

ROMANS: One Verse at a Time

Romans 3:21 – 4:8

How can a person hope to be in RIGHT STANDING before a holy and perfect God? This is one of the most important questions a person can consider. For the one without a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, this is the question that can lead to _____ . For the person who has already been saved, this is the question that will _____ them in right standing before God. A word of warning is appropriate. This question is too important to leave to a search on the internet. One would be wise to avoid randomly flipping through the channels on the T.V. or the radio in search of such profound wisdom. I would suggest that our _____ knows us best. It is God alone who can answer this question. Indeed, for such an important question, only the Holy Bible, God's Word, speaks sufficiently on the subject. It is to its pages we now turn.

Romans 3:21-31

God's Righteousness through faith

21 But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, 22 even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference; 23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, 25 whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed, 26 to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

27 Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? No, but by the law of faith. 28 Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law. 29 Or is He the God of the Jews only? Is He not also the God of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also, 30 since there is one God who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith. 31 Do we then make void the law through faith? Certainly not! On the contrary, we establish the law.

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Earlier in this chapter, Paul documented the absolute and total _____ of man. Here, verse 21 transitions to reveal how that very person can be made right before a righteous God. If this verse tells us anything, it clearly states that **righteousness has been revealed apart**, or _____, the law. To be clear, the law _____ saved anyone. It is important to realize the hopeless futility of trying to keep the law in light of the fact that James 2:10 tells us that if we err in one area of the law, we are guilty of _____. So, if the law does not make us right before God, what does? The following verses reveal the answer that is **witnessed by the Law and the Prophets**...a phrase that was a common way of expressing that the _____ of Scripture teaches this truth...the law did _____ make a person RIGHT before God.

The righteousness of God is found not through obeying the law, but through exercising **faith in Jesus Christ**. Faith _____ is the prerequisite for salvation. Verse 23 labels everyone a sinner and should compel those who are trying hard to “be good” to give up. No matter how good a person is they will have missed the mark of God’s _____.

As we have already seen, no one can adequately follow the law, but it is a glorious truth that faith is available to _____. God is no respecter of persons. The call of the gospel is equally available to the rich, the poor, the free, the slave, the prisoner, any nationality, any color, any level of intellect, any occupation. While man may list a multitude of ways in which we are different, God does not. Everyone is in need of _____.

23 for all

have sinned and
fall short of the glory of God,

24 being justified freely

by His grace
through the redemption
that is in Christ
Jesus,

Similarly, John MacArthur points out that just as no one is good enough to be saved, no one is _____ enough that he cannot be saved. _____ can come to Christ through faith. The prostitute, thief, homosexual, and any other sinner will be saved if they will call on the name of the Lord. God says everyone has a _____ to believe or not to believe. Everyone **has sinned and fallen short of the glory of God**. It is critical for a person to realize that this means _____...that *they* have sinned and are not _____ before God. Once these truths are personalized, the first steps towards salvation will have been made.

Of all those who were sinful, some believed and have been **justified freely** by God's _____. Justification is a legal term which means to be made _____. Here, God freely declares His terms have been _____, and the true believer stands in righteousness before Him. Note also the charge for this justification. It is _____! Though everyone can _____ it, no one can _____ it. This truth comes as little comfort to the person who donates large sums of money to the church but withholds his _____. Likewise, the volunteer who is simply "looking for something productive to do" will find no favor from God for their efforts. Free means free. It is a gift, not a _____. It is unmerited favor. While there are a number of ways to phrase it, we all need to take the time to understand it.

While justification is free to all who believe, redemption did cost Jesus Christ His _____. On Calvary's cross, Jesus paid the ultimate price for our _____. When one considers the shed blood of Jesus, all the other good _____ that man is known for pale in comparison. There is simply no way for mankind to pay anything for their sins.

25 whom God set forth
 as a propitiation
 by His blood,
 through faith,
 to demonstrate
 His righteousness,
 because in His forbearance
 God had passed over
 the sins that were
 previously committed,
 26 to demonstrate
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27 Where is boasting then?

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29 Or

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As we see in verse 25, God allowed Jesus to die to _____ His divine righteousness. It is His righteousness that takes every sin and, instead of _____ humanity, shows forbearance, or patience. God places every sin under the blood of Jesus and, in spite of them, _____ salvation to all. Unfortunately, as verse 26 indicates, not everyone _____ salvation. A just God will only save those who have placed their **faith** in Jesus. But those who do place their faith in Jesus are made right, or _____, before God.

There is simply no room for _____ if a person receives this free gift of salvation, because they have done nothing to _____ it. We have been justified by _____ alone. Can the Jew boast in being a Jew? Verse 29 highlights the fact that, for the purposes of salvation, people group does not matter because God is the God of _____. Chapter three concludes by asking, "Does faith nullify the _____. Paul says _____. Since the law was never designed as the method of salvation, faith alone does not _____ it. In fact, just the opposite is true. The law is actually _____ as in much of the New Testament, Jesus _____ God's standards above even those found in the Old Testament. One only has to read the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5-7 to see a whole new depth to the _____ Testament Law.

As such, the law is still active. The fact that people are able to get saved means the penalty for the law has been paid, the law continues to serve its _____ and drive people to Christ. As such, when you meet a genuine Christian, you are seeing the _____ of the law.

Is He not

also the God of the Gentiles?

Yes, of the Gentiles also,

30 since

there is one God

who will justify the
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by faith

and the uncircumcised

through faith.

31 Do we then

make void the law through
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Certainly not!

On the contrary,

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While this ends chapter 3, it is important to revisit the answer to the question posed at the beginning of this lesson. How can a person hope to be in _____ standing before a holy and perfect God? Paul has given us the answer:

_____.

If faith alone gives a person the ability to be in RIGHT STANDING before a holy and perfect God, it is important to ask some key questions about what this faith looks like.

Consider, for example, what can often be _____ as faith:

Conviction of sin and going to the altar at the end of the service.

Church _____ (teacher, deacon, choir, preacher).

Giving money, volunteering time to the church.

Praying

A past decision to accept Christ.

Bible _____

To many, each of these attributes would be seen as _____ signs of faith. While they should be signs of the _____, far too often they are easily counterfeited.

What inward signs mark _____ faith?

A love of God

Repentance and _____ for sin.

A _____ love for His people.

A selfless love for His church.

Spiritual growth.

_____ to the Word of God.

A passion to see the lost saved.

While neither list is comprehensive, the goal is to notice the _____ between things like:

- being a moral person and living a moral life in _____ to the Word of God.
- praying before every meal and praying out of love for _____, His people, or the lost.
- a _____ decision to accept Christ and a growing _____ with Him

These types of differences are important because they reveal the _____ of the heart. There is no better time than the present to consider your standing before God. If you realize that your life does not reflect genuine faith, now is the time for you to receive Christ. Here is how:

Pray with sincerity of heart:

Dear Jesus, I know I am a sinner, and I need a Savior.

I believe You are the Son of God.

You died on the cross to pay the penalty for my sins.

I believe You rose from the dead.

Today, I repent of my sins, and I invite you to come into my life,

To be my Lord and my Savior.

Jesus, beginning right now, I desire to follow and obey You the rest of my life.

Romans 4:1-8

Abraham Justified by Faith

4 What then shall we say that Abraham our father has found according to the flesh?

² For if Abraham was justified by works, he has *something* to boast about, but not before God. ³ For what does the Scripture say? *“Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.”* ⁴ Now to him who works, the wages are not counted as grace but as debt.

David Celebrates the Same Truth

⁵ But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness, ⁶ just as David also describes the blessedness of the man to whom God imputes righteousness apart from works:

⁷ *“Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven,*

And whose sins are covered;

⁸ *Blessed is the man to whom the LORD shall not impute sin.”*

Why does Paul have to spend so much time and energy in his letter to the Romans to declare that salvation is by grace through _____ and not by _____ or the keeping of the law? The answer to that question is “The _____ made him do it!” but not in the usual meaning of those words. The fact is that it is Satan himself who wants man to believe in salvation by works. That is why every false religion, pagan or “_____” offers a salvation accomplished by what man can do. The devil encourages, even inspires this false _____ because he wants as many as possible to accompany him to the Lake of Fire. His purpose is to kill, to steal and to _____.

Therefore because the devil works so hard to deceive through lies that salvation is by works, the Holy Spirit through Paul works even harder to declare the truth that salvation is by grace _____, through faith _____, in Christ _____.

What then shall we say
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 our father
 has found
 according to the
 flesh?

In chapter 3 of Romans Paul gives the _____ argument against salvation by works or by the keeping of the law. Paul now moves from the philosophical argument to a more personal one. And the person Paul uses as the basis of his presentation of this critical truth is _____.

Why does the Spirit lead Paul to use **Abraham** as an example? There could be many reasons but one is virtually certain: Most Jews considered Abraham to be the _____ man who ever lived and whose right standing with God was achieved through his faithful _____ to the Almighty.

1. They believed that Abraham was _____ by God because he was the most righteous man on the face of the earth.
2. They even rendered Habakkuk 2:4 to read “The just shall live by _____.” Rather than the more proper “The just shall live by _____.”
3. The rabbis taught that Abraham was _____ by his good works and by his keeping of the law even before it was given to Israel.
4. Some _____ apocryphal books even taught that Abraham began to serve God when he was _____ years old and that he _____ sinned against God.

Paul is literally storming the gates of hell by demonstrating that Abraham was made righteous not by the righteous acts of his own hands, but by _____ in God, Who by His grace, _____ Abraham’s faith as righteousness.

² For if Abraham
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So Paul says, “Let’s ask Abraham. He is our _____ in the flesh. Abraham, what did you find in your life experiences with God about how to be righteous before the Almighty?” He then offers a hypothetical. He says, “**If Abraham was justified by works**, that would give him **something to _____ about**, would it not?” Certainly if a man could do sufficient good works and/or refrain from sufficient bad deeds, that he could _____ to be considered righteous by a thrice holy God, he would have really _____ something magnificent, something he could brag about.” And while this statement is hypothetical for Paul, because he has already demonstrated clearly that “all have sinned,” including Abraham, yet this is exactly what many Jews in New Testament times believed. Abraham deserved salvation because of his _____.

But Paul’s point here is that Abraham did _____ boast, did not dare to boast before God. Why not? Because Abraham knew his _____ and _____. He had nothing to boast about, because he was not justified by his works.

³ For what does the Scripture say?
*“Abraham believed God,
and it was accounted to him
for righteousness.”*

What Paul asks next, we should all remember to ask whenever we need the answer to an important question, “**For what does the _____ say?**” Then he quotes the holy text: *“Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.”* Paul is quoting Gen. 15:6. This verse is very clear to not only tell us about Abraham’s faith - *Abraham believed God*, but also to plainly declare that it was Abraham’s _____ that **was accounted to him for righteousness**.

The word “accounted” comes from the Greek “logizomai” which was used in both the fields of _____ and _____. It meant crediting something to a person’s account. Because Abraham believed God, God credited Abraham’s account with _____.

In his commentary on Romans, John MacArthur makes an important point. “Faith is never the _____ or the reason for justification, but only the _____ through which God works His redeeming grace.... It was not the greatness of Abraham’s faith that saved him but the greatness of the gracious Lord in whom he placed his faith.”

The conclusion of both Moses in Genesis and Paul in Romans (not to mention _____ and Hebrews) that Abraham was saved through his faith is born out by the details of Abraham’s life. Abraham was a man of great faith. He was raised in a culture of _____ (his father being an idolator), yet when the True and Living God spoke to him, Abraham believed and responded. When Abraham was forty years old, the Lord told him to leave his country and his family and go to a land God would show him. Abraham did not even know where he was going to go, but he believed and obeyed. His faith was genuine, but his obedience was far from _____. He left immediately, but he took much of his family with him. They stopped in Haran and Abraham remained there, contrary to God’s command for the next _____ years. When Abraham’s father died, Abraham set out for the land that God was leading him to, tragically bringing his nephew _____ with him.

We note these things not to belittle the testimony of Abraham. Twice he is commended in Hebrews as a _____ of the faith. There were also times in his life when Abraham demonstrated great _____ as well, such as when he obeyed the Lord to take his only son Isaac, whom he loved, and offer him as a burnt offering to the Lord on Mt. Moriah. Which of us could measure up to such an example? I certainly cannot. Yet it is important for us to see, for the Scripture shows us clearly, that Abraham was still just a man. And in spite of his great faith and sometimes great faithfulness, he was a sinner by _____ and action. At times his faith wavered; sometimes he was not so faithful.

We could site many other examples of both from the extensive biblical record of Abraham, but it is hardly necessary to get the point. As good a man as he was in comparison to other men, even Abraham was not good enough to _____ by his own good works. He was a _____ who needed a _____ as much as any of us. And that was the most glorious thing about God’s call and covenant with Abraham.

Genesis 12:1-3 Now the LORD had said to Abram: “Get out of your country, From your family And from your father’s house, To a land that I will show you. ²I will make you a great nation; I will bless you And make your name great; And you shall be a blessing. ³ I will bless those who bless you, And I will curse him who curses you; And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

Through Abraham’s seed, that Savior would come. And like the _____ God substituted for Isaac to die in his place on the peak of Mt. Moriah, the Lord Jesus died in Abraham’s place, paying the price for his sin and ours, there on that same mountain, now called _____.

⁴ Now to him who works,
 the wages are not counted
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⁵ But to him who does not work
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 LORD shall not impute sin.”*

If Abraham gained his salvation by **works**, then it would not be considered _____ but the payment of what is due. But Abraham did not work for his salvation, he simply _____ on God who is the One who justifies sinners, the _____. Therefore Abraham’s faith was credited as righteousness to his account.

Paul now offers another example of a famous Jew whom every other Jew would agree was saved: _____. No Jew would say that David did not end his life in a state of righteousness with God. So Paul quotes what David said about becoming righteous.

Paul refers his readers back to David’s famous psalms of _____ (32 and 51) following his sin with Bathsheba and the murder of her husband Uriah. David did not plead his _____ but asked God to “be gracious unto me according to thy loving kindness.” David declared how blessed a man is when God forgives his sin and _____ righteousness to him that he does not deserve.

Like Abraham, David was such a man. David also was a man of faith and at points a man of great faithfulness, he nevertheless was a sinner and could never earn nor _____ God’s salvation. Only when God charged David’s sins to another (_____) and gave Christ’s righteousness to David, could David be made righteous. This God did when David _____. And so God does for every man and woman, boy and girl who comes to faith in His dear Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.
