

Faith Illustrated
Romans 4

Getting Started

- ❖ We are moving into the Christmas shopping season and this passage talks about our righteousness being a “gift” from God. What is one of the best gifts that you have received from another person? What was the occasion? Why does that gift stand out so memorably to you? How might that gift serve as an illustration of the gift of righteousness that we have from God through faith in Christ?
- ❖ **Opening Prayer Time:** Since Thanksgiving is next week, spend time in prayer thanking God for the many ways He blesses you.

Digging Deeper

- ❖ **Reread and discuss our sermon text Romans 4.**
 - At the end of the message, Jerry spoke of how God declares us righteous now, in light of His eternal “final-day” verdict”, in order to anchor our everyday lives in the truth and glory of this declaration of right standing with Him.
 - What relation does this have to do with the concept of “boasting” in verses 1-2? What does it mean to “boast” from a scriptural perspective?
 - What are some things you may “boast in” that are hurting your walk with God?
 - How does “boasting” in things other than our identity in Christ actually work to divide us from others, create strife and harm the cause of Christ?
 - Paul quotes from **Ps. 32** in Rom. 4:7-8. Read through this Psalm together as a group and share with each other what you find encouraging about how God forgives our sins.
 - In being justified by grace through faith, how does realizing that we have been credited with Christ’s righteousness (this is called the doctrine of imputation) affect us in the following areas of life:
 - Facing disappointments
 - Handling success
 - Feeling like we need the approval of others
 - Being generous with our time, talents, and wealth
 - Dealing with regret?
 - In Rom. 4:13-15, Paul draws a clear line between promise and law: we can’t earn promises by keeping the law.
 - Have there been times when you have tried to add your works to one of God’s promises in order to bring it about sooner? Why are we inclined to do this? How will it affect our walk with God if we try to add our works to God’s ultimate promise of salvation?
 - What is the difference between trying to add our works to God promises, on the one hand, and simply taking wise actions and responsibility, on the other?

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- Satan tempts us with stuff that is already ours through Christ
 - What are some of the “carrots” that Satan puts in front of you to tempt you?
 - How does having Christ’s righteousness – and therefore being a co-owner of the universe with Christ – enable us to resist those temptations?

Think About It!

Faith is never the ***basis*** or the ***reason*** for justification, but only the ***channel*** through which God works His redeeming grace. Faith is simply a convicted heart reaching out to receive God’s free and unmerited gift of salvation.

What was true in regard to Abraham’s faith is true in regard to every believer’s faith. *Now to the one who works, his wage is not reckoned as a favor, but as what is due*, Paul declares. *But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is reckoned as righteousness.*

Although faith is required for salvation, it has no power in itself to save. It is the power of God’s redemptive grace alone, working through the atoning work of His Son on the cross, that has power to save. Faith is not, as some claim, a type of work. Paul here makes clear that saving faith is completely apart from *any* kind of human **works**.

If man were able to save himself by his own **works**, then salvation would be apart from God’s grace, and Christ’s sacrifice on the cross would have been in **vain**. If such righteous **works** were attainable by men, then salvation would not be a gift of God’s grace but would be a **wage** that is due. (John MacArthur)

Praying Together

The second petition of the Lord’s Prayer asks may “Your Kingdom Come”. This week discuss the meaning, implications and application of this petition and allow it to shape your prayer. Some guidance:

- In this petition we give our allegiance to Jesus as our present and coming King.
- We are praying for Jesus to rule and reign in our hearts by his Spirit, acknowledging and confessing areas where we are resisting. We want him to shape our inner and outer lives according to his coming Kingdom even as we walk in this world.
- We eagerly await and prepare for his second coming and the restoration of our broken world. We pray for those things we are involved in that seek this same restoring outcome.
- We pray for other to come into God’s kingdom by faith in Jesus. We are asking him to use us as faithful and effective witnesses to our 3-2-1 friends and others.

(Note: In this year’s study of Romans, our study questions are being inspired by or derived from books, commentaries and bible studies authored by: Pastors Matt Smith, Max Lucado, John MacArthur, R.C. Sproul, Jack Hayford and Tim Keller.)

WORSHIP RESOURCE

November 17, 2019 | 23rd Sunday after Pentecost

WORSHIP SONGS

SHOUT HOSANNA

Words and Music by Chris Tomlin, Brett Younker, Kristian Stanfill, and Ed Cash, 2015

To the King of glory and light, all praises; to the only Giver of life,
our Maker, the gates are opened wide; we worship You.
Come see what love has done, amazing; He bought us with His blood,
our Savior; the cross has overcome; we worship You.

*Shout Hosanna, Jesus, He saves. Shout Hosanna,
He rose from the grave; come and lift Him up, Hosanna.*

Now let the lost be found, forgiven; death could not hold Him down,
He's risen. So let the saints cry out; we worship You, we worship You.

The same power that rolled the stone away, the same power alive in
us today; King Jesus, we call upon Your Name, no other name.

PRAISE TO THE LORD, THE ALMIGHTY

Words by Joachim Neander, 1680 | German Melody, 1665

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty the King of creation!
O my soul, praise Him, for He is thy health and salvation!
All ye who hear, now to His temple draw near.
Join me in glad adoration.

Praise to the Lord, who o'er all things so wondrously reigneth.
Shelters thee under his wings, yea, so gently sustaineth!
Hast thou not seen how thy desires e'er have been
granted in what He ordaineth.

Praise to the Lord! O let all that is in me adore Him!
All that hath life and breath, come now with praises before Him!
Let the amen sound from His people again;
gladly forever adore Him.

TREMBLE

Words and Music by Mia Fieldes, Hank Bentley, Mariah McManus, and Andres Figueroa, 2016

Peace, bring it all to peace.
The storms surrounding me, let it break at Your name.
Still, call the sea to still,
the rage in me to still, every wave at Your name.

*Jesus, Jesus, You make the darkness tremble.
Jesus, Jesus, You silence fear.
Jesus, Jesus, You make the darkness tremble. Jesus, Jesus.*

Breathe, call these bones to live,
call these lungs to sing. Once again I will praise.

Your name is a light that the shadows can't deny.
Your name cannot be overcome.
Your name is alive, forever lifted high.
Your name cannot be overcome.

HE WILL HOLD ME FAST

**Words and Music by Ada Habershon (1861-1918)
and Matthew Merker, 2013**

When I fear my faith will fail, Christ will hold me fast;
when the tempter would prevail, He will hold me fast.
I could never keep my hold through life's fearful path;
For my love is often cold; He must hold me fast.

*He will hold me fast, He will hold me fast;
For my Savior loves me so, He will hold me fast.*

Those He saves are His delight, Christ will hold me fast.
Precious in His holy sight, He will hold me fast.
He'll not let my soul be lost; His promises shall last;
Bought by Him at such a cost, He will hold me fast.

For my life He bled and died, Christ will hold me fast;
Justice has been satisfied; He will hold me fast.
Raised with Him to endless life, He will hold me fast.
Till our faith is turned to sight, when He comes at last!

DAILY READINGS | BOOK OF COMMON WORSHIP

SUNDAY | Ps. 93; Ezra 7:1-26; Acts 28:14-23; Luke 16:1-13
MONDAY | Ps. 57; Ezra 7:27-28; 8:21-36; Rev. 20:7-15; Matt. 17:1-13
TUESDAY | Ps. 54; Ezra 9:1-15; Rev. 21:1-8; Matthew 17:14-21
WEDNESDAY | Ps. 65; Ezra 10:1-17; Rev. 21:9-21; Matt. 17:22-27
THURSDAY | Ps. 81; Neh. 9:1-25; Revelation 21:22-22:5; Matt. 18:1-9
FRIDAY | Ps. 20; Neh. 9:26-38; Revelation 22:6-13; Matt. 18:10-20
SATURDAY | Ps. 122; Neh. 7:73-8:18; Rev. 22:14-21; Matt. 18:21-35

PRAYER OF RENEWAL

O God, our Redeemer,
all creation sings your praise!
You are justice and mercy, judgment and grace.
Following our Lord Jesus Christ, we seek to be faithful,
ever sustained by your Spirit,
that we might stand blameless at the last with Christ,
in whose name we pray. Amen.



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