

# 26-0607a Transcript

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

**Bible Readers:** Kevin Woosley and Roger Raines

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## Do I Have God's Approval?

### Scripture Readings

**1<sup>st</sup> Reading** (0:04 - 0:59): Kevin Woosley

**Matthew 5:3-10:** (0:04) The first scripture reading is Matthew chapter 5, verses 3 through 10. (0:14) Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. (0:19) Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. (0:24) Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. (0:29) Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled. (0:36) Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. (0:41) Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. (0:45) Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God. (0:51) Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness'

**Continued**

sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. (0:56) And that concludes this reading. (0:59)

**2<sup>nd</sup> Reading** (1:04 - 1:42): Roger Raines

**Acts 10:34-36:** (1:04) Good morning. I'll be reading from the book of Acts, chapter 10, verses 34 through 36. (1:14) Opening his mouth, Peter said, (1:17) I most certainly understand now that God is not one to show partiality, (1:23) but in every nation the man who fears Him and does what is right is welcome to Him. (1:31) The word He has sent to His sons of Israel, preaching peace through Jesus Christ, (1:38) He is Lord of all. (1:41) This concludes this reading. (1:42)

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

(1:47) Hello, everybody. (1:49) Good to see you all. (1:53) I wrestled with my lesson all week.

(1:57) I'm still wrestling with it. (1:59) So I hope that I can make sense to you. (2:04) And it comes out the way I want it to come out anyway.

(2:08) The way the Lord wants it to come out. (2:09) Let's put it that way. (2:15) Basically, drawing my lesson from the Roman letter, (2:18) because I've been preaching on the Roman letter all the time, (2:22) but the main thing is that I want us to get a right concept of getting God's approval.

(2:33) And the question that arises is, do you know if you have God's approval? (2:40) And that's the main thing. (2:43) And it's so comforting when you find out that you do have God's approval. (2:49) And that's my thoughts.

(2:51) I'd like to take a look at my constant question, my familiar question that I always ask. (2:59) What pleases God? (3:02) Hebrews 11 points out what pleases God. (3:07) And we pick up in verse 5 in particular, reading from the New International Version.

(3:15) My faith, Enoch, was taken from this life so that he did not experience death. (3:21) He could not be found because God had taken him away. (3:25) For before he was taken, he was commended as one who pleased God.

(3:32) And without faith, it is impossible to please God, (3:36) because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists (3:41) and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him. (3:46) So what pleases God? (3:49) To believe that he is, and that he's a rewarder of those who diligently seek him. (3:54) And so the thing is, are we pleasing God? (3:58) And I'm sure that each one of you who are here this morning are pleasing God.

(4:06) It's a question about those who are not here, whether or not they're pleasing God or not. (4:13) But the main thing is, you need to know that you are pleasing God (4:17) by searching him out and seeking his will. (4:22) And so as we reflect upon it, how do we know whether or not we're pleasing God (4:30) and have God's approval? (4:34) Do you know whether or not you have God's approval? (4:38) The main thing is that when I look at Romans, the second chapter, (4:45) and he points out here to us about God making that judgment.

(4:53) And we pick up, I believe, about verse 12, and I'll be reading from the New International Version. (5:03) All who sin apart from the law will also perish apart from the law, (5:08) and all who sin under the law will be judged by the law. (5:12) For it is not those who hear the law who are righteous in God's sight, (5:19) but it is those who obey the law who will be declared righteous.

(5:24) Indeed, when Gentiles do not have the law, do by nature things required by the law, (5:31) they are a law for themselves, even though they do not have the law. (5:37) They show that the requirements of the law are written on their hearts, (5:41) their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts sometimes accusing them (5:46) and at other times even defending them. (5:50) This will take place on the day when God judges people's secrets through Jesus Christ, (5:57) as my gospel declares.

(6:03) So it is a judgment, and it's God's judgment that we're concerned about. (6:09) And as we reflect upon it, how does God judge us? (6:13) And when He does judge us, He's going to be, like in the law courts, (6:21) He's going to be justifying, and He justifies those that He considers to be righteous. (6:27) And He's doing so in such a way.

(6:46) The main thing that we want to know is, how are we pleasing God? (6:52) And we know that certain acts, like righteousness, we're going to be using the word righteous today. (7:02) It's the concern that I have concerning our thoughts about what righteousness is (7:09) and what righteousness is achieved or accredited to us. (7:16) And so what is righteousness? (7:20) If you look it up in the dictionary, you see the Meridian dictionary, (7:28) it would say, acting in accord with divine or moral laws, free from sin or guilt.

(7:38) Morally right or justifiable. (7:43) When we look at the word righteousness up in Strong's dictionary, (7:49) he says it's the state of him who is such as he ought to be. (7:55) The condition acceptable to act God.

(8:00) Righteousness, the spirit of wrongful, no, the spirit wrought life that conforms to God's standards. (8:17) So we reflect upon righteousness and who is righteous in that particular thing. (8:26) I'd like for us to see a usage of it.

(8:28) Let's take a look at Psalms 33 and see how the psalmist uses the word righteous. (8:38) And as he's reflecting on that for us. (8:45) Psalm 33, I've got to get there myself.

(8:56) It starts out by saying, (8:57) Sing joyfully to the Lord, you righteous. (9:02) It is fitting for the upright to praise him. (9:06) Praise the Lord with the harp.

(9:08) Make music to him on the ten-stringed lyre. (9:12) Sing to him a new song. (9:15) Play skillfully and shout to the Lord.

(9:19) So who is righteous? (9:22) The psalmist is suggesting that they start praising him. (9:26) Sing joyfully to the Lord, you righteous. (9:30) It is fitting for the upright to praise him.

(9:32) Who is the righteous? (9:34) What is he classifying as righteous? (9:37) He basically is classifying those who are righteous as doing the will of God, (9:43) who is considering their relationship to God and whether or not they are being godly. (9:51) And the word godly implies the fact that you are concerned about what God thinks (9:58) and what God proves in your behavior. (10:03) And so he's talking about individuals who concern themselves concerning those things.

(10:08) Let's take a look at chapter 34 of Psalms. (10:13) And in particular, we'll pick up with verse 15. (10:22) The eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and his ears are attentive to their cry.

(10:30) But the face of the Lord is against those who do evil, to blot out their name from the earth. (10:37) The righteous cry out, and the Lord hears them. (10:42) He delivers them from all their troubles.

(10:44) The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit. (10:50) The righteous person may have many troubles, but the Lord delivers him from them all. (10:58) He protects all his bones.

(11:00) Not one of them will be broken. (11:03) Evil will slay the wicked. (11:05) The foes of the righteous will be condemned.

(11:08) The Lord will rescue his servants. (11:11) No one who takes refuge in him will be condemned. (11:15) Again, who is the psalmist referring to as being righteous? (11:21) He's talking about a group of people, a certain type of people, (11:25) and it's the people who are in the class of being concerned about the relationship with God, (11:39) and whether or not they're walking in the light, (11:41) whether or not they're walking in accordance to his will.

(11:46) We can see that God, when we're reading Romans, (11:51) we can see that God definitely has a concern about the individuals who do not concern themselves, (12:01) do not regard themselves to his will, and for the things that he would like for them to do. (12:07) And I always refer to this quite often, and those of you who sit in my class will know that. (12:14) I always turn to Romans, the first chapter, and looking at verse 18 in particular, (12:21) reading from the New International Version, (12:24) because God becomes very angry at those who do not walk righteously, (12:31) who are not concerned about what he thinks about divorce, (12:36) or what he thinks about stealing and cheating or worshiping idols.

(12:42) They're not concerned about these things. (12:45) And the reason why he's angry at them, according to the Paul in the writing of Romans here, (12:51) in the first chapter, is that they are disregarding him as God. (12:56) They have no respect for him.

(12:58) He does not have the proper place in their lives. (13:02) They're concerned about him. (13:04) He is God.

(13:06) He is over us. (13:09) He has authority over the whole world. (13:11) He is the one whom we are to answer to.

(13:17) But if we're going to walk against his will, it's unrighteousness. (13:22) It's considered to be unrighteousness. (13:25) And that walk is out of step with God's will.

(13:28) And so Paul points out that righteousness is when you are in harmony with him, recognizing him. (13:40) What pleases God? (13:41) To believe that he is and that he is a rewarder to those who diligently seek him. (13:46) And we need to recognize God is righteous himself.

(13:51) When we reflect upon the righteousness of God, what are we saying about God? (13:57) You will not find any darkness in him. (14:01) You will not find him going contrary. (14:04) He will not do anything to the detriment of your well-being.

(14:07) He will not do anything. (14:09) Everything that he does has the right purpose and for the right reason. (14:15) And Paul points out in the Roman letter that when we look for him to punish us and he doesn't punish us, (14:25) Paul says, look, don't take that for weakness.

(14:31) Because he's trying to give you all the rope you can have to come back to him. (14:38) And you do not neglect that. (14:40)

(14:41) So he points out here in Romans 1, verse 18, what angers him.

(14:50) And this is what he's pointing out to us. (14:52) The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of people who suppress the truth by their wickedness. (15:04) Since what may be known about God is plain to them because God has made it plain to them.

(15:12) For since the creation of the world, God's invisible qualities, his eternal power and divine nature (15:20) have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made so that people are without excuse. (15:29) So an individual who is walking contrary to the will of God knows he's walking contrary. (15:36) It is his exercise of free will.

(15:39) He is doing it on purpose. (15:42) He's doing it because he wants to. (15:44) It is his will.

(15:47) So, Paul goes on and says in verse 21, (15:50) For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, (15:56) but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. (16:01) Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools and exchanged the glory of the immortal God (16:09) for images made to look like a mortal human being and birds and animals and reptiles. (16:17) Therefore, God gave them over to the sinful natures of sinful desires of their hearts (16:23) to suckle in their own impurity for the degrading of their bodies.

(16:28) With one another, they exchanged the truth about God for a lie (16:32) and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator, who is forever praised. (16:40) Amen. (16:41) So he's pointing out here that these individuals are not righteous.

(16:46) They are unrighteous, and they're doing it on purpose. (16:50) So what pleases God? (16:53) What pleases God is what we find his relationship with Abraham is concerned. (17:00) What pleases God is whether or not we are concerned about his viewpoints about life, (17:08) how life ought to be lived, how our morals are to be.

(17:13) We need to be concerned about those things, and when we are concerned about those

things, (17:18) God justifies us and he considers us to be righteous. (17:23) We're among those who are righteous, God-fearing people. (17:29) And so when we look at the relationship that Paul points out to us concerning Abraham, (17:36) what are we looking at? (17:38) Take a look at Abraham and reflect upon Abraham's life.

(17:43) He came out of a nation, an Ur of Chaldees, (17:51) who purposely worshipped idols, who purposely did not acknowledge God at all. (18:01) And God goes to him and says to him, (18:05) If you will come with me, I will make of you a great nation, (18:10) and through your seed I will bless the world. (18:14) And whatever land that you walk on, I'm paraphrasing obviously, (18:17) whatever you walk on, it is a land that will be yours.

(18:22) So Abraham accepted that proposition, but did he really, really believe God at that point? (18:31) Obviously not, because we can see by the history that is recorded for us in Genesis, (18:39) he did not really take God at his word, (18:43) because God promised him that he would look after him and protect him. (18:48) And whoever blessed him, he would bless, and whoever he would curse, he would curse. (18:52) And so Abraham, the words of security, did God believe him? (19:00) Obviously not.

(19:02) We have those same promises ourselves. (19:06) Jesus in Matthew, the sixth chapter, points out to us that God knows what we need before we even ask of it. (19:14) He meets our needs.

(19:16) We do not have to worry about what we're going to eat, where we're going to live, what we're going to wear. (19:21) We don't have to worry about those things. (19:23) Do we really believe it? (19:25) We're Christians.

(19:27) We're walking in God. (19:28) But do we actually live according to that promise that God gave us to us? (19:37) So Abraham obviously is not living that way, because when he is traveling with Sarah, (19:42) he comes twice under the circumstances of passing his wife off as his sister, just for personal safety's sake. (19:53) Because he tells her, pass yourself off, because I don't believe these people here.

(19:59) He doesn't believe God, because he should not be concerned about those people. (20:05) Those people are going to... (20:11) God is going to make sure that they don't harass him or do any harm to him. (20:17) But Abraham doesn't believe that.

(20:19) He's asking his wife for personal security, for personal reasons. (20:23) He's asking her to pass himself off to protect him from them killing him to get to her. (20:31) He didn't believe that.

(20:32) Do we believe God's promises? (20:34) Do we act upon God's promises? (20:37) So just how righteous are we in our walk of life? (20:42) Just how righteous are we when we deal with these things? (20:47) So when we see the actions that God had to go through in order to save Abraham and Sarah, (20:59) he has to intercede and he has to tell the king, look, that's his wife, don't you touch him, you're as good as dead. (21:07) And so God had to step in and protect him. (21:11) So now, when we see the next thing is that God has promised him, has come to him in Genesis the 15th chapter, (21:22) we see that God is coming to him and saying, look, I'm going to... (21:28) He reaffirms the promise that I will make of you a great nation and through thy seed I will bless the whole world (21:33) and therefore the land that you have been traveling is yours and for an inheritance of your family.

(21:41) What does Abraham do? (21:44) Abraham says, look, I've been following you. (21:49) I'm

almost 90 years old now and I don't have a child. (21:54) Who's going to inherit my property? (21:56) He doesn't believe God at this point.

(21:59) But God takes him outside and he shows him the stars and he says to them, look, you will have a child. (21:42) And the child will be between you and Sarah. (22:14) It's going to be a child promised.

(22:16) What does the scripture say? (22:18) Scripture says that Abraham believed him. (22:25) Ah, he believed him. (22:29) What does that mean? (22:31) It did not take the fact that he was so old that he should not be having any children.

(22:39) As old as he is and Sarah is beyond childbearing. (22:44) He didn't take that into consideration. (22:46) He said, I believe you.

(22:48) And God looked at him and God says, I know you do. (22:53) I know you believe me. (22:57) And when he said that, according to the Greek, (23:01) if you look at the word Greek, the word that is said, it credits him as righteous.

(23:10) He justified him. (23:14) How did he justify him? (23:15) Of all these things that Abraham had done, there was several, perhaps, in the things that he was doing. (23:24) Up until that point, God says to him, I believe you, and he justifies him.

(23:32) Because he justifies him, he counts him as being a righteous individual. (23:37) You are a righteous individual. (23:42) So, when do we believe God? (23:44) And when do we become a Christian? (23:46) Or when do we become justified by God? (23:50) When we believe that God wants to reconcile us to him and forgive us of all our sins (23:58) and believe that he is offering us the opportunity to be reconciled to him (24:04) and to believe that he is taking all the steps that is necessary to reconcile us to him and forgive us of our sins.

(24:12) He's going to have Jesus come and die on the cross as a payment of perpetuation for our sins (24:20) to satisfy the law and to satisfy the law. (24:24) Do we believe that? (24:26) Or are we going to say, God, I don't believe you. (24:32) That's unrighteousness.

(24:34) But when we say, we believe you, and we're going to take you up on that, (24:40) that's when God says to you, I believe you do. (24:44) You are justified. (24:46) And when we're actually baptized for the remission of our sins, that's when God believes us.

(24:51) We take the actions, and we become justified, and we are among those who are righteous. (25:02) And we're walking in the way that God wants us to walk. (25:05) And we're considering God's will, and we're listening to his advice, his commandments.

(25:14) I love Psalms 119. (25:16) When I read through Psalms, when I get to the 119th chapter, and I read the whole 176 verses, (25:28) and all those 176 verses, what is David saying? (25:34) Teach me your way, and I will observe it, and I will be yours. (25:40) Your law is a lamp unto my feet.

(25:43) They guide me in the ways that I should live. (25:47) When I learn about your wills and how you want me to live, I will live it that way. (25:55) He's making a promise.

(25:59) So when we're baptized, we are making a promise to God too. (26:06) I'm going to give up the simple ways of the life. (26:09) I'm going to give up the evil ways of the world.

(26:12) And I'm going to pay attention to your will. (26:14) I'm going to pay attention to your commandments, your desires, what you have to say about divorce and remarriage, (26:24) what you have to say about cursing, what you have to say about idolatry, (26:28) what you have to say about giving, what you have to say about trusting you. (26:34) So when I come up out of that watery grave of baptism, I'm going to walk in a newness of life.

(26:44) It's a changed life. (26:45) It's a new life. (26:47) It's a life dedicated to God's will.

(26:51) And if there's anyone here that needs to respond to that invitation and that promise that God has given to you (26:57) and wants you to act upon, we'd like to extend to you the opportunity to respond to it (27:03) and to be considered among God's approved. (27:07) You will be righteous in His eyes. (27:11) Worship God.

(27:13) Lord, together we stand and sing this song of encouragement. (27:15)