

26-0607a - Detailed Summary

26-0607a - *Do I Have God's Approval?*, Steve Cain

Bible Readers: Kevin Woosley and Roger Raines

This detailed summary by Grok, xAI, (Transcription by TurboScribe.ai)

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Do I Have God's Approval?

Scripture Readings

1st Reading (0:04 - 0:59): Kevin Woosley

Matthew 5:3-10: Kevin delivered the first scripture reading from Matthew chapter 5, verses 3 through 10, proclaiming the Beatitudes. He read: Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God. Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for

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theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Kevin concluded the reading.

2nd Reading (1:04 - 1:42): Roger Raines

Acts 10:34-36: Roger then provided the second scripture reading from Acts chapter 10, verses 34 through 36. He read Peter's words: Opening his mouth, Peter said, I most certainly understand now that God is not one to show partiality, but in every nation the man who fears Him and does what is right is welcome to Him. The word He has sent to His sons of Israel, preaching peace through Jesus Christ, He is Lord of all. Roger concluded his reading.

Summary of Transcript (0:04 - 27:15), Preacher: Steve Cain

(1:47-4:06) Introduction and Theme: God's Approval

Steve greeted the congregation warmly, noting it was good to see everyone. He shared that he had wrestled with his lesson all week and was still wrestling with it, hoping it would make sense and come out as the Lord wanted. Drawing primarily from the book of Romans, where he has been preaching, Steve emphasized the importance of gaining a right concept of obtaining God's approval. He posed the central question: Do you know if you have God's approval? He described how comforting it is to know that one does have God's approval.

Steve introduced his constant and familiar question: What pleases God? He turned to Hebrews 11, particularly verse 5 in the New International Version, recounting how Enoch was taken from this life so he did not experience death and was commended as one who pleased God. The passage states that without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to Him must believe that He exists and that He rewards those who earnestly seek Him. Steve summarized that what pleases God is to believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. He expressed confidence that those present that morning were pleasing God by searching Him out and seeking His will, while expressing concern for those absent.

(4:13-6:03) Judgment and Righteousness from Romans 2

Steve continued by asking how we know whether we are pleasing God and have God's approval. He directed attention to Romans chapter 2, reading from verse 12 in the New International Version. The text explains that all who sin apart from the law will perish apart from the law, and all who sin under the law will be judged by the law. It is not those who hear the law who are righteous in God's sight, but those who obey the law who will be declared righteous. When Gentiles who do not have the law do by nature the things required by the law, they are a law for themselves. They show that the requirements of the law are written on their hearts, their conscience bearing witness, with thoughts sometimes accusing and sometimes defending them. This judgment occurs on the day when God judges people's secrets through Jesus Christ, as the gospel declares.

Steve stressed that the concern is God's judgment. God judges like in a law court, justifying those He considers righteous. The focus remains on how we please God, particularly through righteousness.

(6:09-8:26) Understanding Righteousness

Steve explored the meaning of righteousness, noting its dictionary definition as acting in accord with divine or moral laws, free from sin or guilt, and morally right or justifiable. According to Strong's dictionary, it is the state of him who is as he ought to be, the condition acceptable to God, and the spirit-wrought life that conforms to God's standards. He reflected on who is considered righteous.

(8:28-11:15) Psalms on the Righteous

To illustrate, Steve turned to Psalm 33, urging the righteous to sing joyfully to the Lord, as it is fitting for the upright to praise Him. The psalm calls for praising with harp and ten-stringed lyre, singing a new song, playing skillfully, and shouting to the Lord. The psalmist classifies the righteous as those doing the will of God, concerned about their relationship with God and being godly—meaning they care about what God thinks and how their behavior aligns with His approval.

Steve then examined Psalm 34, beginning at verse 15. The eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and His ears attentive to their cry, but His face is against those who do evil. The righteous cry out and the Lord hears and delivers them from troubles. The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those crushed in spirit. Though the righteous may have many troubles, the Lord delivers them, protects their bones, and ensures no one who takes refuge in Him will be condemned. Evil slays the wicked and their foes are condemned, but the Lord rescues His servants. Steve reiterated that the psalmist refers to people concerned about their relationship with God, walking in the light and in accordance with His will.

(11:46-14:40) God's Anger Toward the Unrighteous

Steve explained that from Romans, God has definite concern for individuals who do not concern themselves with His will or do the things He desires. He frequently refers to Romans chapter 1, particularly verse 18 in the New International Version. This passage reveals that God becomes very angry at those who do not walk righteously and are unconcerned about His views on matters such as divorce, stealing, cheating, or worshiping idols. According to Paul, God is angry because they disregard Him as God, show no respect for Him, and fail to give Him His proper place in their lives. They walk against His will, which is considered unrighteousness and being out of step with God's

will. Paul points out that righteousness is being in harmony with God and recognizing Him. What pleases God is to believe that He exists and that He rewards those who diligently seek Him. God Himself is righteous, with no darkness in Him, never acting contrary to what is right or to the detriment of well-being. Everything He does has the right purpose and reason. Even when God does not immediately punish, Paul warns not to mistake it for weakness, as He is giving opportunity to return to Him.

(14:41-16:50) Romans 1: God's Wrath Against Godlessness

Steve continued reading from Romans 1, verse 18 in the New International Version. The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of people who suppress the truth by their wickedness. Since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain, and since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—His eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse. Steve emphasized that an individual walking contrary to the will of God knows they are doing so; it is an exercise of free will, done on purpose because they want to.

In verse 21, Paul continues: For although they knew God, they neither glorified Him as God nor gave thanks to Him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like a mortal human being and birds and animals and reptiles. Therefore, God gave them over to the sinful desires of their hearts to impurity for the degrading of their bodies. With one another, they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator, who is forever praised. Amen. Steve concluded that these individuals are not righteous; they are unrighteous, and they are doing it on purpose.

(16:50-18:22) What Pleases God: The Example of Abraham

Steve returned to the question of what pleases God, pointing to God's relationship with Abraham. What pleases God is whether or not we are concerned about His viewpoints about life, how life ought to be lived, and our morals. When we are concerned about those things, God justifies us and considers us righteous; we are among the righteous, God-fearing people.

Steve invited reflection on Abraham's life. Abraham came out of Ur of the Chaldees, a nation that purposely worshiped idols and did not acknowledge God at all. God called him, promising that if he would come with Him, God would make of him a great nation, and through his seed bless the world. Wherever he walked, the land would be his. Abraham accepted the proposition.

(18:22-21:11) Abraham's Struggles with Belief

Steve questioned whether Abraham really, fully believed God at that point. From the history in Genesis, he did not completely take God at His word. God promised to look after and protect him, to bless those who blessed him and curse those who cursed him. Yet Abraham did not fully believe this.

Steve drew parallels to believers today, noting the same promises. Jesus in Matthew chapter 6 points out that God knows what we need before we ask and meets our needs, so we do not have to worry about food, shelter, or clothing. But do we really believe and live according to that promise?

Abraham did not initially. When traveling with Sarah, he twice passed her off as his sister for personal safety, telling her to do so because he did not believe the people there would spare him. He should not have been concerned, as God would protect him, but Abraham sought personal security instead. God had to intercede with the king, warning him not to touch Sarah, as he was as good as dead. God stepped in to protect Abraham and Sarah.

(21:11-23:37) Abraham's Faith Credited as Righteousness

Steve continued with Genesis chapter 15, where God reaffirmed the promises to make Abraham a great nation, bless the world through his seed, and give the land as an inheritance. Abraham, nearly 90 and childless, expressed doubt about who would inherit his property. God took him outside, showed him the stars, and promised a child from Abraham and Sarah. The scripture says Abraham believed God. Despite their advanced age and Sarah being beyond childbearing years, Abraham believed. God acknowledged this belief, and according to the Greek, it was credited to him as righteousness. God justified him, counting him as a righteous individual.

(23:37-26:14) Justification by Faith and Baptism

Steve applied this to believers: When do we believe God and become justified? It is when we believe God wants to reconcile us to Him, forgive all our sins, and believe He has taken all necessary steps—including sending Jesus to die on the cross as payment for our sins to satisfy the law. When we say we believe and take Him up on that offer, God justifies us. When we are baptized for the remission of sins, God believes us. We take action, become justified, and are among the righteous, walking in God's way, considering His will, and listening to His commandments.

Steve expressed love for Psalm 119, noting that across its 176 verses, David promises to observe God's ways, calling His law a lamp unto his feet that guides how to live. When we learn God's will, we commit to live that way. At baptism, we make a similar promise to God: to give up the sinful ways of the world and pay attention to His will regarding divorce and remarriage, cursing, idolatry, giving, and trusting Him. Coming up from the watery grave of baptism means walking in newness of life—a changed, new life dedicated to God's will.

(26:51-27:15) Invitation and Closing

Steve extended an invitation: If anyone present needs to respond to God's promise and act upon it, the opportunity is open to respond and be considered among God's approved, righteous in His eyes. The congregation was then invited to stand and sing a song of encouragement while worshiping God.