

# 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...
  - 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!'"*

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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). □