

The Law Established - Part 2

by John Metcalfe

John Metcalfe's sermon emphasizes the importance of establishing the law through faith and the implications of righteousness for eternal life.

Duration: 1:23:30

Scripture: Matthew 5:17, Matthew 22:37-40, Romans 3:9-31

Topics: "Faith And Law", "Sound Doctrine"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher focuses on the third and final question posed in the Epistle to the Romans: 'Do we then make void the law through faith?' The preacher firmly rejects this notion, stating that the law is not nullified by faith but rather established by it. He emphasizes the importance of doctrine in the gospel, stating that without sound doctrine, one cannot truly have the gospel. The preacher uses the example of Abraham to illustrate how God's work in his life serves as a basis for understanding the truth behind this question.

Transcript

Three times over on the seventh, seventh day evening, for the seventh day was, is, and shall be till the end of time, the seventh day. Three times over on the seventh day evening, we have looked at the question at the end of Romans chapter 3, and we've looked at it in the Bible, which is of course the authorised version. Three times over, we have looked at it, and the question in chapter 3, verse 31, is this.

Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid! Yay! We establish the law. Now twice we have looked at this, and this is the third and last occasion on which, if the Lord will, we should examine this question. The apostle lays down the great doctrine of the gospel in the third chapter of the epistle to the Romans, between verses 21 and 26.

He then divests himself of his own coat, and he takes upon himself the coat of a rhetorical questioner, a hypothetical questioner. He isn't asking the questions, he knows the answers, he has no need of the questions. But he knows these questions will be those, which they will embrace the gospel, will either be tempted to ask themselves from within, and there are many questions you will be tempted to ask yourself from within, which you ought not to entertain, or they will be asked it from without, and there will be those who appear to be with us.

Do we then make void the law through faith, as though we were joining with them as they were joining with us, when they're not at all undermining our faith? So he assumes this position of a hypothetical questioner, hypothetical questioner. Not as if he were asking, he's not. But in order to bring out the truth, and to give the answers, and to sanctify us, there is nothing to fear from any questioner.

And in practice, as a hypothetical questioner, taking this position at the end of his having pronounced the gospel doctrine, he asks three rhetorical questions, rhetorical because they're not really inquiring, because he knows perfectly well what the answer is. But they're the sort of thing that vile, hypocritical, humbugs will ask to undermine our faith, and worse still, to undermine the gospel. Where's bursting, then, if this doctrine of yours ought to be true? Where is bursting, then? Is he the God of the Jews only, or the Gentiles also? Do we then make void the law through faith? Three questions he asks, each of which he briefly answers.

Very briefly. Not so much by argument as by categorical rebuttal. He refuses the questions.

He's not now concerned to give reason. There are times when thou dost not give reason. There are times when your wisdom is to say, get thee behind me, Satan.

You don't answer. You don't even think about it. And at first, he gives a brief rebuttal to those three questions.

Now, I have been concerned on these three separate days to take only the last question. Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid. Yay.

We establish the law. He doesn't say how. Not immediately.

Though we have expanded how we establish the law. So he takes the position of a rhetorical questioner, having delivered his doctrine. And I would say this again in passing.

You cannot preach the gospel without delivering doctrine. And I don't care for 10,000 million charismatics. Or 10,000 million excitable experimentalists.

If you haven't got the doctrine, you haven't got the gospel. I'm not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation. Ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered unto you.

Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed. Sanctified unto the truth, thy word is truth.

If any man come unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive it not in your house, neither bid him Godspeed. He that hath not the doctrine of Christ hath not the Father nor the Son. You cannot separate Christ from the doctrine.

You cannot separate the Spirit from the truth. He's the Spirit of truth. And you can't know God without the doctrine of the gospel.

It's just lies, it's pretended experience. It's a mirage. You're forever seeking for something that appears, ephemerally to materialize, like shimmering pools and waving palms on the horizon of a desert.

But when you finally make it, it isn't there. And then you go on to the next horizon, and it isn't there. But the doctrine's there.

And we're not afraid of any questions they want to ask. And he asks three questions in the position of a hypothetical questioner, and the questions are rhetorical, and he gives very, very brief answers which are more categorically and dogmatically denial of the reputations than they are reasoned explications. We're concerned with the last of these questions.

Do we then make void the law of true faith? God forbid we establish the law. Now, that isn't the end of the story. Because he takes up each of these brief answers, and he enlarges them.

Very brief, but he takes one, and enlarges it. Like an accordion, he takes another, and expands it. He takes a third, and opens it up throughout chapter four.

And that is what chapter four in Romans is about. And it's all that it's about. Opening up each of the brief answers to the three questions at the end of chapter three on the basis that some hypothetical no, some hypocritical humbug is going to question the doctrine of the gospel because he's full of self-importance.

And the apostle says, no, no. But men, for our sake, who are not of that character, and who want to know, enlarges upon this answer, that answer, and finally our question, the other answer. And he does so using the life of Abraham and God's work in Abraham as the basis by which he is going to open up the whole truth that this question brings into dispute.

So using the principles common to all three questions and their brief answers, we're concluding this series by marking that the brief answer of 3.31 is truly the same as all the other two into which I do not now enter particularly. It answers, one, by expounding that answer in chapter four, precisely verses 13 to 17. Two, by illustrating that exposition using the life of Abraham, by illustrating that exposition in chapter four, 18 to 22.

So 13 to 17, 18 to 22, very easy, very simple, so easy for you to follow. Could anything be easier? I mean, really. Do you have any difficulty about walking up? Then, there is the lower one, there is the next one, up you go.

No problem. So, no problem. Huh? Huh? No problem.

He, of course, he answers, the first question is answered, connect. The second question is answered, connect. The third question is answered, connect, in chapter three, four.

The first connected answer is whoop, opened up. The second is next, whoop, opened up. Now, our question, which was briefly answered, three, 31, huh? Am I right? Or wrong? Sure? Right.

That one is also opened up, firstly, by expounding it in chapter four, 13 to 17. Why 13? Well, because he takes 13 verses, expounds up and answers the other two answers. Having used up those 13 verses, he now wishes to come to this last question.

At verse 13, he committed it. And he, there, expounds the answer in chapter four, 13 to 17. He then illustrates that exposition in the next few verses, 18 to 22.

And if time would only allow me to deal with it, I would show you how in the remainder of chapter four, namely 23 to 25, he applied that answer. But getting nearer towards three o'clock this morning, I laid down my pen. I was going to say weary pen, but the pen doesn't get weary.

It's the writer that gets weary. And I thought I'll never get all this over. So, I don't think we're going to get to the application.

I don't mind too much if you don't. But I do want to get to the exposition. Because that's what's going to give bones to your soul.

And I do want to give the illustration because that's what will give you sinews and enable you to make spiritual movement. Because if you hadn't got bones, you'd be no better than a jellyfish stranded on a beach like a modern evangelical with the emphasis on the jelly. But you've got bones if you've got the doctrine.

And if you've got the illustrations of it in the lives of these great saints, you've got sinews. And then you can move your bones to advantage. Such as walking, up, down, step, which requires sinews to pull on bones and utilize the joints.

That's what you need. That's what you haven't had. In each case, of course, whether it were the exposition, the illustration, or the application of the answer to the first question the very first answer, or the second, or the third, it makes no sense of the third.

In each case, he takes the life of Abraham, though he enhances the first with David. But in each case, principally, he takes the life of Abraham and the work of God on Abraham to show you by exposition and illustration how these things are true and how they're brought home to the individual. Yeah? Yes.

Okay. Now, firstly, therefore, the exposition of the brief answer in chapter 3, verse 31. Do we then... Excuse me, I've got to take off my coat.

He puts on this hypothetical questioner's coat to ask this rhetorical question. Do we then make boys the law through faith? And what do you think of that coat? Now... And he comes and he says to the fellow, God forbid! Yea, we establish the law. But he's got a lot more to say about it than that.

And there is a lot more in it than that. The matters to you more than health and wealth and life and death. Don't get it? Firstly, then, the exposition of the brief answer, which, as we said, commences from verse 13 and goes on to 17.

God forbid! Yea, we establish the law. And he does it from the life of Abraham. Now, you might not think so when you read verse 13 because it doesn't at first seem anything to do with it.

Because verse 13 of chapter 4 says, For the promise that he, that is Abraham, should be heir of the world. Well, what's that got to do with it? Well, that just shows how ill-taught we have been by our fathers who professed to pass on to us the Christian religion. Because it's got everything to do with it, only we don't realise it because we haven't been taught.

And if you think that's a rash statement, defer your judgement until I tell you to. Mark well the brief answer of which this is the exposition. We, who are of the righteousness of faith, establish the law, that the law and commandments given by Moses.

Now, this carries an inescapable corollary They, who are of the righteousness of the law, do not establish it. As people who lay us under the law, as people who put us under commandments, as people who insist we attain to this degree of sanctification, or that degree of spiritual experience, or that degree of perfectionism, or the other second blessing, or baptism, or call it what they will, they're in fact laying a law upon us to which we must attain. They don't establish it.

We do, but they don't. We establish the law. The corollary of that is you don't.

I've had a long experience now, very long, and I never experienced one of them, who attained in fact and in their private life to the thing they press upon us, never once. They don't. They can't keep the thing about which they make such a noisy and indignant trumpeting, but we who are of faith, whose faith is in this solid, sound, immovable, immutable doctrine of Christ, which comes out of the word of God, which is not subject to change, or from age to age, or race to race, or school of thought to school of thought, or universities, or the wisdom of the world, because it came down from heaven by Jesus Christ and his holy apostles.

We establish the law. We don't move about. Now he expounds this briefly stated answer of 3.31, God forbid, yea, we establish the law, in chapter 4, by opening and showing the very heart and root of the whole matter, and he does it in this way.

First, by showing that there are two ways of seeking righteousness, not one. You can read about that in Romans 10. They, the Jews, going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God.

Two ways. One will damn you, and the other will save you. One will sink you into everlasting perdition in the flames of unquenchable fire.

Though you seek righteousness, but not according to knowledge. The other will elevate you into the everlasting glory of an unending inheritance in Christ. There are two ways of seeking righteousness.

From which it follows, secondly, that there are, of necessity, there will be two kinds of righteousness. Two kinds of righteousness. Thirdly, one of these kinds of righteousness is of God, and the other is of man.

Fourthly, the first is by faith, and the second is by works. You've got to do it. And if you don't do it, you're lost.

And if you don't do it continually, you're lost. And if you don't do it till the day you die, you're lost. And fifthly, these can never be mixed.

There are no other ways of righteousness. There can be no mixture of the only two ways of righteousness. If you add faith to works, faith loses its character.

You can have some faith, you suppose, but you add some works, and faith loses its character. You can add works to faith, and works suffuses and swaps the whole the same, as if you had a carat of crystal clear water and dropped in a few drops of black ink. The whole carat has changed.

It's lost its carat. You can't add faith to works. You can't add works to faith without that faith becoming corrupted and polluted and losing its pure character.

No mixture between the two ways of righteousness, law and grace, faith and works. You can't mix them. If you mix them, you corrupt the character of grace and faith.

Now, thirdly arises the question, aren't the apostles not afraid to face it? Well, whether there are two kinds of ways of righteousness or not, irrespective of which kind, why bother to have a righteousness anyway? Why bother? What do they matter? Why concern ourselves with righteousness at all? Leave it to the religious. Apart from what kind of righteousness? So what? After all, that's what they're saying, isn't it? So

what? So why care? What difference does it make? It makes all. And nothing but righteousness makes all the difference.

And you can't put anything else, like a universal solvent you choose to call love, in the place of righteousness and make it make a difference. Because if you do that, you might as well tear this book up and throw it away. In which case, why bother? Either take it from here or take it from there.

It makes all the difference. Why? Why? Why? Because there's a world to come after death. That's why.

Now here are three overwhelming reasons. One, there is a resurrection of the body after death. And that body cannot perish.

It cannot decay. And it cannot die. Body! Not soul.

That's true also. Body! There is a resurrection of the body. Yea, the worms destroy this body.

Yet in my flesh shall I see God. He rose again the third day from the dead. He did.

But spirit hath not flesh and bones as you see me have. Christ the firstfruits. Then afterwards, then the dead.

And it is coming. There's a resurrection. The word doesn't apply to the soul.

It is a word that applies to the body of the wicked. And of the righteous. Because you're standing your body before God.

Oh God bear witness to you. That's an overwhelming reason. And it won't decay.

And it won't die of disease. And it won't get old. And it won't die.

And you'll grow your tongue for pain. And you'll cry for death but you won't find it. For it can't come.

That's why righteousness matters. What wickedness we have been subject to. By what our fathers have handed, immediate fathers have handed to us in religion.

To me? I suppose shut up alone. Near thirty years to all intents and purposes. The immensity of that wickedness.

Takes my breath away. Of what we've been handed. In a way of religion.

By those that went before us. But we're not going to stay like that. We want the truth.

We want the whole truth. And we want nothing but the truth. We don't want John Metcalfe any more than we want the Pope.

We want the word of the Lord. That's all. Nothing else.

Just tell us the truth. When John Knox. Was preaching.

In his very old age. And he could hardly stand. Up in Edinburgh.

I think it's St. Giles, I'm not sure. And the people stood, there weren't any seats. And after two hours his strength failed.

And the poor old man couldn't keep on any longer. And some man. Who stood.

Still as a statue for two hours. Cried out. For God's sake go on.

Oh would God that spirit were any. Righteousness matters. If you only saw it.

You would say. For God's sake go on. Is this the resurrection of the body? After death.

And immediately after death. A member of man died. At the hospital.

He died wide open. He said. Ten.

Nine. Eight. Seven.

My father. Ninety-five. Fought like a trooper to the last.

Three strokes. Shoved him off. Sat in his chair.

Got up. Went to his bed. Don't fuck over me.

Old school. It became a day. He got up in the morning.

He was struggling away as usual. But he flopped back on the bed. And I said.

Now this French said to the doctor. He couldn't get up. Now my father pretended he didn't know any French.

That's rubbish. He knew French was looking for Frenchmen. But he never let them know.

And they thought he didn't understand. He said to the doctor he didn't bother anymore. Because where he was going.

It didn't matter what you spoke. It mattered what he spoke. And he said to the doctor.

Didn't matter. Tomorrow. The end.

So it was. But. That body.

Which I had to go and look at. Which I hated. I thought it was always looting.

It was a macabre practice. Don't like it. But I had to honour my stepfather.

And I did. And I fulfilled my duty. But I knew somewhere.

In the underworld. Every living consciousness. Every aware sensitivity.

Every vital feeling. Every pregnant thought. Every moving medicine.

Was just as real as it had been. When he was in the body. And one day.

That body. Will be rejoined by the soul. And so will yours.

Now don't tell me righteousness doesn't matter. Because it's the criteria. Of what will happen.

Forever, and ever, world without end and change after that. That's why you want the gospel. There's a resurrection after death, one, two.

There's a world to come after death. Not just an existence to come after death. A world to come after death.

Since Adam, generations have passed into the underworld. But it won't go on forever. There's a new world coming.

There's a world to come coming. And it won't be night, day, night, day, but day after day will utter speech and night after night will show knowledge. There won't be any night in the glory.

And there won't be any light in the depths of outer darkness. And righteousness will determine where you are. Now where are you? There's a world to come.

Thirdly, the world to come after death and life after death never end. With two results. Indescribable bliss or unendurable pain.

There are no alternatives. And all the materialism, and all the gadgets, and all the lying entertainers, and all the devilish deception of blaring music, and lying big jockeys, and actors, don't alter earth, not earth. And it all depends upon righteousness.

That's why it matters so very, very much. The question is, in view of the resurrection and the world to come, which righteousness is sufficient for these things to save me? Give me the hard answer to that question. And only give it to me from God, and I don't care what you do.

You can inject me with cancer. You can inject me with typhoid, typhus, black water fever, a lot. I really don't care.

But I must know which righteousness that is the right righteousness, and God has given it to me. That's all I want. And merely when you've said that, you've said all the Gospels about it.

The Gospel isn't about all the silly, rotten, prattled nonsense. I'm baptism of the Spirit, as they call it. Look, there's more people damned through than through adultery.

But nobody's damned for the right righteousness. Get your focus right, man. Get your focus right, woman.

Don't be deceived. The question is, which righteousness is sufficient for the... And it's exactly this the verses 13 to 17 set out to answer. Well, you see, that's why, in fact, the answer that doesn't appear to relate to the question, do we then make void the law through faith, yet God permitted to establish the law? What's that got to do, apparently, with verse 13? For the promise that Abraham should be heir of the world.

Heir of the world. We're coming to it. I don't want to jump my... Let's just get along steadily.

Let's climb this ladder run by run and not fall off. You don't want to fall off, do you? No, not at all. I don't want you to fall off either.

It's exactly this that verse 13 to 17 sets out to answer. Verse 13, it's the question of inheritance. Verse 13, for the promise that Abraham should be heir of the world.

Now, you don't inherit till after death. That's when the inheritance comes in, after death. And you're talking about the world.

Then after the end of the world, the death of it. Now, it might be all but mine. It's this question of inheriting, and it's so in the nature of inheritance, after death, inheriting the world to come.

How? The life and example of Abraham provide us with the answer, and it's this that we're about, by the grace of mercy of God, to expand on. And, firstly, verses 14 and 15, it is not through the law. It is not through the law, in any shape or in any form.

Basically, the law assumes goodness and ability in you, and demands it to a degree prescribed by itself and not by your consciousness, whether it be of religious attainment, whether it be of emotional experience, whether it be of spiritual degree, whether it be of just gratitude, whether it be of consistent resolution. You've got to give it, every moment, every day, all your life. That's what the law requires.

The law requires works from you, emotionally, intellectually, volitionally, livingly, breathingly, in body, in soul and spirit, and it's written down, and at the last day, the books will be opened to see what you did, according to his judgment. But, whatever you did, the inheritance of the world to come is not through the law. For the promise that he should be heir of the world was not to Abraham nor to his seed through the law.

Nothing you do. For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise of none effect. It won't work.

You won't inherit anything. The promise won't be fulfilled. If you think you can do it by your own works, and your own effort, and your own religion, and your own prey, and your own crime, and your own experience, you won't.

They which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise of none effect. Firstly, it is not through the law. Because if they that are of the law be heirs, faith is made void.

But in verse 31 of chapter 3, the questioner had just been complaining by innuendo, oh, we make the law void through faith. But here the apostle Paul turns the tables and says, you make faith void by your works of the law. And everyone who turns to the works of the law, or the Westminster Confession and follows it, makes void faith.

Because you can't make faith in the law, and the Westminster Confession requires you to walk by the law as what they call the rule of life, though God calls the sentence of death. Here the apostle shows it was they who made faith void through the law, verse 14. For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void.

And these are the kind of tricks in religion up with which we've had to put from the beginning, mixing together the law and the gospel, as you may read in Galatians or Colossians, or Corinthians, or Acts. These are the kind of tricks that we've had to put up with in religion from the beginning and it's only got worse. Up with which our champion the apostle will not put, but delivers us by indignantly exposing the worth-mattering, self-justifying, doctrine-twisting, self-righteous mask of those who exploit religion to their

own clerical advantage.

Faith is made void. But why Paul? Because the law does not require faith. The law requires works.

And since the law doesn't require faith, it won't accept it. Even if you bring it, it doesn't want it. So therefore it's made void.

Faith is made void. The law is not of faith, Galatians 2.12, 3.12. It is of works and works are what you do. But faith stands in what he has done and nothing else.

It stands in what God has done. Not what you do or what you do about it either. But solely, exclusively in what he has done.

That's what faith stands in. But if they that are of the law are heirs, the inheritance is by the righteousness of works ruling out faith. If so, God doesn't give it.

You earn it. Whoever earned of earning an inheritance. Because the inheritance was first promised to Abraham, it must be by faith because it is said of Abraham, Abraham believed God, not worked the law.

It must be by faith. Then they that are of the law cannot be heirs, for the law is not of faith. No, it's of works.

And all they that walk by it, work by it, in any shape or form which includes all our minions who are second cousins to all faithists. All our minions require works. All Pentecostals, all Charismatics require works.

You've got to have this experience. If you haven't got it, you don't belong. You've got to show forth this sign.

If you can't show it forth, you don't belong. That's works, that's what you've got to do. But faith stands in what God has done for us and for all and for ever.

The law is not of faith. They who walk by the law or who stand under works cannot or who vault human free will or their choosing Christ or their acceptance of his work or their coming forward or their doing this or their doing that cannot be of faith because faith stands in doing nothing but owning everything he has done. Can't be by works and they can't inherit not unless they give that up.

Those that are of the law cannot inherit the world to come. They can only inherit wrath to come. They're of works, but Abraham was not.

Abraham was of faith and the promise was given to him, not them. Now the second reason that the promise of resurrection, eternal life, everlasting glory and the inheritance of the world to come is not of human merit by the works of the law in any shape or form or the choice of man in any degree or type or the attainment of some spiritual plane by whatever works it might have been done if it was done but by the free grace of God by Jesus Christ now follows in verses 14 and 15 it's this if they which are of the law beheads the promise would be made of none effect. Oh, but which promise is this, Paul? And why would it be made of none effect? Which promise? That made to Abraham by God in Genesis chapter 17 when God promised the whole land of Canaan to Abraham which Paul interprets to the fallen countenance of every beguiled, besotted bemused, bedumped bedarkened, trivialist Paul interprets as the inheritance of the world to come.

That promise there it is the promise of the resurrection, eternal life everlasting glory, the inheritance of the world to come is not of human merit by the works of the law you can't lay hold of it you can't lay hold of him you can't lay hold of God your armies are long enough and it's not in heaven that you should say you should ascend into heaven to bring down Christ from above it's out with the reach of human free will for the promise of everlasting glory, of resurrection and of the inheritance of the world to come is not of human merit by the works of the law but by the free grace of God through Jesus Christ for if they which are of the law beheads the promise is of nothing left the promise that is made by God in Genesis chapter 17 which Paul calls the promise of being heir of the

world and God has given that promise not to the wise, but to the foolish not to the noble, but to the base not to the things which are, but to the things which are not but no flesh should glory in his presence by grace not by law it was not to Abraham through the law, but through the righteousness of faith how do you know Paul? because the promise was established in Genesis chapter 17 but Abraham was justified by faith in Genesis chapter 15 then the promise in chapter 17, two chapters and ages later was on the basis of a justification by faith without works two chapters and ages before that's how I know John this is Paul for me, he's over there you can't see him, he's of interest not quite in a line of sight it was not to Abraham through the law, but through the righteousness of faith

because the promise in Genesis 17 was on the basis of his having already been justified by faith and if you're justified by faith you've got the promise it was not that Abraham earned it this promise of the world to come of the resurrection, of the everlasting glory he didn't earn it he couldn't do anything, or attain to anything or come to some religious standard to get it it was not that Abraham earned it it was not that by his own righteousness he earned God's favour and promise in Genesis 15 in fact Paul says about it in Romans 4, 5 Abraham was ungodly and God justified the ungodly he didn't call on God, God called on him he wasn't godly, he was ungodly he wasn't worthy, he was unworthy but God took him and God blessed him and the name of the blessing is justification by faith he was

reckoned righteous with a righteousness not his own which God had brought and bestowed and dropped upon him as if it was its own when it was reeking with ungodliness and that's called God's blessing and with it goes God's promise of the resurrection to everlasting life and to eternal glory in Christ Jesus freely, by grace, without words, then or after but to him that worketh not the righteousness, because he's got none and no ability to bring it forth but to him that worketh not but believeth on him and justifies the ungodly his faith is counted for righteousness he hasn't got it, but it's counted to him as if he had and that'll do me and nothing else will do me and I can't live or die with anything else and if you can, God have mercy on you but all this happened to Abraham in Genesis 15

long, long after he received the promise in Genesis 17 then the promise rests just as this table rests on a platform which was before they did otherwise you couldn't put the table on it, could you? you couldn't put it in the air and drop, weren't it easy, right? gravity, what? yeah? that's it so you've got to put the platform there first, yes? yes and you put the table and the platform afterwards, right? yes the platform is justification by faith of the ungodly and the table is the promise, the sure, the certain the established, the absolutely unconditional promise of resurrection after death from the grave in the body and the inheritance of everlasting glory in the world to come whereon we speak Amen Old Paul says it's not through the law but it's through the righteousness how could it

be by the law?

Abraham was justified by faith as it is written Abraham believed God and it was counted to him for righteousness how could it be by law then? because the law doesn't own faith the law is not of faith the law demands works he that doeth them shall live in them if it's of faith, then neither of the law cannot be aired because it rests on the basis of justification by faith because they of the law depend on works which Abraham did not he renounced works he condemned himself he trusted in God alone to give him the righteousness he knew he hadn't got the ability much less the product to bring forth and he couldn't do it and he knew he couldn't do it and God had pity on him and God spent and God showed him that he had the righteousness for the ungodly and Abraham believed God and it was counted

to him for righteousness if it's of faith then neither of the law cannot be aired because they depend on works which Abraham did not I tell you he renounced works he condemned himself he trusted in God alone and this is the man and the woman today for it's to his seed as it is written I made thee the father of many nations how could the promise of resurrection everlasting glory eternal life and the inheritance of the world to come be through the law which one of you is holy enough to earn it you are are you which one of you can look back on ten nights and say I'm holy enough which one of you rose up all the dawn broke which one of you rose seven times in the night to pray and cry to God and get hours on your knees in praise and if you did that you're not worthy because there's nothing

from a polluted heart and pride comes in what can you earn even Abraham couldn't how could these things all these promises were given to Abraham in Genesis 17 after he was justified by faith in Genesis 15 but Genesis 15, Genesis 17 and Genesis anything else Abraham had no law the law wasn't in the world when Abraham lived when Abraham was justified and received the promise the law had not been given to prescribe a rule of righteousness for man to work up to and work by to please God it wasn't in the world the law was not in the world says Paul from Adam to Moses but Abraham was and he was there when the law wasn't so how could it have been by the law no law had been given for man to work by or earn favours with God listen to Paul Galatians 3.17 now to Abraham and his seed were the

promises made and the law which was 430 years after cannot disavow either justification or the promise and make the promise of nothing the law came by Moses and prescribed a righteousness for man to earn God's favour addressing his mind, his mentality his intelligence, his understanding his susceptibility, his volition his passions, his emotions, his affections his life, his soul, his body and prescribing exactly and precisely the forensic rate that you require continually in order to please God and without that you can't earn anything but you can't do it and you know you can't do it and no one ever did do it but it's right that we should have done it and that's called being a sinner and that's what you are a sinner and what sinners need is free grace with father Abraham please that's

what you need none kept it none ever will keep it none earned God's favour 430 years before either Moses or the law God freely justified Abraham though he was ungodly though he had nothing but wrath though he'd earned God's disfavour he pleased God to bless him with favour God freely justified Abraham by grace alone without works giving him a gratuitous everlasting righteousness by faith to which he had not contributed one single good work good intention, good feeling or atom of goodness in his totally depraved soul with all the grace and to cap it all God then favoured him with the favour of favours the promise of the world to come as his inheritance an everlasting life by the resurrection from the dead the clearing the law and his works were 430 years in the future and therefore could

have contributed absolutely nothing and required absolutely nothing from Abraham in order to gain these blessings he didn't gain them God gave them and that's the only way you are going to be saved and that's

the only righteousness that will get you to God get your eye on it oh for God's sake get your eye on it and hence he who hopes to justify himself by his own presumed virtue or supposed religion before God of necessity must insist upon works but don't insist upon your own or your own standards like the rotten corrupt evil legal system of Great Britain into which we have fallen where right is what they think it is or public opinion supposes it is and where murderers go free and rapists are let off to the iniquity of these rotten people here that are bringing blood on the country and

the curse of God on a once blessed land don't set your own standards make sure you've got God's because that's what you're going to be judged by in the resurrection however, the pearl of the deepest reason why those who seek merit by works could never inherit the promise is this verse 15 because the law of work is wrath the law of work is wrath that is, it can never bring peace neither to you nor to God the law can never in any shape or form moreover bring righteousness no man ever kept it and because in the very effort to keep it it brings indwelling bringing in red things the likes you never knew were there like rebellion like lawlessness like I won't like fury like rage like lust like passion like uncontrollable movements of the affections like unbelief like hardness of heart like a

brazen heavens like a shut out god like a hatred of your parents like a mindless blind enmity against those who love you no reason but you don't give a hank for reason when inbred sins at work that's what the law brings out it does nothing but reveal man's innately evil state that is otherwise hidden from him by the devices and wiles of the devil so that he never knows what's inside him but the law brings it out it brings inbred sin to life but this calls forth of course it calls forth God's wrath the law of work is wrath because it reveals just how depraved and hateful and unbelieving you are and what a hater of God you are when once he showed the one he is under the law how you hated for bringing the law like that on you you resent the law it's only your duty but you resent it rebellion

works envy works desperation works enmity, hatred work and that brings down God's wrath and when God's wrath comes down like a fool you defy him and you lift your hands to heaven and curse him I've done it myself can't help it is that going to inherit the promise is that righteousness and are these legalists going to put us back under law the law of work is wrath well they may go back under law but Paul says Romans 4.15 where no law is there's no transgression from which it follows only when there's deliverance from the law can transgression be avoided for as long as you've got the old yoke clapped on your shoulders and so long as you've got the old manacles on your wrists and so long as you've got the old demands sounding in your heart and pricking in your conscience you're going to work

up sin but where no law is there's no transgression if you'd only start with righteousness like God told you in the gospel you wouldn't have got it this day only when there's deliverance from the law can transgression be avoided can wrath cease and the promise be assured but that's exactly what Christ died to bring us Romans 4.16 therefore it is of faith that it might be by grace that the promise might be sure to all to see my dear friend these things might be unto you that your joy may be full the clergy may want to keep you under bondage and keep you under doubting or keep you under a light empty frivolous airy shaggy false joy but God wants to bring you not under fear but solid joy based on sound doctrine which brings in saving grace the maximum penalty of the law was death death

establishes the law because it gives the law its ultimate and final say it can say no more death is its last word for the very reason that the law is a rule of righteousness for man alive in this world once it's given the maximum penalty it can beat you with rods it can lash you with stripes it can put you in prison it can hail you into the death's court but the worst thing it can do to you and the last thing it can do to you is

sentence you to death and when it's done that it's said all it's got to say because you aren't in the world anymore and it's a rule of righteousness for man alive in this world that's why death establishes the law it gives it its ultimate say the law was made for man in this life this world and its sanctions and penalties are all temporal and its final exaction is

death after that one is no longer alive in this world and if not no longer alive to the law this is nothing to say to one and one has nothing to say to it it's alive but in a different realm I'm dead and it can't speak to me across that breakdown it's said all it's got to say nothing more to say one is dead to it and by death it's established it's established however on the other side of death and it can't bring its yoke over its last yoke was when the axe fell on the neck and you were put to death by it and it's done and it's done the law therefore we establish the law because we believe we're dead with Christ I am crucified with Christ for ye are dead buried with him by baptism into death then beyond the laws reached by faith and if so beyond wrath and if so beyond transgression for

where no law is there is no transgression this is the place Christ went for us in death God's righteousness by grace is his gift for us in death and deliverance from wrath and transgression and the law itself is the ultimate witness of the blood of his cross the legalists will say this grace isn't safe they can say what they like they're the ones who break it not us we establish it and you're safe with this grace you're not safe with anything else to believe this is to have the righteousness of faith and to have the righteousness of faith is to have sure title to the promises therefore verses 16 and 17 it is of faith because it isn't my law because you can't reintroduce the law because the law is the other side of death from the side that we're on with Christ it must be by faith it can't

be by law why not? because man only breaks the law he can't keep it, he won't keep it but that's all there is for man to do in one shape or form you can mangle Christianity with it you can mangle evangelism with it you can mangle denomination with it and they've done it till you can't tell which is which for the gloom but you can tell it at night but the truth is what God has done in purposing a righteousness what Christ has done in securing that righteousness and what the Spirit does in witnessing to a righteousness secured by grace and freely given is all of God and it's called the righteousness of faith and it's to this end that the promise of the resurrection that the promise of eternal glory that the promise of the inheritance of the world to come might be sure to all to see it can't

be taken away I come really to the second heading which is the illustration of all this from the life of Abraham thirdly of course it was to apply the whole from the last two verses I really don't think I'm up to it are you? yes oh thank you indeed indeed I'll touch all right I got a few months to recover haven't I?

I mean I'm only going to Penang in a few weeks aren't I? so I can rest for a few weeks can't I? all right the illustration of this three parts let's just get through this quickly the illustration of this brief answer from Abraham's faith we're told six things about the character of Abraham's faith three of them are negative three of them are positive the three negative things come under this heading and being not weak in faith how were you weak in faith Abraham? he considered not his own body nowadays about what? about the promise what promise Abraham? well John God called me out of my tent that night with my bare feet in the sand I went out under the night sky and God said look at the star uncountable but it's toast with the sand and the sand on the seashore innumerable Abraham Lord so shall my seed be so shall my seed be remarkable you say what's remarkable about that? because he was a hundred years old he was a hundred years old he considered not his own body now dead he got no sap he got no sap he couldn't he was a wise bag of skin and bones now dead that's the first negative thing he didn't consider it well he got

things in your body that you consider a bit too much but Abraham didn't consider the second thing he didn't consider he didn't consider the deadness of Sarah's womb well she was ninety years old and she'd never born a child and her sap had dried up and her womb had dried up and it had long years ceased to be with her after the manner of women it was impossible not to Abraham he considered not he wouldn't entertain he didn't let the thought come into it that it was physically impossible by all natural laws he considered not his own body now dead nor yet the deadness of Sarah's womb he staggered not through unbelief he didn't consider death in himself or in Sarah he staggered not to the promise of God through unbelief that he should inherit the world out of death but he got a question to ask whereby shall I know this? know what? know how God would overcome death well why did death come?

I'll tell you why death came death came because of sin in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die the wages of sin is death by one man sin entered into the world and death by sin how would God answer sin and death? tell me Lord I believe but tell me God said take me a heifer a three years old and take me a she-goat a three years old and take me a ram a three years old and take me a turtle dove and a young pigeon that's every sacrifice that was ever going to be offered under the law to point to the death of Christ as a sacrificial victim in behalf of his people and God said go out there this evening and cut them in pieces and lay one side against another and stand in the middle now a heifer of three years old the size of those would come up you'd hardly see Abraham's head

over the top against that was laid a ram a three years old against that was laid a she-goat a three years old and there he was standing on the blood soaked ground all bloody with the spattered blood with a reek of slaughtered flesh in his nose that's how you'll know it and when you see yourself standing in Christ crucified for you and when you see yourself enclosed in his death in the pieces all bloody from the precious blood of Christ then you'll know you've got righteousness and faith alright then you'll know you didn't do it alright then you'll know you didn't choose it because it happened two thousand years ago and that's when it was effective that's how Abraham knew it but when God accepted and the horror of great darkness fell upon Abraham the wrath the judgement and he stood as it

were in the spirit of Christ he felt the pains of hell get hold of him and the pains of death lay upon him and miraculously a smoking furnace and a burning lamp passed and consumed the pieces the wrath of God in righteousness and the wrath of the righteousness of the Lord burned up the bloody sacrifice in spite of Abraham and God was satisfied in his righteousness and that was imputed to Abraham for righteousness and it shall be imputed to you also if you believe in God who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead who was put to death because of our offences you stood in the middle and was raised again because of our justification he'd taken it all away there are three positive things about Abraham's faith but was strong in faith how Abraham? giving glory to God honouring Him justifying Him

vindicating Him exalting Him triumphing in Him stop your moaning and your whining and your self-centred grumbling and your self-centred living he gave glory to God for whom he lived believing of what he promised he didn't want a promise of a house and he didn't get one he didn't want a promise of a wife and children and all these things as such saved as they served God and God's purpose he lived for God he lived for God's promises God's purpose God's election God's predestination God's will God's counsel God's oath God's covenant God's promises believing of what he promised he was able also to perform raise the dead assuredly raise the dead change the world melt the heavens wrap up the universe as a garment bring in a new heaven and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness bring down

the holy city from heaven out of God raise the dead in glory with Christ condemn the damned to everlasting wrath with the devil and his angels no problem he was able also to perform and therefore it was counted to him for righteousness now this wasn't written for his sake alone but for ours but for ours also to whom it shall be a punitive not maybe or they are the seats on his feet to whom also it shall be a punitive if we believe on him who put Jesus our Lord to the death who was delivered for our offences and when he was taken away he was raised again because we've already been justified this is called the righteousness of faith may God bless my feeble strength and poor although I do it do it in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ Amen

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