

**Date** : 6 October 2024  
**Theme** : Making our Salvation sure  
**Topic** : Amazing grace through faith in Jesus  
**Passage** : *Romans 4,5*  
**Key verse** : *The words “it was credited to him” were written not for him (Abraham) alone, but also for us, to whom God will credit righteousness – for us who believe in Him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead...  
*Romans 4:23, 24**

## Introduction

So far, we have established that no one (from the primitive tribes to the learned scholars) anywhere in the world will be able to raise an objection against God who has judged that there is none righteous. Why? Because God has given mankind 3 reasons to know Him but we have ignored Him:

- In creation *Romans 1*, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, so we are without excuse.
- Through conscience *Romans 2:15*, the work of the law written in our hearts, bears witness of what pleases God.
- Through the Law given to Israel *Romans 3:19*, it speaks to those under the Law.

However, to those who believe (= trust what God's Word says), God credits (imputes) righteousness (= we have God's righteousness). We call this justification (= we are considered not guilty of sin).

So, when we speak of being justified by faith, we mean being declared righteous in Christ, and so accepted by God through the means of faith. What kind of faith? The answer is faith as demonstrated by Abraham. The question is what is it about Abraham's faith and why did God credit righteousness to him?

## 1. Why did God credit Abraham with righteousness?

a) Abraham believed God's promises

- He obeyed. On God's instructions, he left his comfortable home in Babylon and went where God would lead *Genesis 12:1*.
- He kept on believing God's promise...*I will make you a great nation...* *Genesis 12:3*. Abraham needed to have a son, an heir. God promised his descendants would be as numerous as the stars.
- He believed God's big vision. Through his seed, the whole world would be blessed. (...*Abraham believed God...* *Romans 4:3*) as well as in God's promise that he would be the ancestral head of a great nation. (In *Galatians 3:16*, the word *seed* is singular (not plural) thus pointing to Abraham's one descendant, Christ).

Abraham, through his faith, anticipated Christ's death and resurrection when, by faith, he enacted this in the process of sacrificing Isaac. (*Romans 3:25* says *Christ's death paid the penalty for the sins of those who will trust in Him*).

b) Abraham demonstrated faith when...*he did not waver...* *Romans 4:20*

- He hoped against hope  
He believed the...*God who gives life to the dead and calls things that are not (exist) as though they were...* *Romans 4:17*

- He faced the facts that his body was as good as dead but believed that God's power was greater. He considered his own body and Sarah's already dead (unproductive from medical perspective) since he was 100 years old and Sarah was infertile.
- He strengthened his faith and persevered till God's timing. He waited 25 years for the result; all this time, things only seemed to go downhill but was strengthened in his faith. How did he strengthen his faith?

He did not doubt God's promise (the seeming impossibility of having a child in his 100<sup>th</sup> year and Sarah in her 90<sup>th</sup> year). It seemed a long wait but this was necessary for Abraham's faith in God to be stretched. Secondly, He was strengthened in faith = empowered by faith in God's Word. It was not his faith per se that gave him strength. It was the God of his faith that gave him strength. Faith can grow stronger. It is the proper response to God's promises.

For today's generation, where instant gratification is expected, waiting for God's appointed time seems a waste of time. But the Lord is never late. Just as in Abraham's case, when the appointed time was due, the Lord paid a personal visit to reassure him – next year, same time, same place. You will not be disappointed with God's appointed time  
*Genesis 18:10,14.*

- c) He believed God's provision when told to present his son as a living sacrifice,
- To his servants (before the sacrifice) he said...*We will return...*
  - To Isaac, his son, (on the way up to the place of sacrifice) ...*The Lord will provide.*  
And the Lord did.
  - He believed in God's resurrection power ...*who gives life to the dead... Romans 4:17*  
The rejuvenation of Abraham's "dead" body was a picture of the Lord's resurrection from the dead.

From the above example of Abraham, we see Paul defending the teaching on justification by faith. Abraham was not declared righteous through his works or by keeping the law. Rather, God's promises to Abraham and his descendants were received by faith, the promise rests on God's grace.

Here is the ultimate good news that God will do for us what He did for Abraham  
*...not for his sake only was it written, but for our sake... Romans 4:23, 24*

## 2. What is so amazing about God's grace?

- a) Grace is given precisely to those who do not deserve it.

*...God who justifies the wicked Romans 4:5*

*...Christ died for the ungodly Romans 5:6*

(We do not understand grace because we are used to people deserving what they get.

Ought not the just God condemn the ungodly, not justify him).

But like the physician who does not treat the well, so God does not offer life to the alive.

Who needs grace but the sinner who does not deserve it.

- The ungodly = the wicked. In *Romans 1-3*, those who thrash His Name, ignore and suppress His existence, those under God's wrath and deserving death. Through grace, God gives the exact opposite of what we deserve. Eternal life, not death.  
*...so grace might reign through righteousness to bring eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord Romans 5:21*

- How? God chose the right time. *Romans 5:6*.  
The apex of man's sin was when we man crucified Christ. Yet the marvel of God's love is that this event, the death which proves man's guilt, is at the same time the death which forms the perfect and acceptable sacrifice to God. ...*God presented Him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in His blood... Romans 3:25*
- This is grace!  
The glorious unexpected reversal coming over the world in the death of Jesus Christ. God proclaiming release from judgement and forgiveness of sin in His Son.

b) Grace abounds, exceedingly abounds, much more abounds. *Romans 5:15, 17, 20*

Grace abounds over our judgement and condemnation

The whole world was condemned in deep spiritual darkness.

Grace from God covers not just Adam's sin and the repercussions there, but all our sins.

- Grace can reverse what sin did because grace results in righteousness and eternal life. That is the security of our salvation. It is stronger and greater than sin.  
...*the promise comes by faith so that it may be by grace and may be guaranteed to all...Romans 4:16*

c) Grace is amazing because it reigns

- Grace will not result in people living licentiously and recklessly in sin. Why?  
The real rule, reign and government of grace results in righteousness.  
...*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*
- God gives us a righteous nature, a new man.  
If grace truly operates in our life, it will result in the rule and reign of righteousness.

### **3. 7 amazing blessings of grace that follow justification. Romans 5**

#### **① Peace with God Romans 5:1**

We were once enemies of God but are now brought near. Christ, our Mediator, brought us near to God, breaking down the wall separating us and God. As our Peac, we can now approach God freely in Jesus' Name.

#### **② Access to God's grace Romans 5:2(a)**

We were once under judgement for sin but now have access into God's presence to receive His unmerited favour. We do not deserve any good thing from God, but only through our Lord Jesus can we find favour in His sight. Today, every good and perfect gift we experience daily comes from the Father.

#### **③ Hope of glory Romans 5:2(b)**

Glory speaks of His presence, particularly in the future. Previously ours was a hopeless end but now we have an endless hope. We are assured a place in glory land. We may not know what the future holds but we know Who holds the future. Our future ahead is guided by His Spirit.

#### **④ Joy in all circumstances Romans 5:3**

We often associate joy with good things that come our way. But now, in Christ, we can rejoice in times of trial and testing. Our joy is not dependent on external circumstances. It is internal, the condition of our hearts.

We see a purpose in trials, the testing of our faith that will build Christlike character.

⑤ **His love poured into our hearts *Romans 5:5***

The love of the Father is poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit. God's promise is not only to the good, righteous or the deserving but to the ungodly. Yes, God's wrath is on the ungodly, but Christ died for the ungodly. There is none godly until redeemed by His blood.

⑥ **No more wrath *Romans 5:9***

We were once under the wrath of God; but that has passed. We are no more relating with an angry God. We now know Him as our Heavenly Father who lavishes His love on us.

⑦ **Reconciled with God *Romans 5:10***

In the past, we were aliens and enemies of God because of our rebellion against Him. Now that reconciliation has taken place, we can approach God with a clear conscience, knowing that all our sins have been forgiven.

**Application – Get to know the meaning of these terms in *Romans 4***

a) Why we cannot attain justification by works *Romans 4:2*

Works has to do with trying to earn merits before God

**Question:** Why do you think the idea that good people deserve salvation, while evil people deserve hell is so prevalent?

b) Justification by faith

- The state of being declared “not guilty” by God because Jesus died to remove the penalty of sin on our behalf.
- Justification would not be possible without the Cross. The Cross is God's righteous act.
- Righteousness is imputed (credited) – a gift is not earned.

**Question:** Why must I see myself as ungodly before I can be justified?

*...Christ died for the ungodly. Romans 5:6*

Does that give me a bad self-esteem?

c) Gifts and works

- Wages are earned through works. It is an obligation an employer must fulfil.
- Gifts are not earned.

d) Grace (= *charis*) is the favour God extends to unworthy people.

- People say *...he does not deserve grace...* Grace is not grace if one deserves it.
- Grace cannot be gained through works, conduct or morals.
- Grace is God's offer to man.

e) Faith

- Is trusting the Word of God and His promises.  
It is not believing anything without basis. Faith is shown by what you do with God's promises.
- Faith is belief in the truth of the gospel as well as trust in the God of the gospel.
- Our object of faith is Christ.

f) Imputed = to account, to credit; to reckon.

Our sins are put to Christ's account and Christ's perfect righteousness credited to our account. This exchange takes place the instant we believe in Jesus.

- Human law courts versus God's court.  
Human law courts – only the innocent person is justified (= not guilty)
- God's court
- The unjust are declared just by God's merciful verdict.
- This is no arbitrary pronouncement but is made with reference to Jesus Christ  
*...who was put to death for our trespasses and raised for our justification Romans 4:25.*  
In this way, the sinner is acquitted, reconciled with God and has peace with God.