

God's Exclamation Point Devo Series



God's exclamation point – part 1

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, 'The just shall live by faith.'" Romans 1:16-17, NKJV

Would you like some good news this Monday morning? How about a “shout out” from the Lord?

This week in our daily JumpStart devos, I'll share some of the cliff notes from a series I am teaching at our church titled “!” – God's Exclamation Point. By definition, an “exclamation point” is punctuation that describes a “shout out.” In our series, we are talking about the things God wants to exclaim and “shout out” to us and through us!

Let's start with the good news! God's exclamation point is good news and that good news is the gospel! That's right, by definition, the gospel means “good news.” Good news worth shouting out! So, what makes the “gospel” of Jesus Christ such good news? There are many things that make the gospel good news, but today, let's look one of those things:

The Gospel is the Power of God to Salvation – For Everyone Who Believes: The gospel inherent power. In other words, those who believe in the good news of the finished work of Jesus on the cross have the power to experience salvation.

What is salvation? Salvation is the all-inclusive word of the Bible. Salvation – or to be saved – means so much more than most Christians realize. Salvation as defined by numerous Bible and Greek scholars includes: *All the blessings bestowed by God on men in Christ; the spiritual and eternal salvation granted to those who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ; to be rescued from penalty of sin, to make well, heal, restore to health; to keep safe and sound, to rescue from danger or destruction; to save a one suffering from disease; healing, welfare, prosperity, victory, preservation, material and temporal deliverance from danger and suffering.*

The gospel is the good news of this fact! When we believe and are fully persuaded in Jesus, we are enabled to experience salvation and everything it includes. Have you appropriated the power of salvation by believing the gospel? It's available for everyone who believes!

Do you need to be rescued and forgiven from the temporal and eternal penalty of sin? Do you need prosperity and victory? How about preservation and safety? What about healing? (Just so you know, while I am writing this devo on Sunday night – I am appropriating and experiencing the healing power of God to overcome symptoms of the stomach flu. The gospel is the power of God for salvation and I might as well receive what I preach, right?)

The gospel is the power of God to salvation for all who believe! Today, receive God's exclamation "shout out" to you – believe the good news of the gospel of Jesus Christ and appropriate the power of salvation.

Say It: "Father, I believe the gospel – the good news of Jesus and His finished work on the cross. I thank You for Your exclamation point – the power of salvation in my life. Today, because of the power of the gospel, I believe I am saved and experiencing salvation. I am forgiven and rescued from the penalty of sin. I am healed. I am safe. I am protected. I am prosperous. I am victorious. In Jesus' Name. Amen."



God's exclamation point – part 2

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, 'The just shall live by faith.'" Romans 1:16-17, NKJV

This week we are taking a look at God's exclamation point! His exclamation point – His shout out to humanity – is wrapped up in the gospel! The good news of Jesus is more than just cliché phrases – it's the power of God to save, change, rearrange and radically renovate our lives. Let's look at it...

In the passage in Romans 1:16-17, there is a particular phrase that is important. Notice the phrase, *"For in it the righteousness of God is revealed...."* What is the "it" in this phrase? The "it" is the gospel. For in it – the gospel – the righteousness of God is revealed! What does that mean? It means that God has given us His righteousness – His right standing – because of the gospel! He has declared that we are as righteous as He is because of Jesus' finished work on the cross. This is the good news of the good news! God imparted His own righteousness to us!

The gospel is this: In God's mercy, He satisfied all of the demands justice required for the sins of mankind when He sent His Son Jesus who died on the cross in our place. Until Jesus came on the scene, the only way a sinner could pay for their sins was to die, since the wages of sin is death. The sentence for the sin of mankind was literally: the death sentence. However, God loved us so much He sent Jesus to take our sins upon Himself and die in our place. He was our substitute on the cross. God's entire wrath for sin was poured out on Jesus when He hung on the cross and died. He completely paid the price sin demanded. When Jesus said, "It is finished" – our debt was paid! From that point on, salvation was made available to all who believe!

When we believe on Jesus and His finished work on the cross, God causes us to become as righteous as He is. He justifies us and declares that we are now righteous. This is a legal act – God legally declares that we have been justified and made righteous. His declaration that we are righteous, just, or justified is a legal verdict that will never be repealed! In heaven's court, because of Jesus Christ and His amazing gospel, His righteousness is ours and He declares us not guilty! In it...the gospel...the righteousness of God is revealed to those who believe. What good news! What freedom! What a gospel!

Here's a good summary statement of God's exclamation point in Romans 1:16-17: *"If you believe the gospel – the good news about Jesus – in your heart and acknowledge it with your mouth, you will experience power – moral excellence, miracles, influence, prosperity – for and to salvation and all that it includes – you will be saved from the penalty of sin, given deliverance, safety, healing, and well-being; you will experience the reality of continual freedom from accusation, condemnation and guilt because it is revealed and disclosed to you that you have been made as righteous as God Himself; you will now know that you have been legally acquitted for all sins, justified and declared just – just as if I had never sinned! By faith, you believe and live in this reality."*

Declare it today!

Say It: "Father, thank You that because of Jesus and Your glorious gospel, I am the righteousness of God. I believe the gospel, and Your righteousness has been revealed to me! I have been declared righteous, not guilty and justified! I receive it and I thank You for the good news! In Jesus' Name. Amen."



God's exclamation point – part 3

"For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ!" Romans 5:17, NIV

Here's another one of God's exclamation point shout-outs! Do you need God's power to reign in life? To dominate? As a student? Athlete? Sales person? Manager? Business owner? Mom? Homeschooler? Entrepreneur? Politician? Preacher? Christian? God wants us to reign in life as His representatives and He tells us how in Romans 5:17. This verse is rich and overflowing in goodness! Let's look at it.

We will highlight four key phrases in this verse: *those who receive*, *abundant grace*, *gift of righteousness*, and *reign in life*. Today, let's look at two phrases from Romans 5:17 and tomorrow we will look at the other two. Let's start at the bottom of the verse and work our way up...

Reign In Life: In this verse, the Holy Spirit is letting us know that it's possible to reign in life. Literally, this means that as we live under the Lordship of Jesus Christ, it's possible to exercise a kingly dominion in our lives, to be the influence

of our world and to live a life in control. This is in contrast to being dominated – living lives that are out of control, or living lives that are influenced by others or the circumstances around us. Can you imagine a life where you are in control of your emotions, choices and words, thereby influencing your experiences, success, wealth, lifestyle and witness for Christ? What does your life look like when you are reigning in faith and seeing God do supernatural, miraculous things in your world? The potential to reign in life is good news!

Those Who Receive: How do we reign in life? According to this verse, “reigning in life” is available to those who receive it! The way we receive this type of life is by receiving abundant grace and the gift of righteousness. Notice, the Lord didn’t say the ability reign in life was for those who “achieve” it – it’s for those who “receive” grace and God’s gift of right standing. To “receive” is the opposite of striving, working for, earning or deserving. We don’t have to strive; we just need to receive what Jesus has done.

To “receive” is not a passive word. It is from the Greek word, “*lambano*” and according to numerous experts, it literally means: *“to take with the hand, lay hold of, to take in order to carry away; to take what is one's own, to claim; to take to one's self, lay hold upon, take possession of, i.e. to appropriate to one's self; to take a thing due, to collect, gather; to receive what is offered; to receive what is given, to gain, get, obtain.”*

To receive from God is very proactive. Notice those descriptive words for “receive” – to take, to claim, to get, obtain, lay hold upon and take possession. These are not kick back words; instead we are to *take* what God offers, not just *wait*. When the Lord tells us that those who receive abundant grace and the gift of righteousness reign in life – it gives us the idea that we are to take possession of these things by claiming them and taking them! (Tomorrow we will talk about the definition of abundant grace and the gift of righteousness.)

So, let’s review – those who receive an abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness will reign in life. Do you want to reign in life? Get ready to receive, to claim and to take hold of God’s abundant grace and His free gift of right standing and watch your life enter a new orbit! (Don’t miss tomorrow’s devo when we talk about this abundant grace and gift of righteousness that we are to take!)

Say It: *“Father, I thank You for the ability to reign in life. As I live under the Lordship of Jesus Christ, I believe You want me to reign in*

life in these areas: (name them). As Your representative, I want my life to be a testimony and reflection of Your goodness. I understand that as I receive – take, claim and appropriate Your grace and righteousness I can enter a whole new realm of reigning in life. (Also, Lord, I thank You in advance for revealing what it means to receive abundant grace and the gift of righteousness in tomorrow's devo.) Thank You, Lord. In Jesus' Name. Amen."



God's exclamation point – part 4

"For if by the one man's offense death reigned through the one, much more those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ." Romans 5:17, NKJV

Today will be our last devo in the series titled, "God's Exclamation Point!" Let's look at one more shout-out from God's Word! As we discussed yesterday, if we

want God's power to reign in life, it's available! If you're a mom, dad, student, athlete, business owner, single person, sales executive, homeschooler, politician, fighting a faith battle, a preacher or just a fired up Christian – God wants you to reign in life and He tells us how to do it in Romans 5:17. He tells us to receive two specific things - *abundant grace* and the *gift of righteousness*.

Abundance of Grace: There are a lot of ways to look at grace. We could examine saving grace, serving grace or standing grace and how these graces impact our lives so we can reign. In general, when we receive (take, claim, obtain, possess – remember yesterday's devo?) God's grace, He causes us to be "highly favored." His grace, His loving-kindness, is a benefit and reward. God's grace is given to us as a favor, which we receive without any merit of our own. God's grace keeps, strengthens and increases us in Christian faith. God's grace is freely given to those who believe and is ultimately defined as the sum of earthly blessings! We can access an abundance of grace by faith according to Romans, "*...through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.*" (Romans 5:2, NKJV)

What does that mean? It means that by faith (what we believe in our hearts and acknowledge with our mouths) we simply receive/take the free gift of God's favor, blessing, reward, strength and benefit in the areas of our lives where we need to reign! God is so good and that is one heck of an exclamation point!

Gift of Righteousness: God's gift of righteousness is one of the most profound and generous gifts God has given us. It's the Mother Lode! To receive God's gift of righteousness is to become as righteous as He is! To be righteous is the character or quality of being right or just. It is used to denote an attribute of God – the righteousness of God – and that gracious gift of God to men whereby all who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ are brought into right relationship with God. This righteousness is unattainable by obedience to any law, or by any merit of man's own, or any other condition than faith in Christ.

When we believe in Jesus and receive (take, claim, obtain) the gift of righteousness, God legally justifies us in heaven's court! Because of the finished work of Jesus on the cross, He declares that we are not guilty. This is a declaration that heaven will never repeal. Listen to this definition of "justification" – *the act of God removing from the believing sinner, his guilt and the penalty incurred by that guilt, and bestowing a positive righteousness, Christ Jesus Himself in Whom the believer stands, not only innocent and uncondemned, but actually righteous in point of law for time and for eternity.*

The words justify, justification, righteous, righteousness, as used of man in his relation to God, have a legal, judicial basis.

God's gift of righteousness is free. We cannot earn it. We can only receive it through believing in Jesus and His finished work on the cross on our behalf. What a gift!

I love these statements. Two by a historic figure and one by a modern day preacher of righteousness:

“What awful presumption to imagine that there is any work good enough to pacify God, when to pacify God required the invaluable price of the death and blood of His own and only Son?” (Martin Luther)

“If my salvation was so difficult to accomplish that it necessitated the death of Christ, then all my works, all the righteousness of the Law, are good for nothing. How can I buy for a penny what cost a million dollars?” (Martin Luther)

“The Law condemns the best of us – righteousness justifies the worst of us.” (Joseph Prince)

God's exclamation point is simply this: When we receive abundant grace and the gift of righteousness we will reign in life! Let's declare it today...

Say It: “Father, I thank You for the ability to reign in life. Today, because of Jesus and His finished work on the cross, I receive (I take, claim and possess) the abundant grace You so freely give. I am living under Your unmerited favor. I am a recipient of Your goodness, benefits and rewards. I thank You for the inner strength and ability You give me by grace. I receive (I take, claim and possess) Your free gift of righteousness. I am the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus. You have declared that I am justified. It's 'just as if I had never sinned.' I believe it and I receive it. I am free from guilt, condemnation and inferiority. I am free to worship You Lord. I am free to live a life that honors You. I thank and praise You today for your amazing gifts and the power to reign in life! In Jesus' Name. Amen.”



yes...more exclamation points! - part 5

"Now to the one who works, wages are not credited as a gift but as an obligation. However, to the one who does not work but trusts God who justifies the ungodly, their faith is credited as righteousness. David says the same thing when he speaks of the blessedness of the one to whom God credits righteousness apart from works:

"Blessed are those whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered. Blessed is the one whose sin the Lord will never count against them."

Romans 4:4-8, NIV

God's exclamation points keep on rolling! He continues to proclaim the good news to all who will receive it, and this passage in Romans 4 is another shout-out to all who have ears to hear. In my own private life and in my preaching life, I can't seem to get away from this topic – so let's look at another week of devos on *More Exclamation Points!*

The Bible describes God's biggest shout-out – His greatest act of love towards mankind – in what is known as the “great exchange!” On the cross, Jesus exchanged our sin for His sinlessness. He took our unrighteousness and gave us His righteousness. He shouted His goodness to all humanity through His Son! Today, let's look at a pretty amazing exclamation point in this passage in Romans:

“Now to the one who works, wages are not credited as a gift but as an obligation.” When a person works a job, they expect a paycheck. That paycheck, their wage, is not a free gift but something they've earned. They deserve it and the employer is obligated to pay it.

Did you know that we also deserve to receive a paycheck – a wage – for the sin we have committed? It's true, the Bible says, *“The wages of sin is death.” (Romans 6:23, NKJV)* God is obligated to pay us the wage we deserve – yes, death. We've earned it. We deserve it. However, God has intervened! Jesus wrote the paycheck for sin by paying the wage with His own death. Jesus went to the cross, took our sins upon Himself and paid the wage our sin demanded. He was our substitute on the cross and He took our place!

“However, to the one who does not work but trusts God who justifies the ungodly, their faith is credited as righteousness.” The Lord does not want our “self-righteous” works. He does not want us to trust in our own efforts; He wants us to trust in His Son. The Lord knows that we cannot keep His laws or do enough good works to earn His righteousness. No matter how we slice it, we will blow it. We are unable to keep the Ten Commandments or do enough good works to earn a righteous standing with God. What God really wants is our faith. He wants us to believe in Jesus and His finished work on the cross, from our hearts, and acknowledge it with our mouths. When we do, God credits our account with His righteousness.

“David says the same thing when he speaks of the blessedness of the one to whom God credits righteousness apart from works.” What an amazing reality. God credits us with righteousness apart from any good works we do. Pure and simple – a gift!

“Blessed are those whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered. Blessed is the one whose sin the Lord will never count against them.” Once again – a truth so good it almost seems too good to be

true! We all know our own transgressions – our thoughts, words and our behaviors. We are well aware of our sins, and yet, God have forgiven us! He will remember our sins no more. Our sins are forgiven and God will never count them against us! Even better – He has given us His righteousness and justified us by declaring us, "Not Guilty!"

“But now apart from the law the righteousness of God has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. This righteousness is given through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference between Jew and Gentile, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.” (Romans 3:21-24, NIV)

Say It: “Father, thank You for shouting out the good news of the gospel to me! I thank You for the 'great exchange.' Thank You for crediting my account with righteousness apart from my works. I believe and I praise You Lord for such a generous, unspeakable gift! In Jesus' Name. Amen.”



yes...more exclamation points! - part 6

"But now the righteousness of God has been revealed independently and altogether apart from the Law, although actually it is attested by the Law and the Prophets, namely, the righteousness of God which comes by believing with personal trust and confident reliance on Jesus Christ (the Messiah). [And it is meant] for all who believe. For there is no distinction, since all have sinned and are falling short of the honor and glory which God bestows and receives. [All] are justified and made upright and in right standing with God, freely and gratuitously by His grace (His unmerited favor and mercy), through the redemption which is [provided] in Christ...."

Romans 3:21-24, AMP

Today, let's listen to the Lord shout out three big words: righteousness, justification, and sanctification.

The New Testament is loaded with pregnant truths on these three things! I know these are big, theological words, but when we receive God's revelation on righteousness, justification and sanctification, we will experience a pivot point and a trajectory change in our lives. Let's look at it:

Righteousness – We Have Been Made Righteous In Christ: We must know, believe and receive the fact that the sinless Jesus became sin on the cross so that we could be made as righteous as He is. When we believe on and receive Jesus Christ as Lord, He gives us the gift of righteousness. This gift is absolutely separate from any works we have done or could ever do. We can't add to it; we can't take away from it. Jesus gave us right standing with God. This is a fact of redemption and the sooner we believe it, the better it will be for us! A revelation of righteousness completely uproots a root of guilt, condemnation, unworthiness, inferiority, rejection and disapproval and fills us with the 'exclamation point' reality that we are forgiven, accepted, approved and worthy because of Jesus and His finished work on the cross!

Justification – Heaven Has Declared That We Are Not Guilty: When we believe on and receive Jesus Christ as Lord, we are made righteous and God makes a declaration from Heaven’s courts that we are, Not Guilty! The gavel has come down and the verdict is in, our sins – past, present and future – have been forgiven! God will never repeal this declaration. We are justified – it’s been announced that we are “just as if I’d never sinned!” Let’s shout out our praise and thanks to God for His indescribable gift!

Sanctification – We Progressively Become More Christ-like: Someone might wonder if God wants us to do good works? After all, shouldn’t Christians obey, do good deeds and have works to show for their faith? If righteousness and justification is a free gift separate from our works – where do our works or good deeds fit in? Our works are the evidence of our faith and our right standing with God; they are not the means to it. (God justifies us by faith. People justify our faith by our works.) We are not to put our faith in the works we do, but in the finished work Jesus has done! When we have our faith in God and His Work, not in our own works, we stay free from self-righteousness and we desire to honor God and please Him with our lifestyle and deeds. Because we have been made righteous and justified, we will want to do good works and live pure and holy lives. We will desire these things because God has *already* been so good to us, not because we’re *trying* to get God to be good to us. Can you see the difference? As we cooperate with the Lord, His Word, His grace and His Spirit, He does a work of sanctification in our lives and we are consecrated to His will, His plan and His pleasure.

Let’s receive God’s exclamation points and let’s shout out our faith in His goodness!

Say It: “Father, I am so thankful for these three big words. Thank You for shouting them out to my heart! I believe and receive it – I am the righteousness of God in Christ. I have been justified – in Heaven’s court it’s ‘just as if I’d never sinned!’ I am becoming more and more like Jesus because of Your work of sanctification in my life. I love You Lord. In Jesus’ Name. Amen.”



yes...more exclamation points! - part 7

"No weapon formed against you shall prosper, and every tongue which rises against you in judgment you shall condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and their righteousness is from Me," says the LORD.
Isaiah 54:17, NKJV

This week, we are still camping out on some of God's exclamation points – His 'shout-outs' to us. One biggie is the amazing truth of righteousness. (I encourage you to [read the archives](#) of the past few devos to catch up on this topic if needed.) When we are established in the righteousness God gives us, something happens! Besides all of the other perks we've been talking about, here are a few more benefits that belong to us through God's gift of righteousness:

No Weapon Formed Against You Shall Prosper: Anyone trying to come against you unjustly? With words? Lawsuits? Editorials? Manipulation? Game playing? Deception? It will not prosper! You can rest in that. If God is for you,

who can be against you? No one can curse whom God has blessed. Your righteousness is from the Lord, says the Lord!

Every Tongue Which Rises Against You in Judgment You Shall Condemn: Anyone wagging their tongue against you? You can condemn it! Usually the loudest mouth of negativity belongs to the devil. He's the accuser of the believer. He's the one who throws the biggest jab of guilt, condemnation, rejection and disapproval towards us. If we listen to his voice, we will find ourselves joining in his chant and the next thing you know we are singing the blues and self-deprecating. When Satan (or anyone else) comes against you with judgment – you can condemn every word by reminding him (and them) and yourself that you are the righteousness of God in Christ. Their words of judgment mean nothing, hold nothing, amount to nothing, are nothing and will not prosper because you are loved, accepted, approved, forgiven, called, bought, taught and righteous according to the Lord God Almighty! Your righteousness is of the Lord. Jesus did not come to condemn you, but to save you through His rich mercy, grace and love.

Today, remember that no weapon formed against you can prosper, and no tongue that rises against you will be successful. Don't allow Satan to prosecute you with accusation and deception, but instead rise up in the power of the Holy Spirit, your great advocate and defense attorney, and be strong in His righteousness!

“...the righteous are as bold as a lion.” (Proverbs 28:1, NIV)

Say It: “Father, I thank You that my righteousness is from You! Thank You for this great gift and the boldness I can have in knowing that no weapon formed against me shall prosper. Every tongue that rises against me in judgment, I will condemn...thanks to You! Thank You, Lord. In Jesus’ Name. Amen.”



yes...more exclamation points! - part 8

*"For You, O LORD, will bless the righteous; with favor
You will surround him as with a shield."*

Psalms 5:12, NKJV

Just when you think God couldn't be any more generous, kind or good – He shouts out even more good news!

Because you have believed in and acknowledged Jesus as the Lord of your life, you are now "in Christ." Since you are in Christ, God has given you the free gift of righteousness. You've been made as righteous as He is! Therefore, you are "the righteous!" When you read Bible verses talking about the benefits and blessings associated with the righteous – it's talking about you – in Christ!

In Psalm 5:12, we discover a major benefit for the righteous: favor! God blesses the righteous with favor. He surrounds us with favor as with a shield. We are surrounded with the favor of God front to back, side-to-side and top to bottom!

To be favored by God is to be given an advantage, to have an edge, to be given

preferential treatment. God's favor opens doors, brings unexpected blessings, out-of-the-blue 'upgrades,' and God's goodwill with man and God into our lives.

We see example after example of the favor of God at work in the lives of God's people throughout the Bible. Think about Joseph, and how God's favor promoted him. Think about Nehemiah, and how the favor of God opened doors and gave him supernatural provision. Think about Esther, and how the favor of God caused her to become the King's favorite. Think about Ezra, and how God raised him up to teach God's people through favor.

In Nehemiah and Ezra, we see the phrase "the good hand of the Lord" mentioned several times. This is a reference to God's favor and success. When the "good hand of the Lord" is upon us for favor – all kinds of supernatural things happen.

You are the righteous, and God has promised to surround you with favor. The good hand of the Lord is upon you for good. Believe and receive it today!

Say It: "Father, I thank You that You surround me with favor as with a shield. I am righteous because of Jesus and Your good hand is upon me for good things! Today, I receive Your favor, and I thank You that I walk in wisdom and I have favor with God and man. I thank You for open doors, advantages, preferential treatment, the supernatural edge and success – all because of Jesus and Your goodness! In Jesus' Name. Amen."