

What God Did About a Guilty World

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 17 July 2005

Preacher: Marvin Wiseman

[0 : 00] As has been our custom, when we come to the completion of a strategic passage in the Epistle to the Romans, we stop and we recapitulate what we have studied up to that point from that particular segment.

That is what we are going to be doing this morning. Although the study we will be bringing in one sense will be the 76th study that we have brought from Romans, for the shorter Roman series it will only be study number four.

This isn't my particular piece of cake in trying to take it in rapid fashion like this, as you can well appreciate. We usually average about two verses a Sunday, and this morning we're going to take a whole chapter and half of another.

So we'll be moving very rapidly. I probably will be, as I was from the early service, pretty much out of breath by the time we finish. It is as though we are going through this in a verse-by-verse fashion, looking at each of the passages, each of the truths, each of the doctrines, with a magnifying glass that we have been doing, dissecting and analyzing word-by-word, verse-by-verse.

Now we are going to set aside the magnifying glass and pick up a telescope and look at the whole of the passage at one particular setting. Hopefully you will be able to kind of reach out and pull some loose ends together and make a composite hole out of all of the 22 hours that we have spent in the last chapter and the verses preceding that.

[1 : 34] Our new material will actually begin with Romans chapter 3 and verse 21. We have noted that up until this point, that is, up until verse 21, we have had enumerated a catalog of human vices.

It is an inventory of man's evil and his waywardness from his Creator. And the grand conclusion of all of these terrible things that must be admitted about humanity is found in verse 19.

Now we know that whatever the law says, it speaks to those who are under the law, that every mouth may be closed, and all the world may become accountable to God.

Because by the works of the law, no flesh will be justified in his sight, for through the law comes the knowledge of sin. So the Apostle Paul has built a case, if you will, for the indictment of humanity and the conclusion or the verdict that is handed in at the conclusion of this particular portion is guilty.

The whole human race stands guilty and condemned before God. Because the wrath of God has been revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and against men of ungodliness.

[2 : 53] It is in that category that the totality of the human race is placed. It is a very bleak picture. In fact, there is no way that anyone can come to any intelligent decision but one of absolute despair as he reads the first three chapters of Romans.

It is a terrible, terrible indictment. It leaves us at this portion of Scripture with no hope, with no possibility of ever becoming rightly related to God, with no hope of ever standing in God's presence. It leaves us with nothing but under the sentence of condemnation and the sentence of irrepressible guilt. It is a terrible, terrible situation for the whole of the human race.

And nobody is excluded. Nobody. We are all under the ban. We all belong here.

Corporately, the totality of humanity is thrown under condemnation. Justly and rightly so. We are sinners by nature. We are sinners by deed.

[4 : 02] All that can be said of us is that we are sinners. Terrible, terrible, bleak picture. The glorious thing, however, of the book of Romans and of the whole of the New Testament revelation is this.

While that is man's state, while that is the best man could do, while that is the only place you could expect to find man unaided by God, that is not where God left him.

And there are two glorious words that open up a whole new vista that we are now going to begin to cover in verse 21. But now. But now.

But now. Two of the most welcome, glorious words in all of Scripture. But now. And the suggestion is that something has happened to change all that.

It has been a dark, despairing picture. It has been very bleak. It has been terribly depressing. We have been brought to despair. But something has happened to change all that.

[4 : 58] And what has happened begins with the but now. In contrast to what has gone on before. But now. Apart from law. The article is not there in the Greek.

It should simply read, but now, apart from law, the righteousness of God has been manifested. This is just an absolutely overwhelming truth. And it is going to grow and grow and grow as we go on through the third and the fourth of Romans.

The but now indicates that something new is going to happen. And what it is, Paul says, apart from law, the righteousness of God has been manifested.

Actually, there is an emphasis on this in the Greek. And we would do well to render it this way. But now. Absolutely. Apart from law. Totally apart from law.

Altogether. Apart from law. The righteousness of God has been manifested. Being witnessed by the law and the prophets. Apart from law.

[6 : 03] Apart from law is a new concept to Paul's readers. Because they weren't accustomed to thinking in terms of anything happening apart from law. And yet. He is here ready to.

Ready to reveal. The greatest single truth. That can ever come to the ears of a human being. Is right here. In this passage before us.

That is. The gracious steps. And the provision that God has made. Whereby man. Can become acceptable to his creator.

He does not have to remain under condemnation. This is such a wonderful thing that the Bible throughout speaks of it as the gospel. And the word gospel means good news.

It is the good news. About Jesus Christ. It is the good news. About the salvation that is available in him. It is the good news. That we are delivered from wrath and condemnation.

[6 : 57] It is the good news. That we are made accepted in the beloved. It's the most glorious good news that anybody has ever heard. And as I have said before. It is the best news the world has ever heard.

And it is at the same time the world's best kept secret. For what I am going to share with you this morning. Is not anything new. It is the old old story that's been around for years.

But there are multitudes and millions upon millions of people who have never heard it. There are millions right here in the United States who have never heard it. You say well they could hear it. Churches on every corner. Radio. Television. Literature. Granted. But many have never heard it. Oh they've heard smidgens of religion here and there. They've heard little religious cliches and sayings.

They've read roadside signs that say repent or prepare to meet thy God. And all of that. They've never really heard the good news. That salvation is extended to lost man on the basis of the finished work of Jesus Christ.

[7 : 58] And it is apart from law. Means the law doesn't figure in. Because all the law can do. Is condemn you. You know.

Most of us who are familiar at all with the law. And I'm talking about. An ordinary traffic ticket. Or a speeding ticket. You know I have never had a policeman pull me over.

I'm not going to stop there. Because that isn't true. I've never had a policeman pull me over. And he said. May I see your driver's license please. That's the first thing they always say.

And they're so polite you know. So I pull out the driver's license. And I look at it. And I say. I realize there's no resemblance between the picture on the license and me. But it is me. And he looks at it. And he says. Well Mr. Wiseman. The reason. Do you have any idea why I stopped you? And I say. Oh. Why did you stop? Well the reason I stopped you.

[8 : 56] Is because. I've been noticing you for the last 12 miles. I've been following you. And you are the most exemplary kind of motorist.

Everything you did was right. You never violated the speed limit. You were always courteous to other drivers. You gave the right away. You always had your turn signals on.

You are just a model driver. And I just thought I had to stop you and compliment you on that. And I say. Well thank you very much. And he says. Have a nice day Mr. Wiseman.

And I say. Same to you. And I go off driving down the street. I should live so long. That will never happen. It never has happened. Because the law doesn't pat you on the back for doing right.

The law just brings its full weight to bear upon you for doing wrong. The law does not congratulate. It condemns.

[9 : 56] It judges. The law brings us up short. The law sits on us. The law catches up with us. The law says stop it.

The law says you're wrong. You're wrong. You're wrong. It never says you're right. You're right. It says you're wrong. It's so negative. So negative. Have you ever noticed in the Ten Commandments it isn't thou shalt.

It's thou shalt not. Thou shalt not. Thou shalt not. If you want to know what people are doing that's wrong. Just read the thou shalt not. What we are told not to do is what we're doing.

It's very negative. The law condemns. The law has no dynamic. It has no power to deliver. It only has power to condemn.

And the reason for that is because that's the only purpose for which God gave it. The law was not given to justify. The law was not given to save us.

[10 : 51] It was not given to deliver us. The law was given to show us that we do not measure up to God's standards. Because the law is a reflection of God's moral character.

And when I look at the law, I see perfection. Like when I look at God, I see perfection. And my conclusion is, unless I've got such a swelled head that you can't believe it, my conclusion is, oh, oh, I am undone.

I fall short. I can't measure up. I've had it. I am condemned. Justly so. Righteously so. What Paul, however, is talking about now is the fact that the righteousness of God is revealed through some principle or through some activity that has nothing to do with law or law keeping.

What is it? Let's go on and examine it. He says, it has been manifested. The righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets. And that means what I have to say to you isn't really new.

It has Old Testament verification. Paul was accused in some quarters of teaching some strange new doctrine. This thing called justification by faith was weird, new, different, novel, unorthodox.

[12 : 07] Paul says, no, it isn't. What I am preaching, justification by faith, is witnessed to by the law and the prophets. The Old Testament is saturated with it.

This isn't anything new. And yet it was to many of his hearers. Do you know why? Because many of the people to whom Paul wrote had the same misinformed, warped ideas about the law that people have today.

How many people today think that you are brought into a right relationship with God by keeping the Ten Commandments? How many people think that? Friends, the woods are full of them.

There are millions of people out there who say, well, I just live by the Ten Commandments and do the best I can. They don't know what they're saying. I'm sure they mean well. I know they have good intentions.

I'm sure they're really sincere when they say that. They really believe it. But they don't have a prayer as to what is involved. And most of them can't even name the Ten Commandments that they think they're living by.

[13 : 07] Really? So what I'm saying is that people in Paul's day misunderstood the intent of the law just as much as people do today. If you're bad, you're going to suffer the consequences.

Boy, you'll go to hell if you're bad. But if you're good, oh, then you'll go to heaven. And that's your reward for being good. That's exactly where most people are today. And I hate to say this, but I'm going to.

That's where most people are today. Inside and outside of the churches. It makes us wonder, does it not?

Has the church become part of the solution or part of the problem? Well, I guess that all depends. That all depends. It is apart from law that the righteousness of God has been manifested or declared, being witnessed by the law and the prophets.

Now he's going to talk about the particularizing of that faith. Even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe.

[14:11] Now what he's saying is that this has an exclusiveness to it. This righteousness, which God has revealed or manifested, is revealed and manifested through Jesus Christ and nowhere else.

No place else. This is the only place you'll find the product. Right here. It is through Jesus Christ and it is for all those who believe. Now that's the rather limiting kind of gospel.

I am convinced that Paul intended it to be limiting. The righteousness of God is the righteousness which his righteousness requires him to require.

It is God's righteousness, not man's. God's righteousness is obtainable, but not attainable. That is, you can get it, but you can't work for it and get it.

It is receivable, but not achievable. That is, you can receive it, but you cannot work for it and achieve it, or work yourself up to a certain level where you have earned it.

[15:16] This righteousness of God is the righteousness which is consistent with his own holy character, nature, person, makeup, and quality. It is that which makes God God.

It is tantamount to his holiness. It is that inviolable essence about God and of God which cannot be tainted with any degree of unholiness or unrightness of any kind.

And that righteousness, God wants to give to you. So that, now you listen, you hear me well. So that when you have received this righteousness, you are just as righteous as Jesus Christ himself is, which means you possess the righteousness of God.

That's what he has for you. Can you not now see the justification for that but now? It is declared, revealed in a way that it never was before.

Oh, justification by faith was preached in the Old Testament. We'll see Abraham as an example of that. But what Paul is saying is, listen, the rationale, the basis, the platform for justification by faith, faith, even being available, has never been revealed before.

[16:48] But it's revealed now through the finished work of Jesus Christ. And he'll get into that in verse 25. But let us back up for just a moment. We've got to deal with the parenthesis.

For there is no distinction. For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. You see, Romans 1, 16 and 17 tells us where man needs to be.

Romans 1, 18 through 3, 20 tells us why we aren't there. And Romans 3, 21 onward tells us what God has done about it. And this righteousness that is provided whereby we can be accepted to God is on the basis of faith in Jesus Christ.

And he is the object of our faith. Faith must have an object. And then he tells us by way of parenthesis here, for there is no distinction for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. That's just in case anybody thinks that they are excluded from this. For there is no distinction. All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

[17:52] That means there is no distinction between Jews and Gentiles. All are included. And when you say Jews and Gentiles, you have just incorporated the whole human race into that.

Because everybody who is not a Jew is a Gentile. Two classes of people, Jews and Gentiles. Everybody in this auditorium is one of the two. I would venture to say that the vast majority of us are Gentiles.

There may be a Jew sprinkled here or there. It's entirely possible that some of you may be even Jewish and perhaps aren't even aware of it. But be that as it may, you are in one of those categories.

You are Jew or Gentile. And if you are, you are thrown into this category wherein there is no distinction for all have sinned. There is no distinction between their sin, between their condemnation, between their need for the righteousness of God, between their obtaining the righteousness of God, between the necessary object of faith, between their falling short of God's glory.

And the conclusion is there is no distinction between their sin or their salvation. There is one God and one way of approach to Him and one Savior and you come that way or you cannot come.

That's what it means.

[19:02] Men make distinctions that separate Him from His fellow man. We do this all the time. You realize that the world is, well, the United States in particular, is on a big kick now about discrimination.

I sure will be glad when this thing passes. You know, these things come across the nation in waves and they peak and then they start falling off. There was a time when discrimination was so terrible

and so blatant that it was shameful.

But the government, anytime the government gets involved with anything, they don't know how to correct it. All they know how to do is exercise overkill. So they exercise overkill and swing the pendulum to the other extreme and we are now on a rights kick.

Everything is discrimination or non-discriminatory and do you know, friends, that discrimination is part of human existence? It is an inevitable part. Everybody.

You cannot live without being discriminating every time you turn around. You're discriminating about the food you eat. You're discriminating about the automobile you buy.

[20 : 08] You're discriminating about the home you live in. You're discriminating about the friends you choose. You're discriminating about your choice of occupation. Everybody discriminates all day long. Now, there are right and wrong bases for discrimination.

That's true. But I, for one, will be glad when this thing has run its course because, well, you know as well as I.

We make distinctions in physical appearance. We make distinctions regarding racial background. We make distinctions between people for socioeconomic reasons.

We make distinctions in people for their intellect. If you're going to hire somebody to run a bank of computers, you don't want someone with an IQ of 70. You need somebody that's got some smarts about them.

So what are you going to do? Well, you're going to discriminate. We make discrimination between people with physical ability. Spring training is already over. Already over.

[21 : 07] Major league season is underway. The Reds still haven't called me to help out in any wise. You know, I mean, you'd think that they could have me down for some tryouts or something and let them show them my stuff.

You know, but they haven't called me. They're discriminating. They want somebody of particular physical ability who can catch the ball and throw the ball and hit the ball and run and all the rest of it.

And I can't do that. I just can't do that. Except when we play a bunch of women. I'll show you how I'll do it then. We're going to discriminate, aren't we?

But you see, it's just part of life. It's part of being a human being that we engage in these kind of things all the time. The wheels are always turning by which we classify people and distinguish people and we put them over here and these over here and these over here.

But, God doesn't do that. We do that. God says there are no distinctions.

[22 : 17] The word that is used in the Greek many times in connection with God does not respect any man's person is a word we've looked at. It means God does not receive the face.

It's beautiful the way that's structured in the Greek. God doesn't receive the face. It is as though a man stands before a judge accused of a crime and he has a sack over his face so that the judge cannot possibly be prejudiced against or for the person.

He doesn't even know who he is. It could be his own brother for all the judge knows. He stands there with a sack over his head. That way the judge does not have to be influenced by who the person is.

Oh that's Mr. So and so he could buy and sell this town. Doesn't make any difference. He doesn't know who he is. Or that's an old drunken broken down bum he's probably guilty of the charge and he's prejudiced against him.

No it is as though every person stands before the judgment bar of God faceless. God does not receive the face. That's a beautiful thing.

[23 : 30] He isn't capable of playing favorites or distinguishing one against another. There is no distinction and the reason there is no distinction is because all have sinned.

We have removed any distinguishing characteristics from ourselves by engaging in this. We have all placed ourselves into the same substance the same lump of clay.

All have sinned and God sees us all as sinners. Consequently because all have sinned we fall short of the glory of God.

And that means that God has a plan God has a standard for each of his creatures. There is something to which God expects you and intends you to measure up to.

But because we have sinned we can't do it. The machinery the spiritual equipment by which we can glorify God is shut down.

[24 : 30] Sin has shut it down. It has made it inoperative. It is immobile. We cannot do the things that we want to do. Paul alludes to this in chapter 7. He says the things I don't want to do that's what I do.

And the things that I do want to do I just don't have the power to do them. Oh wretched man that I am who shall deliver me from this body of death? And then he goes on to point to Jesus Christ as being the answer again.

We cannot glorify God in our old sin nature because all our old sin nature can do is sin and compound the problem further. So we fall short of the glory of God.

We fail in our single now you think about this for the whole human race think about this it means to fail in our single greatest most important responsibility in life.

And friends if you fail there it doesn't make any difference where you succeed. The chief end of man says the Westminster Shorter Catechism is to glorify God and enjoy him forever.

[25 : 44] This implies our creatureliness. This says that God is the creator that we have been made for him and he can frankly he can demand of us and expect of us anything he wants to.

This is God's show. He can do whatever he wants however he wants. He has given us the wonderful privilege of being alive of being a human being of figuring in the plan and scheme of the universe and he has asked us that in turn in exchange for this creatureliness that we pay him the homage that is due him that we glorify him that we acknowledge him that we honor him.

But because all have sinned we fall short of that glory and of that standard and of those expectations and we can't do it and I'll tell you something else we don't want to do it.

we don't want to do it. We serve and worship the creature more than the creator. That's the burden of this portion of the passage.

Then he goes on and says in verse 24 this glorious glorious thing being justified as a gift all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

[27 : 11] We've told you that you should read that as a parenthesis because that's what it is. So let me read it this way. Even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe being justified as a gift by his grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus.

That's the way it reads when you leave out the parenthesis and leaving out the parenthesis helps us to maintain the train of thought just a little bit more. So the parenthesis is certainly legitimate and inspired and everything else but it was added to elaborate just a little and when you read it without it it helps to maintain the continuity.

Now this term being justified is the key word for the whole epistle. it is the righteousness of God.

In fact the word righteousness and justify come from exactly the same Greek root word dikaios and dikaiosune and it means that they are really interchangeable to be right or to be justified means that they are one and the same and this is such a glorious glorious concept I just shudder to think of even the Christians who are unable to appreciate it simply because they don't know what's involved.

This justification means that we are declared righteous. It is a legal judicial forensic act.

[28 : 41] It is the language of the law court. Now the thing that I would have you know about this word more than anything else is that it is dealing in the legality.

It is dealing with the judicial aspect of this truth and not the practical aspect. Oh please make that distinction.

We shall have much more space and time to devote to the practical aspect. He is now laying the foundation for the legal upon which the practical is to be based.

In fact he is going to get to that in chapter 5. Chapter 5 is going to begin therefore being justified by faith here is what comes next.

But so far as our cause is concerned we are still talking about the legal judicial aspects of justification. And here is what it means. And here is what it does not mean. it does mean that in so far as God is concerned and the sinner's relationship to him who has trusted in Jesus Christ that one has received the righteousness of God he stands in the righteousness of God he is accepted in the righteousness of God he is as perfect and as complete and as righteous as God himself is legally forensically judicially I am not talking about whether or not he is a nice person that deals with the practical aspect of righteousness which comes later we are looking at this as God views us and that's the way it really counts may I say this justification has absolutely nothing to do with your performance it has everything to do with Christ's performance it doesn't have anything to do with

your performance it is that fact by which

[30 : 55] God declares you to be absolutely righteous and holy and accepted of him because you are in Christ it is that fact by which God declares you to be absolutely righteous and holy and accepted of him because you are in Christ that is the position that Christ enjoys you are in Christ you enjoy the same privileged favor that he does you have been made accepted and beloved he has forgiven you all trespasses this is far more than being pardoned some people look upon justification as well that's the act by which God pardoned you for your sins oh it includes that but it's far far more than a pardon I don't want a pardon from God I sure don't you know why because all that will do is take care of my past my past is reason enough to give me great concern for my future I need something to take care of my future if a man is pardoned we'll use an illustration familiar to all of you where not too long ago we had one president pardon another president now regardless of how we may feel about that he did it he had the prerogative of doing it and he did it but he couldn't do anything about the former president's future there is no such thing as a pardon in advance a pardon is for crimes that have been committed in the past and are forgiven if a man is forgiven for a crime in the past and pardon the governor the president or whoever that doesn't do a thing for the man if he goes out and commits another crime next year or the next day or 20 years later then he's got the answer for that one justification means much more than a pardon it means more than forgiveness it means more than declaring innocence and it is not a reward it is a declaration of righteousness it is a positive declaration of righteousness now understand this what it means what it means is that

God pronounces you perfect for your past for your present and for your future having forgiven you all trespasses the reason it has to be this way is because the forgiveness the justification we have that is past present and future is all locked in to the work of Jesus Christ for whose sins he died past present future surely you do not think that Jesus Christ has unfinished business to care for regarding the sins that were committed since he died on the cross do you does he have to come back and die again there is no such thing now listen

I want you to get this it will liberate your soul there is no such thing as in the eyes of God there is no such thing as one single solitary sin ever being charged to your account from here on out you are forgiven in Christ you are justified in Christ there isn't anything that you can do that will add one stroke of the pen against your name in so far as God is concerned now here is where the rub comes in people say oh I don't believe that you can commit sins and do a whole lot of bad things nope not in the eyes of God now listen friends in the eyes of the person sitting next to you you sure can and you probably will but God has left us as a result of the finished work of Christ with a clean slate beside our name that has a surface on it that there just isn't any writing that can be put down there isn't anything there our sins have been blotted out forensically legally judicially forever forever forever permanently totally completely you are free in Christ there is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ do you realize what is involved if there could be one sin laid to your charge since you have believed in Christ do you know what would be involved there you're condemned all over again you're condemned you go all the way back to go and you don't pass and you don't get your two hundred dollars you're right back where you start you're worse off than you started terrible miserable state for I ask you if when once you are in Christ if there is any sin that can isolate you from God how many sins would it take just one how big a one just a little teensy weensy one any sin that is less any sin is less perfect than the standard of God and you are divorced from your creator you are undone one sin will separate one sin will alienate you don't have to steal ten times to be a thief just once you don't have to murder twenty people to be a murderer just once and this whole vicious thing is all over again and you are in a state of condemnation but the truth of the matter is if anybody if an angel in heaven if an angel in heaven should go to the throne of God and say well what are you going to do about

[37 : 11] Marv Wiseman he really blew it again yesterday didn't he do you see that big ugly sin he committed do you know what God says what sin Marv's never committed any sin there's no sin on the book against him here's his name right here the slate but don't you know what he did I don't know anything I know nothing I see nothing his sins are forgiven trespasses are gone he's cleansed they're removed as far as the east is from the west they're cast behind my back they're sought for and not found they're buried in the depths of the deepest sea now I want to tell you something anybody could go to God with that kind of charge and that's the response they would get but if anybody goes to someone here in this congregation and says what are we going to do about Marv

he blew it again did you see that big sin he committed the other day you know what they're going to say yeah or no tell me about it one of the two you know but they won't be ignorant they won't say what sin they'll know all right preacher he's at it again what are we going to do in that's the way you see me that's not the way

God sees me God sees you as the slate is clear there is nothing there that's what justified means past present and future it has to do with your position not with your performance could we make a chorus out of that wouldn't that be great sure be scriptural wouldn't it some of you songwriters ought to think about that position not performance whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in his blood that is Christ it is the redemption that is in Christ and it isn't any place else through faith this was to demonstrate his righteousness whose God's because in the forbearance of God that is the hand of God that stayed judgment he passed over the sins previously committed keeping account of them chalking them all up tallying them for the time when the finished work of Christ would wipe them all away for the demonstration

I say of his righteousness at the present time that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus this is such a glorious thing what it means is that God demands a righteousness from man that man cannot provide so God turns right around and God provides the righteousness for man which he himself demanded and he did it in Christ and it cost you absolutely zilch that's what it cost you it cost Christ everything it cost you nothing you exercise non-meritorious faith in the finished work of Christ cost you nothing nothing that being justified as a gift means without a cause we dealt with that you may recall simply means that God looked at you and found no basis in you at all for justifying you absolutely none absolutely none without a cause but he justified you because he found a cause in himself and the cause in himself is called grace the cause he found in you and me was to judge to condemn rightly so so we are justified as a gift without a cause freely because of the grace of our

God now if all of these things are true Paul says if all of this that I have said is true then the question I have to ask you is this if God has done all of this all of these wonderful things for you then what do you have to boast about what do you have to brag about you don't have anything to brag about this is what he says in verse 27 where then is boasting where then is it is excluded by what kind of law of works absolutely not it is excluded because of the principle of faith for we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from works of the law you get that justified by faith brought into this right standing this right glorious relationship with the creature with the creature and the creator brought into that solely on the basis of faith without works means you don't have to do anything there are a whole lot of things that you should do that you ought to do that you'll want to do after the fact but not before it after you have been justified but not in order to be justified he continues by saying is God the God of Jews only of course not is he not the God of Gentiles also yes of Gentiles also there is only one God and since indeed God who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith is one do we then nullify the law through faith may it never be on the contrary we establish the law he realizes that some of his recipients are thinking that what Paul is doing is just poo pooing the law he's saying well we don't like the law the law condemns us and we can't be saved by the law so let's just scrap the law and forget all about it Paul said is that what we're doing absolutely not by by our insisting on the fact that redemption has come through Christ and that God is just and the justifier of them that believe on Jesus what we are saying is the law counts the law matters God could not abrogate the law he could not violate the own law the law that he himself gave and established as his moral norm and standards he can't just throw that out the window and forget it because man isn't able to keep it what

[43 : 28] God had to do he had to satisfy the demands which his own law imposed and he did through Christ so we are not nullifying the law and saying the law doesn't count quite the contrary we're saying the law is formidable the law matters the law is important if it didn't Christ does not nullify the law it establishes the law it proves its necessity and its importance but Christ fulfilled the law so even though you couldn't you don't have to Christ fulfilled it in you you are fulfilled in Christ you want an example okay I'll give you an example you think what I'm saying is something new some new doctrine what about Abraham our father Abraham what shall we say that Abraham our forefather has found according to the flesh did Abraham earn his salvation was it the energy of his flesh just exactly how did our father

Abraham become justified for if Abraham was justified by works he has something to boast about he would wouldn't he let's be honest anybody who could justify themselves on the basis of what

they do if they did succeed in justifying themselves they have every reason in the world to boast they could say hey look what I did look what I did could you deny him that of course not he'd be entitled to it but he goes on to say Abraham may have something to boast about before men but not before God for what does the scripture say it says Abraham believed God and it was reckoned to him as righteousness that's all he did you mean Abraham was justified by faith exactly it's not a New Testament doctrine it's an Old Testament doctrine and a New Testament doctrine now we know that to the one who works his wage is not reckoned as a favor but as what is due but to one who does not work did you hear that to one who does not work who does not work now it's not talking about 40 hours a week it's not talking about day to day occupation it's talking about to the one who does not work through efforts of human merit and human instrumentality to clean themselves up and to morally improve themselves so that God will accept him that's the kind of work that it's talking about to the one who does not do that but believes in him who justifies the ungodly his faith is reckoned as righteousness now all I can say is folks that is one whale of a deal you're not going to beat that anywhere and there are no strings attached you can improve upon that to one who works not but believes in him who justifies the ungodly his faith is counted as righteousness people who cannot see salvation apart from doing something have two serious errors in their thinking number one they think too much of themselves and their own ability and their own goodness and number two they have too low a view of God they underestimate God's standards they think that God's standards are so low that they can meet them so they have an exalted view of themselves and their own ability to perform and they have a depreciated view of God and what he requires that's the great fallacy David speaks of the blessedness upon the man to whom God reckons righteousness apart from works and the quote here is from the Psalms and then he says in verse nine is this blessing then upon the circumcised or upon the uncircumcised also is this available only to the Jew or to the Gentile also for we say faith was reckoned to Abraham as righteousness alright if faith was reckoned to Abraham as righteousness when did that happen one of the things that set Abraham apart that made him a specific member the progenitor of the covenant relationship a member of the chosen race was his circumcision everybody agree everybody to whom

Paul wrote this would agree there's one problem Paul says only one thing wrong with that Abraham was justified by faith years before he was circumcised don't you dare try to say he was justified because he was circumcised that came along much later not only that but Abraham was justified by faith before Moses and the law were ever given so it couldn't have been by law and it couldn't have been by circumcision it had to be on the basis of faith may we skip to verse 13 the promise to Abraham or to his descendants that he would be heir of the world was not through the law but through the righteousness of faith for if those who are of the law are heirs faith is made void and the promise is nullified you see his reasoning here you've got to go one way or the other you can't have both you can't have one and you can't even have 90% one and 10% of the other it's got to be one way or the other and he concludes by saying for this reason it is by faith that it might be in accordance with grace because whose bailiwick is grace that's

God's that's God's territory grace it is by faith in order that it might be in accordance with grace in order that the promise may be certain what makes it certain grace is God's territory that's if your salvation the maintenance of it the obtaining of it or the maintenance of it is based upon you and your ability to perform there is no way that the promise can be certain I'll tell you what you will have hanging over your head 24 hours a day is a question mark have I done enough have I believed enough am I good enough can I perform enough where do I stand with God I don't know and the reason you don't know is because you will be so discouraged and maybe embarrassed by your low level of performance you will be convinced there is no way God could be pleased with you and [50 : 12] I would agree he cannot be pleased with you as you but he can be pleased with you as you are in Christ it is in the beloved that we are accepted in order that the law but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham who is the father of us all as it is written a father of many nations have I made you in the sight of him whom he believed even God who gives life to the dead and calls into being that which does not exist in hope against hope he believed in order that he might become a father of many nations and we checked out that word hope and we've seen that it doesn't mean anything even close to the way we use the word hope today we have desecrated this good word hope and have reduced it to an aura of uncertainty and of questioning we don't know if it's going to rain today or not but we hope it doesn't which means maybe it will and maybe it won't the bible never uses the word hope that way never does it uses it as an established fact it is as good as done

it is an absolute certainty we have hope in christ that doesn't mean boy sure hope he doesn't let me down it means that in christ it is an accomplished fact it is certain it is true it is firm it hope he looked at himself and he had no reason for confidence he looked at

Sarah's body and closed womb and he had no reason for confidence but he believed what God said and there he had great reason for confidence he did not become weak in faith even after contemplating his own body and Sarah's dead womb but with respect to the promise of God he did not waver in unbelief he grew strong in faith giving glory to God and being fully assured that what God had promised God was able to perform therefore also it was reckoned to him as righteousness now not only for Abraham's sake was it reckoned as righteousness but for our sake too to whom it will be reckoned as those who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead he who was delivered up because of our transgressions we have noted here very carefully that it was God the father who delivered the son for our transgressions not Pilate not Judas not the Romans they delivered him up but for other reasons the only one who delivered the son for our transgressions was the father and if the father did not deliver the son for your transgressions then he would deliver you for your transgressions in the case of Christ it was a sinless substitute who died for the sinner so ultimately sin is paid for it's just that you and I didn't make the payment Christ did and because God the father was pleased and accepted with the payment that Christ made because it was sufficient because it was final it was complete there was no longer any reason for him to be dead or to remain the bars of death and brought the son of God forth and because he lives you too shall live it was not possible that death could hold him captor death had been paid sin had been paid in full there was no legal reason for death to maintain its hold on him and he rose from the dead glorious glorious truth well once again

I'm out of breath we really went through that and it really went through me I hope you are captivated by the passage as well as having captured the passage questions or comments that you may have Paul and then Max relative to the spacelessness of the individual before God God never sees anybody except in Christ so he only sees one face regardless of who he look that's a good point it is as though every person standing before him is Christ good point good point yes Max I do understand what you said but I have one problem I don't understand okay well there is a distinction there is a distinction to be the ordinances and so on insofar as the law of the land is concerned every

Christian of course is supposed to be subject to the powers that be for there are no powers except those that are ordained of God Romans 13 so the Christian there shouldn't be a more law abiding citizen than a believer in Jesus Christ but keeping that law a civil law that is designed for peace and tranquility of a community is to be kept separate from the law of God although there is a point at which there is a crossover if you want to talk later about it privately I'd be glad to talk to you anybody else you see the great difference friends and I want to emphasize this before I let you go is between the practicality of the situation and the legality of the situation we all know of cases where someone has been brought to court and charged with an offense and they may have been just as guilty as the day as long they may have even admitted their guilt so there's no question as to their guilt but through a technicality or through some kind of legal maneuver the individual gets off now we consider that a great injustice and it is it is but we all know that it happens and we would say that person was as guilty as guilty could be but what really matters what counts what counts is what the court says if the court says not guilty he is legally not guilty you say yes but he is guilty no he is legally not guilty he may be guilty to all his neighbors guilty to all his peers guilty in his own mind guilty even as far as the court is concerned in what they know to be the evidence but he may still be pronounced not guilty and that's exactly what God does it is a divine pronouncement it is that God declares you to be not guilty because

[57 : 55] Christ took your sin upon himself and there was no basis then for convicting you you say but I know that I know that God knows that Christ knew that we're all guilty we're all ungodly but it is the official judicial pronouncement of the court that makes the difference and that's what justification is now when you want to talk about sanctification that's an entirely different thing that has to do also with position but it also relates to performance and that's something entirely different Paul gets into that in chapter five anybody else before we dismiss oh I'm so glad I don't have to teach like this all the time I'd much rather use a much rather use a magnifying glass with a text of scripture than I would a telescope any day but this will provide us with an ongoing shorter

Romans and give you all a rapid overview of the whole passage so next time we are together we will open up with all together fresh material in Romans chapter five and verse one and it's a glorious glorious thing starts with therefore beautiful beautiful word let's stand shall we