

North Weekly Devotional

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Song: [In Christ Alone](#)

Prayer: God, open our hearts and minds to your word and the truth of the scriptures. Give us the peace and understanding to not only grow in your word but to also apply it to our lives each day.

Text: Philippians 3:9 (ESV)

“and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith—”

Explanation: Right before this, Paul tells us that his ultimate desire is to know God-to gain him. Paul says it's worth everything (Philippians 3:7-8). In verse nine, he continues this thought by stating he wants to be found in Christ. But how does he do that? How do we do that? Paul first tells us what NOT to do. He says being righteous from our own doings, based on the law-following rules, cannot and does not work. No amount of good works can lead us to be found in Christ. If we follow all of the rules, and do all of the good things, and check off every box, it still isn't enough. We cannot be made righteous in God's eyes through our works. Even the best of our best isn't enough.

So what do we do? Paul says that righteousness comes from placing our faith in Christ. It isn't faith plus something else. It's just faith. Therefore, we are made righteous in God's sight only through placing our faith in Christ. Paul is showing us that the only way to salvation is by trusting in Jesus.

When we don't place our faith in Christ, our outcome is bleak. We cannot save ourselves. Without faith in Christ, we cannot overcome our sin. We cannot overcome the evil of the world. There's nothing we can do to change the outcome. We can't check off enough boxes or give enough or do enough. ***But, with faith in God!*** With faith in God, that sin is washed clean. We are made righteous and blameless not because of what we do but because we have placed our faith in him.

In Esther, the Jewish people's outcome with anything other than Christ looks bleak. Haman's plot seems insurmountable. After all, King Ahasuerus has already agreed to the genocide of the Jewish people. The plan is already in motion. What could they possibly do in their own strength to overcome the evil in front of them? Nothing. All hope seems to be lost, but we can trust that it's not. We can trust that through God's sovereign hand, evil and sin can be (and-spoiler alert-will be) defeated.

That's what we will see in Esther and through her story. Even though it seems that evil will win, God and God alone will save his people. And that's what we see in our own lives. Even when the enemy seems to be winning. Even though we deserve death because of our sin. We place our faith in Christ, and then God and God alone saves us.

The Point: The only way to salvation is through placing our faith in Christ.

Application: Are you actually placing your faith in Christ for salvation? Or are you looking somewhere else?

Pre-K & Elementary Age: Ask your kids: How many ways can we be saved? Then explain that Jesus is the only way to salvation. You can also print or draw an easy ([already made](#)) maze. As your kids work through finding their way out of the maze, draw connections between the maze and salvation. If you get lost in the maze, it only brings dead ends and frustration. When we try to get salvation through anything other than placing our faith in Christ, the path leads to frustration and dead ends as well. Just like the maze only has one correct way to get out, we only have one way to “get” salvation.

Middle & High School Students: We live in a world of instant gratification and constant distractions. Ask your teenagers: What are you putting your trust in? Are they trusting in social media, friends,

school, or their talents? Ask them to think about the things they place their faith in more than Jesus, and then challenge them to refocus that faith in Him.

Young Adult: You're facing the time of life when things constantly change. You're figuring out how to be on your own, trying to build a life or family, and deciding what "forever" looks like. Everywhere you look there are things that seem crucial and things that need to be handled immediately. Don't lose sight of who you belong to and who to place your faith in each day. Stay focused on Christ! This doesn't mean that those decisions get smaller and that changes are less impactful. Instead, it means you trust that God has his sovereign hand in it all.

Adult: More than likely, you already know that salvation comes through placing your faith in Christ alone. Do you really believe it? Or do you think that being the perfect mom, dad, friend, or do-gooder is what's been asked of you? Repeat after me: I am more than my role. If you're spending more time perfecting your Earthly role than living fruitfully in Christ, it's time to refocus.

Empty Nesters: More than likely, you also already know that salvation comes through placing your faith in Christ alone. You're at a time in life where you most likely don't have to consistently make crucial and life-altering decisions. You've raised your kids according to God's word. You've been financially responsible. You truly trust in God. So, how does the scripture call you to refocus your life? How can you remain purposeful and not to allow those things (financial peace, kids raised well, secure faith, comfortable in your walk) to cause you to forget what Christ has done for you? What can you do to become even more thankful for the simplicity of the gospel instead of riding in cruise control?

Song: [Hallelujah \(All I Have Is Christ\)](#)

Prayer: Lord, show us our focus. Prick our hearts and draw attention to the things in our lives we place our faith in rather than placing our faith in you. Don't allow us to be complacent in our faith, but stir up in us the desire to refocus that faith and trust solely to you.