

# FAITH: THE WAY THAT PUTS AN END TO HUMAN BOASTING AND PRIDE, TO SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS AND WORKS

## ROMANS 03:27–31

### *Introduction*

One of the most powerful forces in all the world is faith. This passage discusses the power of faith, revealing four things that faith does.

- I. Faith excludes boasting (v .27).
- II. Faith justifies a man without the works of the law (v. 28).
- III. Faith reveals only one God, who deals with all equally (vv. 29-30).
- IV. Faith upholds and establishes the law (v. 31).

### JOHN 02:24

#### SAVING FAITH: BELIEVE, COMMIT, ENTRUST

The word commit or entrust is the very same word “believe” (see Jn. 2:23). This gives an excellent picture of *saving faith*, of what *genuine faith* is — of the kind of faith that really saves a person.

1. Saving faith is not head knowledge, not just a mental conviction and intellectual assent. It is not just *believing the fact* that Jesus Christ is the Saviour of the world. It is not just believing history, that Jesus Christ lived upon earth as the Saviour just as A. J. Abdul Kalam lived upon earth as the President of India. It is not just believing the words and claims of Jesus in the same way that a person would believe the words of Abdul Kalam.
2. Saving faith is believing in Jesus, *who* and *what* He is, that He is the *Saviour* and *Lord* of life. It is a man giving and turning his life over to Jesus. It is a man casting himself upon Jesus as Saviour and Lord.
3. Saving faith is commitment — the commitment of a man’s total being and life to Jesus Christ. It is a man’s commitment of all he *is and has* to Jesus. It gives Jesus everything; therefore, it involves all of a man’s affairs. The man trusts Jesus to take care of his past (sins), his present (welfare), and his future (destiny). He entrusts his whole life, being, and possessions into Jesus’ hands. He lays himself upon Jesus’ keeping, confiding in Him about his daily necessities and acknowledging Him in all the ways of life. He follows Jesus in every area and in every detail of life, seeking His instructions and leaving his welfare up to Him. It is simply commitment of a man’s whole being, all he is and has, to Jesus.

There are three steps involved in faith, steps that are clearly seen in this passage.

1. There is the step of *seeing* (Jn. 2:23) or *hearing* (Rom. 10:16). A man must be willing to listen to the message of Christ, the revelation of truth.
2. There is the step of *mental assent*. A man must agree that the message is true, that the facts of the case are thus and so. But this is not enough. Mere agreement does not lead to action. Many a person knows that something is true, but he does not change his behaviour to match his knowledge. For example, a man knows that eating too much harms his body, but he may continue to eat too much. He agrees to the truth and knows the truth, but he does nothing about it. A person may believe and know that Jesus Christ is the Saviour of the world and yet do nothing about it, never make a decision to follow Christ. This man still does not have faith, not the kind of faith that the Bible talks about.
3. There is the step of *commitment*. When the New Testament speaks of faith, it speaks of *commitment, a personal commitment to the truth*. A man hears the truth and agrees that it is true and does something about it. He commits (entrusts) and yields his life to the truth. The truth becomes a part of his very being, a part of his behaviour and life. □

### **I. *Romans 03:17 Faith Excludes Boasting***

Faith excludes boasting among men. Boasting is now excluded and eliminated, banished and made impossible. No man can boast in himself before God. No man can boast in his own righteousness, goodness, merit or virtue.

What is it that keeps man from boasting and glorying in himself? This is puzzling. Think about it, all the advancements of man...

- the scientific and technological advancements
- the medical and health advancements
- the commercial and farming advancements
- the comfort and recreational advancements

When man is considered, the power of his mind and all that he is able to produce, it is very difficult for some to understand why man cannot boast in himself. What is it, then, that forbids man to boast in himself? What kind of law would prohibit man from glorying in his ability and achievements?

1. It is not the *law of works*. The law of works does not exclude boasting; it promotes boasting. When a man looks at what he has done, at the works of his hands, he is led to boast and to glory in himself. A law of works does not discourage boasting, it encourages

it. A law of works encourages a man to be selfish, self-centred, prideful, and self-righteous. It causes a man to stand before God and other men and declare that he...

- is more acceptable than others
- is more deserving than others
- has achieved more than others
- is more sufficient than others
- is more adequate than others
- has no need beyond himself and this world

A law of works causes men to be focused upon self. It causes men to centre the world around themselves: to look upon themselves as the power that creates and sustains the world, as the power that gives purpose, meaning and significance to life. A law of works encourages boasting; it does not exclude it.

**Rom 12:16** *Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited.*

**Rev 3:17** *You say, 'I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing.' But you do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked.*

**James 4:16** *As it is, you boast and brag. All such boasting is evil.*

**Psa 10:3** *He boasts of the cravings of his heart; he blesses the greedy and reviles the Lord.*

**Psa 49:6-7** *Those who trust in their wealth and boast of their great riches? No man can redeem the life of another or give to God a ransom for him.*

**Prov 3:7** *Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD and shun evil.*

**Prov 25:14** *Like clouds and wind without rain is a man who boasts of gifts he does not give.*

**Prov 26:12** *Do you see a man wise in his own eyes? There is more hope for a fool than for him.*

**Prov 27:1** *Do not boast about tomorrow, for you do not know what a day may bring forth.*

**Isa 5:21** *Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes and clever in their own sight.*

2. It is the *law of faith*. The law of faith excludes boasting. Man has to boast in God when man believes what Scripture has just declared (Rom. 1:18-3:26)...

- that *God is* (does exist),
- that God is the creator of the universe and can be known by man,

- that man is short of God's glory and righteousness,
- that God has provided righteousness for man *through faith*.

It is God who has created and given man his ability and who has provided righteousness for man. God has provided the way for man to be saved from sin, death and hell. Therefore, man has to boast in God and not in self, for God is the One who has given man all that he has, both his natural ability and his eternal salvation. It is the law of faith, not the law of works that eliminates boasting.

**2 Cor 10:17** *But, "Let him who boasts boast in the Lord."*

**1 Cor 6:20** *You were bought at a price. Therefore honour God with your body.*

**2 Th 1:12** *We pray this so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

**Psa 22:23** *You who fear the LORD, praise him! All you descendants of Jacob, honour him! Revere him, all you descendants of Israel!*

**Psa 44:8** *In God we make our boast all day long, and we will praise your name forever.*

**Isa 45:25** *But in the LORD all the descendants of Israel will be found righteous and will exult.*

**Jer 9:24** *"But let him who boasts boast about this: that he understands and knows me, that I am the LORD, who exercises kindness, justice and righteousness on earth, for in these I delight," declares the LORD.*

## **II. Romans 03:28 Faith and Justification**

Faith justifies a man without the works of the law. This is of extreme importance. A man is justified by faith and not by the deeds of the law. Boasting shows this. Who is to be praised and set up as the subject of glory? Is man the one in whom to boast? Is man the one who is to be glorified? If man created himself and saved himself from sin and death by his own works and deeds, then he is the one to be glorified. But what man can do these things? Man did not make himself nor can man save himself. When we consider that man is corruptible, and that man can do nothing beyond this life, then boasting is excluded. Therefore man is not justified before God by the deeds of the law; he is justified by faith — by believing in God and His righteousness. (See *Justification*, Rom. 4:1-3 *Justification, Faith and Righteousness*, Rom 4:22.)

**Thought 1.** Despite the great ability and all the marvellous achievements of man, man is still unable to control things morally, unable to live in love, joy and peace with others. He is unable to control the shame and devastation of selfishness and greed, disease and accident, sin and death. Man's only hope is to come before God...

- not boasting and glorying in self, but bowing in all humility.
- believing in the law of faith: that God saves and justifies man by believing in the righteousness of Jesus Christ.

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

**Acts 13:39** *Through him everyone who believes is justified from everything you could not be justified from by the law of Moses.*

**Rom 3:28** *For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from observing the law.*

**Rom 5:1** *Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

**1 Cor 6:11** *And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.*

**Gal 3:24** *So the law was put in charge to lead us to Christ that we might be justified by faith.*

### ROMANS 04:01–03 JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH

The logic of Abraham's justification. A person can look at Abraham's life and logically see that a man is not justified by works but by faith.

1. Abraham was not justified by works, for works *cannot qualify* a person to glory before God. Now note this: if Abraham had been justified by works...
  - he *would be* qualified to boast or glory before men.
  - but he *would not be* qualified to boast or glory before God.

Think about it – the logic, the clarity of the matter. No man is ever qualified to glory before God. No act or work or combination of acts and works could ever elevate man to such a height that he could glory or become qualified before God.

2. Abraham was justified by believing God. How? Abraham believed God, and God took Abraham's belief and counted his belief as righteousness. It was not Abraham's works, but his faith that God took and counted as righteousness. It was all an act of God; therefore, all glory belonged to God, not to Abraham. Man is saved by faith; that is, God takes a man's faith and counts that man's faith as righteousness. Such has to be the case.

=> God is perfect; He is perfectly righteous. No man can achieve perfection; therefore, no man can live in the presence of God.

=> However, God is love. So what God does is take a person's faith (any person's faith who is truly sincere) and counts that faith as righteousness, as perfection. Therefore, a man is able to live in God's presence by faith or justification.

**Mat 7:22-23** *"Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?' Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'"*

**Rom 3:20** *Therefore no one will be declared righteous in his sight by observing the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of sin.*

**Gal 2:16** *Know that a man is not justified by observing the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by observing the law, because by observing the law no one will be justified.*

**Eph 2:8-9** *For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith — and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God — not by works, so that no one can boast.*

**Titus 3:4-5** *But when the kindness and love of God our Saviour appeared, he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit.*

**Thought 1.** Why does God justify a man through faith? There are at least two reasons.

First, God loves everyone with a perfect love. God wants everyone to live with Him in a *perfect state of being* throughout all eternity. God is perfect; therefore, He alone can provide the only perfect way for man to live in His presence. Because God is love, He has reached out for man by providing that perfect way through Jesus Christ, His Son.

**John 3:16-17** *"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him."*

**John 5:24** *"I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life."*

**Rom 5:8** *But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*

**1 Pet 3:18** *For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit.*

Second, God loves His Son with a perfect love. Any person who honours God's Son by believing in Him is accepted by God. That is, God takes that person's belief and counts it as righteousness. The person receives the right to live in God's presence in a *perfect state of being*. "We were also chosen...*that we...might be*" (a state of *being* that is to be eternally lived to the praise of God's glory Eph. 1:11-12).

**Mat 17:5** *While he was still speaking, a bright cloud enveloped them, and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!"*

**John 10:17** *"The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life – only to take it up again."*

**John 15:9** *"As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love."*

**John 16:27** *"No, the Father himself loves you because you have loved me and have believed that I came from God."*

**John 17:23** *"I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me."*

**John 17:26** *"I have made you known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them."*

**Eph 1:6** *To the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves.*

**Col 1:13** *For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves. □*

## ROMANS 04: 22

### JUSTIFICATION: FAITH, RIGHTEOUSNESS

*This is why "it is credited to him as righteousness." **Romans 04:22***

In simple terms *justification* means that God takes the believer's faith and counts it as righteousness (Rom. 4:3; see Gen. 15:6)

When a person *really believes* that Jesus Christ is *his Saviour*, God takes that person's faith and counts it for righteousness (Rom. 4:3, 5, 9, 11, 22, 24). The person is not righteous; he has no righteousness of his own. He is still imperfect, still sinful, still corruptible, still short of God's glory as a sinful human being. But he does believe that

Jesus Christ *is his Saviour*. Such belief honours God's Son (whom God loves very much), and because it honours God's Son, God accepts that person's faith for righteousness. God counts that person's faith as righteousness. Therefore, that person becomes acceptable to God. A person's belief — the right kind of belief — is critical.

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

**Rom 5:1** *Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

**Gal 3:6** *Consider Abraham: "He believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness."*

**1 Cor 6:11** *And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.*

**Phil 3:9** *And be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ — the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith. □*

### **III. Romans 03:29–30 God, The Universal Father**

Faith reveals only one God who deals with all equally.

1. God created everyone; therefore, He is the God of all. There is not one God of the Jew (religionist) and another God of the Gentile. There are not different gods of the races and nations of the world, not a different god of Africa and a different god of India, and a different god for Arabs, and a different god for Americans and on and on. Imagine the foolishness of such an idea! Yet how common the idea is! There is only one God who created the universe and only one God who is the God of all mankind.
  - a. There is only one God who created all things: "One God, the Father from whom all things came and for whom we live" (1 Cor. 8:6).
  - b. There is only one God who has made all men alike: "From one man he made every nation of men" (Acts 17:26).
  - c. There is only one God "in him we live and move and have our being" (Acts 17:28).

**Mat 23:9** *"And do not call anyone on earth 'father,' for you have one Father, and he is in heaven."*

**Eph 4:6** *One God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.*

**Heb 12:9** *Moreover, we have all had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it. How much more should we submit to the Father of our spirits and live!*

*Mal 2:10* Have we not all one Father? Did not one God create us? Why do we profane the covenant of our fathers by breaking faith with one another?

2. God is the *only* God; therefore, all are justified in the *same* way — by faith. God does not play favourites and show partiality. God does not make it more difficult for some to be saved. God is God; that is, He is perfectly just and equitable in all His dealings.
  - a. There “is only one God, who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through that same faith” (Rom. 3:30).
  - b. “There is [only] one God and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus” (1 Tim. 2:5).

*Acts 10:34* Then Peter began to speak: “I now realize how true it is that God does not show favouritism.”

*Acts 15:9* He made no distinction between us and them, for he purified their hearts by faith.

*Rom 2:11* For God does not show favouritism.

*Rom 10:12-13* For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile — the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him, for, “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”

The point is this. When a man trusts God to save him and to count him righteous in Christ, that man’s faith proves...

- that God is, that there is only one true and living God.
- that God treats all men equally; that he, the sinner, is saved just like all other believers.

#### **IV. Romans 03:31 Faith and Law**

Faith upholds and establishes the law. This means at least three things.

1. Jesus Christ established the law. Jesus was everything that God said a man should be. He was the ideal of all that God wants man to be. Therefore, Jesus fulfilled the law perfectly.

But there is something more. Jesus not only fulfilled the statutes of the law; He fulfilled the penalty of the law. He took the penalty and the punishment of man upon Himself and died for man. Man is thereby absolved from the penalty and punishment exacted by the law. Therefore, Jesus established the law by fulfilling both the statutes and penalty demanded by the law. (See *Law*, Mt. 5:17; *Christ Fulfills the Law*, Rom. 8:3.)

*Mat 5:17* “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfil them.”

**Rom 8:3** *For what the law was powerless to do in that it was weakened by the sinful nature, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful man to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in sinful man.*

2. The believer establishes the law when he admits he is a law breaker or a sinner. In so doing, he admits that the law is good. The law is good because it points out his sin (Rom. 3:19-20; 5:20; 7:7; Gal. 3:19). It makes him guilty and it leads him to confess his need for help outside of himself. But the law is also good because it points man to Christ. It makes man cast himself upon Christ *for righteousness*. It forces him to believe in God and to honour God. Therefore, the believer's faith establishes the law.

**Gal 3:19** *What, then, was the purpose of the law? It was added because of transgressions until the Seed to whom the promise referred had come. The law was put into effect through angels by a mediator.*

**Gal 3:22, 24** *But the Scripture declares that the whole world is a prisoner of sin, so that what was promised, being given through faith in Jesus Christ, might be given to those who believe. So the law was put in charge to lead us to Christ that we might be justified by faith.*

**Rom 10:4, 9-10** *Christ is the end of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes. That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.*

3. The believer establishes the law (much more than a legalist) because in seeing what Christ has done for him, he is driven to please God. The believer sees Christ bearing the guilt and punishment for his crimes (sins), and then bows in love and adoration, and arises to work in appreciation for such amazing love. The believer tries to be good, not to earn or to win righteousness, but to serve God. He does not try to put God in debt for salvation, but he thanks God for righteousness, seeing that he owes God whatever service he can do. The genuine believer has come to know above all others that love is a much stronger force than fear.

**2 Cor 5:14-15** *For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.*

**Gal 2:20** *I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.*

**1 John 3:16** *This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers. ■*

## MATHEW 05: 17 THE LAW

*“Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfil them.” Mathew 05: 17*

The law referred to four different writings to the Jews.

1. It referred to the Ten Commandments.
2. It referred to the first five books of the Bible, that is the Pentateuch.
3. It referred to the law and the prophets, that is, all the Scripture of the Old Testament.
4. It referred to the oral or the Scribal Law.

God’s law, given in the Old Testament, was not enough for the Jews. They reasoned that if the law was really God’s Word, then it must include — have embodied within it — every rule and regulation for conduct. Therefore, they took the great principles of the law and reduced them to thousands upon thousands of rules and regulations. These rules and regulations became the oral or Scribal Law. There were two groups who gave their lives to the teaching and keeping of the law.

1. The Scribes: they were the writers and teachers of the law (Lk. 6:2).
2. The Pharisees: they were the strict followers of the law (Act. 23:8). □

## ROMANS 08:03 CHRIST FULFILLS LAW – SIN

*For what the law was powerless to do in that it was weakened by the sinful nature, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful man to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in sinful man. Romans 08:03*

Christ condemned sin in the sinful man, the flesh in by three acts.

1. Christ pointed to sin and condemned it as being evil. The very fact that He never sinned points out that sin is contrary to God and to God’s nature. Christ rejected sin, and by rejecting it He showed that it was evil, that it was not to be touched. He condemned it as evil and unworthy of God and man.
2. Christ secured righteousness for all men. When He came into the world, He came with the same human nature, the same flesh that all men are born with — the same human nature, the same flesh with all its desires, passions and potential for evil. However, He never sinned, not once. Therefore, He secured a perfect righteousness; and because His righteousness is perfect and ideal, it becomes the model and pattern for all men. It stands for and covers the unrighteousness of all men. His perfect righteousness overcomes sin and its penalty — it condemns sin.

It is to be noted that He condemned sin “in sinful man, in his flesh;” therefore, all flesh finds its perfection and ideal in His righteousness and perfection. All flesh finds its power to condemn sin “in Christ,” in His ideal righteousness.

**John 8:46** “Can any of you prove me guilty of sin? If I am telling the truth, why don’t you believe me?”

**2 Cor 5:21** *God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*

**Heb 4:15** *For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are – yet was without sin.*

**Heb 7:26** *Such a high priest meets our need – one who is holy, blameless, pure, set apart from sinners, exalted above the heavens.*

**Heb 9:14** *How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!*

**1 Pet 1:19** *But with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.*

**1 Pet 2:22** “He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth.”

**1 John 3:5** *But you know that he appeared so that he might take away our sins. And in him is no sin.*

3. Christ allowed the law of sin and death to be enacted upon Him instead of upon the sinner. Man has sinned, so the natural consequence is corruption and death. However, Christ approached God and made two requests. First, He asked God to accept His *Ideal righteousness* for the unrighteousness of man. Second, He asked God to lay man’s sin and death upon Himself. He asked God to let Him bear the law of sin and death for man and to experience hell for man. He asked God to let Him condemn sin and death “in His body on the tree” (1 Pet. 2:24). He was the perfect, ideal Man. Therefore, He could bear all the violations of the law and all the experiences of death for *all* men. God so purposed, and God bore the awful price of having to condemn sin and death in the death of His very own Son. Sin and its power have been made powerless. Death has been conquered (1 Cor. 15:1-58, esp. vs.54-57), and he who had the power of death has been destroyed, that is, Satan. (Jn. 16:11; Heb. 2:14)

Satan is judged and condemned by the obedience of Christ upon the cross. God is perfectly pleased with Christ, for Christ did exactly what God wanted: *He obeyed God perfectly*. Therefore, God is bound to be perfectly pleased.

The point is this: what God wanted most of all was for Christ to die *for man*. Christ Himself said, “I do exactly what my father commanded me” (Jn. 14:31). It was upon the cross that Christ obeyed God in the supreme, ultimate, and absolute sense.

**Rom 5:6** *You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly.*

**Rom 5:8** *But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*

**1 Cor 15:3** *For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures.*

**2 Cor 5:15** *And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.*

**Gal 3:13** *Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: “Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree.”*

**Titus 2:14** *Who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.*

**Heb 2:9** *But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, now crowned with glory and honour because he suffered death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.*

**Heb 9:28** *So Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many people; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him.*

**1 Pet 2:24** *He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed.*

**1 Pet 3:18** *For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit.*

**1 John 3:16** *This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers. □*

# LOGIC: THE EVIDENCE THAT FAITH ALONE JUSTIFIES A MAN ROMANS 04:01–08

## *Introduction*

Most people think they become acceptable to God by doing the best they can. Most actually believe they secure God's approval by being reasonably good: by being a respectable and upright citizen and by occasionally helping others who are less fortunate. But note a startling fact: a man is not justified by works, but by faith. Logic proves the fact.

- I. The logic of Abraham's justification, his salvation (vv. 1-3).
- II. The logic of the worker or labourer's reward (vv. 4-5).
- III. The logic of David's words about the blessed man (vv. 6-8).

## **I. *Romans 04:01–03 Abraham's Justification by Faith***

The logic of Abraham's justification. A person can look at Abraham's life and logically see that a man is not justified by works but by faith.

1. Abraham was not justified by works, for works *cannot qualify* a person to glory before God. Now note this: if Abraham had been justified by works...
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  - but he *would not be* qualified to boast or glory before God.

Think about it — the logic, the clarity of the matter. No man is ever qualified to glory before God. No act or work or combination of acts and works could ever elevate man to such a height that he could glory or become qualified before God.

2. Abraham was justified by believing God. How? Abraham believed God, and God took Abraham's belief and counted his belief as righteousness. It was not Abraham's works, but his faith that God took and counted as righteousness. It was all an act of God; therefore, all glory belonged to God, not to Abraham. Man is saved by faith; that is, God takes a man's faith and counts that man's faith as righteousness. Such has to be the case.

=> God is perfect; He is perfectly righteous. No man can achieve perfection; therefore, no man can live in the presence of God.

=> However, God is love. So what God does is take a person's faith (any person's faith who is truly sincere) and counts that faith as righteousness, as perfection. Therefore, a man is able to live in God's presence by faith or justification.

**Mat 7:22-23** "*Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?' Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'*"

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**Rom 3:20** *Therefore no one will be declared righteous in his sight by observing the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of sin.*

**Gal 2:16** *Know that a man is not justified by observing the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by observing the law, because by observing the law no one will be justified.*

**Eph 2:8-9** *For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith — and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God — not by works, so that no one can boast.*

**Titus 3:4-5** *But when the kindness and love of God our Saviour appeared, he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit.*

**Thought 1.** Why does God justify a man through faith? There are at least two reasons.

First, God loves everyone with a perfect love. God wants everyone to live with Him in a *perfect state of being* throughout all eternity. God is perfect; therefore, He alone can provide the only perfect way for man to live in His presence. Because God is love, He has reached out for man by providing that perfect way through Jesus Christ, His Son.

**John 3:16-17** *“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.”*

**John 5:24** *“I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life.”*

**Rom 5:8** *But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*

**1 Pet 3:18** *For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit.*

Second, God loves His Son with a perfect love. Any person who honours God’s Son by believing in Him is accepted by God. That is, God takes that person’s belief and counts it as righteousness. The person receives the right to live in God’s presence in a *perfect state of being*. “We were also chosen...*that we...might be*” (a state of *being* that is to be eternally lived to the praise of God’s glory Eph. 1:11-12).

**Mat 17:5** *While he was still speaking, a bright cloud enveloped them, and a voice from the cloud said, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!”*

**John 10:17** *“The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life — only to take it up again.”*

**John 15:9** *“As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love.”*

**John 16:27** “No, the Father himself loves you because you have loved me and have believed that I came from God.”

**John 17:23** “I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.”

**John 17:26** “I have made you known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them.”

**Eph 1:6** To the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves.

**Col 1:13** For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves.

**ROMANS 04:01–25**  
**JEWS, THE SEED OR OFFSPRING OF ABRAHAM;**  
**JUSTIFICATION, RIGHTEOUSNESS, NEW CREATION**

Abraham held a unique position in the Jewish nation, for he was the founder of the nation. He was the man whom God had challenged to be a witness to the other nations of the world — a witness to the only living and true God. God had appeared to Abraham and challenged him to leave his home, his friends, his employment, and his country. God made two great promises if Abraham would follow God unquestionably: Abraham would become the father of a new nation, and all nations of the earth would be blessed by his seed or offspring (Gen. 12:1-5; 13:14-17; 15:1-7; 17:1-8, 15-19; 22:15-18; 26:2-5, 24; 28:13-15; 35:9-12).

Scripture says Abraham did as God requested. He went out not knowing where to go (Heb. 11:8). He completely and unquestionably trusted God and took God at His word.

Now note: it was not Abraham’s keeping of the law that pleased God. In fact, the law had not yet been given (Gal. 3:17). What pleased God and what caused God to justify Abraham was Abraham doing as God said. Abraham simply *believed* the promise of God that God would give him a new life — *in* a new nation — *with* a new people. (See Gal. 3:8, 16; Heb. 11:8-10; 11:13-16; 11:17-19.)

Note several things.

1. Abraham and his “seed” or “offspring” were the only ones to whom God gave the promises. This is emphatically stated (Rom. 4:13-25; Gal. 3:6-16, 26, 29).
2. Only a promise was given to Abraham (Rom. 4:13-21; Gal. 3:14, 18-21, 29). No other information whatsoever was given. God did not identify the country nor tell Abraham where he was to go. Neither did God tell Abraham when his wife

(Sarah) would bear the seed (the male child) from whom the promised nation would be born. God made a simple promise, and all Abraham had to go on was that simple promise, that is, the sheer Word of God.

3. Only one condition was attached to the promise. Abraham had to believe God. No works whatsoever were involved.
4. Abraham did believe God (Gen. 12:4-5; Rom. 4:3. 11-22; Gal. 3:6; Heb. 11:8f).
5. Abraham was *counted righteous* because he believed God (Rom. 4:3-5, 9-13, 19-22; Gal. 3:6; see Gen. 15:6). God did not count him righteous because of who he was or what he had done. He simply believed God. Therefore, God took his faith and *counted* his faith as righteousness (See Rom. 4:1-3; 4:22; 5:1).
6. The proof that Abraham really believed God was that he did what God had said. His faith *preceded* his obedience. He believed God and then he obeyed God. If he had not believed God, he would not have left his home or his employment. He would not have left his familiar surroundings and meaningful relationships and personal attachments. The fact that he did as God asked was evidence that he believed the promise of God.
7. The man who believes God is the man who receives the promises of God (Rom. 4:5-12, 16-17, 23-25; Gal. 3:7-9, 14, 22, 26, 29). Paul argues that neither heritage nor nationality, neither merit nor works, neither the law nor the rules of the law have anything to do with the promises of God (Gal. 3:6-7). The true children of Abraham are those who believe God — any person of any nation. In fact, God's promise that a nation would be born to Abraham and "his seed (offspring)" was the promise of an eternal nation. This eternal nation is to be of another world, of another dimension of being: the spiritual dimension, a dimension just as real as the physical dimension. But it is to have one distinction: every citizen is to be a believer — one who has believed God and His Word. This is exactly what this passage is saying: "They who believe are the children of Abraham, the children of God's promise. They are to be blessed along with faithful Abraham. They are to be the citizens of God's Kingdom, of 'the new heavens and the new earth.'" (See Heb. 11:8-18; 2 Pet. 3:10-14.) □

## II. *Romans 04:04–05 Works and Righteousness*

The logic of the worker or labourer's reward. A person can look at the day to day labourer and logically see that a man is not justified by works but by faith.

1. Works necessitate *debt* or "*an obligation.*" When a man works, someone owes him something. If a man could work for righteousness, that is, work so that God would

owe him righteousness, then God would owe man. But God, being God, is completely self-sufficient; therefore, He cannot be put in debt to any man. He cannot *be made or forced* to do anything.

2. Believing in God results in righteousness. It is the “wicked” who believe who are counted righteous (see Rom. 5:6). This is because the man who admits he is wicked is the man who rejects self, sensing his need for *godly help* in spiritual matters. He is ready to give himself up in order to honour and glorify God alone. Therefore, he centres and wraps his whole life around God, depending solely upon God for righteousness.

**Thought 1.** God can never turn away from a person who senses and confesses his ungodliness and who wishes to recognize and glorify God. God is love, and God’s love is bound to be moved by so humble an act and faith.

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

**Rom 5:1** *Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

**Gal 3:6** *Consider Abraham: “He believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.”*

**Phil 3:9** *And be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ – the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith.*

The converse teaching of Scripture needs to be remembered: the man who does not admit he is wicked, who does not reject self and sense the need for godly help is the man declared to be self-sufficient and self-righteous. Therefore, he is pronounced unjustified, not so much because God rejects him as the fact that he has already rejected God.

**John 3:18** *“Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God’s one and only Son.”*

**John 8:24** *“I told you that you would die in your sins; if you do not believe that I am the one I claim to be, you will indeed die in your sins.”*

**Heb 3:12** *See to it, brothers, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God.*

**Prov 20:6** *Many a man claims to have unfailing love, but a faithful man who can find? (see. Mt. 7:21)*

**Prov 30:12** *Those who are pure in their own eyes and yet are not cleansed of their filth.*

### III. *Romans 04:06–08 Forgiveness is Credit to Man*

The logic of David's *blessed man*. A person can look at prophecy, at the man described by David and see clearly that justification is not by works but by faith (see Psa. 32:1-2). Note who the blessed man is.

1. The blessed man is the man who is *counted* righteous without works. Note the word "credit" (*logizomai*). It means to reckon, to count, to put to one's account, to credit, to deposit. Just think for a moment. If God credits and counts a man righteous "apart from works," then we know something: *Man is not justified by works, but by faith.* (See *Reckon*, Rom 6:11.)

Pure logic tells us this. Therefore, the blessed man is the man who has righteousness *credited, imputed, counted* to him...

- not because of his works,
- but because he believes God, and God loves him so much that He takes the man's belief and counts it as righteousness.

2. The blessed man is the man whose sins are forgiven and covered. Think for a moment. Lawlessness (sin) exists despite all the works and efforts of men to eliminate it. No matter how hard men try, lawlessness still exists. If lawlessness is to be handled, it has to be handled by God and God alone. He simply has to forgive man's lawlessness (sin).

Now note: logic tells us that if God loves that much, loves enough to simply forgive men for sin, then justification is not by law but by faith.

3. The blessed man is the man whose sins are not imputed, not credited nor counted against him. Note: it is not the acts of men, but the act of God that justifies men and does not count sin against them. A man cannot justify himself before God. No man can free himself from sin and force God to accept him — not by his own hand. Justification — complete deliverance from sin and condemnation — comes from God and from God alone, not from some act of man. Therefore, logic tells us that it is not works that justifies a man, but faith.

*Isa 38:17* Surely it was for my benefit that I suffered such anguish. In your love you kept me from the pit of destruction; you have put all my sins behind your back.

*Isa 43:25* "I, even I, am he who blots out your transgressions, for my own sake, and remembers your sins no more."

*Isa 44:22* "I have swept away your offenses like a cloud, your sins like the morning mist. Return to me, for I have redeemed you."

*Isa 55:7* Let the wicked forsake his way and the evil man his thoughts. Let him turn to the LORD, and he will have mercy on him, and to our God, for he will freely pardon.

**Psa 78:38** *Yet he was merciful; he forgave their iniquities and did not destroy them. Time after time he restrained his anger and did not stir up his full wrath.*

**Psa 85:2** *You forgave the iniquity of your people and covered all their sins.*

**Psa 103:3** *Who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases.*

**Psa 103:12** *As far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us.*

**Psa 130:4** *But with you there is forgiveness; therefore you are feared.*

**Micah 7:18** *Who is a God like you, who pardons sin and forgives the transgression of the remnant of his inheritance? You do not stay angry forever but delight to show mercy.*

**1 Cor 15:3** *For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures.*

**Gal 1:4** *Who gave himself for our sins to rescue us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father.*

**Eph 1:7** *In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace.*

**1 Pet 2:24** *He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed.*

**1 John 1:9** *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.*

**Rev 1:5** *And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood. ■*

### ROMANS 06:11 RECKON, COUNT, IMPUTE (LOGIZETHE)

*In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. **Romans 06:11***

To credit; to set to one's account; to lay to one's charge; to judge; to consider; to treat; to compute; to ascribe. It is an accounting word; it implies something put to a man's credit. It is used many times throughout Romans, about eleven times in chapter four of Romans alone. It is an extremely important idea in Scripture.

1. Scripture says that righteousness is imputed, counted or reckoned to the genuine believer by God.

**Rom 4:22-25** *This is why “it was credited to him as righteousness.” The words “it was credited to him” were written not for him alone, but also for us, to whom God will credit righteousness — for us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead. He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification.*

2. Scripture says that the genuine believer is immersed, imputed, counted or reckoned as dead in Christ’s death; that is, his “old self” is imputed or reckoned as crucified in Christ’s death.

**Rom 6:3-4** *Or don’t you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.*

**Rom 6:6** *For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin. (See note, Sin, Rom. 6:11)*

3. Scripture says that a new life, a resurrected life is imputed, counted, reckoned or put to the account of the believer through Christ’s resurrection.

**Rom 6:5** *If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection.*

**Rom 6:8-10** *Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him. The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God.*

Very simply stated, God counts the believer righteous because of what Christ has done. Christ is seen to be “the Lord our righteousness,” and His righteousness is said to be put to a man’s account through faith (see Phile. 18). □