

1 **OVERTURE 5** from Westminster Presbytery
2 “Concerning Our Present Need”

(to OC)

3
4 **CONCERNING OUR PRESENT NEED**
5

6 We come as persons in the same predicament as all persons, yet who have been shown
7 mercy by a gracious God, and who desire that the goodness and mercy of God be showered
8 upon other individuals and our nation. We testify, with the Apostle Paul:
9

10 I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because He
11 considered me faithful, putting me into service, even though I was formerly a
12 blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent aggressor. Yet I was shown mercy
13 because I acted ignorantly in unbelief; and the grace of our Lord was more
14 than abundant, with the faith and love which are *found* in Christ Jesus. It is a
15 trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into
16 the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost *of all*. Yet for this
17 reason I found mercy, so that in me as the foremost, Jesus Christ might
18 demonstrate His perfect patience as an example for those who would believe
19 in Him for eternal life. Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only
20 God, *be* honor and glory forever and ever. Amen. I Timothy 1:12-17
21

22 We come as fellow sinners whom God has saved by His grace in Christ Jesus, who are
23 examples that God can save anyone, no matter how deep or desperate their sin, and that God
24 is glorified as He is shown to be the Lord who can save, reclaim, renovate, and restore those,
25 like us, who were most entrenched in sinful hearts and actions.
26

27 We confess that the Bible is the Word of the Living God, and that it is the measure and
28 standard that evaluates us, not we the judge of it.
29

30 For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged
31 sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and
32 marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. 13 And
33 there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare
34 to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do. Hebrews 4:13-14
35

36 You, however, continue in the things you have learned and become convinced
37 of, knowing from whom you have learned *them*, and that from childhood you
38 have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that
39 leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is God-
40 breathed and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in
41 righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every
42 good work. II Timothy 3:14-17
43

44 With God’s Word as our standard, we find that it tells us plainly that we are all sinners, in
45 need of the redemption purchased by Christ, in history, at the cross.

1 For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified as a gift
2 by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; whom God
3 displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith. *This was* to
4 demonstrate His righteousness, because in the forbearance of God He passed
5 over the sins previously committed; for the demonstration, *I say*, of His
6 righteousness at the present time, so that He would be just and the justifier of
7 the one who has faith in Jesus. Where then is boasting? It is excluded. By
8 what kind of law? Of works? No, but by a law of faith. For we maintain that a
9 man is justified by faith apart from works of the Law. Or is God *the God* of
10 Jews only? Is He not *the God* of Gentiles also? Yes, of Gentiles also, since
11 indeed God who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised
12 through faith is one. Do we then nullify the Law through faith? May it never
13 be! On the contrary, we establish the Law. Romans 3:21-31

14
15 God is a moral God. We are sinners. Thus the dilemma—How can a holy, moral God, in
16 love forgive sinners, not holding their sins against them, and still maintain His righteous
17 character? In the wisdom of God this is resolved at the cross of Jesus Christ, when God's
18 own Son propitiated (appeased, satisfied the demands of) the holy justice of God, and
19 suffered the full penalty for the sins of those that trust in Him IN THEIR PLACE. God did
20 not compromise His law's requirement that sin be punished, but upheld the sanctity of His
21 law, yet in love provided His own beloved Son to bear the penalty of His law in the place of
22 sinners. Thus, the continuing validity and relevance of the Law of God as the standard by
23 which He judges all human conduct is established by His own action in history.

24
25 In our current culture we believe it is our responsibility to declare the truth of God's Word in
26 the face of lawlessness being endorsed and promulgated, just as John the Baptist, in our
27 Lord's day, called King Herod to repent of breaking God's law by his adultery with his
28 brother's wife (Matthew 14:3-4), and as the Apostle Paul called people to turn from their sin
29 to Christ, when he said:

30
31 The night is almost gone, and the day is near. Therefore let us lay aside the
32 deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light. Let us behave properly as in
33 the day, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual promiscuity and
34 sensuality, not in strife and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and
35 make no provision for the flesh in regard to *its* lusts. Romans 13:12-14

36
37 In our current culture, there is need for the clarity that only God's wisdom can bring to a
38 situation where, as in the days of Isaiah the prophet, people are calling bad things good, and
39 good things bad.

40
41 Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; Who substitute darkness for
42 light and light for darkness; Who substitute bitter for sweet and sweet for
43 bitter! Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes and clever in their own
44 sight! Isaiah 5:20-21

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