

When Habakkuk Cooks a Stew: The Righteous Shall Live by His Faith (Part 3)

Introduction

The Text

² And the LORD answered me: “Write the vision; make it plain on tablets, so he may run who reads it.” ³ For still the vision awaits its appointed time; it hastens to the end—it will not lie. If it seems slow, wait for it; it will surely come; it will not delay. ⁴ Behold, his soul is puffed up; it is not upright within him, but the righteous shall live by his faith.” (Hab. 2:2–4)

Part 3

- A. This is now our third and final week focusing in on the last part of [v. 4](#) there in particular: namely, “the righteous shall live by his faith.”
- B. And as I’ve said twice before now, these seven little words may be the most significant in all the OT.
 - 1. I feel at liberty to make such a claim because of the prominence of place it seems the NT authors themselves ascribe to them. On three separate occasions, these words are cited in the NT and, in each case, it’s concerning a matter of critical importance. They are trying to help us understand the gospel and discern what it means to get right and stay right with a holy God, to live in his good pleasure forever. And they reach back to [Hab. 2:4](#) to do it.
- C. I don’t have time to fully reiterate all I’ve said before about the semantic range of these words in [Hab. 2:4](#) and the variations of translations and interpretations given to them. But let me at least say this: you remember, at the end of the day, it seems the words can go in one of two directions:
 - 1. On the one hand, God could be saying to Habakkuk: “If you want to live through judgement that’s coming with Babylon and things, then you must place your faith in me and you will be counted righteous in the courtroom of heaven as it were.”
 - a. Here we’ve said the interpretation turns towards what we’ve come to understand as the doctrine of justification. You place your faith in Jesus and his righteousness is imputed to you and you live with God forever.
 - 2. On the other hand though, we’ve seen that God could be saying to Habakkuk: “If you want to make it through the coming judgment of Babylon, you have to be a faithful disciple, you have to be a righteous person, you have to do good works and remain obedient to me to the end.”
 - a. Well now that has quite a different flavor to it, doesn’t it? Here now things seem to be turning towards the biblical doctrine of sanctification.

- i. Here the idea is that it's not good enough to just receive Christ's righteousness by faith and go on our way, living as we want, living in sin. No, we must also become a faithful person, growing in righteousness ourselves, growing in the holiness of God.
- D. And, of course, we've wrestled with the question: which of these reads is God intending here? Which side of the coin is the right one so far as [Hab. 2:4](#) is concerned?
 - 1. And I've said I think it's actually both. I think God chooses the words he does here, knowing the range of meaning is so broad, filled to the brim as it were, specifically because he means to get at all of it with one punchy little statement.
- E. And I feel confident drawing such a conclusion, again, because of the way I see the NT authors use this text. One author dips his ladle into the stew that is [Hab. 2:4](#) and one draws out this aspect of meaning, this flavor of insight. But then another will dip his ladle in and draw out something from the other side.
 - 1. So last week we focused on Paul's use of these words in [Gal. 3:11](#). And there we saw that he foregrounds the flavors of justification, the first read mentioned—that we're not saved by works of the law but by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone.
 - 2. But this week, we're going to look at how these words are used in [Heb. 10:38](#). And here we're going to see that it's sanctification that comes out more prominently. It's the second read that is accented in particular.

Dipping in the Ladle—Heb. 10:38

- A. So you can turn now to [Heb. 10](#) and we're going to read [vv. 19-39](#) for context.
- B. And, while you turn there, as a quick refresher, let me remind you that the author of this book is likely writing to Jewish Christians who are suffering persecution for their faith. And, because of this, they find themselves tempted to abandon Christ and return to their Jewish heritage where at least they weren't so despised and ever at risk.
 - 1. So the great burden in this letter has been to show these struggling Christians that Jesus is the fulfillment of all the types and shadows of the Jewish OT . . .
 - a. that he's better than the angels;
 - b. he's a greater than Moses;
 - c. he's a far superior high priest;
 - d. he's the final once-for-all sacrifice for sins;
 - e. he's ushered in a new and everlasting covenant.
 - i. He's the realization of all that the OT was pointing to.
 - 2. And, therefore, you can't just go back without losing it all.

- a. Redemptive history has moved forward with Christ and you have to stay with him if you want to be saved. You need to endure. You need to be obedient. You need to be faithful . . . to the end.
- C. So let's pick it up in [Heb. 10:19](#). He just got done making the case in particular that Jesus, on the cross, became the final offering for sins, and there is now full forgiveness for God's people in him. And he goes on to write this: "¹⁹ Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, ²⁰ by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, ²¹ and since we have a great priest over the house of God, ²² let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. ²³ Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. ²⁴ And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, ²⁵ not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.
- ²⁶ For if we go on sinning deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, ²⁷ but a fearful expectation of judgment, and a fury of fire that will consume the adversaries. ²⁸ Anyone who has set aside the law of Moses dies without mercy on the evidence of two or three witnesses. ²⁹ How much worse punishment, do you think, will be deserved by the one who has spurned the Son of God, and has profaned the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has outraged the Spirit of grace? ³⁰ For we know him who said, "Vengeance is mine; I will repay." And again, "The Lord will judge his people." ³¹ It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.
- ³² But recall the former days when, after you were enlightened, you endured a hard struggle with sufferings, ³³ sometimes being publicly exposed to reproach and affliction, and sometimes being partners with those so treated. ³⁴ For you had compassion on those in prison, and you joyfully accepted the plundering of your property, since you knew that you yourselves had a better possession and an abiding one. ³⁵ Therefore do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward. ³⁶ For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God you may receive what is promised.
- ³⁷ For, "Yet a little while, and the coming one will come and will not delay; ³⁸ but my righteous one shall live by faith, and if he shrinks back, my soul has no pleasure in him."
- ³⁹ But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who have faith and preserve their souls" (vv. 19–39).
- D. Now, as with the Galatians text we looked at last week, so too with this one, there is so much here that I simply can't address. Our focus is going to be on the way the author uses [Hab. 2:4](#). Therefore, as I've said, we're going to talk about the issue of sanctification in particular.
- 1. And I want to organize my thoughts under two key headings with regard to sanctification: namely, (1) That We Need It; and (2) How We Get It.

(1) That We Need It

A High-Level Outline

- A. Under this first heading, let me first quickly give you a high-level outline of the verses we just read so you can see how the author's use of [Hab. 2:4](#) fits in with the logic and flow.

- B. In [vv. 19-25](#), building on the fact that Jesus has done away with our sin by the sacrifice of himself, he exhorts us therefore:
1. to “draw near” to God ([v. 22](#));
 2. to “hold fast [to] the confession of our hope” ([v. 23](#))—that Jesus is enough, that he has us, that we’re forgiven, loved, safe and secure, headed for glory;
 3. and to do such things in community—“not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some” ([v. 25](#))—because we need each other, because we’ll need accountability and encouragement to remain faithful and fruitful to the end—as the last “Day,” the day Jesus’ return, is rapidly approaching.
 - a. Why do we gather together every week on Sundays? Why do we encourage every Christian to be in a small group of some sort? So we can do this!
- C. Can I just say: I know, since the pandemic, people have gotten used to doing church online. And listen, we’re happy to provide a livestream for those who are sick or on vacation or have to quarantine for COVID or something.
1. But I just want to plead with you not to buy into the idea that virtual church is somehow now sufficient for you, to sustain your spiritual life in Christ. It’s not.
 - a. You can’t do all that the author of Hebrews is calling you to here in a deep and meaningful way if you neglect to gather with the saints.
 - b. You need personal engagement with a local body of believers.
- D. In [vv. 26-31](#), he warns us of what will happen if we don’t draw near, if we don’t hold fast, if we don’t meet together and encourage one another to love and good deeds.
1. We’ll turn from repentance and faith and give way to sin. We’ll “[spurn] the Son of God”; we’ll “[profane] the blood of the covenant”; we’ll [outrage] the Spirit of grace”—because we’ve heard the offer forgiveness, we’ve even taken the living water to our lips, as it were, and filled our mouths with it, but then, even still, in an act of outright rebellion, we spit it all out in favor of other founts, mud-filled as they may be.
 - a. And he’s saying: “Listen, if you reject the gospel, the good news that Jesus suffered the judgement of God due your sin in your place on that rugged cross, then you must know you are setting yourself up to face the judgment of God on your own.” And “[i]t is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God” ([v. 31](#)).
 - i. There is no sacrifice for sins outside the sacrifice of Christ. There is no getting into the kingdom of God outside faith in Christ. If you turn from him you head towards hell. There’s no gentler way of putting it.
- E. And that is why he comes down in [vv. 35-36](#) and says: “³⁵ Therefore do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward. ³⁶ For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God you may receive what is promised.”

1. You need endurance. You've got to keep trusting in Jesus and "[doing] the will of God" if you're going to receive what's been promised and live.

Habakkuk 2:4

- A. And, now, the author of Hebrews—knowing that he's speaking to a people deeply familiar with the Jewish Scriptures, longing to make the case here crystal clear and show them that such things are so—he reaches back into the OT and grabs hold of what verse in particular?
 1. Wouldn't you know it: [Hab. 2:4](#) (well, to be clear he actually cites [v. 3](#) as well!). (He quotes from the Septuagint's version of these verses [the Greek OT] which accounts for a bit of the difference in verbiage, but the essential message is the same.)
- B. Look at [Heb. 10:37-38](#): "³⁷ For, 'Yet a little while, and the coming one will come and will not delay;³⁸ but my righteous one shall live by faith, and if he shrinks back, my soul has no pleasure in him.'"
 1. As we've seen, Paul uses this verse in [Gal. 3:11](#) to say if you want to live, to be saved, you cannot justify yourself before him by your own works of the law, you must receive the perfect, complete, whole righteous of Christ, which is freely imputed to you by grace through faith. It's not your works, it's his!
 2. But here now the author of Hebrews, grabs hold of this very same verse to make a seemingly opposite point. Namely, if you want to live, to be saved, you yourself have to be faithful and live righteously to the end or God will reject you. If you shrink back he will take no pleasure in you.
- C. And you say, again, what in the world is going on?
 1. Well, that's what will become clear, I think, as we transition now to that second heading and begin to consider how we get sanctification and enduring obedience and things.
 2. But all I wanted you to see here at first is simply that we need it—that we can't just lay hold of Jesus and his righteousness and go live however we want, assuming we're safe and secure and judgment day will go well for us.
 - a. Brothers and sisters, what we see here with unmistakable clarity is that it is not enough for us to merely have faith in Jesus, we must also be faithful to him.

(2) How We Get It

- A. So the question that then presses itself upon us is: how do we get it?

Not By My Strength

- A. Well, let me say first how we don't get it. We don't get it by relying on own strength and flesh.
- B. This was made abundantly clear last week as we looked at [Gal. 3](#).

1. There, if you remember, Paul rebukes the Galatian Christians for the way they began by hearing the gospel with faith but then thought they were to continue and reach perfection on their own. Jesus and grace maybe gets you started down the road of salvation, but you have to seal the deal in your own strength.
 - a. Nothing could be further from the truth.
- C. Perhaps you remember how the chapter began: “¹O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you? It was before your eyes that Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified. ²Let me ask you only this: Did you receive the Spirit by works of the law or by hearing with faith? ³Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?” (vv. 1–3).
 1. So we can know straight away from this: we don’t start with faith in Christ and endure with faith in ourselves. It’s faith in Christ through and through. This is a gospel-centered, grace-saturated endeavor.

But By Christ’s Grace

- A. Now, before I turn us to the answer as it’s given in the book of Hebrews, let me first reiterate something we only touched on last time from Galatians.
- B. The whole sermon was on justification, and how it’s by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone.
 1. But the third and final point I made concerning this justification is that it’s trajectory is transformation—meaning: when we are justified truly by faith in Christ it will lead to sanctification as well.
 - a. Justification and sanctification come together. It’s a package deal. They can be distinguished, but they cannot be divided.
- C. And this I brought out from where our text ended in [Gal. 3:14](#) in particular—where Paul says that Jesus bore our curse, not just so that we might be justified by faith, but also “so that we might receive the promised Spirit through faith” as well.
 1. When we come by faith to Christ we receive not only his righteous status but also his Holy Spirit. And what that means is: you’re going to be changed.
 - a. If justification is God cleaning the house as it were, counting you righteous in position, sanctification is when God in the Spirit moves in, and he’s going make you more and more righteous in practice, from the inside out.
- D. And I said last time that Paul connects this gift of the Spirit in [Gal. 3:14](#) with what he calls the “fruit of the Spirit” in [Gal. 5:22-23](#). And I just want to make that line a little crisper for us here.
 1. I want you to see how when we come to Jesus by faith—when we trust that we are justified before God by his good works, not our own—it actually leads to our own Spirit-empowered good works, or fruits.

- a. These fruits, therefore, are not the basis or grounds of our justification but rather the evidence of it. They show we truly have it, that we truly get it and are living free in the love of God.

- E. So let's consider just the first of this fruit of the Spirit Paul lists: namely, "love" (Gal. 5:22).

- F. Now, if you are trying to save yourself by your own strength, by your own works, ironically, even as you are attempting to love others, at bottom, you're really just doing it out of love for yourself. "I will try to love you because I love me. I want to get on God's good side, I want life in his kingdom, so I guess I'll put up with you."
 - 1. It's like as a parent when you tell on of your kids, if you don't go help your siblings clean up you won't get dessert. Okay, so he goes and helps. But why? Because he loves you and he loves his siblings? No. Because he loves himself and he wants dessert.
 - a. So this whole endeavor always rings hollow. And people can feel it. It's like the Pharisees who memorize their Bibles, they're always at church, they tithe, they serve, and yet they have no real love for God or neighbor.

- G. Think about it. If I'm trying to prove to God I'm a good person by my good deeds, I can't love other people. I actually end up feeling like I have to show why I'm better than other people. Other people, especially good people, become a threat.
 - 1. If they're better than me, I'm envious and I want try to find a way to slander them.
 - 2. But if their worse me, I'm haughty and judgmental and I love to look down on them.
 - 3. Either way I'm not able to truly love them. I have to compare myself to them. I have to compete with them.
 - a. The great irony in all of this is that, whenever we try to save ourselves by our good works, we only end up producing what Paul calls, not the "fruit of the Spirit," but the "works of the flesh" (Gal. 5:19).
 - i. I may get more religious but I don't get more righteous. I may get cleaner in the eyes of other people—certainly in my own eyes—but, all the while, my heart is actually gathering filth so far as God is concerned.

- H. But listen, on the other side, when you know that you have been freely forgiven and justified in Jesus, when you know that "God so loved the world [and he so loved you], that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16), when you get God's love for a sinner like you—you can't help but love others.
 - 1. Your free justification in Jesus leads to your sanctification in his Spirit.
 - a. You remember that sinful woman who crashes the dinner party thrown by the Pharisees, just because she wanted to be near Jesus and serve him.

- i. You remember what Jesus says to the men as they're grumbling about her. Here's my paraphrase: "You guys have little love because you don't know my forgiveness, you don't think you need it, you're trying to justify and sanctify yourself by your works. But because she knows she's been forgiven of so much by me, her love is off the chain, she loves so much as well. He who's been forgiven little, loves little. But he who's been forgiven much, loves much" (cf. [Luke 7:47](#)).
- I. The only way to truly bear the fruit of the Spirit is to freely receive the gift of the Spirit. And the only way to truly receive the gift of the Spirit is to freely receive the righteousness of Jesus in justification.

- 1. Again, justification and sanctification come together. It's a package deal. You stay on the gospel and grace and you are empowered by the Spirit towards love and good deeds.

Back to Hebrews

- A. Now we saw this already in our text back in Hebrews actually, but I didn't linger much on it. Back in that opening section, you remember. He's exhorting us to do a few things, though I can only bring out a couple of them here.

- 1. He says in [v. 23](#): "Let us hold fast the confession of our hope"

- a. What confession? What hope? It's the gospel, it's the truth that Jesus has paid for our sins and we're forgiven in him and, more than that, counted righteous in him and we have an inheritance in glory with the Father because of him.
 - i. That's "[the confession of our hope](#)" that we have to hold fast to. It's the confession of our free justification in Jesus, we could say.

- 2. But why must we hold fast to this? To what end?

- a. So that we can go off with an unburdened conscience and live however selfishly knowing in the end all shall be forgiven anyways?
 - b. No! For in [v. 24](#) he connects the former exhortation to yet another: "[And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works](#)"

- i. Hold fast to your confession that you are saved not by your good works but by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone. But hold fast to that confession so that you might then stir one another up to good works. It's awesome, isn't it?!

- B. I thought of the parallel logic we see Paul use in [Titus 3:3-8](#): "[3 \[W\]e ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another. 4 But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, 5 he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, 6 whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, 7 so that being justified by his grace we might](#)

become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.⁸ The saying is trustworthy, and I want you to insist on these things, so that those who have believed in God may be careful to devote themselves to good works.”

1. Did you catch that? Parallel to the idea of holding fast our confession, Paul exhorts us to “insist on these things” What things? The things of the gospel. The things of free justification—that “he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy” (v. 5) that we are “justified by his grace” and “heirs according to the hope of eternal life” (v. 7).
 - a. So that we can go off and live however we want?
 - b. No! “. . . [S]o that those who have believed in God may be careful to devote themselves to good works” (v. 8).
 - i. Insist on the fact that we are not saved by good works so that we can go and devote ourselves to good works. We are not saved by our good works, but we are saved for them (cf. Eph 2:10). Justification and sanctification come together.
 - (1) As we insist on the truths of the gospel, we come to look more and more like the gospel in our lives. In other words, as we insist on the free love of God for us in Jesus we become more free in our love for others as well.

C. I become more faithful, more fruitful, more sanctified, not by my strength, but by God’s grace.

The “Duck Truck”

- A. You know, there was a time when I was living in SLO, working as a college pastor there, and I think Megan and I were getting married and so I needed to move a couch or something, and my buddy let me borrow his truck. It was an awesome old beat up truck. He called it the “Duck Truck”—I think that’s even what the license plate said, because he would take it out duck hunting and things.
 1. Well, when I was out driving I wanted to be nice and fill up his tank for him. And, I know this sounds dumb, but because it’s a really old truck, for some reason I was thinking maybe it takes diesel or something rather than unleaded or whatever (I don’t know why I had that idea). But just to be sure I called up my buddy, and he’s trying not to freak out.
 - a. He’s like: “No! The Duck Truck doesn’t run on diesel, bro! If you put that in the tank you could destroy the engine.”
- B. And I bring this up because, when it comes to trying to grow in godliness, when it comes to sanctification, the fuel you put in the tank is everything.
 1. If you put in the fuel of self-reliance and your own strength, you may get the thing started, you may drive down the road a bit, but you’re going to destroy things from the inside out.

2. But if you put in grace, God's love for you in Jesus, if that's what's in the tank, man your engines going to purr, right?! That's what will lead to real change, real growth, real endurance.

A Better and Abiding Possession

A. Now this whole idea is really brought out from the abstract and vividly illustrated for us there in vv. 32-34 of our text in Hebrews. I skipped over them earlier in the quick outline, but here now we're ready to really take them in.

1. As the author of Hebrews is calling these people to remain faithful to God to the end, he goes on to encourage them, saying he's seen this already at work in their lives.

- a. And in so doing he gives us the secret to that question we've been trying to answer: namely, how do we get it? We need sanctification, but where does it come from? Well, if you had any doubt about what we've been saying to this point, this should clear it up for you.

B. Start at v. 32: “³² But recall the former days when, after you were enlightened, you endured a hard struggle with sufferings,³³ sometimes being publicly exposed to reproach and affliction, and sometimes being partners with those so treated.³⁴ For you had compassion on those in prison, and you joyfully accepted the plundering of your property, since you knew that you yourselves had a better possession and an abiding one.”

1. Do you hear what's happening? It's radical. These guys are dealing with terrible persecution. There's a hard **struggle**. There's **sufferings**. There's **reproach** and **affliction**.

- a. And when it doesn't come for them personally, it comes for their friends in the faith, some of whom were imprisoned for Jesus—but you went and associated yourself with them anyways, you loved them and had compassion on them.

C. And here's what I want you to consider. If this is the sort of stuff that you were facing because of your association with Jesus, what would you do?

1. Wouldn't you be tempted to give it up? Isn't the natural thing to do to bend in with concern for self? I want to keep my toys, my health, my comforts, my security, my life. I'm not going to risk all that for Jesus, and I'm certainly going to risk all of that in love for you.

- a. If the authorities got you, I mean tough luck, but I'm not going to go visit or care for you in prison and expose myself as a follower of Jesus. I'm going to pull a Peter on that one: “I never knew the man. I'm not one of them.” Isn't that what you'd be tempted to do?

D. But that's not what these Christians are doing. “[Y]ou had compassion on those in prison, and you joyfully accepted the plundering of your property . . .” (v. 34). They loved Jesus and others. And they didn't just accept all the shame and suffering that came along that, they “joyfully” accepted it.

1. It's something like those apostles in [Acts 5](#) who, after being imprisoned and beaten for their faith, went on their way "rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the name" (v. 41).
- E. And you just want to ask: where does that come from? How are these kind of Christians made? Well, look at how the verse ends: "[Y]ou had compassion on those in prison, and you joyfully accepted the plundering of your property, since you knew that you yourselves had a better possession and an abiding one" (v. 34).
1. How do you find the strength to love like that, to endure like that? Knowing what's already yours in the gospel, knowing grace, knowing God's full forgiveness in Jesus and the inheritance that's ours in glory.
 - a. "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth" (Matt. 5:5). It's all already yours, in Jesus.
 - b. "For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us" (Rom. 8:18).
 - c. "¹⁷[T]his light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, ¹⁸as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal" (2 Cor. 4:17–18).
 - i. It's a "better possession and an abiding one" and we have it freely in Jesus already by faith. So we have the resources and the power to let everything else go in love for him and others.
- F. If you want to see more examples of this just look at the next chapter, [Heb. 11](#). The author launches out from here to show how this faith in what God has done and secured for us in heaven leads to a life of radical faithfulness and love here on the earth.

Winning the Lottery

- A. It's really not that hard of a concept to understand. Think of it. If you had just played and won the multi-million dollar Powerball lottery and you knew that that fortune was going to hit your bank account by the end of the week, wouldn't it change the way you handle your money today?
1. When you go out to dinner with your friend are you going to demand that he pays half like you used to, even though you know he just lost his job and he's struggling to get by in the current economic environment? Like "I don't know, let me see the bill and do the math, you owe me \$15.22. Don't hold out on me man."
 2. No! You'd have to be an incredible jerk to do something like that. Instead, you'd feel freed up to pay for it, wouldn't you? You'd feel freed up to stop worrying about yourself and to start loving others in need. It's not all that complicated to understand how this works.
- B. But what we come to understand is that we don't live like this because we don't believe it. We don't believe that "the coming one will come and will not delay" (v. 37). We don't "know" that in Jesus we have "a better possession and an abiding one" (v. 34).

1. So we fight like hell to get our best life now and keep it at any cost, only to lose it all in the end.
 - a. I mean that's the great irony, right? You try to save your life you lose it. You lose it on both accounts, now and later. Trying to save it means you live like it's all on you. So you're burdened, and you're anxious, and you use other people and compete against other people and hurt other people to save what's yours and it's gone in the end. It's a double-loss.
- C. But then those who lose their lives for Christ's sake find it ([Matt. 16:25](#)).
 1. And, again, on the opposite side now, you win on both accounts, now and later.
 - a. For you don't just lose your life, you lose your life for Christ's sake. Which means you have Christ. You have his Spirit. You have his promises. You have his love. You have his righteousness. You have his favor and provision and protection and his peace. And because you have that, or better, because he has you, you can let go of everything. You don't have to fight others to keep what's yours, you don't have to worry like you're an orphan and no one's going to be there for you. You're a son or daughter of the King. So you can go love the orphan and love the widow and extend grace and covering to them.
 - b. And in the end, you will find that you've not lost anything at all, you've gained, you'll have life, eternal life with God. It's a double-win.
- D. So I guess the question to end with is where are you at with Jesus?
 1. If we need both his righteous position and to be growing more righteous in practice little by little, and we get these together by coming to him, trusting him, receiving his grace, where are you with Jesus?
 - a. He loves you. And as the author of Hebrews will go on to say in [Heb. 12:2](#), he's the "founder" and the "finisher" of our faith. So let's look to him!
 - i. "[T]he righteous shall live by his faith."