

Prayer:

Slide # 1
Romans

Theme: The Righteousness of God – The Gospel of God

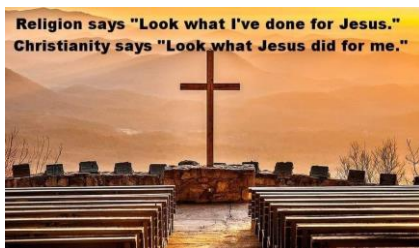
Outline:

- **Prologue:** 1:1-17
- **Doctrinal:** 1:18-8:39
God's holiness – man's sinfulness – 1:18-3:20
Justification by grace through faith – 3:21-5:21
Sanctification of the believer – 6:1-8:39
- **Dispensational:** 9:1-11:36 (The place of Israel and the church)
- **Practical:** 12:1-15:33 (Duties and privileges of the believer)
- **Epilogue:** 16:1-27

Paul in his presentation of the gospel and how we are made right with God first starts with the issue of SIN. This is our universal problem and Paul's conclusion is that “all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Rom. 3:23).

The answer to our sin problem is found in Jesus. Paul emphasizes that God in His GRACE through Christ has provided redemption (the price paid to set us free) and propitiation (the satisfying of God's wrath) by the BLOOD of Jesus at the cross (cf. Rom. 3:24-25). That is the divine side of the equation – God's provision for our sin problem. Jesus is God's Lamb Who takes away the sin of the world (cf. Jn. 1:29).

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On the human side we must appropriate the truth of Christ by FAITH. We are justified (declared righteous) by FAITH. Paul belabors the point in Romans 3:22-31 that we are justified by FAITH ALONE and not by our works or law-keeping.

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- Rom. 3:22 “through **faith** in Jesus Christ”
- Rom. 3:22 “on all who **believe**.”
- Rom. 3:25 “by His blood, through **faith**”
- Rom. 3:26 “justifier of the one who has **faith** in Jesus.”
- Rom. 3:27 “by the law of **faith**.”
- Rom. 3:28 “a man is justified by **faith**”
- Rom. 3:30 “justify the circumcised by **faith**”
- Rom. 3:30 “uncircumcised through **faith**.”

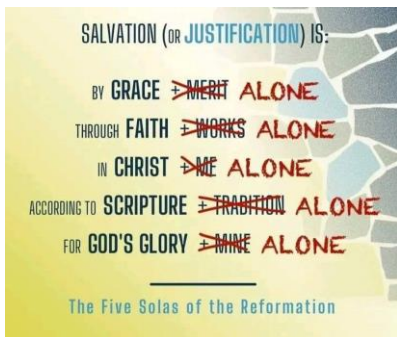
Romans 3:21-28 is among the strongest passages in the entire Bible emphasizing that justification is by faith alone! Paul says in 3:21 “the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed” And then in 3:28 “we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law.” Justification is not based on our WORKS but rather on FAITH ALONE.

Romans 3:21-28 is the great text on justification by faith alone, but Romans 4 then follows up by giving the great illustration of Justification by faith alone as seen in the person of Abraham.

Romans 4 is the great Bible chapter on salvation by faith alone. Many claim to believe in salvation by faith, but not in salvation by faith alone. The word “alone” is the watershed which divides the Catholic from the Protestant, and it was the watchword of the Reformation. The Romanist [if he is consistent with teaching of the church] for example, believes in salvation by faith, but not by faith alone; he believes in the value of the blood of Christ, but not in the value of the blood alone; he accepts the fact that Christ is Mediator between God and man, but not that Christ is Mediator alone; he acknowledges the authority of Scriptures, but not their authority alone. In Romans Paul demonstrates that salvation is by faith alone apart from any work or merit of man. – ***John Phillips***

This is where the SOLAS come in. The Latin word “sola” means “alone”. The Reformers held to what we call the five SOLAS and KEY was “Sola Fide” meaning FAITH ALONE. This was the great dividing point.

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It is not enough to say we are saved by faith – the truth is we are saved by FAITH ALONE. And as Paul shows - a true saving faith holds to “justification by faith ALONE”. This is the nature of true saving faith. This is a fundamental truth that cannot be compromised.

Paul has just hammered the truth of justification by faith alone in Romans 3 and now he is fully expecting the Jewish objector to challenge this with the example of Abraham. And that is where the discussion now goes in Romans 4.

Romans 4:1–8 (NKJV)

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

Abraham was recognized by all the Jews as the “*father*” of the Jewish nation. God started building the nation of Israel through him – channeled through Isaac, then Jacob and then the 12 tribes (cf. Isa. 51:1-2). The Jews saw Abraham as the great prototype of how a person is saved. In this they were right – as indeed in all the Bible the great foundational example of saving faith is found in Abraham.

The problem is the Jews did not see it that way. They believed that Abraham was justified by his works. They pointed to passages such as...

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Genesis 22:15–17 (NKJV)

15 Then the Angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time out of heaven,

16 and said: “By Myself I have sworn, says the LORD, because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only son—

17 blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies.

What the Jews failed to realize is that Abraham’s life of obedience followed his initial justification by faith alone. They even quoted Genesis 15:6 (which we will get to in verse 3) in such a way as to say this spoke of Abraham’s faithfulness and life of fidelity – saying his life of obedience is what was accounted to Abraham for righteousness.

They believed that Abraham actually performed the whole Law even before it was written. Therefore, they concluded that Abraham was indeed justified by his works and therefore should be emulated.

Here is Paul’s response. He asks what Abraham “found according to the flesh?” That is what did Abraham discover in terms of his own physical doings, according to his own works?

2 For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God.

Works and boasting go together. Works speak of accomplishment – what the person has done to achieve an objective. Paul has already made the point in 3:27 that boasting is excluded in the principle of FAITH.

And now he is about to prove that Abraham was NOT justified by works and therefore has no basis for boasting and bragging on what he did to make himself right with God. He is showing that Abraham was NOT a self-made man. In truth, all God’s people are GOD-MADE people!

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Ephesians 2:8–9 (NKJV)

8 For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God,

9 not of works, lest anyone should boast.

10 For we are His workmanship...

And Abraham is a great example of this reality.

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

Paul has made his case for justification by faith alone and now appeals to Scripture as his crowning argument. What saith the Scripture? This is the great issue! The Scripture itself speaks with final authority. When the Bible speaks that ends the argument!

Paul has affirmed that the method of being right with God that he is espousing is witnessed by the Law and the Prophets (3:21), and so he now presents a precedent and an example from both – Abraham from the Law and David from the Prophets.

And what does the Scripture say regarding how Abraham was justified? Well, Paul appeals to Genesis 15:6 which he quotes here to make his point.

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Genesis 15:6 (NKJV)

6 And he believed in the LORD, and He accounted it to him for righteousness.

In Genesis 15 Abraham was now an old man and he still had no children. He protested to God that as it currently stood a slave born in his house named Eliezer of Damascus would be his heir. God told him that indeed one would come from his own body who would be his rightful heir. And then God told Abraham to look into the heavens and count the stars if he was able to number them. And then promised him that his descendants through the promised heir would eventually be as innumerable as the stars.

And then we have the statement of Genesis 15:6 that “Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness.” (cf. Gal. 3:6-9)

This is KEY! What did Abraham do? He simply believed the promise of God. He believed in the LORD in the sense He believed God would bring to pass what He said He would do. He believed God COULD do it and that He WOULD do it. Abraham simply accepted what God said was true and relied on Him to fulfill it. That’s it! All he did was BELIEVE. That’s all!

The concept in view in Abraham believing God here in Genesis 15:6 is that of TRUST. He TRUSTED God to bring to pass what He promised. Trust is the idea of reliance or dependence upon. TRUST is confidence in God’s Word.

People often say we need to TRUST in the LORD for salvation but in truth the Bible mostly uses the word faith or believe. However, the concept of TRUST is clearly seen here in Genesis 15:6. That is the basic idea!

The Hebrew word for “believed” is **aman**, which is the root for Amen! It denotes trust, a strong confirmation, or personal certainty of what it affirms. It expresses complete reliance or dependence upon.

God promised Abraham an innumerable amount of descendants and Abraham “Amened” it. AMEN means “so be it”. It is a heartfelt strong affirmation of what has been said! To believe God is to AMEN what He says!

Abraham’s BELIEF was not mere mental assent, but an active trust. The nature of the faith is active, as shown in James 2:23; where we see that the reality of Abram’s faith is that it WORKED (cf. Jn. 8:39). He was not justified by faith plus works, but by faith alone. However, this saving faith was not dormant – it demonstrated itself in action.

Note: A key point is that Abram did not simply believe in the promises of God, but rather believed in the God of the promise. Note it carefully, Genesis 15:6 says, “he believed in the LORD”. His belief was IN THE LORD. That is, he believed in the character and power of God to bring to pass what He had promised. You cannot separate faith in the Word of God from faith in God Himself. What you think of a person you think of their word.

Faith all the way through Romans 3 and 4 is contrasted with works. Faith involves human response but it is not a work. Abraham did respond – He did believe! *“Abraham did the only thing a person can do without doing anything – he believed God (Gen. 15:6).” – John Phillips*

I talk a lot about “The Right Kind of Faith” and we should note the layered nuances related to saving faith as developed by Paul in Romans 1-4.

Slide # 8 ***Saving Faith...***

Rom. 1:5 The **OBEDIENCE** of Faith

Rom. 2:4 Involves **REPENTANCE**

Rom. 2:29 Is in the **HEART**

Rom. 4:3 Is a matter of **TRUST**

Has as it’s **OBJECT** the Lord Jesus Christ.

Abraham acquired righteousness – a right standing before God. How did he get it? He believed God. He acquired it just by faith – by faith ALONE. What Abraham did is BELIEVE God and then what God did is account it (that is his faith) to him for righteousness!

The word translated “**accounted**” is the Greek word “*logizomai*”. It is an accounting or bookkeeping term meaning to enter something into a ledger. It means “**to put to one’s account**” (cf. Phm. 18). This is a KEY word throughout Romans 4 being used a total of 11 times. However, it is variously translated as “accounted” (v. 3), “counted” (v. 4), “imputes” (v. 6), and “impute” (v. 8; also see v. 9, 10, 11, 22, 23, 24). This word is used 5 times in Rom. 4:3-8.

What we have here is imputed righteousness! God put righteousness to the account of Abraham on the basis of his BELIEF ALONE.

It’s as if we all have an account before God. Our account before God shows guilty. We are all guilty – we have all sinned. But then when we put our faith in Christ, God puts to our account righteousness – we are then accounted as righteous! This is IMPUTED righteousness. It is put to our account simply on the basis of FAITH ALONE. That’s what happened to Abraham and the same truth applies to every true believer. We have imputed righteousness on the basis of faith.

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Philippians 3:9 (NKJV)

9 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;

Note that what was credited to Abraham’s account was righteousness – meaning a right status or relationship with God. God did not account to him regeneration. He did not account to him faith. Rather God accounted to him righteousness on the basis of faith. That reality is very important to note!

Slide # 10

Justify (“To Declare Righteous”)

Account/Impute (“To put to one’s account”)

- We are justified by faith and are accounted righteous by faith!

Abraham was justified by faith. It was just as simple as that. Works had nothing to do with it. They aren't even mentioned. – **William MacDonald**

The nature of Abraham's faith was essentially the same as that of the NT believer – although revelation was progressive. Abraham looked forward to what God had promised to do, whereas the Christian looks back at what God has accomplished in Christ. But the nature of saving faith in dependence upon God remains the same as Paul plainly states at the end of Romans 4 (cf. 23-25).

But Paul wanting to drive the point home in a most clear and dogmatic way does so in verses 4 and 5.

4 Now to him who works, the wages are not counted as grace but as debt.

Romans 4:4-5 are two verses that every believer should commit to memory. This is perhaps the strongest text in the whole Bible on the truth of justification by grace through faith alone.

Paul here in verse 4 uses an illustration from the workplace. For the person who is working, the wages they get paid are not counted as grace. They are not counted as a gift, but rather as a debt that is owed them.

The boss is obligated to pay the person as a matter of debt because they earned it. The person earned their paycheck – it's not a gift. The point is what is earned is not of grace! Grace and works are mutually exclusive.

There are hypothetically two ways in which money can be put to your account. You can earn the money and put it into your account yourself; or someone can gift you and just put it into your account for you. Paul is arguing that when it comes to righteousness we have been GIFTED by God. God in grace has put it to our account on the basis of faith alone.

5 But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness,

[This verse]... is without a doubt the greatest presentation of free grace and righteousness by faith in all the Word of God.

– **Alva McClain**

But is a contrast word. In contrast to the person working and receiving on that basis is the person who DOES NOT WORK. Stop right there!

Note this person does not work. The issue is justification and being accounted righteous. This person is not working to be righteous. Instead of working for a righteous standing this person simply BELIEVES on Him who justifies the ungodly. It is this person whose faith is accounted for righteousness.

This is essential truth. It goes to the heart of what constitutes THE RIGHT KIND OF FAITH.

A saving faith is not depending on works to be right with God. Instead of trying to work their way to God this person simply believes on the Lord. Again works are shown to be mutually exclusive of believing. To truly believe on the Lord means you are not trusting in your works to make you right with God.

To truly believe in Jesus as Savior means I am not trusting in myself or my own works at all. Rather we now trust in Jesus ALONE to save us. He alone is Savior and we trust in Him alone to save us. He is our ALL! "Jesus paid it all – all to Him we owe!" We make no contribution to our salvation. All we do is believe.

Understand what the text is saying. The person who says I believe in Jesus but I also believe in some form of works (such as sacraments, baptism, being a good person, etc.) to get me to heaven is NOT saved. It is ONLY the person who does not work but rather believes on the Lord – it is ONLY this person whose "faith is accounted for righteousness". In order to be saved we have to let go of everything we do. We have to stop trusting in any and all works of any kind and believe on the Lord ALONE and His finished work on the cross.

Slide # 11

Philippians 3:7–9 (NKJV)

7 But what things were gain to me, these I have **counted loss** for Christ.

8 Yet indeed I also **count all things loss** for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the **loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ**

9 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;**

It is like the proffered hand of a drowning man that makes it possible for the lifeguard to save him. There is nothing meritorious in the act of a drowning man stretching out his hand in order to be saved. It is the efficient medium through which he is saved. Thus, the act of faith on the sinner's part is not meritorious but only the efficient medium through which God is able to save him. – **Kenneth Wuest**

Not only are we not saved by our works, but GRACE gets much more radical than that. It says that God “justifies the ungodly” who believe on Him. The faith of the ungodly is accounted for righteousness.

How far grace goes beyond justice is seen in the statement that God justifies the wicked (or ungodly). Not only does God justify men apart from works but he does so contrary to what they deserve.

- **Expositors**

This reality of God justifying the ungodly would have been shocking to Jewish sensibilities. In Exodus 34:7 God said He would “by no means clear the guilty”.

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Exodus 23:7 (NKJV)

7 Keep yourself far from a false matter; do not kill the innocent and righteous. **For I will not justify the wicked.**

So, how can it now be that God can “justify the ungodly” on the basis of faith? The answer is found in the difference between Law and Grace. The “law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ” (Jn. 1:17). What the LAW technically forbade GRACE makes possible. God in GRACE through Jesus Christ has made it possible! This grace was foreshadowed even in the law, but it was brought into full light through the gospel (1 Tim. 1:10).

God bestows His righteousness upon the one who trusts Him (Phil. 3:9). The OT asserts that God does this. The NT shows more clearly how He can. -**Wycliffe Bible Commentary**

This justifying of the wicked is so radical that it runs contrary to all-natural thinking. The faith of the ungodly is accounted for righteousness. We can understand if God might take into account the person that is making their best effort – who is trying hard and God therefore says, “Well, since you are trying hard I will give it to you!”

But NO that's not what it says. It says the one who "believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness".

Let this soak in a moment: God "justifies the ungodly" on the basis of faith alone. In a state of being ungodly – which is a very strong term indicating not being right with God, in that condition when they put their faith in the LORD He instantly accounts their faith "for righteousness".

Note the emphasis in Romans...

Slide # 13

"justifies the ungodly" – Romans 4:5

"justified by His blood" – Romans 5:9

"justified by faith" – Romans 5:1

- God justifies the ungodly on who put their faith in Him on the basis of the shed blood of Christ.

...the truth is we are all ungodly/wicked. None of us are good enough. Salvation will be sola fide, or it simply will not be. – **R. Kent Hughes**

You thought, did you not, that salvation was for the good, that God's grace was for the pure and holy, who are free from sin? It has fallen into your mind that, if you were excellent, then God would reward you; and you have thought that because you are not worthy, therefore there could be no way of your enjoying His favor. You must be somewhat surprised to read a text like this: "Him that justifieth the ungodly." I do not wonder that you are surprised; for with all my familiarity with the great grace of God, I never cease to wonder at it.... God invites sinners to come at once for salvation, just as they are. Come in your disorder. Come with your confusion. Come with your despair. Come filthy, naked, and dirty. Come with all of your sin. Come to Jesus, crucified for sinners! If God justifies the ungodly and you're ungodly, there's hope for you! The best news in the world is, God graciously justifies the ungodly sinner who does not work for salvation, but rather believes in Jesus Christ!

- **Charles Spurgeon**

Romans 4:5 has a very interesting place in the whole debate over justification by faith alone. The Roman Catholic Church while emphasizing faith, strongly denounces the idea of justification by faith alone. In fact, they have anathematized this view.

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*“If any one saith, that man is truly absolved from his sins and justified... and that by this faith alone, absolution and justification are effected; let him be anathema.” - **Canon 14** at the Council of Trent*

You see the whole Roman system is built upon the idea that in piece-meal form grace is little by little given out through the sacraments helping you on to God but at the same time little by little you are working your way there and in the end finish your purging process in purgatory. It really is a WORKS RIGHTEOUSNESS system that defies justification by faith alone!

James McCarthy is Roman Catholic by background. After his conversion he served as a missionary to Ireland and then founded the mission, “Good News for Catholics”. He writes this....

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*“After studying Catholic theology I have found that the Roman church has the ability to take almost any verse of Scripture and find some way of explaining it into their system. It’s almost uncanny. But this one verse [Romans 4:5] they can’t do it to. This is the antithesis of Roman Catholicism. ... I say that’s the antithesis of Roman Catholicism because the concept that God justifies the ungodly is so foreign to Roman Catholic thinking.” – **James G. McCarthy***

And frankly it’s foreign to all natural thinking.

The true gospel is a gospel of GRACE where God justifies the ungodly solely on the basis of faith. Most people think God is grading on a curve and that they are a pretty good person.

They think that their “goodness” counts for something. In truth the Bible says, **“all our righteousnesses are like filthy rags”** (Isa. 64:6). **“There is none righteous, no not one”** (Rom. 3:10). We are saved solely on the basis of God’s grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone!

To summarize, then, justification is for the ungodly – not for good people. It is a matter of grace – not of debt. And it is received by faith – not by works. – **William MacDonald**

Paul now moves to his next OT example to make his point; namely David.

6 just as David also describes the blessedness of the man to whom God imputes righteousness apart from works:

When Paul says “**just as**” he is saying that David in effect illustrates the same point he has just illustrated in Abraham; namely that righteousness is imputed apart from works.

A form of the word “**blessed**” is found in all 3 of these verses related to the example of David. David describes as “**blessed**” the one who is in right relationship with God. It is often conveyed as being “happy” but that is too weak. It is a joyful awareness of the grace of God. It has been described as “*a condition in which you are deeply secure and content and happy in God.*”

Paul in verses 7-8 goes on to quote David from Psalm 32:1-2 which serves to illustrate the truth that God imputes righteousness apart from works.

Psalm 32 is David’s Psalm of confession after his horrendous sinful downfall with Bathsheba as recorded in 2 Samuel 11-12. Actually, David wrote two confession Psalms in this regard – Psalm 32 and Psalm 51. David in this context was guilty of the sins of covetousness, adultery, and murder. You can’t get much more guilty than this.

David lived under the time of the Mosaic Law. Under the law there was provision made for sin committed **unintentionally**. However, there was no offering or provision made for INTENTIONAL sin (cf. Lev. 4:2-3). The penalty for intentional sin was the death penalty (Num. 15:30-31).

The sin of a high hand or willful defiance was not provided for in the maintenance offerings. Such a sin expressly called for the death penalty. That is precisely why David, when he sinned **deliberately** with Bathsheba, threw himself on the mercy of God (cf. Ps. 51:16-17). David understood that for defiant sin, God demanded repentance; and then on the basis of mercy, He may forgive. We note, however, that the Day of Atonement did cover ALL the sins of the people committed during the previous year.

So, the idea was that if a believer in the O.T. committed willful sin, there was no provided sacrifice. Such a one would not be right with God until the Day of Atonement. The death penalty constantly hung over his or her head. The only thing to do was to throw yourself on the mercy of God. It definitely spoke to the seriousness of willful, defiant sin.

Slide # 16**Psalm 51:16–17 (NKJV)**

16 For You do not desire sacrifice, or else I would give it; You do not delight in burnt offering.

17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, A broken and a contrite heart— These, O God, You will not despise.

But there is another thing to consider. David had previously been described as a man after God's own heart. He definitely was a man of faith as seen in his taking on the Giant Goliath as a young man. He was a saved man of faith when he fell into sin. Note that in Psalm 51:12 David did not say "**Restore to me Your salvation**" but rather, "**Restore to me the joy of Your salvation**". David did not lose his salvation, but he did lose his joy.

For believers there are two aspects of forgiveness. There is the forgiveness in salvation when we are justified by faith. That relates to our position of being a child of God, and that never changes. We call this "**penal forgiveness**". Jesus said the moment we believe we pass from death to life and shall not come into judgment for sin (Jn. 5:24).

But then, in our walk, we sometimes get our feet dirty – we mess up. As James said, "*we all stumble in many things*" (Ja. 3:2). In such a case we need to get right in our walk. We are still a child of God, but our sin has disrupted our fellowship with God. In this case we need to ask God for forgiveness (Mt. 6:12). This is where 1 John 1:9 comes in which says...

Slide # 17**1 John 1:9 (NKJV)**

9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

This is what we call "**parental forgiveness**" because we are coming to God as one who is already His child and getting right in our walk (cf. Mt. 6:9-13). Jesus had this aspect of forgiveness in view when he said to Peter, "**He who is bathed** [that is has the bath of salvation] **needs only to wash his feet**, [the cleansing related to our walk]..." (Jn. 13:10).

However, when a believer sins both aspects come into view in this sense. Yes, we come to God for cleansing related to our fellowship walk; but at the same time we always go back to the fundamental rock truth that our faith relationship with God is based on a right standing imputed to us apart from works.

From where we are at on this side of the cross it means we always come back to the truth of the cross which is the core basis of our relationship with God. Even in confessing our sins as a matter of maintenance, we remember that our relationship with God is a matter of GRACE and not of WORKS. We always come back to the truth of the cross!

David's case, according to the law, was hopeless. He had very intentionally broken God's law. Yes, he was saved, but he should die. So, David threw himself on the mercy of God steeped in the reality of having imputed righteousness apart from works.

On that basis he confessed his sin and as a matter of maintenance was restored. Yes, he experienced ongoing discipline but at the same time his life was spared.

Since David was actually already a justified man, known as a man after God's own heart, in his case we learn the truth that sin in the life of a believer does not cancel our justification. - **Expositors**

This is the key point that this example from David illustrates. Relationship with God is not based on works. God justifies the ungodly who turn to Him in faith and once we are saved, we remain saved apart from works – even if we should fall terribly. David could not rectify his situation by means of works; but he could fall back on the truth that his position of imputed righteousness on the basis of faith did not change in spite of his great failure.

7 “Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, And whose sins are covered;

When we fall we are reminded that God's parental forgiveness is based on a standing position of imputed righteousness apart from any works as noted in verse 6. We are again and again brought back to the reality that we are what we are by grace – apart from works.

The forgiveness related to our walk is based on the foundational reality of imputed righteousness that is established in saving faith.

Back in the OT sins were “covered” as represented in the blood that was sprinkled on the ark of the covenant on the annual day of atonement (cf. Lev. 16).

As noted in Romans 3:25 the OT saints were saved on credit as they awaited the Messiah who would be the final and complete payment for sin. In the OT their sins were merely covered - they were not permanently taken away.

However, as they looked to God in faith and were justified they experienced penal forgiveness; and then in their faith walk when they fell they experienced parental forgiveness in confession.

And this brings us to the KEY point Paul wants to illustrate in relation to David as seen in Romans 4:8.

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

Paul was a Hebrew Bible scholar by background. The Rabbi's commonly used an interpretive method (called Gezerah Shevah) in which they would link verses sharing a common thread WORD to illustrate a general principle. In other words, they saw these KEY words as indicating they were a cross reference that made a certain point.

We have that here in Romans 4:8 in the word “impute”. The KEY linkage is this.

Slide # 18

Genesis 15:6 “**hashab**” – translated as “accounted” (Rom. 4:3)

Psalms 32:2 “**hashab**” – translated as “impute” (Rom. 4:8)

Note the emphasis is that Abraham had righteousness accounted/imputed to him on the basis of faith. But the emphasis in relation to David is that he did NOT have sin accounted/imputed to him when he sinned.

But further note that with David there is a double emphasis: 1) David had righteousness imputed to him apart from works (Rom. 4:6); and 2) David did not have sin imputed to him when he sinned (Rom. 4:8).

Slide # 19

Abraham: Imputed Righteousness (Rom. 4:3)

David: Imputed Righteousness (Rom. 4:6)
Sin NOT imputed (Rom. 4:8)

- Both are true for the believer. We have imputed righteousness and sin is not imputed to us.

This is the point Paul is wanting to make. For believers to have imputed righteousness means that God never imputes sin to our record. Once we are saved the record is sealed forever. Forever we have imputed righteousness -put to our account and forever sin is never imputed to us even when we are guilty of it.

Slide # 20

2 Corinthians 5:21 (NKJV)

21 For He made Him [Jesus] who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

All of our sin was put to the account of Jesus on the cross and in saving faith the righteousness of Christ is now put to our account. Since Jesus has made full payment for our sin it is forever taken care of. The payment was in full and forever. Sin will NEVER be put to the account of the believer! All of our sin; past, present, future, is removed from our record. Even if we fall into sin – like David did it is not put to our account because it has already been paid for.

Slide # 21

1 John 2:1–2 (NKJV)

1 My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate [Defense Lawyer] with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.

2 And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world.

Even though Satan still has limited access to heaven, and even though he accuses us before God day and night, he has nothing on us because Jesus in our place as our substituted has forever satisfied the holy demands of God's righteous wrath against our sin. It has all been settled!

Slide 22

On the Basis of FAITH

Righteousness
Imputed

~~Sin~~
~~Not Imputed~~

This is what we might call the two sides of IMPUTATION. On the one side when we put our faith in Christ we have righteousness imputed or put to our account. On the other side when we sin it is NOT put to our account. The Cross provides the basis for the two sides of imputation. The cross forever answers to the penalty of sin and the cross is the ground for God putting righteousness to our account on the basis of faith.

And here is the point – both are based on faith apart from works. Abraham shows that righteousness is imputed on the basis of faith alone. David shows that even if we sin – that sin is NOT put to our account.

How glorious is this amazing grace. As a believer we have the righteousness of Christ put to our account forever and ever. As a believer the penalty of sin will never be put to our account because God has once and forever declared us righteous. We are positionally free from sin forever! This is a glorious truth that will set you free indeed!

Thus Paul writes in Romans 4 both of God not imputing sin to sinners, although it actually belongs to them, and of his imputing righteousness to us, although it does not belong to us. – **John Stott**

Paul makes the point that crediting righteousness to a person's account at the same time means NOT crediting sin. This is a package deal!

A PARDON MUST BE ACCEPTED

Back in 1830 George Wilson was convicted of robbing the U.S. Mail and killing a government employ and he was sentenced to be hanged.

President Andrew Jackson issued a pardon for Wilson, but he did a strange thing and refused to accept it. No one seemed to know what to do because of this, so Wilson's case was sent to the U. S.

Supreme Court. Chief Justice Marshall speaking for the court said a pardon must be accepted by the one it is offered to, if refused the pardon does not stand. The conclusion was that if George refused the pardon he would have to be hanged – and he was!

Slide # 23

John 1:12 (NKJV)

12 But as many as received Him [Jesus], to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name:

The Bible says, *“to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness”* (Rom. 4:5).

Have you accepted God's offer of pardon through faith in Jesus as Savior and Lord? Have you believed on Him? Come by faith as you are!