

## **TOPICAL SERMON: SO CLOSE TO BEING SAVED**

**[2]** The title of the sermon: "SO CLOSE TO BEING SAVED."

- When we give the Gospel to people, many people are so close to being saved by Jesus Christ.
- But they pull back and go with what they've been taught in false churches all over this country.
- I was able to go soul winning with Sure Foundation Baptist Church in Vancouver, Washington and it's very similar to here.
- So many people are so close to being saved, but they go back to believing in works to save them.

**[3]** *Luke 8:11 Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God.*

- We plant this seed by giving these people the Gospel. We're all sinners. We all fall short.
- There's none righteous. No not one. They usually agree.
- There's a first physical death. That's our body. There's a second spiritual death. That's our soul.
- No one is able to avoid the physical death. All of us will die. This will be our body.
- The second death, though, in hell, we can avoid. This is why we preach the Gospel.

We're all sinners, but yet, God sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to die for our sins and become the sacrifice for sins.

- Jesus is the Savior. He was born of a virgin, lived a perfect life, never did anything wrong.
- He was crucified on the cross willingly. He became the sacrifice for our sins.

If we die without His sacrifice applied for our sins, we would go to hell. So He took our place.

- The body of Jesus Christ died and was buried. His soul died and went to the lowest hell. He was dead.
- He took the sins of the whole world onto Himself. And He then arose from the dead on the third day.
- He is alive. He did all the work for salvation. All we need to do is change our mind and believe on Him.
- We must fully trust in Jesus Christ alone for salvation. We know He can save us because He is God.

He came forth from God. He is the Son of God. He is God. He can do all things. He has THE POWER to save us.

- There is nothing else required. Put your faith in Jesus and this is it.
- But people always have to take it further for some reason. There's always a BUT.
- And this BUT keeps people from being saved. They were so close to being saved.

Jesus Himself says that He gives to us everlasting life the moment we believe in Him.

- At the moment we trust in Him, we are born again with everlasting life.
- He gives us everlasting life right now. If it's everlasting right now, it cannot be lost. It lasts forever.
- This is the gift of God. He comes with this gift. This is the word of God. People say they believe.
- But this doesn't mean they believe. They are so close to being saved.

**[4]** *Luke 8:12 Those by the way side are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved.*

- They hear the true Gospel that we preach to them. They understand what we're saying.
- But then they go to "faith without works is dead" and they misunderstand the Scriptures.

- They can't give up good works to be saved. They think you must have good works.
- You show them the Scriptures that say you don't have to have good works.
- You show them that it's all about faith in Jesus Christ.

You explain to them what it means to believe in Jesus Christ. Faith in Him is faith IN HIM and not ourselves.

- Our works are of ourselves. Salvation is not of ourselves. Salvation is only in Jesus Christ.
- We plead with them to forget about all these other things for salvation and trust in Jesus.
- We do. We spend hours with people in an attempt to get them to believe in Jesus Christ alone.
- We show them that repenting of sin is a work clearly defined by the Bible and God Himself.

But they just won't put their trust in Jesus Christ. They won't have faith in Him.

- And I say, "Don't you believe that Jesus can save you? You can't save yourself."
- "You can't even trust in yourself. This is why salvation is only in Jesus Christ."
- I say, "What if Jesus were standing right in front of you and said to you:"
- "If you believe in me, you will never die." Would you believe Him or call Him a liar?
- Would you tell Jesus He's wrong and that you must do works to be saved?

***[5] Titus 3:4-6 But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, 5 Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; 6 Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour;***

- Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he SAVED us.
- How are we saved right now? Not by works of righteousness. This is the word of God.
- Faith without works is dead, 100% for sure, doesn't mean that we're saved by works.
- We don't justify ourselves for salvation. We can't.

If salvation were of works in any way, we would be justifying ourselves.

- What stops these people who are coming so close to being saved? Good works. Good deeds.
- They will say that you must have good deeds to be saved. They will say that you must change your life.
- But there is no Scripture in the Bible that says any of what they're saying. They are using wisdom of man.
- They are attempting to justify themselves by using their own mind and not the mind of God.

***[6] Job 9:20 If I justify myself, mine own mouth shall condemn me: if I say, I am perfect, it shall also prove me perverse.***

- If we think we can justify ourselves by our works, we only condemn ourselves.
- The Bible even says that we must be perfect if we're going to save ourselves by our works.
- If I say I am perfect, mine own mouth will prove me perverse. This is reality. We aren't perfect.

***[7] Job 25:4 How then can man be justified with God? or how can he be clean that is born of a woman?***

- What's the answer to that? "How then can man be justified with God?"
- Jesus Christ is the answer to that. God gives us the answer. It's the gift of God. We don't earn it.
- We don't work for it at all. But for some reason, people always want to bring works into salvation.
- And this keeps them from being saved. Why? It's always works.

They think they must do something good to be saved. They get so close but reject Jesus Christ.

- When you think salvation has something to do with your works, this is the definition of rejecting Christ.
- And you don't want to continue to do this. When you do this one too many times, God can reject you.

**[8] Psalm 143:2 *And enter not into judgment with thy servant: for in thy sight shall no man living be justified.***

- Our works do not make us righteous. We must realize this. They only condemn us.
- There is no good work you can do to justify yourself in the sight of God.
- When it comes down to salvation, I will declare HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS and HIS WORKS.
- The Sabbath day is a picture of this. Jesus is our Sabbath.
- We rest in Him because He did the work for salvation.

**[9] Romans 3:20 *Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.***

- The Bible says all of these things so many times: from the Old Testament to the New Testament.
- We are not novices in the Bible. We go out and give the Gospel because we know the Gospel.
- We know the Bible. We know the way to salvation is Jesus Christ alone. But people add other things.
- Stop adding other things if you want to be saved. We try our absolute best to convince these people.
- Jesus clearly says in the Bible that people will not HEAR HIS WORDS. He clearly gives you the way.

**[10] Romans 3:28 *Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.***

**[11] Romans 4:5 *But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.***

**[12] Romans 9:11 *(For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;)***

**[13] Romans 9:16 *So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.***

**[14] 2 Timothy 1:9 *Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,***

- Our works will not save us at all. It's very frustrating when we can't convince someone to only believe.
- BELIEVE ONLY. This is what saves you. It's not a work to change your mind and believe.
- Repentance for salvation is changing your mind and believing on Jesus Christ.

So, what are some of the reasons people give us to say that salvation is of works?

- Their proof doesn't come from the word of God.
- When we go to the doors preaching the Gospel, this is what we've learned from people.
- We've learned that they go by their experiences in their life and by real world examples.
- They'll say, "Well, salvation must be of works because I saw this happen." Or, I saw that happen.

They will bring up someone in their family. They will say, "Well, my father said he was a Christian."

- And he was a drug dealer too. They look at you and ask, "Are you saying he's going to heaven?"

- "Are you saying that these people can do whatever they want and go to heaven like that?"
- Or, another example I've heard: "My uncle said he was a Christian and he molested children."
- That's why they are saying good works or a changed life is required to go to heaven.

What they don't realize is they are turning the truth of God into a lie based on examples from their life.

- They don't realize they are allowing these evil people to also take them to hell.
- They are allowing those people to keep them from believing on the Lord Jesus Christ.
- And yes, this is what's happening out there. We see this all the time when giving the Gospel.
- From a distance, these evil people keep others in their family from being saved.

They think they are being like them if they only put their trust in Christ. But they are being deceived.

- It's a mirage. So close to being saved but they allow the evil and wicked people to change their minds.
- These pedophiles are not saved. It doesn't matter what they say.
- They are reprobates who go after strange flesh. They are weird, sick, nasty, depraved.
- They can say they believe in Jesus Christ all they want but their "Jesus" is okay with what they do.
- So they keep doing it. They have a different version of Jesus who loves them no matter what.

Don't allow other people to stop you from being saved. These other people blaspheme the name of God.

- Don't add works to salvation because of examples of people in your life.
- Don't look to them. Don't live by what they've done. Live by the word of God.
- We go with what God says. We believe what He says. We don't know if a person is saved or not.
- But I can tell you this. Live by the word of God. Here's an example.

If a person is saved and won't stop dealing drugs, what do you think would happen to them?

- God is their Father now. They sell drugs to children. They get children addicted to drugs.
- They indirectly kill people through the nasty drugs they sell. What do you think God would do?
- Do I think a saved person can continue to be a drug dealer after they are saved? Yes, I do.

But do I think they will live very long? No, I don't.

- If you're actually saved by grace through faith, and continue dealing drugs, God will kill you.
- This is what I believe. If you're saved and continue in your evil deeds, I think you will die soon.
- Now, do I think a saved person can become a pedophile? No, I don't. If they do, they weren't saved.
- Some of the drug dealers who are out there professing to be Christians aren't saved either.
- Most people who profess to be Christians aren't saved. Why? They believe in their works.

You can be what you believe to be a "good" person and still end up in hell just like the drug dealer who never believed in Jesus Christ.

- The Bible says there are none good. Do I think the drug dealer will get a deeper part of hell? Yes I do.
- Will the child molester get a deeper part of hell. Yes, they will.
- If you go your entire life doing what you call "good works" but never believe in Jesus, you get hell.
- If you continue to think that you must have good works to be saved, you get hell.
- You must stop allowing life experiences to keep you from putting your faith in Christ.

***[15] Galatians 2:16 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.***

- When you give people the Gospel, it's important to be ready to convince them that salvation is not of works.
- Most people will believe in a works based salvation. Most people will be against once saved always saved.
- If they see a self professed "Christian" do something horrible, this strengthens their belief in a works based salvation.
- Instead of living by the word of God, they allow all of these other people to change their mind.

This is why a saved person, who does horrible things in front of others to blaspheme the name of God, will die.

- As a saved person who trusted in Jesus Christ, you better do what God says to do.
- You better not blaspheme the name of God. Do you know who was a blasphemer of God but was spared?

***[16] 1 Timothy 1:12-13 And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry; 13 Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief.***

- If you go against God, break His commandments, and call yourself a Christian, God will be angry.
- Paul was spared because he did it ignorantly in unbelief.
- If you're saved, and you do evil things, God will not spare you.

***[17] Titus 2:3-5 The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things; 4 That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, 5 To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed.***

- Here's an example of the word of God being blasphemed.
- If a Christian woman won't be a keeper at home, she blasphemes the word of God.
- Others see this. You call yourself a Christian, but you won't do what God says.
- So, you can use the drug dealer examples, the pedophile examples, but what about all of these?

This is why it's so important for you to do what God says. When you don't, this keeps others from being saved.

- So, I get these people who give me examples of others who keep them from believing in Jesus Christ.
- But they do the same things. They blaspheme the word of God and keep their children from being saved.

We went to the door of a Russian man named Yuri in Vancouver, Washington. He was a very nice man.

- He invited us in to his home immediately. His wife and several kids were there too.
- They were all listening. Yuri loved his children. He told us he wanted them all to go to heaven.
- He said that he believed in Jesus Christ and that salvation was not of deeds.
- His wife joined in and stopped the believing in Jesus Christ. She is a so-called "Christian."
- But she told them all, her family, that good deeds are required. Yuri said, "No, deeds are not required."

But then Yuri says, "I don't believe in once saved always saved."

- We tried to prove to them with Scripture that faith alone saves you.
- If it's no once saved always saved, then salvation is of works. Yuri is so close to being saved.
- But both of them went back to drug dealers in their family or someone doing some other wicked act.
- They listened. They said that they understood what we were saying.

- But they are not saved. They are so close to being saved but not there.

He said that we made some very good points that he would think about.

- We spent a lot of time with them. As we left, I asked Yuri to please just go by God's words in the Bible.
- I said, "Please for your wife and for your children. There's nothing more important."
- He said that he would. And I think that he will. He is so close to being saved.
- And it's very important he get it right as soon as possible for the sake of his wife and children.

When you grow up in a works based salvation, it can be tough to come out of that.

- If you're humble to the word of God, you can be saved. If not, you cannot be saved.
- We asked them to live by the word of God and not by examples from their life.
- If you go by examples in your life, you can go straight to hell because you can't see faith.
- You might think a drug dealer is saved because he confessed it years ago, but you don't know.
- If that drug dealer was saved, I think God will kill that drug dealer himself.
- Don't go by drug dealer examples and think that salvation is of works.

Don't go by examples of people. We even gave that Russian lady the example of Solomon.

- If we saw Solomon as an older man that built temples to false gods, we would think he wasn't saved.
- But he was. She even said that she wasn't sure that Solomon went to heaven.
- She said they he would have needed to repent of his sin to go to heaven. This is a lie.
- Solomon went to heaven 100% without a doubt.

***[18] 2 Samuel 12:24 And David comforted Bath-sheba his wife, and went in unto her, and lay with her: and she bare a son, and he called his name Solomon: and the LORD loved him.***

- The Lord LOVED Solomon. Even when Solomon did wrong, God loved him because he was a saved man.

***[19] 1 Chronicles 22:9-10 Behold, a son shall be born to thee, who shall be a man of rest; and I will give him rest from all his enemies round about: for his name shall be Solomon, and I will give peace and quietness unto Israel in his days. 10 He shall build an house for my name; and he shall be my son, and I will be his father; and I will establish the throne of his kingdom over Israel for ever.***

- This is why you don't look at examples of people in your life as the way to salvation.
- "Well, he did this so it must not be faith alone." All of the examples in the Bible prove it's faith alone.
- Paul blasphemed. He went to heaven. Saul, David, Solomon. THREE KINGS. They did evil.
- They went to heaven. Why? Because they had faith in God at some point in their life.

Some had more faith than others. Some did more evil than others. Salvation is not of works.

- GOOD OR BAD WORKS. You don't get to heaven or go to hell because of the works you do.
- You go to heaven if you've had faith in Jesus Christ. You go to hell if you've never had faith in Jesus Christ.
- Don't change the words of the Bible because of examples in your life.
- Believe the words of the Bible and be saved right now.

What can happen to these people who are so close to being saved but just won't put their faith in Christ?

- The Bible teaches us this, and we hope and pray that many of these people haven't had their last chance.
- There is a last chance for people out there. Yuri invited us in and was kind to us.

- This doesn't get you to heaven, though. People who think salvation is of works might be very kind.
- Salvation is not of kindness. Salvation is in Jesus Christ. We must put our faith in Him.
- Many people in hell got very close, but they pulled back. Don't be this person.

***[20] Hebrews 6:4-6 For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, 5 And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, 6 If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.***

- The people in Hebrews Chapter 6, right there, were very close to being saved.
- They were enlightened. The light bulb went off in their head. They understand what we're preaching.
- They understand the true Gospel of Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit is there with us convincing them.
- They were made partakers of the Holy Ghost. He is the one there with them convincing them.
- He is calling for them. Will they answer that call and believe? They have tasted of the good word of God.

God has pulled them close to believing in Him. They are almost saved. He sent His Gospel preachers to them.

- They are almost saved. SO CLOSE TO BEING SAVED. And what happens? We know what happens.
- They pull back. They just won't do it. This happens all the time.
- These are they by the way side. They hear. They listened. They understand. They are enlightened.

Then cometh the devil and taketh away the word out of their hearts lest they believe and be saved.

- All because of what? A WORKS BASED SALVATION THAT THEY BELIEVE IN.
- Examples in their life that they believe in because others blasphemed the word of God.

Don't allow this to happen to you. This could be the last chance to be saved.

- "If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance." They almost changed their mind.
- I pray for Yuri right now. I like the man. I hope he changes his mind and commands his household.
- Don't crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh and put him to an open shame.
- Jesus Christ is God. He can save you. He already did 100% of all the work required for you to be saved.
- He did it all. "Jesus paid it all. All to Him I owe. Sin had left a crimson stain. He washed it white as snow."

We don't have anything left to pay for because Jesus paid it all. He paid for all our sin.

- Does that mean you'll go to heaven if you sin after He's saved you? Yes, it does.
- Does that mean you can go do whatever you want and still make it to heaven? Yes, it does.
- Does that mean you can go do whatever you want without other consequences? No, it doesn't.
- God can and will make your life a living hell if you want to blaspheme His name to others.
- You can even prevent others from going to heaven. Why would you want that? You don't.

You could contribute to a person going to hell because they look at you as an example.

- They were so close to being saved, but you did evil and wicked things to them or others.
- Think of how angry this will make God when you prevent someone from going to heaven.
- So, be very careful out there. Read your Bible. Study God's word. Get to a good church. Learn.
- Hear. Do what God says. Why? So others can be saved. Love and care for others.

Let's pray.