

THE BOOK OF ROMANS  
"God Justifies Ungodly"

Romans 4:4-5

Mar 31, 1985

INTRODUCTION

1. God has but one way of salvation. It is by grace through faith in the finished work of Christ at Calvary.
2. Abraham is given as an illustration of a by grace through faith salvation (vv. 1-3). Abraham found nothing in his works, but salvation through his faith.
3. This is really not something new with Paul. That's why Abraham is such a potent example. His faith was calculated righteousness. That's a declaration of acceptance before God. Great!
4. On the basis of the Abraham example, a Biblical principle is recorded (vv. 4, 5). Faith alone brings about righteousness. Consider:-

1. A GREAT COMPARISON

Scripture has a fantastic comparison to make. It may be set out in this model:

<u>A</u>		<u>B</u>
Works		No works
Reward	vs	Righteousness
Debt		Grace

It is clear that under "A" a person works for hire. It is expected, therefore, that a man who punches a time clock will be rewarded. It is a matter of just debt. The thought is this: if a person should produce works that are worthy of heaven, God would have no right to keep him out of heaven. Under "B" a person does not work for hire and punches no time clock. Rather, he believes in the merit of Another (Christ). Christ becomes the meritorious Cause for the person being calculated righteous. That's grace. He's not worthy, but is accepted through the merits of Another (Christ).

In the context, this model could also be set out:

<u>A</u>		<u>B</u>
Law (works)		Faith (no works)
Transgression (sin)		Grace (Another's merit)
Wrath (Death)		Promise (righteousness)

Thus the principle of salvation by works is destroyed and the principle of salvation without works is established.

2. A GREAT ILLUSTRATION Num. 21:5-9, John 3:14, 15

This account of sin against God and Moses resulted in the brass serpent. God's method of healing (physically) is illustrative of how God saves (spiritually). It is

all of grace through believing God's Word. By noting what the people of Moses' day were not told, popular notions about salvation are destroyed. Consider:

a. They were not told to make remedies for themselves. The rush and fury for religious palliatives is useless. It was look and live.

b. They were not told to help one another. Social welfare is fine, but not to save. It was look and live.

c. They were not told to fight the serpents. To campaign against sin will not save. It was look and live.

d. They were not told to pray to the brass serpent. It was only look and live.

e. They were not told to bring an offering to the serpent. You don't give God your heart--it's dirty. It was look and live.

f. They were not told to get some relic of the serpent or pole (cf. 2 Kings 18:4). It was look and live.

GOD'S WAY: NO WORKS (FAITH), GRACE, RIGHTEOUSNESS

### 3. A GREAT APPLICATION

God justifies the "ungodly" (v. 4). This word signifies impious and profane people. Simply it denotes "not god-like" people. How ungodly? Scripture teaches:

a. By heritage No matter what lineage, all come from sinful parents (cf. Mt. 23:29-32).

b. By birth Original sin is transmitted by natural procreation (Psa. 51:5).

c. By choice None has obeyed God perfectly. All have sinned (Isa. 53:6; Rom. 3:23). It is such ungodly whom God justifies.

CONCLUSION Here is the Gospel of Christ taught in principle out of the life of Abraham. Whether Jew or Gentile, God only declares righteous those who come God's way (John 14:6). You are a "whosoever" who may believe (John 3:16). The ball is in your court. What will you do? Should you say that God did not have you in mind in all of this, then consider this:

1. Christ came for the poor (Lk 4:18).

2. Christ came for the lost (Mk 19:10).

3. Christ came for the sinner (Mt. 9:12, 13).

Accept yourself as the poor lost sinner and believe that God justifies such ungodly persons--you will be declared righteous.

*Nothing either great or small  
Nothing sinner, no,  
Jesus died and paid it all,  
Long, long ago.*