

# MESSAGE

Enjoy, Share, Love, Message, God, Everyone—part 4

January 26, 2020

We exist to enjoy and share the love and message of God with everyone.

## **DAY 1: We are justified by faith, not by works.**

*Romans 4:3 What does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness."*

1. The story of Abraham illustrates one of the wonders of the gospel message. God had promised the patriarch Abraham a blood son. But for years, Sarah was not able to get pregnant.

2. Abraham, getting older and wondering if he'd ever have a blood son tells God that from the looks of things, one of his servants would inherit what Abraham had.

3. God tells Abraham to go outside and look up in the night sky. As Abraham looked at the innumerable number of stars in the night sky, God said, "So shall your offspring be."

4. Though the promise seemed inconceivable to Abraham, he knew enough about God that no matter how bleak the outlook may appear for even one son, God would be true to His word.

5. And we have this clear demonstration of how God *makes* unrighteous people *righteous*.

*Genesis 15:6 Abram believed the LORD, and he **credited** it to him as righteousness.*

6. Abraham became a righteous man (saved) strictly on the basis of taking God at His word!

## DAY 2: The example of Abraham illustrates how salvation happens

1. It was faith in the promise of God that allowed God to do the unthinkable—credit to Abraham, an unrighteous man the gift of being a righteous man.

2. The Hebrew word “**credited**” is a banking term, similar to making a deposit or adding money to your account.

3. The same Hebrew word is translated “reckoned,” “imputed,” and “counted.”

*Romans 4:5 (RSV) And to one who does not work but trusts him who **justifies the ungodly**, his faith is **reckoned** as righteousness.*

4. Here, Paul makes the same argument for salvation! God gives salvation, He justifies the *ungodly!*

5. When a person **works** they receive a salary. Their paycheck is not a gift. They earned it. But salvation is very different. It is given, bestowed, and unearned. In fact, what was earned was the opposite—judgment!

6. The “**work**” for salvation is done by Jesus Christ on the cross!!!

7. Our righteousness is placed on His shoulders where His blood washes our stains and cleanses our guilt. His righteousness is then granted to us, simply as we respond in faith to this amazing transaction!

8. What strikes you from these last two days?

### **DAY 3: God's righteousness is given to us simply by faith.**

*Romans 3:21 But now a righteousness from God, apart from law, has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify.*

*"...a righteousness from God, apart from the law..."*

1. Whenever people think of salvation, most people sense it is something they need to earn, or merit. Many people will tell you that "if my good outweighs my bad, I'll be in heaven."

2. This is salvation by works. The problem is no one is good enough to be saved. God does not judge on the curve. He does not judge on a sliding scale. He judges on the basis of full obedience. No one can pass that test!

3. Salvation is not by behaving but by believing!

*"A righteousness **from** God"*

4. We'd expect Paul to say "*the righteousness OF God ... has been made known...*"

5. While that is true, Paul is making a very different point. How can an unrighteous creature become a righteous one? The bible testifies from start to finish that no one is righteous.

6. The wonder of the gospel is that God makes us righteous! He gives us His righteousness, though completely undeserved!

7. And here is the wonder of the gospel—we are given the righteousness of God as a gift, simply by believing in Him!

*Romans 3:22 This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe.*

8. What strikes you from today's devotional?

#### **DAY 4: Christ, our sacrificial lamb and payment in our place**

*Romans 3:22 ...There is no difference, <sup>23</sup> for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, <sup>24</sup> and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.*

1. Redemption is a **price** that is **paid** to buy back something. The redemption “came by Jesus Christ.” He was the **payment** made for sin!

2. To highlight that salvation is a gift, Paul tells us we are justified *freely!* No effort or righteous deeds can bring this about!

3. Paul also attributes our salvation to the grace of God. Grace means God’s favor to people who don’t deserve it, another indicator that salvation is a free gift, not something we can earn.

4. How did this salvation happen for unrighteous people? It’s because of what Jesus Christ accomplished on the cross!

*Romans 3:25 God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. He did this to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished—*

5. Jesus was offered as the sacrificial lamb of atonement.

6. In the Old Testament, on the Day of Atonement, a lamb and a goat are brought to the priest. The lamb is sacrificed, his blood is spilled as cleansing blood for the sins of the people. Death, the natural payment for sinful man occurs through a substitute—the lamb!

7. Then the priest puts his hands on the head of the goat and places on the goat the sins of the people. The goat is taken out into the wilderness away from the people, symbolizing the removal of sin from the people. Jesus was both our sacrificial lamb and scapegoat!

## **DAY 5: God is just, and the justifier of the unjust!**

*Romans 3:26 ...he did it to demonstrate his justice at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus.*

1. The question we might ask is this. Isn't it unfair or unjust of God to lay all of our sins on the perfect Son of God?
  
2. God is just because the penalty for sin is paid! Death was paid. Justice was meted out, but not on us. The wrath of God fell on Jesus Christ.
  
3. In this way, God could be just (sin was paid for, and atoned) AND could be the justifier of unrighteous people!
  
4. The holy God was able to justly punish sin, while at the same time the love of God for people was fully expressed and seen at the cross!
  
5. The message of God is this:
  - a. God has done for us what we could not for ourselves.
  - b. He came up with a way to pay for our sin
  - c. ...At great cost to Himself.
  - d. The cross of Christ paid for our sins and draws us to God to receive new life.
  
6. What strikes you about the message of God?