***Faith and Faith Alone
RO43-01***

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Please open your Bibles to Romans 4:20-25.

**Justifying Faith**

It is not an improper question to suggest that it is wise for us to test our faith: we who think we are Christians; and, we who think that we are someday going to heaven. It is wise to test our faith to see whether it is justifying faith. That actually is the point that the apostle Paul is making in these last verses of Romans 4. He is now going to come to an end of the formal discussion of the doctrine of how to go to heaven. And in order to try once more to make that perfectly clear, he is repeating some very critical pieces of information.

In effect, Paul is saying, "You take what I write in these verses, and you may now test your faith to see whether it is justifying faith. So, he writes, "And therefore it was imputed to him (that is to Abraham) for righteousness. Now it was not written for his sake alone that it was imputed to him, but for us also to whom it shall be imputed if we believe on Him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was delivered for our offenses, and who was raised again for our justification."

**Add Nothing to Faith**

The verses, in short, reduce themselves to saying that you can test your faith, and see whether it is justifying faith, by the simple procedure of examining whether you have added something to your faith. And that's what he has been striving to make clear all through this passage – that justification can have nothing added to it beyond what God does. So, if at some point in your faith, relative to the ground of your salvation, you have injected some human doing, you are in a very dangerous condition today. What this passage is saying is that if you have done anything more than to trust in Jesus Christ to provide you with eternal life, you're in a lot of trouble. If you have added any human work, or any religious ritual of any kind, then you are doomed, and you are not going to heaven, and you need to do something about it.

This is a very important passage of Scripture. We have seldom come across one as important as this one today, and we're really going to hack it out, because here is where multitudes of churches have failed. They're literally sending people to hell left and right, because they're telling them: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and add water baptism, and though shalt be saved." Or: "Add the Lord's Supper, and thou shall be saved. Or: "Add a good life, and thou shalt be saved." Or, "Add any number of other things, and thou shalt be saved." And that is wrong. That is what the apostle Paul has been trying to say: "Don't you dare do that, because it will cost you eternal life."

**Why am I Going to Heaven?**

I hope that, before we're through, that will be clear to you. And that you'll be able to step back and look at yourself and say, "Why do I think I'm going to heaven? If, when I walk into heaven, God may say, 'Why should you be permitted to enter My heaven?' What would I answer Him? And the answer that you give will reflect whether your faith is justifying faith or whether it is a delusional faith.

**Adam vs. Abraham**

Paul has reviewed for us (in order to make this point clear) the life of Abraham, the founder of the Jewish nation. He has shown that this life was characterized by faith from start to finish. Whatever religious rituals or other human works were required of Abraham, they had no bearing on his justification. Adam began his fall into sin, and into eternal death, with an act of not believing God's Word. Abraham did just the opposite. He began by believing God's word, and the result was justification and eternal life. Adam, who began with unbelief, ended up with loss of justification, and with eternal death upon him. Abraham began with believing God's Word, and ended up with justification and eternal life resting upon him.

So, the issue at stake is always believing or not believing God's Word. That's what Paul has been drumming away at. It is never what you do or don't do. It is whether you believe what God has done for you, or whether you don't believe that.

Now, because Abraham was a man of faith in God, he could believe the seeming absurdities of the promise that had been made to him – the absurdities of having a son at his age and in his condition, and in his wife's condition, that made it absolutely impossible to have an heir. Yet the heir, he was confident, was on his way.

**The Effect of Obstacles upon Faith**

So, this teaches us something. Faith does not grow stronger as the obstacles grow weaker. Look at it this way. Faith does not grow stronger because the obstacles are growing weaker. And the reverse is true – that faith does not grow weaker as the obstacles become stronger. Many times we make that mistake about faith and the relationship to our circumstances.

Now, one thing we should have learned from the faith of Abraham is that the strength (the quality) of your faith has nothing to do with your circumstances. Certainly, Abraham's faith was strong. The Bible clearly declares that. And it had nothing to do with his circumstances. So, remember that your faith will not increase because your troubles decrease. And your faith will not decrease just because your troubles increase. There is no relationship between your faith and your circumstances.

So, when a believer sees the impossibility of his own condition, what happens is that faith actually is strengthened because you are forced to turn for the promise of God. You are forced to turn to the one who has told you that He will do something for you. And you look upon Him, not upon yourself, and not upon your circumstances. And you get clearly in mind who and what God is.

**The Essence of God**

This is exactly what Abraham did. In his situation, he turned and he said, "Now let me review for myself the essence of God."

1. **Sovereign**

He said, "God is sovereign, as we find in Deuteronomy 4:39. That means that God is the supreme authority in the universe whose will is final. God's plans for Abraham, therefore, he knew could not be nullified by anyone.

1. **Righteousness**

Furthermore, God is absolute righteousness (Leviticus 19:2). That means that God is absolute righteousness. Therefore, He is free from all evil. So, He would do no wrong in dealing with Abraham.

1. **Justice**

God is justice (Deuteronomy 32:4). That means that God is absolutely fair. God will provide a perfect ground, therefore, for Abraham's justification, and for all those blessings which He has promised to Abraham.

1. **Love**

God is love (1 John 4:8). God's mental attitude goodwill characterizes everything He does. God's love is motivated by His kindness, therefore, to Abraham. He is not motivated because of some merit Abraham, so that God's love could stop if the merit in Abraham ceased. God's love was apart from any merit in Abraham.

1. **Eternal Life**

God is eternal life. Abraham knew this (Exodus 3:14). Abraham knew he was not dealing with some mere mortal who's here today and gone tomorrow. God is always going to be around to keep His Word to Abraham. And Abraham latched onto that.

1. **Omniscient**

Abraham knew that God is omniscient (Psalm 44:21). That means that God knew everything that was in store for Abraham so that He could actually describe Abraham's future to him. God knows the needs of Abraham – the things that Abraham would require in order to be able to enter the blessings of that promise. God knew it all.

1. **Omnipresence**

Abraham knew that God is omnipresent (Psalm 139:7-8). Abraham would never be left alone in the foreign land to which God had led him. Wherever Abraham's descendants wandered in the future, God would always be present with them because God is omnipresent.

1. **Omnipotent**

Abraham knew that God is omnipotent (Genesis 18:14). There is nothing that God cannot do within the range of His holiness. Abraham's fathering the child of promise with a wife who was beyond conceiving, therefore, was no problem at all, because God (who is omnipotent) would make it come about.

1. **Immutable**

Abraham knew that God was immutable (Psalm 102:26-27). God cannot change. Therefore, He is absolutely faithful. He is trustworthy. Abraham knew that he was not dealing with the devil who is not immutable. The devil changes. Therefore, what the devil promises you today, tomorrow he'll take back. Abraham knew that never changes. Therefore, Abraham could rest assured that whatever God had in mind for him, and whatever God had promised to him, God wouldn't go back on His word.

1. **Veracity**

Finally, Abraham knew the God was veracity (Numbers 23:19); that is, God cannot lie. Abraham knew that what God told him about his future was actually a fact. It was true. God was not trying to describe something for him that would make Abraham feel good, but which really wasn't a fact of life.

So, when you think about the essence of God and recognize what God is really like, failure to have faith in God, in view of His essence, is an absolutely unmitigated insult to God. You couldn't insult God more than just by not believing what He has told you, in view of who and what He is.

**Abraham's Faith**

Now, Abraham, therefore, we have found, did not deny the facts of his situation. He did not presume to reason out a solution. He didn't look to some false authority for the answer. All of those we branded as false kinds of faith. The Bible does make it clear to us that Abraham's faith was of a very specific nature, and it should give us a guideline to what ours should be. It told us that Abraham's faith was not weak. It told us that it was not undermined by his inward circumstances (his own sexual impotency). It was not undermined by the outward circumstances (the inability of his wife to bear children at her age). It was not fluctuating between belief and unbelief. It was strong, and it gave glory to God for what was not yet possessed. He was a thankful man, and that strengthened his faith. Finally, he was fully persuaded to keep His promise. All of these things (we find in the passage that we have studied thus far) characterized Abraham's faith.

So, what I'm saying is that Romans 4 is the great faith chapter of the Bible. If you wanted to count them up, you would find that the words "faith" and "believe" are used 16 times in this chapter alone. Paul could not stress the concept of trusting God any more than he did.

**Bible Doctrine Knowledge**

Now we have found that the faith may be present, but it may also be weak. There are two factors have strengthen a person's faith. One, of course, is the knowledge of Bible doctrine. You can never have faith that amounts to anything until you know the Word of God. That is the first step. First, you have to have factual information.

**Bible Doctrine Application**

Then, the second thing is to apply the knowledge to your circumstances. When the disciples were crossing the Sea of Galilee, and the Lord Jesus was asleep in the boat, and the storm blew up, they had faith, and they had information about the person who was lying there asleep in the boat. They knew who He was, and they knew His powers. But they did not apply that information to their circumstance – the storm. Instead, they were all upset because they were bailing water out of the boat, and they were concerned that they were going to sink, and that they were going to drown. So, they wake Him up, and they actually in absolute lack of faith. And Jesus points that out to them. Jesus rebuked them for the fact that they were men of little faith.

When you have information about God, and you apply that to your circumstance, your faith becomes stronger all the time. Faith looks at God. Faith depends upon his faithfulness. Have you ever heard of positive thinking? Positive thinking that a delusion because it's looking at yourself. Positive thinking is not looking to God. That's just looking to yourself. But faith is trusting beyond yourself, and having nothing positive about yourself at all, because there isn't anything to be positive about.

Let's begin with Romans 4:22 now. This is one of the most important passages in all the Scriptures. See that you understand it: "And therefore, it was imputed to him for righteousness." Here is the result in verse 22 of Abraham's faith. The word "And" is the Greek word "kai," which is translated here as "also." The word "therefore" is the Greek word "dio." This is a conjunction which means "wherefore," or "on account of which." We take these two words together and we may translate them as: "on account of which also."

What this is referring back to is Abraham stable faith, which has just been described in this context, and which we have just reviewed under the seven points that the Bible indicated characterized his faith. At the heart of that characterization was that it was not a fluctuating faith between belief and doubt. This faith, we also saw, depended entirely on God's character for salvation, and Abraham gave God the exclusive credit for his eternal life.

So, the passage begins by referring back to that quality in Abraham. These words introduce again the quotation that we have had several times from Genesis 15:6: "It was imputed to him for righteousness. Abraham believed God, and it was imputed to him for righteousness." The word "was imputed" is the Greek word "logizomai," which we have had several times. "Logizomai" means simply "to put to one's account" or "to reckon." It is in the aorist tense which refers to a point in time. And that point in time is back in Ur of the Chaldees when Abraham believed God's promise to him, because the promise that God would make of him a great name and a great nation also included the fact that he would be a great blessing to the people of the world. And that great blessing was because the Savior would be born through the Semitic line of Abraham.

So, back in Ur of the Chaldees, something was imputed (was reckoned to his account) because he believed God. It is passive voice here because it was done to Abraham by God. It was a gift. It was not some payment that Abraham earned. And it was in the indicative, which indicates that we have a statement of a fact here. So, Abraham's faith in God's word was the condition of justification. In other words, Abraham, listen to God, and he said, "Amen."

**Righteousness was Imputed**

Also, "It was imputed:" "It was reckoned to his account (to him; that is, to Abraham) for." The word poor is the preposition "eis," which here means "resulting in." It was reckoned to his account, resulting in "righteousness" ("dikaiosune"), which means here "God's absolute righteousness." This is the third time in chapter 4 that this principle has been stated. If you look back, you'll see that in verse 3 this quotation is referred to; in verse 9 it's referred to; and, in verse 22 it's referred to. Basically, Abraham believes God. That faith in God results in personal justification.

**Faith**

So, believing in God's word was credited to Abraham's account with the fact that absolute righteousness was imputed to Abraham, and he was declared justified before God; meaning that, in God's eyes, He no longer had any moral guilt whatsoever. Abraham's faith was in the promise, and that promise included that he would be a blessing to the nations of the world. Galatians 3:14 tells us that that blessing meant salvation through the coming Savior. Abraham's faith was the condition of his justification. The ground of it, of course, was the future death of Christ on the cross who was going to bear Abraham sins.

**Faith Alone**

So, the only righteousness Abraham possessed (Paul is saying) is one that he got without doing anything. That's the only righteousness that Abraham possessed that counted anything before God. And that's why we tell you that you can check your faith today. Whether you have justified faith or not depends on the fact whether that faith that you have, on which you're counting to get into heaven, has anything added to it of your own doing. If it has anything added to it of your own doing, you do have justifying faith, and you are not going to heaven. So, get it straight once and for all. If you have justifying faith, it is faith in Christ alone, and you have not added anything.

I realize that that is a horrendous thing to say, but I think if you've been with us over these months through the fourth chapter of Romans, you have seen increasingly that that conclusion has been pressed upon us as inevitable. And I know that that means that there are many people in the circle of your acquaintance, and within your family group, that suddenly you may get the shock of realizing that they are enthusiastic Christian-like participants who think they're going to heaven, who sadly are not. All we can do is warn them that they should be aware of the fact that they are not going to make it unless it on God's basis. On his own, the only righteousness Abraham has is "-R." But the righteousness that counted with God was when Abraham trusted in God. Then it was "+R." Then it was absolute righteousness.

So, here with one verse (verse 22), Paul sums up in a dramatic fashion how to secure "+R," and thus eternal life. Abraham in himself was only "-R": relative righteousness. But in God's view, on the basis of his faith, with the imputation of God's absolute righteousness, Abraham becomes "+R."

**Divine Good Works**

I want you to notice something else. Until Abraham was actually justified, he could not produce a single divine good work. The only thing that God considers of value, and that He rewards, is divine good. That's why you, as a Christian, can produce divine good for which God is going to store treasures in heaven in your name, and for which you will be rewarded, and which you will enjoy for all eternity. This is what is so ludicrous about these people who think they can add something to faith for salvation, because until you're actually justified, you cannot produce any divine good that God would accept. Until God actually says, "You're justified," then you have nothing but "-R." So, what good is it for you to go and produce the ritual of baptism? Unless you produce that ritual of water baptism after you're justified, it could not be a good word acceptable to God.

So, there it is. If circumcision counted for anything, unless you did that after you were saved, it could not be of divine merit in God's eyes. So, there is no way that any rituals can be added to salvation. God has just closed it off. All divine good comes only within the circle of your being a believer. Unless you're in the outer circle of eternal fellowship, you cannot produce divine good. And even then, unless you're in the inner circle of temporal fellowship, where you are under the power and the guidance of the Holy Spirit, you cannot produce divine good. So, the whole concept of something added to salvation (works or rituals) is absolutely ludicrous. Until Abraham was justified, he could produce no divine good work, and neither can you or I. So, salvation by works, or partly by works, is simply impossible. When you stop and think through this issue, it's even logically impossible, as well as by the order of Scripture.

**Faith is a Gift from God**

So, there was no merit in Abraham's faith itself. It was only the fact of the object that he trusted in – God. Even the faith that Abraham had didn't come from him. Ephesians 2:8-9 makes it very clear: "For by grace you are saved through faith, *and that not of yourselves*. You didn't have that faith. It is the fact that *God gave you that faith*. That's scary, isn't it? That almost makes you break out in the cold sweat. You could be sitting out there, and God has not given you faith. And there's nothing you can do about it. There is nothing you can do about it. Until He comes and gives you that, you're out.

If you sit here, and if you have justifying faith (trust in Christ plus nothing), just breathe a sigh of relief that, for some reason, He looked at the clods that we are, and said, "I'd like to have you in My family," and He gave you the faith. You did it to Abraham, and He has done it to us.

**Right Believing**

Man's reason and man's conscience are so absolutely disoriented by the sin nature within him that people constantly think that right living is more important than right believing. That's why we had this badmouthing about doctrine. What they do not realize is that while it is true that healing is indeed more important than the remedy for an illness, without the remedy, there can be no healing. That's true. Healing is far more important than the remedy, but without the remedy, there is no healing. So, with salvation, it is true that salvation is more important than what we believe. But without a true doctrine of salvation, there can be no salvation.

One of our men was telling me yesterday a man spoke to him, and said that he was a member of a large church in Fort Worth, and the word "doctrine" had come into the conversation. And the other man said, "Oh, at our church, we don't get tied up in that business of doctrine. We just don't get fouled up in that. We are very ecumenical minded." And our man asked him where he went to church, and he said that he went to Broadway something church. Well, our man restrained himself from saying, "Yeah, we've read about that one in the Bible. We know the gang that's on the broad way, and we know where it's going too. Without doctrine, that broad way is leading you straight into hell. Unless you have true believing, you cannot have true living. So, it is foolish to try to separate the fact that it's how you live: "Love – that's the things. Let's not fight over doctrine. Let's not be splitting hairs. Let's just love one another." Anytime anybody tells you that, you just look him right in the eyeballs and you know that you have a disoriented character from the Word of God, and he's trying to cover his ignorance.

One of the great writers about the Scriptures was a man named W. R. Newell. He was a great old saint. He and Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer used to be wonderful friends. One time they were together (both as old men), and Dr. Chafer said to William Newell, "Bill, how old are you?" Bill said, "I'm 71." And Dr. Chafer was up toward 80, and he said, "71? I don't know why I treated you with respect all this time. You're just a kid." But Newell was a smart kid. He had a great understanding of the Word of God, and he wrote a commentary on Romans. And there was a footnote that sort of summed up this point of the relationship between the content of right believing and the expression of like living.

On page 153, he says, "Faith is the only faculty by which we can lay hold of God. 'Let him take hold of My strength' is God's command (Isaiah 27:5). But we cannot reach His greatness. We are dust. We cannot look upon his face, for he dwelleth in light unapproachable. We cannot apprehend His wisdom, for it is infinite – incomprehensible. Reasonings of the wise regarding God are vain. Then how shall we lay hold of God at all? By believing Him. The weakest of men can believe what God tells him. Praise be to His name. Faith, simple faith, connects us with the Mighty One. Paul says, 'The faith of God's elect motivates the knowledge of the truth, which is according to godliness" (Titus 1:1). Purity of heart and life without the correct, accurate, constant teaching of doctrine (the doctrine which is according to Godliness (1 Timothy 6:3)) is simply a philosopher's speculation, or a Romanist's lie, or a modernist's imagination."

That is well-stated: "Therefore, it was imputed to him for righteousness." What was? Believing God and keeping his hands off of the project by trying to do something? Abraham was saved that way, and you and I are saved that way too.

In Romans 4:23-24, the Holy Spirit explains to us the reason for giving such an extensive record about Abraham's salvation. And here's the reason: "Now it was not written for his sake alone." The word "now" is the Greek word "de." It is a junction which introduces the reason for this extensive record on how Abraham was justified. Paul is now going to close the divine viewpoint teaching on justification with one concise, tremendous summary. So, don't miss it.

The words "was written" is the Greek word "grapho." This has the strong negative "ou," so that it means "not written." This refers to the record we have in Genesis. It is aorist – at the point when Moses, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, proceeded to record particularly Genesis 15:6 which records this phrase: "Abraham believed God, and it was imputed to him for righteousness." It is passive. The Bible did not write itself. Moses wrote that book as God's instrument. It is indicative – a statement of fact: "This was recorded for." The word "for" is "dia," which means "on account of." It gives us the reason for this account: "This was not written on account of his sake (Abraham's) alone. The word "alone" is the Greek word "monon," which means "exclusively." It wasn't done just for him.

**The Extensive Record of Abraham's Salvation**

In other words, all of this extensive record about how Abraham was saved was not just to preserve an accurate record about the great Jewish patriarch. Abraham is in fact the example for all ages of the only way that God justifies a human being. That's why we have so much information on him. It is the principle which is set forth in 1 Corinthians 10:11: "Now all these things happened unto them for examples (the Old Testament saints), and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages are come." The extensive records we have of what happened to God's people in the past is so that we can have some perspective to learn. History does have some lessons to teach us. And if we learn from history, we will be oriented so that we do not repeat the mistakes.

So, what the Holy Spirit says here is that this record of Abraham's salvation was not just to preserve something about Abraham, but because Abraham is the perpetual testimony to all sinners of the true method of justification. His was not an exceptional case: "It was not written for Abraham's sake alone." What was not written? The next word is "that" which is the Greek word "hoti." This is a conjunction which introduces what was written: "Was imputed" is that Greek word that we've had many times: "logizomai:" "To credit to his account." This is aorist – when he believed God. It is passive. It was credited by God. It is indicative – a statement of fact: "It was not written for his sake alone, that it was credited to his account."

Then verse 24 begins with the word: "But." This is the Greek word "alla," which introduces the other divine reason for the careful recording of Abraham's salvation: "For." This is the Greek word "dia," which is a preposition meaning here "on account of:" "For us" – the people who are living in Paul's day, and the people who would be living after Paul's day: "For us also." The word "also" is the Greek word "kai." The greatest that a human being faces is" how can I know that my sins are forgiven? How can I know that I can face death without alarm; without fear; without terror; and, without despair? The security of justification is the essence of Christianity. And that is the question. And we are going to do our best to try to alert people, through various facets of our ministry (particularly through the tapes), that many people are deluded about themselves relative to having justifying faith. They don't have it at all, especially if they grew up in some denominational context where justifying faith was completely fouled up, and man's doing was involved. They have a very hard time of getting it straight. They must abandon all the misinformation they've been given – sometimes from the days of their childhood.

So, Paul says that this information about Abraham's salvation was not written just so we would have an accurate historical account of this great man. But it was written that salvation was imputed to him as a gift: "It was written for us also to whom (that is, the people living in Paul day and after) shall be." The words "shall be" is "mello," which means "it's about to be" (about to do something). It is present – constantly true. It is active. It is done by God. It is indicative – a statement of fact: "It is about to be imputed." Again, this is "logizomai" – the same word we had before: "Credited to our account, if we believe" ("pisteuo") – that great word for trusting God.

This "if" here is not one of those four kinds of conditions that we have in "ifs" in the Greek language. This is what we call a causal participle. It just expresses in a different way the condition – that you may believe, or that you may not believe. Today, we must meet this condition of faith to be justified. "If we believe" is present tense. That's God's only way. It is active. You have to do the believing. It's a participle. Here is a divine principle established. But it means believing on a special object ("epi"). This is the word for "on" which means "upon." Interestingly enough, it is believing upon whom? God the Father – "the One who raised Him up from the dead." The words "that raised Him up" is the word "egeiro." "Egeiro" here refers to coming alive from the dead. Resurrection is the idea here. It's aorist. It looks back to the point of Christ's resurrection. It is active. Who raised Him? The Bible tells us that God the Father raised God the Son: "Raising Jesus ('Iesous'), our Lord" ("kurios").

**Your Lord**

You must remember that the word "Lord" denotes deity. The resurrection of Jesus Christ was: "the resurrection of our Lord." You would think that the writer would have said "of our Savior." But no. Very specifically, the Holy Spirit says, "No, Paul, I don't want you to say 'Savior.' I want you to say 'Lord' there, because I want to make it clear that the One who was raised was a God-Man – not just a good man." It was deity who had died for us. It was the resurrection of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. And as Jesus must be your Savior through faith, He must also be your Lord. He who is your Savior through faith must be your Lord.

**How is Jesus Christ your Lord?**

How is Jesus Christ your Lord? You hear a lot about that: "Make Christ your Lord." Very simply, let's go back to our two concentric circles – the inner circle and the outer circle. You make Christ your Savior by trusting in Him in behalf of the work that he did for you on the cross. That is eternal fellowship. That is the outer circle. When you trust Him by putting Him in control of your life; when all those things are confessed; when you are under the direction of God the Holy Spirit; and, when you are what the Bible says, "Filled with the spirit" (controlled by the Spirit), then you are in this inner circle of fellowship in time (temporal fellowship). And it is here, and here alone, that Christ is your Lord. In the outer circle, He is your Savior. In the inner circle, He is your Lord. And the only way the Lord Jesus will be your Lord (which when that you treat Him as God who runs your life) is when you permit Him to do so by the confession of your known sins. It is this God-Man, our Lord: "Who was raised from." The word "from" is "ek," which means "from among the dead" (the "nekros"); that is those who are physically dead. Romans 10:9 tells us that God the Father raised Jesus Christ from the dead.

**Believe in God the Father**

So, Abraham believed God, and so, today, we believe in God: "To believe in God the Father." Notice that that's what it says: "It was not written for his sake (it was imputed to him), but for us also to whom it shall be imputed if we believe on Him that raised up Jesus." Who raised up Jesus. God the Father.

So, to believe in God the Father as the One who raised up Jesus Christ is what the Bible requires of us. But when you believe in God the Father, then you believe in what God the Father said. And God the Father has said to us, "This is My Son, in whom I am well-pleased. This is the Lamb of God who bears the sins of the world. This is My Son, whom I have raised because His death has satisfied My justice."

**Believe in God the Son**

So, if you believe in God the Father, you believe everything He said about the Son; and, thus you believe also in the Son. So, in other words, you cannot believe in Jesus Christ without believing in the Father. To believe in the resurrection of Jesus Christ is to affirm the truth of all that He claimed to be. He said, "I'm going to be raised again." If you believe it, you say. "He was true." Abraham looked to God to make the provision of atonement in the future. Today we look back to the provision which has already been made. The resurrection of Jesus Christ by the Father, we find, is the cornerstone, therefore, of the gospel of justification by faith (Acts 1:22, Acts 4:33, 1 Corinthians 15). The whole chapter of 1 Corinthians 15 makes a big issue that justification is faith. It's believing God. So, you cannot believe in God the Son without believing in God the father (Luke 10:16).

Now that makes you a little suspicious when you stop and think about the charismatic movement and the Pentecostals who make a great deal of emphasis on what? Jesus only. The Word of God says, "You direct your praise, and you direct your honor supremely to the Father. And if you trust the Father, you trust the Son. You cannot come to the Son without trusting in the Father. And these groups that talk about Jesus only, and direct the attention of people to Jesus are actually directing them away from the Son.

So, the approach to justification is simply believing God the Father's promise in the gospel. That's what Abraham. Paul has given us an inerrant record of Abraham's justification to preserve us from false approaches to God. The ground of salvation always has to be what God has said as recorded in the Bible – not on human pronouncements and human feelings. He recorded Abraham's experience to preserve us from false appeals to the unsaved. That's why I said here that what we're dealing with today is the issue of getting into heaven without fouling up the system, which I'm sorry to say, many churches and many preachers have done.

The apostle Paul could not make it clearer – that you must approach God on His basis. You have to believe in God. That means to believe His Word. Thus, you believe everything He said about His Son, and all the way down the line. Abraham, is our example. You go back to what's the Word of God has said; you know what God is like; and, you hang onto that. Therein lies your trust. And what some star football or other athlete has to say is of no consequence whatsoever. And all it does is try to convince people that being a Christian means just going on and being like you are, instead of abandoning yourself from all that you are, and turning to Christ. That's what Abraham had to do.

Let's tied up at the last first – one of the most famous in Scripture: Romans 4:25. This is a verse that's very confusing in the King James translation: "Who was delivered for our offenses and was raised again for our justification." "Who" refers to Jesus Christ. "Was delivered" is the Greek word "paradidomi." It means "to deliver over" or "to hand over." This was done in the past at the cross. It was done by the Father who was sacrificing the Son, as Acts 2:23 states to us. Jesus was ultimately executed by God the Father.

The word "for" is the confusing word. Sometimes in the King James translation, the word "for" gives you the impression that it means purpose. It should be translated "on account of" or "because of." Jesus was delivered to death because of our offenses. It is not the instrumentality. This same word is used in the Greek language with what is called the genitive case. Then it means instrumentality. That we have translated here in the King James Version. "For He was delivered" by the instrumentality of our offenses. That's not correct. "He was delivered on account" (because of) what is called here "our offenses." And the word "offenses" is the Greek word "paraptoma." "Paraptoma" is "trespasses." It's a word for sin that indicates straying off of God's straight and narrow path. It is moving from God's standards. The deviations from absolute righteousness are the reasons that Jesus Christ went to death on the cross. And He alone bore the penalty for our deviations from God's standard. He paid all that God's justice demanded. We deserve help. Jesus Christ took our hell. There's nothing left for us, but His heaven.

So, that is point number one. Paul is tying this whole thing up. Now Paul says, "In one statement, I'm going to give it to you: Jesus Christ, on account of our stepping out of God's standard, was delivered up to death on the cross, and ("kai" – adding) was raised" ("egeiro"). This word refers to resurrection: here, of Jesus Christ. It is aorist tense. It is at the point when God raised Him. It is passive again. The Father raised the Son. It is indicative – a statement of fact.

The word "again" is not in the Greek. You can cross that out: "And was raised for." Again, the word "for" is "dia," the same word we had before. And again it is with what is called accusative case. Therefore, it tells us that it is "on account of:" "It is because of." Why was Jesus raised from the dead? Why was He not left in that grave: "Because of our justification." That is the Greek word "dikaiosis." "Dikaiosis" means "an act of pronouncing righteous." And the reason He was raised from the dead was because God the Father had pronounced all who would believe in Him as righteous.

We have of hymn that says, "Living He loved me. Dying He saved me. Rising He justified." That is wrong. It should say: "Rising *because* I was already declared justified." His resurrection is not what contributed to our justification. It was the fact that God said, "My Son, You've done it. All of divine justice is absolutely satisfied. There is indeed a finished salvation. There is nothing more to provide. And I am going to prove it to the world by reaching into the tomb now and raising You back to life. If Jesus Christ did not come back to life, you would never know that God had made the pronouncement of justification upon the human race. We would still be in doubt. The resurrection of Christ was the proof.

1 Corinthians 16:17 puts it this way: "If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain, and you are yet in your sins." You cannot be saved if you do not believe in the resurrection of Jesus Christ, incidentally.

Later on in Romans 10:9, we're going to read, "If you shall confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus, and shall believe in your heart that God had raised from the dead, you shall be saved." Every liberal who says that Christ never was raised from the dead; He was a good man, but He's still in His grave, is going to hell. Here again, that man indicates he does not have justifying faith. And if you do not believe that Jesus Christ died, and was raised again, you do not have justifying faith. You cannot be saved if you do not believe that He was raised again.

Sometimes when we are about to administer water baptism to people, I ask them, "Do you believe that Jesus Christ was raised from the dead?" The reason I ask that is because if they don't believe that, they're not believers. Unless you believe that, you cannot be saved. On account of our justification, we have been raised from the dead.

So, the verse says, "Who (Jesus) was delivered to death on the cross on account of our stepping out of line of God's standard; and was raised back to life again on account of God having pronounced justification a reality in the universe. Now we know it's so. No human effort can add to this great provision for our sin. The price was paid in full forever. That's what God has written across your record if you have trusted in Him apart from all of your human doing.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1977

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