

The Narrow Road to Salvation (Part 4)

by Robert Wurtz II

The sermon explores the concept of salvation through faith and grace, emphasizing the importance of imputed righteousness over works.

Scripture: Isaiah 53:4, Romans 4:1-11, James 2:18

Topics: "Salvation By Faith", "Imputed Righteousness"

Description

Robert Wurtz II delves into the Book of Romans, emphasizing the narrow road to salvation through faith and not works. He highlights the importance of God's mercy and grace in forgiving man's sins, making it clear that salvation cannot be earned through works but is a gift from God. The sermon explores the concept of imputed righteousness, where God credits righteousness to believers through faith, contrasting it with the costly nature of sin that requires atonement. Wurtz also discusses the significance of faith, zeal, and the seal of the Holy Spirit in demonstrating one's trust in God and receiving His righteousness.

Transcript

THE NARROW ROAD TO SALVATION

(Revisiting the Book of Romans)

Part 4

By Robert Wurtz II

What shall we say then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found? For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God. For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness

(Romans 4:1-5)

If God were going to save man, He would have to forgive man of his rebellion. Mankind needs forgiveness of sins, and that forgiveness requires mercy. Neither God's mercy, or His Love can be bought, so works based salvation is out of the picture. Man cannot work his way to obtaining God's forgiveness, God will have to grant it by His grace. As a matter of fact, it is an insult to God to ever believe that you can buy His

mercy or love; that is, obtain His love and mercy under a condition in which you had worked until God owed you forgiveness.

It is clear from Romans 4:1 as well as other similar accounts, that no matter how great your works, you have no right to boast. Abraham could not glory in the presence of God no matter what type of selection of works he could produce. Neither could Paul the Apostle (see Philippians 3:3-10). Given man's condition, God's mercy is to be desired far and above salvation by works. We will see later that this does not mean "let us sin that grace may abound," but is rather an attitude that gives God the glory for having forgiven man's sin, rather than giving man the glory for having earned it.

Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin. Cometh this blessedness then upon the circumcision only, or upon the uncircumcision also? for we say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness. How was it then reckoned? when he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision (Romans 4:6-10)

It is God's decision whether or not He will bless man by not imputing his sin to him, and that decision is based upon whether or not we exercise faith in God. The reason for this is that God is glorified when a person legitimately places faith in Him. Glorifying God and not ourselves is the difference between law and grace. What glory does God get from a person who believes that they have attained salvation through works, and now God actually owes them salvation?

God's mercy was first revealed as He decided to impute righteousness to Abraham in place of his sin when Abraham believed Him. The point of verse 9 is that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness, and not works. God through the faith of Abraham had already established His method for declaring man righteous. Righteousness by faith has the preeminence over all other types of obtaining righteousness. Further, no other method that would follow could take precedence over salvation by grace through faith. Remember, imputed righteousness by faith first, circumcision second.

Imputed Righteousness

When it comes to righteousness, we are literally bankrupt without God. We have no way of obtaining righteousness apart from God imputing it or more literally crediting our account with it. Imputed righteousness is the method that God has chosen to make provision for mankind's need for righteousness. On the other hand, God has the option of charging our account with a debit of unrighteousness if He so chooses to impute our sin. That is what Paul is referring to when explains that a person is blessed if God does not impute their sin (Romans 4:8). For man, the greatest blessing is found when God will impute righteousness, while not imputing our sin. This in theory would leave man in a state of unmerited righteousness, all of which was provided by the grace of God.

Sin is NOT Free

Though many people never realize it, sin is NOT free. Sin is expensive. When a sin is committed it has to be atoned for or more simply, it must be paid back. That payment has to be made with blood, not just any blood, but innocent blood (Romans 3:25, I John 2:2, 4:10). As it is written....And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission (Hebrews 9:22). God's perfect righteousness requires that every sin that is committed be atoned for.

When it comes to God not charging (imputing) us with our sin, He does so only as He charges it to His Son Jesus Christ. As it is written.... Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all (Isaiah 53:4-6).

It may come as a shock to some, but zeal is also said to be a source of imputed righteousness. Zeal for God is like extreme faith. Psalm 106:31 tells us that Phinehas' zeal was counted to him for righteousness. In a sense, zeal and faith are similar, but both of them are deeply rooted in a trust for God moves a person to some sort of action. Faith and zeal are verifiable, and as James tells us, works are the spirit that gives the body of our faith-life. As it is also written... Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works. Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble. But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only. Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way? For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also (James 2:18-26)

Faith that brings about a born again experience and consequently- imputed righteousness, is not a belief such as the trembling demons of James 2:19 that concurs with all that God is, but is a cooperative belief, that not just recognizes God for who He is, but humbly submits to His authority. It is not enough to simply believe in God and tremble before Him as the Almighty, but is rather a belief that He alone is worthy of ruling and reigning in His Kingdom. Faith does not merely say...I believe in an Almighty God, faith says I believe in the one and only Almighty God, beside whom there is no other! Similarly, a zeal that brings about imputed righteousness is not one that merely feels a sense of anger and jealousy when God is being disrespected, but is like unto Phinehas who moved to immediate action, bringing upon Himself the mercy of God, by staying His hand of judgment.

Our Seal of Faith

And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also: And the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had being yet uncircumcised. For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect: Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there is no transgression. Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all, (As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were. Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be. And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body

now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb: He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform. And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness. Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification (Romans 4:11-25).

When God wanted to make a distinction between one who believed in Him and obeyed His voice and one who did not in the beginning, He made all males to be circumcised on the eighth day. That sign of circumcision was the seal that God gave to Abraham and to his seed because of his faith. The seal was a token or a reminder to all who would see them that these men and their families trust in the Most High God (see I Corinthians 7:12-14).

Every male on earth is born uncircumcised, just like every human being born on earth has a sin nature. When God got ready to deal with sin in the individual, He did so by the method of the born again experience and subsequent circumcision of the heart. When a person is born again, the Holy Spirit comes in and severs the hold that the flesh (Sarx: sin nature) retained upon the decision making faculties (the heart) of a believer. This we know as circumcision of heart (Compare Romans 2:28-29, Galations 6:15 and Acts 7:51-53). This allows the influence of the Holy Spirit to dominate our thoughts after that the "strong man" of the old man's mind has been put off. This strong man is the sin nature (Greek: Sarx, flesh).

The evidence or seal that God gives to the believer is not circumcision in the flesh, but circumcision of our flesh. This seal is found in the presence of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer. God gives us the Holy Spirit in place of the flesh (sin nature) as a proof that we are indeed heirs to the righteousness that is of God by faith. The promise of the inheritance that was to Abraham and his seed is now verified by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit which is said to be the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of all that Christ died to pay for (Ephesians 1:14-30).

Both the former seal of circumcision and the present seal of the Holy Spirit can be authenticated. Circumcision is nothing without obedience no matter how or when it may have happened. Likewise without the fruit of the Spirit in our life we have no proof of our claims. Circumcision is another way of saying "under the law," and the way that we that we remove ourselves from circumcision and the law is to be born again and walk in the Spirit (Galations 5:18).

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/robert-wurtz-ii/the-narrow-road-to-salvation-part-4/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net