked about this the last time I was up here, we talked about this one who came to the Lord and said, "I've kept all of these things from my youth up," but the Lord looked on the heart and there was something deficient in him and that deficiency can only be made up by the sufficiency that's in Christ. Do you today have a deficiency? Is it called sin? Is it something that plagues you day in and day out, and as you wrestle with it, as you wrestle with the wicked one who takes that sin and tells you, "See? You're condemned. See? You're not God's child. See? You keep doing these things over and over again." Has the Lord answered him? Has the Lord come up and answered him and said, "I have died for this one?" As we read in Zechariah a couple of weeks ago, that he said for Joshua, "This one is mine, a brand pulled out of the fire. I have pulled him out of the fire of death and

hell. He is saved by my grace. He is saved by my blood which has covered a multitude, all of his sins." That's the physician. That's the balm that answers the question, "Is there any balm in Gilead?" the prophet said. "Is there anything that can heal the people of God?" Yes, Jehovah Rophe says, there is a balm. It's my blood.

In our minds where we have this warfare every day and we seem to lose it a lot of times, the battles, the battles in our mind that tells us we're not God's children, if we were we wouldn't have this battle or we wouldn't still have these thoughts or we wouldn't still... But has he ever fought for you? Has he ever said to you that you are not guilty? That's what justified means, you're not guilty because of him. And how are we justified?

But let's look at Galatians 2, chapter 2, let's start in verse 16. "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ." That right there, Paul just separated our whole argument in our text today. Why did the Lord come to save sinners? Well, they're saved by the faith of Christ. They are revealed that Christ is salvation. It's not by their works. That's what Paul is saying. A man is not justified, he's not proclaimed not guilty by the works of the law, by obedience, by "this is what I've done for you, Lord." Remember, the Son of Man said, "I came not to be ministered to but to minister." To minister grace. To minister power. To minister life to his people. He doesn't need you to minister life to him. He doesn't need you to tell him how obedient, how perfect and how holy you are. Our holiness is in Christ and Christ alone.

"Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified." And we know that. We know that the Scriptures say, "If you are going to live by the law, you must keep every law." That's what he revealed to the rich young ruler. He met him on his terms. "You want to believe, you want to approach me by keeping the law, then keep them all," because we know that the Scriptures tell us the transgression of one law is enough sin to damn us for eternity and that's what we're guilty of in the fall. That's what we are all in Adam. We're conceived in iniquity. We have to have the righteousness of another. We have to have the obedience of another. We have to have the one who has fought for us.

"But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is therefore Christ the minister," or the author, "of sin? God forbid." As we seek to be justified by Christ, and isn't that interesting that he uses that terminology because Paul knows fallen man. He knows what the propensity of the religious man is. "I must be justified with Christ. Here's how I can do it. What must I do?" There are a lot of "I's" and we're going to hear some "I's" here in a minute.

"But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners." That's what the Lord does, he brings us to the end of ourselves. You can't justify yourself. That's what the Holy Spirit does. The Lord said he will convince you of sin. He convicts the child of God of sin. He says, "Thou art the man." He convinces us of the righteousness of Christ. It is the righteousness of Christ that saves you, that you must be

wrapped in. He convinces us of judgment, the Lord's judgment upon sin, the Lord's judgment upon his enemies, the Lord's righteous judgment in life. And those are three things we're in dire need of every day and we're told the Holy Spirit does that, and here Paul is talking about us wanting to take the place of the Holy Spirit and saying, "I can do this of my own."

If we do that, "is therefore Christ the," author or the "minister of sin?" Did he bring that in? "God forbid." That's our own fallen nature. "For if I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor." It's a sin to continue to seek God on this plateau, to come to Christ saying, "This is what I bring to you. This is what I've done for you." That hymn, "Nothing in my hand I bring/ Simply to thy cross I cling," how true that is. Is that true for you today? "I have nothing in my hands." I'm not as Cain comes up and says, "Lord, accept this. Look what I've done for you today." And the Lord said, "I don't accept it. It's not of faith." Abel sacrificed and we're told it was given in faith. How did Abel know that the shedding of blood is what the Lord required for the remission of sins? How did he know that? It wasn't on any record of that time. It wasn't. The Lord revealed it to him. That's what Hebrews tells us. By faith. It's all of him. So we see our dependency over and over again. I pray today you see that same dependency.

"For I through the law am dead to the law." We're slayed by the law. When we try to keep the law, the law is so righteous and holy. Don't ever walk out of here thinking the law is bad. It's righteous. It's holy. It speaks of the holiness of God but we in our unlawful use of it, try to obtain and approach God based on his holiness. We cannot do that.

"For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God." Then verse 20 which I've said to you many times is probably one of, if not the most special verse to me in my soul because when the Lord brings me here, he shows me everything that I've been speaking about today. My sufficiency is in him. "I am crucified with Christ." When Christ died for me, I was in him. I was crucified and I look in my life and I say, "Lord, have I been crucified to the things of this world?" And I have to say by faith, yes. Do I still struggle with them? Yes, but do I want them in my life? No. No. I see them as wicked. I see them as estranged from my Lord. I see them that they have nothing to do with him and his holiness.

"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I," these are these "I's" I was telling you about. It is not I, Paul said, it's not me. It's not my life going forward. It's not my life that I'm living here. That is what crucifixion in the soul is, death to self. That's what Jesus said, "I came to save sinners. I didn't come to call the righteous who are whole in their own eyes." And yet we have seen the depth of grace in the word of God where he has called some of those, hasn't he? But he changed that whole mindset. He brought Saul off of that horse and threw him down to the earth and brought him to his knees and to cry out to the Lord to save him, save him from what he believed at one time was the highest righteousness that he could attain to, and it ended up being all dung to him. Nothing. Waste. May the Lord bring us there if he hasn't already. And if he has, to rekindle that. To breathe life on us today to reveal the depth of grace and the sweetness and the amazingness that grace is.

"Yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God." I live by Christ's faith. I live by Christ in me. Not by some creed. Not because somebody told me how to live. Not because I've read some book, because I've followed this. Not because I have an instruction manual. I live by the faith of the Son of God. But why? Because he "loved me, and he gave himself for me." That is the life of the child of God is the love and sacrifice of Christ and that's what gives us life.

Therefore, 21, "I do not frustrate the grace of God," by mixing the law and works, by saying there's something I must do, I have to. No. My sufficiency is in the Lord Jesus Christ. My rest is in the Lord Jesus Christ and for me to say otherwise and to do otherwise and to think otherwise frustrates the grace of God. Does it make it go away? Does it make of no effect? No. It pollutes it on our end, not on the sovereignty of the Lord's depth and saving through grace.

"I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain." Because Christ was the end of the law. He was the end. He was the fulfillment of it. Everything is fulfilled in Christ, my Lord, and his righteousness must be imputed to me to have any righteousness at all. And I'll tell you something, that's proved out in my life every day to have no righteousness in myself. Nothing at all to call my own that's worthy of the blood of Christ, that's worthy of Christ's great sacrifice for my soul for the salvation of me. This is what justification is, that Christ justified my life because my life is hid in him and he has said, "Shawn, you're not guilty. Not because of anything you've ever done or anything you've ever thought or anything you will do, but because of what I've done." Paul said in Romans 3:4, being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. In Christ Jesus is our redemption. In Christ Jesus is our repentance. That's what he came to call sinners to, repentance. We're going to talk about that more here in a second.

In Acts 13:39, Paul said, "And by him all that believe are justified from all things," all that believe, "from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." Our justification is in him. Romans 4:8 says, "Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin." And do you know why he doesn't? Because we're justified in the Lord Jesus Christ. He has covered that sin.

And how does he do this? Well, turn with me over to Zechariah 12:10. I can think of no better place than to show this picture of how the Lord brings a sinner to the end of himself and brings him to see the redemption that's in Christ. Zechariah 12:10 says, "And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem," that is, the people of God, "the spirit of grace," that's how we know it's people of God, "the spirit of grace and of supplications." You notice how those two go together. So when the Lord pours upon the spirit of grace upon his people, they supplicate. They pray. They cry out unto him. They commune with him. That's what grace does, it brings us to the throne. It brings us to commune with him. That's how we call out to him.

"And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced." Whom they have pierced. I didn't come to call the righteous, I came to call sinners to repentance. This is how. He pours upon us the spirit of grace. He shows us remorse. He shows us sadness. He shows us to call out and say, "Lord, I've done this to you. It's my sin that's put you up there. You died for my sin." Only the Lord can bring a sinner to the end of himself that way. We have certainly known, seen and actually experienced in our own selves the opposite of trying to say that we're sinners when we haven't had the work of grace teaching us that we are. "Oh, that's right, I'm just a sinner. I'm just the chief of sinners like Paul." But Paul under the power of the Holy Ghost was shown that he was a greater sinner than anyone else in the world. That's what grace and the power of the Holy Spirit does in the soul, he convinces us of the wickedness of sin and what sin's price is and what sin's cost is.

"They shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn." That's the bitterness of the gall of sin, to know what sin's price was, to see that Christ died in your place. You say, "Oh, my goodness, are we left there?" No.

Look at 13 in verse 1, "In that day," in the work of the Lord's power, in the day of the Lord's power when we're revealed the sinners that we are, "there shall be a fountain opened to the house of," the same ones, "the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness." The Lord's plan of redemption is to reveal it, not to leave us in the gall of sin, in the bondage of sin, but to reveal the great sacrifice that he has done that all glory and praise and honor belong and go to him. Great things he hath done.

By his stripes we are healed. Isn't that what Isaiah said? By his stripes. By him on the cross. It just doesn't seem right, does it, that because of a crucifixion we've been healed? Because of blood flowing we've been healed? Yes, because of the one who we are justified in. And praise be to God that salvation is this way; that he has made every provision for you and I and all of the people of God no matter what age they live in. It's the same salvation. We all have the same salvation, the same faith, the same redemption, the same resurrection, the same life is in Christ.

Now turn with me to our last stop which you probably thought we were headed here today, of course, Luke 18. The Pharisee and the publican. I know we've been here many times from up here in this pulpit, various ones of us, to describe the work of grace upon one and the work of religion on another.

Chapter 18, verse 9 says, "And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves." Isn't that what we just heard today is that the Lord Jesus Christ came to save sinners? He didn't come to call the righteous, he came to call sinners to repentance.

Well, what are the righteous? What are the whole? Jesus says again, "which trusteth in themselves that they were righteous," and it causes you to "despise others." Isn't that what

we saw throughout the Pharisees? They despised so many people. They despised Christ for the same reason, "We are so much holier than you are. We can see man for what they are and you can't."

"Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican." And the Lord uses a publican again because they were the scourge and that's how man looked at them. "Oh, my goodness, a publican. You can't be saved." This is the depth of grace again.

"The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself," don't miss that, he prayed within himself. He prayed of himself. This is the offering of Cain. This is what I have, it's not of faith. "God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are." What, you're not a sinner like others are? Absolutely not. I have merited a higher place in your kingdom. I have merited a much better place than that guy over there. Listen to what I've done.

"I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican." He's so deceitful. He takes money from people. I would never do that. I would never sin the way that he is.

"I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess." You say, "Wow, what a really righteous person. He's so righteous in his own eyes." Well, may the Lord judge us in this hour to how we look upon not only others but ourselves. "O Lord, this is what I've done this week. This is what makes me righteous when I'm looking at others and I say, 'Well, I go to church. I'm here today.'" Well, the Lord looks on the heart. The Lord looks on the heart. Sometimes the unction isn't given in the life of his children, the bruised reed, the smoking flax is hurting, but the Lord's enough. We may not see the outward work of the Lord but the work in the soul is enough because the one who does see it is the one who authored it.

"And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven." He had no justification to be there. None. "I have no reason to be here. I'm a thief. I'm a sinner." That is when the Lord opens your eyes to who you really are. The filthiness of the flesh, the filthiness of what you are without grace.

"Would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner." I will pour out upon my people the spirit of grace and supplication. He poured out upon him the spirit of grace to cry out to the Lord, "God, be merciful to me a sinner." Sometimes we get it backwards by thinking we have to fight with him, we have to bring some kind of strength to the battle, but the Lord empties us to show us, "God, be merciful to me a sinner. Mercy is in your hands. Salvation is in your hands. Deliverance is in your hands."

Jesus said, "I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other." Why? Because he was justified in Christ. He was justified in the finished work of Christ who brought him to himself, brought him to his throne to cry out for grace, and the works

of man and the religion of man and the high-mindedness of man is left behind to justify themselves.

"For every one that exalteth himself shall be abased." You say, "Well, we're not told this one went away abased." Well, he will be.

"And he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." We just heard how that happened. We know we can't humble ourselves and we know we can't pull ourselves off of a high horse. You see, the Bible and the word of God talks about sensible sinners, those that were like Manasseh who burned his own children and offered them as sacrifices to a false god and the true God brought him to repent, to cry out for salvation and Manasseh is praising God in heaven. Mary Magdalene who had seven devils, you understand that means the perfection of the devil was in her. The perfection of the devil, she was a perfect devil. That's powerful and the Lord brought her to his feet. The Lord's grace saved her. We have Saul who persecuted the church, who put many of God's people and railed upon them but the Lord by grace brought them to the end of themselves.

Our text one more time, "When Jesus heard it, he saith unto them, They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." May the Lord call us today to repentance, to seek his face, to cry out to him by the great spirit of Christ that brings us to the end of ourselves and causes us to cry out to him. It's that faith we've been talking about, to live by the faith of the Son of God. We need him and I know words are cheap so I pray the Holy Ghost reveals to you in this hour your need of him.

Dear heavenly Father, may you add thy power to the souls of thy people for the glory of thee and for your name's sake. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.