

Sunday Service ~ October 26, 2025

Service for Swansea & Charlestown Presbyterian Church

Welcome & Prayer

"If the LORD had not been on our side— let Israel say— ² if the LORD had not been on our side when people attacked us, ³ they would have swallowed us alive when their anger flared against us; ⁴ the flood would have engulfed us the torrent would have swept over us, ⁵ the raging waters would have swept us away. ⁶ Praise be to the LORD, who has not let us be torn by their teeth. ⁷ We have escaped like a bird from the fowler's snare; the snare has been broken, and we have escaped. ⁸ Our help is in the name of the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth."

Let us pray. Dear Lord and Father of mankind thank you that we can come to you for help in our time of need. We come this morning to praise you for your power and for your passion, your sovereignty and your sincerity, your faithfulness and your fellowship, your control and your care. Where else can we go to for help? Who else is able to save us from our sin? From ourselves? From our world? From all that is around us? But you. You alone are worthy of our worship. You alone are the one we want to live for. You alone are the one whom we can trust. So, we turn away from all other distractions and come to you. We place our sins before you and ask for forgiveness. We offer ourselves to you as living sacrifices, wholly & pleasing to you and you alone. May this be our spiritual act of worship this day & may you again become our God, our father and our friend. Amen.

Song – 10,000 reasons

[Matt Redman - 10,000 Reasons \(Bless The Lord\) \(Lyrics And Chords/Live\) - YouTube](#)

Chorus Bless the Lord O my soul

O my soul

Worship His Holy name

Sing like never before

O my soul

I'll worship Your Holy name

2. You're rich in love

And You're slow to anger

Your name is great

And Your heart is kind

For all Your goodness

I will keep on singing

Ten thousand reasons for my heart to find

1. The sun comes up

It's a new day dawning

It's time to sing Your song again

Whatever may pass

And whatever lies before me

Let me be singing

When the evening comes

3. And on that day

When my strength is failing

The end draws near and my time has come

Still my soul will

Sing your praise unending

Ten thousand years

And then for evermore.

Bible Reading – Romans 2:17-29 (NIV)

"Now you, if you call yourself a Jew; if you rely on the law and boast in God; 18 if you know his will and approve of what is superior because you are instructed by the law; 19 if you are convinced that you are a guide for the blind, a light for those who are in the dark, 20 an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of little children, because you have in the law the embodiment of knowledge and truth— 21 you, then, who teach others, do you not teach yourself? You who preach against stealing, do you steal? 22 You who say that people should not commit adultery, do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples? 23 You who boast in the law, do you dishonour God by breaking the law? 24 As it is written: "God's name is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you. 25 Circumcision has value if you observe the law, but if

you break the law, you have become as though you had not been circumcised. 26 So then, if those who are not circumcised keep the law's requirements, will they not be regarded as though they were circumcised? 27 The one who is not circumcised physically and yet obeys the law will condemn you who, even though you have the written code and circumcision, are a lawbreaker. 28 A person is not a Jew who is one only outwardly, nor is circumcision merely outward and physical. 29 No, a person is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is circumcision of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the written code. Such a person's praise is not from other people, but from God."

Announcements

Focus for Month: Godly Households. We should strive for a godly household because it becomes a living testimony of Christ's love and truth in action. When our homes reflect God's grace, forgiveness, and faithfulness, others are drawn to see how the gospel transforms everyday life. A Christ-centred family creates a nurturing space where faith can be strengthened, shared, and passed on to future generations.

New City Catechism: Question 44. What is baptism? Baptism is the washing with water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; it signifies and seals our adoption into Christ, our cleansing from sin, and our commitment to belong to the Lord and to his church. **Bible Passage – Matthew 28:19** *"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."*

Fitout of new redevelopment. We are now (hopefully) in the last 2 months of the build. The COM on Wednesday endorsed a list of jobs we want to do (mainly in the new hall and Church) once we have received the keys from our builder and prior to moving back in. Some of these jobs will involve skilled labour and others unskilled labour, so there should be a job for us all. In the next few weeks we will be getting quotes and chasing up options with the hope that on the last Saturday in November and first Saturday or two in early December, we can all come together to complete the fit out of the new hall and Church, a lot of painting and a myriad of other jobs. Please join us when and if you can.

Parsons. It is so great that the Parsons are able to join us today for all three services and during the week at a number of our home groups. We have been long term supporters of the vital work that they are doing in Japan, helping the local church preach the gospel in a very difficult environment. If you would like to support them prayerfully or financially now would be a great time to do so.

Church Picnic: Sunday 26 October Today we are having a church picnic @ Harold Wesley Knight Reserve, Whitebridge. There is an enclosed kids' playground and an adjacent oval, with a Foodworks and a café around the corner. Bring your own lunch, hat, picnic blanket/chairs. Meet at the park from 12:15pm. A great way to spend time with Steve and Sandra Parson and get to know some of the new people who have joined our church recently. Inquiries - Simon M.

Youth and Young Adults Worker. We hope to complete the interviews of all four applications by this week. A name will be recommended to Session on Sunday for the final decision. Hopefully we will be able to announce the successful candidate in the next week or so.

Resource. Hunter Gospel Ministries runs an annual 2 days of bible teaching to help preachers and teachers get to grips with a book in the bible. This year it is Colossians and we have Ian Smith from Christ College leading us in our discussions. It will be held on Wednesday 12th and Thursday 13th November. Early bird end today. Discount for all those under 23 years of age. See Stephen for more details.

Complementarian Seminar. All invited to a seminar as to what complementarianism (men and women are equal in dignity & worth but complementary in roles, skills, wisdom and insight) looks like within our Church. They will be held on

Sunday 2nd November at Charlestown school from 11:30am to 12:45pm
and again at 3:45-5pm

Wednesday 5th November at Swansea Presbyterian from 9-10:15am.

Next AM Sermon Series: Romans 1-8 ~ God's Unstoppable Gospel

2.11 **God's great exchange – Romans 3:21-31**

- 9.11 **The faith that saves** – Romans 4:1-25
 16.11 **A matter of life and death** – Romans 5:1-21
 23.11 **Breaking free from sins chains** – Romans 6:1-25

Pastoral Prayer

Pray for Compassion. Gracious Father, we thank You for the work of Compassion Australia in bringing the love of Christ to children in need. Strengthen their ministry with faithfulness to the gospel, that both physical and spiritual needs would be met in Jesus' name. May many come to know the riches of Your grace and the hope of eternal life through their witness and care.

Pray for Vietnam (Population 99 million, Christians 10 million) Local authorities crack down on Christian meetings, evangelism, or Bible teaching. They may break up church services and **detain, threaten, fine** and sometimes **imprison** church leaders, ordering them not to speak about Jesus anymore. Ask God to comfort Vietnamese Christians who are oppressed and attacked for their faith. Pray for blessing on the work of overseas mission organisations as they help with Bible distribution. Pray that the believers gathering in unregistered churches can follow Jesus freely.

Pray for our school and university students. As term 4 means exams for most students, please pray that they might get the balance right between study, work and play. Pray that each student can keep their eyes fixed on Jesus during this stressful time. Pray for those finishing school or university that you would open the door for them helping them to understand the next step that you wish for them to take.

Pray for the children of Christian parents. Heavenly Father, we pray for the children of Christian parents as they grow up in a world that often rejects Your truth. Guard their hearts and minds by Your Spirit, that they may stand firm in Christ and delight in Your Word above all else. Strengthen their faith so that they shine as faithful witnesses, bringing glory to You in every place You send them

Song – Facing a Task Unfinished

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zOpt_bulJxY

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|---|--|
| <p>1. Facing a task unfinished
 That drives us to our knees
 A need that undiminished
 Rebukes our slothful ease
 We, who rejoice to know Thee
 Renew before Thy throne
 The solemn pledge we owe Thee
 To go and make Thee known</p> | <p>3. We bear the torch that flaming
 Fell from the hands of those
 Who gave their lives proclaiming
 That Jesus died and rose
 Ours is the same commission
 The same glad message ours
 Fired by the same ambition
 To Thee we yield our powers</p> |
| <p>2. Where other Lords beside Thee
 Hold their unhindered sway
 Where forces that defied Thee
 Defy Thee still today
 With none to heed their crying
 For life and love and light
 Unnumbered souls are dying
 And pass into the night</p> | <p>4. O Father who sustained them
 O Spirit who inspired
 Saviour, whose love constrained them
 To toil with zeal untired
 From cowardice defend us
 From lethargy awake!
 Forth on Thine errands send us
 To labour for Thy sake</p> |

Chorus: We go to all the world
 With kingdom hope unfurled
 No other name has power to save
 But Jesus Christ The Lord

Bible Reading – Romans 3:1-20 (NIV)

3 What advantage, then, is there in being a Jew, or what value is there in circumcision? 2 Much in every way! First of all, the Jews have been entrusted with the very words of God. 3 What if some were unfaithful? Will their unfaithfulness nullify God's faithfulness? 4 Not at all! Let God be true, and every human being a liar. As it is written: "So that you may be proved right when you speak and prevail when you judge." 5 But if our unrighteousness brings out God's righteousness more clearly, what shall we say? That God is unjust in bringing his wrath on us? (I am using a human argument.) 6 Certainly not! If that were so, how could God judge the world? 7 Someone might argue, "If my falsehood enhances God's truthfulness and so increases his glory, why am I still condemned as a sinner?" 8 Why not say—as some slanderously claim that we say—"Let us do evil that good may result"? Their condemnation is just! 9 What shall we conclude then? Do we have any advantage? Not at all! For we have already made the charge that Jews and Gentiles alike are all under the power of sin. 10 As it is written: "There is no one righteous, not even one; 11 there is no one who understands; there is no one who seeks God. 12 All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one." 13 "Their throats are open graves; their tongues practice deceit." "The poison of vipers is on their lips." 14 "Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness." 15 "Their feet are swift to shed blood; 16 ruin and misery mark their ways, 17 and the way of peace they do not know." 18 "There is no fear of God before their eyes." 19 Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be silenced and the whole world held accountable to God. 20 Therefore no one will be declared righteous in God's sight by the works of the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of our sin.

Sermon – Good enough is not good enough! (Stephen)

The story is told of a man who was on his way to attend a fancy dress ball one Sunday evening. He was wearing a red suit with a tail and a skin tight mask with horns. He looked like Satan, or rather what most people think Satan looks like. But as he hurried along, he was caught in a sudden rainstorm, so he sought shelter in a church where the service was just ending. But when he ran into the building, he shocked the members, who thought he was the real thing. A flash of lightning and a clap of thunder added to the illusion. The congregation panicked and rushed for the exits. The intruder thought the church had been struck with lightning and was on fire, so he raced after them. Everyone got out except one elderly lady. Turning in fear, she stretched out her hands and pleaded for mercy, *"Oh devil, please don't hurt me. I know I've been a member of this church for 30 years, but I've really been on your side all the time!"*

Can you imagine that a faithful member of the Church, even our Church, might not be on God's side but really on Satan's side? They look saved, they are living a good life but there actually not living the life that God wants them to live and so their good enough life is not actually good enough for God. Well, that's the issue that the apostle Paul wants to tackle next.

Slide 2

Last week we saw that the Gentiles, even those in deepest darkest Africa will have no excuse when they stand before God's just judgement. They won't be able to say "I didn't know" because creation itself is a never-ending sermon telling them about God's eternal power and his divine nature. Then we saw that the good person, the moral person when they stand in judgement on anyone else will not be able to tell God well at least I am better than them because the mere fact that have judged others sets a standard by which they will be judged.

But at the end of Romans 2 and in Romans 3, Paul turns to the religious person, specifically the Jew and asks the question, is the Jew any better? Because they have the law and the sign of the covenant, circumcision; are they now good enough to withstand God's judgement? And Paul's answer is that they are

Slide 3

1. No better (2:17-29)

“Now you, if you call yourself a Jew; if you rely on the law & boast in God; 18 if you know his will and approve of what is superior because you are instructed by the law; 19 if you are convinced that you are a guide for the blind, a light for those who are in the dark, 20 an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of little children, because you have in the law the embodiment of knowledge & truth; you, then, who teach others, do you not teach yourself?”

Now let us not forget the apostle Paul was a Jew himself. And he knew the value of the law. He understood that God had given the Jews the law so that they could be a light to those in darkness and they were called to be a guide, a teacher, an instructor to those around them. But when you teach or guide or instruct it is more than just saying words, isn't it? It is also about following those instructions yourself. Practising what you preach. Which means the law would only be of any value to the Jew if they put it into practise.

Slide 4

Imagine you decided that you needed a healthier body and so you signed up for a top of the range gym membership at Anytime Fitness. Having the card is of no value to you unless you actually go to the gym and use the machines. Having a piece of paper saying you are a member and telling everyone else what membership gives to you is a waste of time if isn't impacting on your own fitness. Likewise having the law is only good for the Jew if they are actually following the law. Which is where Paul goes to next.

Slide 5

22” You who say that people should not commit adultery, do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples? You who boast in the law do you dishonour God by breaking the law? 24 As it is written: “God’s name is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you.”

If that is true, the Jew is no better than the Gentile. The Gentile knows God from creation but doesn't worship him as he should & the Jew knows God's law through revelation but still doesn't do what God is calling him to do either. He is no better, even if he was circumcised.

Slide 6

25 “Circumcision has value if you observe the law, but if you break the law, you have become as though you had not been circumcised. 26 So then, if those who are not circumcised keep the law’s requirements, will they not be regarded as though they were circumcised? 27 The one who is not circumcised physically and yet obeys the law will condemn you who, even though you have the written code and circumcision, are a lawbreaker.”

You see circumcision is not a magic charm that will bring you whatever you want. It is not a passport that will give you access to God's eternal salvation. Circumcision is an outward pointer to an inward reality. It's a physical mark that points to a spiritual quality. And so, if the sign doesn't lead to a different way of life, it's useless. It's like a wedding ring on the finger on a serial adulterer. In fact, Paul will go on to say that

Slide 7

Circumcision - obedience = uncircumcision Uncircumcision + obedience = circumcision

The law is only any good if you live by it. The sign of circumcision is only any good if reflects what is going on in your heart. So don't put your trust in your heritage, in the things that have been handed down to you by God, for the true Jew will have a changed heart and life.

Slide 8

For you see 28 *“A person is not a Jew who is one only outwardly, nor is circumcision merely outward and physical. 29 No, a person is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is circumcision of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the written code.”*

Slide 9

The true Jew, the real member of God's covenant community, is someone who has the law written on their heart; whose heart has been spiritually circumcised by the very presence of God's Holy Spirit. It is not what is going on outwardly that is super important it is what is going on inside of us. And that means the Gentile

who doesn't worship God and the moral person who condemns others and even the Jew who has God's promises and his law are all in the same boat. They are all sinners who will have no excuse when they stand before God on the day of judgement.

Slide 10

Now as an aside what does that mean for the Jew today? They still have the law; the Torah God's Old Testament and they are still circumcised as they have been for thousands of years. But if they are not worshipping the true God and following God's law, they have forsaken their Jewishness. They are not true Jews. Because their lives are not reflecting the ways of God to the world. The true Jew may not be circumcised, nor have God's law in their hands but instead they have that law in their hearts and they are filled with God's Holy Spirit.

You see being religious is not a get out of jail free card. Which means being a Jew or being a member of the Church will not help us either, unless it has changed our hearts and our lives. Let me replace the words of Romans 2 and apply them to the religious of our day.

Slide 11

"You call yourself a born again Christian and you are sure you are right with God because at one time you prayed that prayer and you are now a card-carrying member of your local Church. You read your Bible every day and can even quote Scripture when you are asked questions at Bible Study. You were baptised by immersion and have even been a teacher at kids Church for many years. But this only counts if there has been a real change in your life. If your heart has been baptised and your insides have been filled with God's Holy Spirit. Because friends it is better to be an unbaptised believer than a baptised unbeliever."

Friends knowing your Bible, going to Church, being a teacher of others doesn't give you and I immunity. Its doesn't make us better than anyone else. For you and I are in the same boat as the religious person, the moral person, even the good Gentile. We are all sinners. Well, if that is true, is there any advantage in being a Jew or a Christian for that matter? Yes, there is

Slide 12

2. Some benefit (3:1-8)

"What advantage, then, is there in being a Jew, or what value is there in circumcision? Much in every way! First of all, the Jews have been entrusted with the very words of God."

If a Jew doesn't get issued with a get out of jail free card, what use it is to be a Jew? Well, the firm advantage that the Jew has is, that they have been given the word of God. That is an out and out privilege. No, it doesn't give them protection from God's wrath but helps them to know what God is like and to hear how God wants them to live their lives.

Slide 13

Now when I hire a car in a place that I have never been to before, there is a real advantage if it comes with GPS maps on its dashboard. That is so much better than an old paper directory or even no map at all. But I need to put the GPS on and to follow it. Otherwise, I will remain just as lost as if I didn't have anything at all. And God's word is a map that will guide us through life. But a map that also tell us something about the one who made this life.

Slide 14

For it reveals a faithful God. 3 *"What if some were unfaithful? Will their unfaithfulness nullify God's faithfulness? 4 Not at all! Let God be true, and every human being a liar. As it is written: "So that you may be proved right when you speak and prevail when you judge."*

Slide 15

You see Paul gets some pushback from the Jew for what he is saying. If God's children the Jews are unfaithful that would reflect badly on their father God, wouldn't it? It would show that God is not faithful as well. No way, Hose! God is always faithful and true. He is like a lighthouse showing the right way to the safe harbour, even if some ships around that lighthouse ignore its guidance and go it alone. And that will

be shown especially on the last day when we will see him as a fair judge.

Slide 16

5 "But if our unrighteousness brings out God's righteousness more clearly, what shall we say? That God is unjust in bringing his wrath on us? (I am using a human argument.) 6 Certainly not! If that were so, how could God judge the world?"

A criminal doesn't say to the court, "My crime makes the justice system look good. I've done you a favour!" That's nonsense. God is a fair judge and we will be able to gauge that fairness on the last day when we will see the outcome of the trial for every single person on this earth. And as well as that we will also see all our false thinking for what it really is.

Slide 17

7 "Someone might argue, "If my falsehood enhances God's truthfulness and so increases his glory, why am I still condemned as a sinner?" 8 Why not say—as some slanderously claim that we say—"Let us do evil that good may result"? Their condemnation is just!"

Slide 18

The Jew has a real advantage over the Gentile but that privilege is only of some benefit if it teaches them that they are a sinner and hence will need a saviour. That they are not good enough to make it on their own. That they need God's help. And isn't that the benefit we have as we read the word of God also? We have the Bible in our own language; we have regular preaching and teaching that show us what God is like and what we are really like. And it will only do us any good, if we realise, we too are not good enough for God. That we too will stand before a fair judge, a faithful God who will reveal to all our false thinking.

And don't think coming to Church and having a spiritual heritage will automatically protect you? My paternal grandmother was a dedicated Christian woman who faithfully raised her three children in the way of the Lord and two out of three of them remained in the Church all of their lives. But only 2 out of her 12 grandchildren are still in the faith. Virtually all went to Sunday school. All have this wonderful spiritual heritage but being brought up in the Church doesn't give you immunity. It doesn't hand out get out of jail free cards. For Paul says

Slide 19

3. All are Broken (3:8-20)

9 "What shall we conclude then? Do we have any advantage? Not at all! For we have already made the charge that Jews and Gentiles alike are all under the power of sin."

Slide 20

All people are in the same boat. A broken boat! The Gentiles are without excuse. The moral person is without excuse. Even the Jew is without excuse. Because all are sinners and so Paul brings the threads of the last two chapters together and tell us that we are all under the power of sin. Which mean that sin rules us all.

Slide 21

Now Paul, knows full well that we aren't going to like his portrait! So, do you notice how he does it? What he has to say is so controversial he doesn't make the assessment up himself; he instead comes up with a number of quotes from the OT. He strings forth, in the words of one commentator, OT passages together like pearls on a string, in order to ram home, his point that we are all under sin.

Slide 22

What are we like? *"There is no one who is righteous not even one. No one who understands, no one who seeks God."* This is what Psalms tells us. In fact, the clear message from the Psalms, Ecclesiastes & from Isaiah, is that *"there are no exceptions."* For 8 times in 3 verses we read the words, *"no one, not even one, no one, no one, all have, no one, not even one."* Sin affects our minds, *"for there is no one who understands."* It affects our motives, *"there is no one who seeks God"*. Sin infects our wills *"all have turned*

away, they have together become worthless, there is no one who does good, not even one." And once it has spoiled our minds, our motives & our wills like a sickness, sin then spreads to every part of the body.

Slide 23

Like a badly cracked mirror it mars the image of God that was placed in us by God Himself. It touches our throats, it infects our tongues, it poisons our lips, it fills our mouths full of cursing, it forces our feet to be swift in doing evil. From head to feet, human beings are full of sin. We are helpless before its siren call. We are hopelessly in its grasp. With its final effects being that our relationship with God is utterly destroyed so that verse 18 *"There is no fear of God before their eyes."* We have become complacent towards God. We take our sin too lightly because we take God too lightly.

Slide 24

Sin rules us, it ruins us and then it reveals to us that we have broken the law in our hands and the law in our hearts. 19 *"Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, so that every mouth **may be silenced** and the whole world held **accountable to God**. 20 Therefore **no one will be declared righteous** in God's sight by the works of the law; rather, through the law we **become conscious of our sin.**"*

You see the law isn't there to save us but to silence us. Not there to erase our guilt but to expose our guilt. For God to see. And for all of us to see as well. It is like an x-ray machine in that it shows us the problem but it can't provide us with the solution, as J B Philips translates Romans 3:20 *"It is by the straight edge of the law that we realise how crooked we are"*

Slide 25

Martin Luther would agree with Paul, he once put it this way, *"the principal point ... of the law ... is to make men not better but worse; that is to say, it shows unto them their sin, that by the knowledge thereof they may be humbled, terrified, bruised and broken, and by this means be driven to seek grace and so come to that blessed Christ."* Now what do you reckon? Is Paul overstating his case here? Is he being too hard on us, we are after all only human? For let's be honest here, you won't hear this diagnosis anywhere else, will we? Elsewhere we will hear, you are beautiful, wonderful, creative. That man is getting better and better. That if properly educated we can do almost anything. No, our world doesn't agree with almost anything Paul says in this passage.

But even though we might squirm at the severity of what Paul says and we might question whether it is a fair description of human behaviour or not, we need to admit that outwardly you and I might look good, upright, moral people but inwardly we do have dark thoughts, our lives are filled with dark deeds and our tongues are always attacking others.

Slide 26

The way that theologians describe our condition is Total Depravity. And that doesn't mean that we as a bad as we could be nor that we are as bad as some others around us. But it does mean that sin rules us, sin has ruined us and sin reveals us to others as someone in the need of forgiveness. As someone has said, "If sin were blue, part of us would be dark blue, part of us would be sky blue, part of us would be light blue but every part of us would be blue in some shade or another."

Slide 27

One of the most fascinating books that I have ever read was by Archbishop Desmond Tutu called *"No future without forgiveness."* It was a book he wrote about the South African Truth & Reconciliation Commission which was set up to hear what actually happened from both sides during the Apartheid years & was given a mandate to try and find a way forward for both those who had been wronged and those who had perpetrated the violence.

Listen to what Archbishop Tutu has to say. *"As I listened in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission to the stories of perpetrators of human rights violations, I realised how each of us has this capacity for the most awful evil - all of us. None of us could predict that if we had been subjected to the same influences, the*

same conditioning, we would not have turned out as these perpetrators. This is not to condone or excuse what they did. It is to be filled more and more with the compassion of God, looking on and weeping that one of God's Beloved had come to such a sad pass. We have to say to ourselves with deep feeling, not with a cheap pietism, "there but for the grace of God go I." A few pages on he picks up this topic again.

"This was the kind of testimony that made me realise that there is an awful depth of depravity to which we can all sink, that we do possess an extraordinary capacity for evil... There is no room for gloating or arrogant finger pointing. We have supplied God with enough evidence for Him to want to dispatch us all, to wipe the slate clean as He did before the Flood, to try and make a fresh start. It is important to note that those who were found guilty of abuses were quite ordinary folk. They did not grow horns on their foreheads or have tails hidden in their trousers. They look just like you & me."

Slide 28

Wow, do you feel the force of that? This is God's word speaking to you, to me, to us, to our world. We can't side step it; we can't avert our gaze, it is there for all to see. We are all in the same boat. Which why in our unrighteousness we need to be rescued by God's righteousness. Which is what Paul says has happened back in Romans 1:17. ¹⁷ *"For in the gospel (the good news that meets us immediately after the bad news of our sin has finally sunk in) the righteousness of God is revealed—a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: "The righteous will live (not by law or works but) by faith."*

So, friends don't settle for good enough. For it is not good enough. God demands from us all sinlessness, perfection, a score of 100% in our moral test. And none of us are even going to get close. We might do better than most or worse than some, but none of us are even close to getting 100. I might be lucky to even get a pass.

Slide 29

But as we will find out next week if we admit that this is the state we have found ourselves then we will be ready for the good news. That Jesus gets 100% for his exam. And he is willing to swap your result for his. Which means we get the rewards he deserved and he gets the punishment for our sins. How amazing is that? You and I are not good enough. So let us all have faith in Jesus. Let us put our trust in Him. Rest in Him. The dark reality of our sin is real but the bright hope of the gospel meets us in our real need and changes absolutely everything. If we are willing to Admit our sin. Believe in Jesus. And commit ourselves to living for him and him alone.

Song – Jesus paid it all [\(1\) Newsboys - Jesus Paid It All \(Lyrics\) - YouTube](#)

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| 1. I hear the Savior say | Thy strength indeed is small |
| Child of weakness watch and pray | Find in me thine all in all |

Chorus: Jesus paid it all All to him I owe Sin had left a crimson stain He washed it white as snow

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| 2. Lord, now indeed I find | Thy power and thine alone |
| Came and changed the lepers spots | And it melt the heart of stone |

- | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 3. And when before the throne | I stand in him complete |
| Jesus died my soul to save | My lips shall still repeat |

Benediction.. *"To him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy— ²⁵ to the only God our Savior be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore! Amen."* (Jude 24)