

Romans, Part 7

Throughout the Bible, justification and righteousness before God is achieved by faith. When Abraham believed God, it was credited to him as righteousness. David described the blessing of God on those to whom God credits righteousness apart from works. Both Abraham and David give testimony of justification before God by faith and not by works. Justification is the act of causing someone to be in a proper or right relation with another, to make right or righteous. God takes the initiative in making those who believe righteous and just in His sight by faith. So, justification is the act of being declared righteous on the basis of trusting God's goodness and Christ's atoning work.

Romans 4:1-2 NKJV What then shall we say that Abraham our father has found according to the flesh? For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God.

All of our good works cannot qualify or justify us before God.

What did Abraham discover and what did he gain? If Abraham had been justified by his own works, he would be qualified to seek praise before men, but not before God. When Abraham believed and trusted God, it was credited to his account as righteousness.

Why is that true?

All of our good works fall short of God's perfection and glory. Abraham was not justified by works but by faith.

God is perfect in every way.

There is no imperfection in God. He is perfectly righteous, holy, good, and pure. If we are to fellowship with the perfect God, we must become righteous in His sight. Since we cannot achieve perfection by works, we are excluded from the presence and favor of God. No act or combination of actions can elevate us to a place where we could glory or be qualified before God. We are not able to stand before God and say: "Look how good I am." "Who can ascend into the hill of the Lord? Or who may stand in His holy place?" (Psalms 24:3) "For we have all sinned and fall short of the glory of God."

How was Abraham justified or made righteous?

Abraham was justified by believing God. As a result of Abraham's faith (confident trust), God credited him with righteousness.

Romans 4:3 NKJV For what does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness."

The word "believed" means "to have complete trust and reliance, to have confidence and faith." It was not Abraham's works, but his complete faith and trust in God that God counted as righteousness. His righteousness was a result of God's action. When Abraham believed God, he was declared righteous by God. It is important to notice how Abraham demonstrated his complete faith and trust in God. When he believed

God, Abraham took steps of obedience to his faith. All of the blessing and glory belonged to God, not to Abraham.

In the same way, we are saved by faith and not by works.

God takes our faith and counts it as righteousness. All of our righteousness is given by God as a result of our complete reliance, faith, and trust in Him.

To bring us into His presence, God took action.

In love, God takes action on our faith and counts our faith as righteousness, as perfection. Therefore, we are able to live in God's presence by faith. We cannot attain God's blessing and favor by obedience but by confident faith and trust in God.

Romans 3:20 NKJV Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

Ephesians 2:8-9 NKJV For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.

Why does God justify us through faith?

There are at least two reasons.

First, God loves everyone with a perfect love.

God wants to restore us to fellowship so that we can live with Him in the state of perfection throughout eternity. Since God alone is able to provide access into His presence, in love, He provided the only perfect way through Jesus Christ.

John 3:16-17 NKJV For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

Romans 5:8 AMP But God shows and clearly proves His [own] love for us by the fact that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

1 Peter 3:18 NKJV For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit,

Second, God has a perfect love for His Son.

Anyone who puts wholehearted faith, confidence, and trust in God's Son is accepted by God. God takes our faith, confidence and trust and counts it as righteousness. Faith makes it possible to receive the right to live in God's presence in a perfect state of being.

Ephesians 1:4-6 NIV84 For He chose us in Him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in His sight. In love He predestined us to be adopted as His sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with His pleasure and will— to the praise of His glorious grace, which He has freely given us in the One He loves.

Colossians 1:13 AMP [The Father] has delivered and drawn us to Himself out of the control and the dominion of darkness and has transferred us into the kingdom of the

Son of His love.

Salvation, justification and righteousness are not a result of works.

Romans 4:4-5 CEV Money paid to workers isn't a gift. It is something they earn by working. But you cannot make God accept you because of something you do. God accepts sinners only because they have faith in him.

Follow the logic of what is being said.

Everyone that works earns something by working. If we could work for righteousness, God would owe us. God cannot be made our debtor or be forced to do anything.

Romans 4:5-6 NKJV But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness, just as David also describes the blessedness of the man to whom God imputes righteousness apart from works.

When we realize that we cannot be righteous by our own works, we come to know our need for God's mercy, grace and help. God is ready to help us. To be right before God, we must look to Jesus and depend solely upon Him for salvation and righteousness. This is trust and confident faith in what Christ Jesus has done for us.

Romans 5:1 NKJV Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,

Philippians 3:9 NKJV And be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith;

The only way to be declared righteous before God is by faith and trust in Christ.

Our own righteousness always falls short of the just demands of God. We can fully trust in the righteousness from God that is through faith in Christ.

Romans 3:10-12 NKJV As it is written: "There is none righteous, no, not one; There is none who understands; There is none who seeks after God. They have all turned aside; They have together become unprofitable; There is none who does good, no, not one."

Proverbs 30:12 NKJV There is a generation that is pure in its own eyes, Yet is not washed from its filthiness.

Self-righteousness always produces a faulty product. Self-righteousness or self-justification always works from a deficit. God has provided a better way.

John 3:18 NKJV He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

Romans 4:6 refers to Psalms 32:1-2.

Romans 4:6-8 NKJV Just as David also describes the blessedness of the man to whom God imputes righteousness apart from works: *“Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, And whose sins are covered; Blessed is the man to whom the Lord shall not **impute** sin.”*

The word **“impute”** means to charge to one’s account, to credit or make a deposit. This term was used in the Graeco-Roman legal language to indicate that something was recorded in the books. The implication is that the guilty individual does not have the record of their iniquity recorded in the books.

When we walk by faith in Christ, God does not charge our lawless deeds to our account.

What happens to our lawless deeds?

They are charged to Christ’s account and the guilty person receives His righteousness apart from works. As a result, we are justified by faith in Jesus Christ.

We are blessed when His righteousness is imputed, credited, or counted to us, not because of our works, but because we believe God.

By love, God takes our faith and trust in Christ’s finished work and counts it as righteousness. We are blessed when our sins are forgiven and covered.

The record stands that we all fall short of the glory of God.

We cannot measure up to God’s perfections or holiness. No amount of personal good works or human effort can eliminate our iniquity and failures. Lawlessness (sin) still exists.

Only God is able to put away our sin.

We are blessed when our sins are not imputed or counted against us.

Only God can justify us and not count sin against us. No one can justify themselves before God. We cannot free ourselves from sin and force God to accept us. Complete deliverance from sin and condemnation comes from God and from God alone.

Isaiah 43:25 NKJV I, even I, am He who blots out your transgressions for My own sake; And I will not remember your sins.

Isaiah 44:22 NKJV I have blotted out, like a thick cloud, your transgressions, And like a cloud, your sins. Return to Me, for I have redeemed you.”

(**Read:** Isaiah 55:7; Micah 7:18; Psalms 78:38; Psalms 85:2; Psalms 103:3, 12; Ephesians 1:7; 1 Peter 2:24; 1 John 1:9; Revelation 1:5)

Romans 4:9 NKJV Does this blessedness then come upon the circumcised only, or upon the uncircumcised also? For we say that faith was **accounted** to Abraham for righteousness.

Many of the Jewish believers assumed that righteousness was only available to those who were circumcised. However, God declared Abraham righteous fourteen years

before he was circumcised, (Genesis 15:1-6; 17:9). As soon as Abraham believed, God accounted him righteous. The word **“accounted”** means to credit, deposit, to put to one’s account.

This word “blessedness” refers back to verses 6-8.

The Amplified Bible says, “Blessed, happy and to be envied is the person of whose sin the Lord will take no account nor reckon against him.”

- He is counted righteous without works.
- His sins are forgiven and covered.
- His record is cleared before God.

If Abraham was already righteous in God’s sight, why be circumcised?

Circumcision was a sign and a seal of a changed life. It was a sign in the flesh of what God had already accomplished in one’s life. Rites, rituals and ordinances cannot make us right with God. We receive communion and are baptized in water as a sign of our faith and trust in something that has already taken place.

What is the value of these things?

They are signs and seals of the Christian’s faith in Christ. The believer is quick to obey God. The act of obedience to the faith is a sign that we have been declared righteous and are justified in God’s sight. Righteous actions follow God’s work to make us right.

Ephesians 2:8-9 NKJV For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.

Why is faith so important?

Romans 4:16 NKJV Therefore it is of faith that it might be according to grace, so that the promise might be sure to all the **seed**, not only to those who are of the law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all.

The word **“seed”** refers to all who have faith in God. All who have faith enter into God’s covenant promise.

Watch the depth of Abraham’s trust and faith in God.

Romans 4:20-22 NKJV He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God, and being fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform. And therefore “it was accounted to him for righteousness.”

This is the kind of faith and confident trust we must have. We must be fully convinced that God will do what He has promised. Our confident trust in Christ’s atoning work puts us in a right relationship and position with the Father.