

The Righteousness of Faith - Part 4

by Roy Hession

The sermon emphasizes that righteousness comes through faith in God, exemplified by Abraham, rather than through human works or adherence to the law.

Duration: 51:44

Scripture: Psalm 32:1-2, Romans 3:25, Romans 4:3-5, Romans 4:16, Romans 4:24-25

Topics: "Righteousness Of Faith"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker begins by addressing a verse from chapter 3, verse 25, which talks about God setting forth Jesus as a propitiation through faith in his blood. The speaker emphasizes the importance of understanding the meaning of this verse. They explain that the devil accuses believers using the law of God, but God declares the wrong to the wrong person. The speaker uses the analogy of a debtor and a surety to illustrate how Jesus took our place and paid our debts. They emphasize that through faith in Jesus, believers are set free from the law and no longer have to fight on their own.

Transcript

We return to the fourth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans. Fourth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans. What shall we say then that Abraham, our father as pertained to the flesh, has found? For if Abraham were justified by work, he hath whereof the 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 death. But to him that worketh not, that believeth on him that justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.

Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputed righteousness without work. And here is a quotation from David's psalm in Psalm 32 where having himself been restored to God, he says, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputed not sin.

How is this blessedness 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. And he received the sign of circumcision, a seed of the righteousness of faith which he had, yet being uncircumcised.

That he might be the father of all them that believe, so they be not circumcised. That righteousness, rightness with God, might be imputed unto them also. And the father of circumcision, who are not of the circumcision only, but who also walked in the steps of the faith of our father Abraham, which he had, being yet uncircumcised.

For the promise that he should be the heir of the world, that doesn't mean politically, but religiously. It was promised that in him and in his seed, all nations ultimately would be blessed through what comes, from Judaism to Christ. And that promise, he says, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.

For it is they, and they alone, which are of the law, the heirs. Faith is made void. And the promise is not of faith, because the law, where it is wrought, 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 it all, as it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations, before him will be believed even God, who quickeneth the dead, and quietest 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 a 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, being fully persuaded that what he had promised, he was able also to perform.

Therefore it was imputed unto him for righteousness. Now it was not written for his faith alone that it was imputed unto 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 offenses, and was raised again for our justification. Well, what a legacy it is, even the reading of it.

Before we approach the subject matter of chapter four, there are two things I want to finish off from yesterday's study, which I didn't have time. It would be unfair to leave at least one verse without comment. In chapter three, verse twenty-five, you have, whom God set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness, for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God, to declare, I say at this time, his righteousness, that he might be the just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus.

I wonder, have you understood what those verses mean? As they stand, they are perhaps a little difficult, a little obscure. The Revised Version gives us a more accurate rendering, and it says that he is set forth as a propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare God's righteousness, because of the passing over of sins down a foretime, in the forbearance of God. In other words, the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ has a retrospective value.

After all, it was something eternal. He was slain from the foundation of the world, in the mind and purpose of God. It happened in time, but it was a reality in eternity.

And therefore, its value is retrospective, and covers the sins that were passed over, a foretime, through the forbearance of God. Abraham had his sins passed over. He had many, but they were passed over.

Moses had them, David had them, but how could a righteous God, who says the soul that sinneth it shall die, pass over sins, when he himself had passed that evening? Only because he knew that in the fullness of time, the Lord Jesus would come, and become the propitiation for those sins. And thus it is that Abraham was saved through Christ. Moses was saved through Christ.

David was saved through Christ. For a time, it wasn't seen how God was righteous in passing over those mentions, until Calvary. And Calvary declared the righteousness of God in passing over sins done a foretime, passing over them in his forbearance.

And so Calvary has a retrospective value. At the same time, it declares his righteousness in the present, in the present, that in the present he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in him. Does God have a righteous ground on which he can declare the wrong person to be right? It's unlawful to do it, unless there's a ground that's satisfactory to justice.

And Calvary's judgment bearing is satisfactory to divine justice. Divine justice cannot demand from man any more than what Jesus does. Divine justice was settled in the most awesome and terrible manner possible.

The most dreadful view of sin was taken up at Calvary, and so that precious blood declares his righteousness, because of a passing over of sins done a foretime in his forbearance, and it declares his righteousness in declaring you to be just when you know you're wrong. That's what it says. God says he's faithful and just to forgive us our sins.

But how is God just to forgive me? I think he's probably setting aside his justice to be lenient toward me. No, no, he hasn't set aside his justice. I'm not in the loving to say that I'm just at all.

How just is God? Calvary was the biggest evidence of the justice of God. Then the man of America flew up to the gas station, and he's a great man of witnessing to all and sundry as he could. And he said to man, you know the judgment day is over already.

No, sir. He said it is. We're over.

But Jesus said it is, for the believer. Not for the unbeliever, but for the believer. I just want to explain that verse.

Give us a see how satisfactory to every moral principle is this God's way. Of justice. And then a word on verse 31.

Do we then make boys the law through faith? Now, it's almost breathtaking, as we thought yesterday, to think that God declares him to be right, who in reality is utterly wrong. And he does that not where he's improved, but while he's still a sinner on the one condition he admits that fact. It would seem as if you can do what you like, and you're still going to be justified.

It would seem that this way of faith would make boys moral principles. And if that's all there was, that criticism would be valid, but it isn't. Because this way of being saved, of being made right with God, has produced this more powerful motive to holiness than any other man-divine way.

It's against him, the one who would be the recipient of this great life, of a one who'd loved him in his sins and restored him and declared him right now that he's at peace. And the last thing in the world he wants to

do is go out playing with that, which costs his Lord so dearly. This is God's way of holiness.

It isn't only a cause of duty that doesn't do anything for us, but to be freely subdued, gloriously restored, to be at peace with God by utter grace. Oh, it changes the heart. It binds our hearts like a fetter.

And it's more than that. As a man comes to Christ as a saviour, and hears the word that he's declared right with God for Christ's sake, there happens within him an internal miracle which Paul isn't at the moment dealing with, but it's dealt with elsewhere. The new birth.

And the man is immediately given a whole range of new appetites, new desires, a new life, which has affinities with God and heaven and holiness, as his old life has affinities with hell. Same chassis, but a new engine. And holiness is native to that life, Paul, the old verb of many a battle.

But all my friends, that man is never going to be the same. He's got appetites, you know, just satisfied with God and walking with God. And so this way of faith does not make faith void of the Lord.

It is capacitive. It produces holiness in a way that mere calls to duty never will. Well, then, those are the two things I wanted to say just to finish off from yesterday.

Now chapter four. Now I remind you that the theme is till this matter of righteousness with God. Righteousness with God.

Being declared right with God, which is the basic effect. Now the natural thing for all of us is to feel you can't be declared right unless you are right. Isn't that so? The natural logic.

You can't be declared right unless you are right. That judge can't declare you innocent unless you are innocent. And you've got to prove that fact.

And that's the natural way we all go around. We're all the time have to prove we're not as bad as people say we are. They haven't got it all wrong.

They just understood us, you see. And you see, we're going to be declared right if we are right. Therefore, our great attempt is to make ourselves right.

To prove ourselves right. In other words, a way of willingness. And it's based on this natural logic that you can't be declared right or regarded right unless you actually are right.

And therefore, we struggle and strive and argue to make ourselves right, to prove ourselves right. To stand before God on the ground of our own righteousness. Now, we may be sympathetic with one another.

It's meant to be. Even after we're saved, you still find yourself arguing you're right. You can't feel you are, you could be regarded right if you are right.

You've got to say, yes, I'm right. And whenever we do that, we're trying to stand before God on the ground of our own righteousness. It's the way it works.

Which lingers on, even after the experience of grace. But the message of this book is the very opposite. It is that God is prepared to declare those to be right who, in reality, are utterly wrong.

And to do so, if anyone is without regard to their nature, he let it in the case. On one ground only, that they let themselves give up. In other words, that's the way of grace.

And so this is a great theme, especially in this chapter. Is this being declared right by works or by grace through faith? When I was a Jew, with his possession of the law and the circumstances, was quite sure that the only way in which you would be declared right with God and fit for heaven was by works, by obeying that law, by proving that you're right. And also, very great help in the matter, by the ritual of circumcision.

He then thought and felt naturally that righteousness was by works and by ritual. And so Paul has got to help this dear man, his own kingdom. And he does so in a skillful way.

He takes him back to the father of their race, from whom the ritual of circumcision first came. Now he says, Abraham, what do we say about Abraham? They based everything on Abraham. And Paul says three things about Abraham's experience of God.

He says, was Abraham justified, declared right with God by his works, by his merits, by his achievements? Well, he says, let's have a look. Because if he had, if he did, he had whereof he might rightfully boast. A man didn't like to boast, but after all he's done, and it's due to his attainment and his religiousness, well, he doesn't like to be proud, but he says, after all, I'm in fact, perfect.

I mean, there's a sense there. There's a hopelessness. He can't even cry.

But of course, I've been crying for years. And you have whereof the glory, if your righteousness with God is the result of attainment. And all the things that can become our righteousness, even after we've failed.

The things that become our righteousness, which give us a little higher standing with men, even if we don't believe they give us a higher standing with God, but intuitively that is the case, we think they do. All the things that can become our righteousness, the things we do, the standards we adopt that other people don't, that they put down on us, it becomes our righteousness. We have whereof the glory that Paul says no one has in reality before God as we do.

Well, he says, what about Abraham? And he takes us back to a certain incident in Abraham's life, to an extraordinary verse that you might miss if you were just reading the Old Testament, but he picks it up and highlights it. Turn to Genesis 16, verse 6. Verse 6, And Abraham believed in the Lord, and he counted it unto him for righteousness. Now, the circumstance of that verse was this, that God had promised that to Abraham and his seed, all nations of the earth were going to be blessed, salvation was coming.

But he hadn't got a seed, he hadn't got a son, and there seemed no likelihood of him having one, or Sarah having one. And the years went on and on and on, and they got beyond the age where the child was normally possible. Poor old Abraham said, what about that promise Lord? One day God took him out on a starry night, and look at those stars, counted them for multitude, so shall thy seed be.

He wasn't speaking only of Abraham's natural seed, but his spiritual seed. I'm of the spiritual seed of Abraham, and so are you, if you're a believer. What a mouth you are.

God was saying, there's everything on the human level of death. But Abraham considered not his own body, neither dead as it is now dead, verse 6, nor the deadness of care of youth. He looked off to the promise, he didn't address, well I believe the Lord, he didn't say, I'm going to have a seed like that.

And you know that touched God. So much so did Abraham, I'm going to count that faith to you for a righteousness which you don't otherwise possess. You haven't got one stitch of righteousness, you're a sinner as much as anybody in the world, but you've done the one thing that delights my heart, against hope you believe me faithful.

You accepted the promise. And now I count that faith in you of righteousness of which you naturally have not got one stitch. And so God counted the faith of Abraham for righteousness.

There you are, just poor. How was he declared right with God? By what? No, you've got it in your own scripture. It was utterly apart from her.

It was simply by faith. To dare to believe God. Now Paul goes on to apply it.

Wonderful verse it is. Now he says, going back to Romans 4, verse 4. For him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace for the sin. Do you understand that? Once again, it's a little difficult in the King James Version.

To him that works and gets a reward for his work, his reward, his wages come as a matter of debt. He's earned them, it's owing to him. He's put his employer into his debt.

It's not a matter of grace at all. It isn't a gratuitous. It's owing to him.

Grace is that which you have got no claim for. But this is a matter of debt. And just as the man who hopes to stand well with God by the fact he's earned his religion, the fact that he's very prayerful and so on, is that going to make his standing with God the right? He's really trying to put God in his debt.

And you're off the ground of grace altogether. It is the work. It is no more of grace.

And you've got to have it one way or the other. You're either going to be utterly judged and tired by grace without a tincture of mercy or grace, tired by works without a tincture of mercy, or else you're going to be saved utterly by grace without a tincture of works or mercy. You can't mix it.

And some of us unwittingly grant it, of course. The whole purpose of the scripture is to discover to us what we're really doing. And what we're really doing in so many ways is trying to put God in our debt so he owes us peace.

So he owes us righteousness. So he owes us salvation. So he owes us power.

So he owes it to us to be used. I don't think I'm trusting my works for my justification but I trust it for a lot of other things sometimes. And I try to put God in my debt that he gives me power.

I try to put God in my debt that he'll use me. If I do this and do the other, I put God in my debt. It's a futile task.

You'll never be saved. Grace has to be the source of everything. I've got to come as a beggar.

I can't do it. I can't achieve the necessary value. And if I'm going to have power, it's going to be used.

It's going to be all grace. Grace. Grace.

But to him that works is the reward not reckoned of grace but of debt. You don't get a thing from God. On that ground.

You can't do it. You can't do what you shouldn't. You've got to come as a saviour.

That's all that I want to address. To him that works is not. This is what the Bible says.

Not what I say. Not what our conscience says. But to him that works is not.

But believe it on him that justifies the ungodly. But believe it on him that declares him to be right or admits he's wrong. That man's holy confidence in a God like that is counted to him for a righteousness which he doesn't otherwise possess.

The most depraved creature in jail if he will be given this view of the God he has to deal with. Oh God I'm a man who's utterly wrong. That man's coming to Christ like that is counted for an eternal unassailable righteousness which he doesn't otherwise possess.

His repentance and faith in the blood of Jesus is counted for righteousness. If you understand that, just guess that. This is what the scripture says.

If it's God's way of peace, you get to peace no other way. And you want restoration to people. It's always the same way right to the end of our days.

All this verse has lived to me. I love to thee a man who without work believes critically on him that justifies the ungodly Christ knows that that new attitude of faith is counted for righteousness and comes at a new time. Sometimes I'm so flabbergasted.

I'm struggling, I'm striving. When am I going to be a really good Christian? When am I going to have a wonderful record? I'm pining for a right of my own. And as long as I'm pining and mourning over myself and my family, the hour of my peace is described.

Oh Christ, joyous continually to thee a man who knows how to believe on him who justifies the ungodly whose faith is counted in for righteousness and to come at that time of peace with God and liberty with God. Although sometimes there's been failure. Once again, this is no way of us having peace while in sin.

You don't get peace. You get it while you're in sin. You've got to repent.

The moment you repent, you're not in sin, you're in Christ. Well, that's that. And then of course he brings a case.

Oh, tremendous argument. I don't know how these men could have a word to say. Very good father.

The blessedness of a man whom God forgave and to whom the Lord will not impute sin. Dear one, you've got plenty and it could well be imputed to you. Oh, the blessed, the one who knows that God no longer imputes my sins to me.

He imputes them to his son. He imputes his righteousness in himself. That's the first thing that Paul says about Abraham that he was declared right with God apart from work.

Now, I must say a word on that. You see where it says verse 6 to whom God imputes his righteousness without work. Literally in those eyes and elsewhere it's apart from work.

Now, it is possible to speak salvation by grace without work in such a way that you could almost give the impression it's wicked to do good work. That there's got no place in the life. Good work.

It doesn't say that. All it says is that righteousness is imputed apart from work. Do good work.

Go help the neglected. Go to church. Go to the sacrament.

Spend time with God. But understand this. When it comes to being declared right with God it's apart from that question altogether.

Your good doesn't help you one little bit. The accumulated effort of yours doesn't do one little bit to put you right with God and the accumulated sins of yours, if that acknowledged, doesn't do one little bit to impact you. This is altogether apart from work.

Oh, look at this. But in this matter notice when it comes to your peace with God you get it through Jesus. Oh, I know in getting it through Jesus and repenting you do actually pray and that he might convict you, you do actually read your Bible.

You get it through the Bible, listen to the Word. Probably into a sermon you come of a conviction. But that isn't the thing on which your eyes focus.

It's the one of whom you're speaking. The one whose scriptures you read. The one to whom you're coming in prayer that's the one by whom.

And so righteousness is apart from work. Your good doesn't help. And then he also says it's apart from the ritual of circumcision.

Now he says well now this when Abraham was declared right with God, how was it? Was he circumcised at that time or uncircumcised? Why do you remind them that at that stage God had not given him the sign of circumcision? He was as uncircumcised as any Gentile. But that apparently was no hindrance to God. He was declared as right as God could make him be.

Why? He was outside any covenant at all. And so the Jew had to admit that the one that he based so much on he was made right, declared right with God apart from work and apart from this vauntless ritual of circumcision. Please turn the cassette over now.

Do not fast wind it in either direction. Was declared right with God apart from any ritual. Apart from any ministrations of the church.

Apart from sacrament. Now circumcision had its place. Oh yes, because it had its place.

What was it? It was a seal upon the righteousness which he had while he was uncircumcised. Just a seal, that's all. It didn't add one little bit to his righteousness.

That was on another ground altogether, but it was a seal. And so it is of the various things that I've mentioned. They have their place, of course.

They're commanded in that. The sacrament. But there's only two of what are intended to be of a righteousness with God that I've got at the cross.

They do not add one little bit to my right hanging with God. Jesus was rather righteousness by duty of, by gloriousness. But there are seals on that and signs on it.

The trouble is you have the seal without the reality. You have the sign without the thing which is meant to signify. Thousands.

And they're hanging on to that as the Jews hang on to circumcision. And that's why sometimes the preacher of the gospel has to appear to be destructive. He's got to rip it away.

It's the wrong thing. And they're dropping the hell depending on their own righteousness and their own religiousness. Oh, they have their place.

Their seal. The signs of a reality which ought to be in our hearts already. They're all connected.

And so Abraham's righteousness with God was apart from the ritual of any sort at all and apart from the law. The promises made to Abraham were not contingent on his obedience to the law. Now it says here, verse 15, the promise that he should be heir of the world.

That is that not only that he should be blessed but through his seed the whole world one day will be blessed. A reference, of course, to the Messiah, the Messianic Pope. Now it says, Paul, that what is given to him contingent on his obedience to the law but on the same basis as he got right with God on heaven.

In Galatians, we have a time to turn to it. Paul takes up that same point. As a matter of fact the law hadn't even been given.

How could that promise be contingent on the law which wasn't given until 400 years afterwards? If you now, afterwards, make it contingent on the law, you cancel the promise. Oh, you say, I suppose there's the promise and you put a condition on it. Yes, but you won't keep the condition.

Oh, you're sure I won't? I'm sure you won't. The Bible says you won't. The Bible says the only effect of law is to work law.

It says so. It says this do and thou shalt this, this says do and thou shalt that. I'm going to tell you, you're going to fail to do it.

You're a sinner. For the fallenness is high and holy law, being concerned not only with the outward but the inward. And if my peace with God is contingent on that, then those promises of God on heaven are now keeping up to a certain standard.

You'll forfeit the promises overnight. Now that's what's important. It's the scriptures, isn't it? I ain't For the promise that he should be heir of the world was not to Abraham or his seed through the law, but through the righteousness of saints.

For if they and they only were God of the law, the heir, faith is made void and the promised men are none. And I think we need to see that our righteousness is God is ours. It isn't contingent on our attaining certain standards.

It's great. And yet I say again there's no more powerful intention to holiness than that. And as I say again, it carries new birth and makes a man new.

And the lovely thing is this, that if there should be failure, he is a trash. He's not under the law that would trash him and congender, but under grace that tells him that if he's finished, he's going to have to come again and be at peace and restored into fellowship with God. And then there's a wonderful verse.

Here's a verse for a sermon really in itself. Verse 16. Therefore it is the faith that it might be by grace to the end the promise might be sure to all the people.

Now some people are not sure. Not sure. I hope I am.

I think I'm like a sea lion, let's say. But they're not sure. You know why? Because deep down in the back of their mind, their thinking is and it's so natural to all of us that of course you can't be sure unless you've kept the law.

Unless you've been the sort of person you should be. And how can I say that I have been? And even if I say that I've been up to this moment, how am I sure I'm going to continue to the end? And on that basis, you never, never, never can be sure. But the scripture says, it is the faith, the simple way of coming, that it might be by grace to the end that the promise might be sure to all the people.

That Jesus may be sure of us. Sure of Christ. Sure of salvation.

Sure of fellowship with God. Because it's a grace dependent not on what he is but on what God has done in Christ for us on his behalf. Are you sure? Are you sure? You haven't seen it yet.

The reason why we're not sure is that we're trying to find something right there upon which to build. Our great hope of peace and our hope of relationship with God. Our hope of power even Christian.

And all the time, trying to find something in myself on which to build my hope of being used. And I'm in despair because I can't find it. The devil speaks to that he says, oh you're not this and not the other.

And so on when he says it's true. And the law says you've got to find something in yourself to be sure. And you look and you can't find it.

You can find it one day and it's gone the next. Like religious feelings, how long do they last? To get a build on peace? Or an experience of joy? You'll never be sure. It's building on self, it's building on worth.

Something that you have. God wants us to build on Christ. The sinner's friend, the solid rock.

To the day that it might be my grave to the end, the promise might be sure to all. So those are the three things that God says and it taught us about Abraham. Well aren't they tremendous? If it's argued out, we can give to a man.

Of course he's not out to knock him for sick. He just wants to help him. He wants to build him up.

The man's making things too hard for himself. He's only trying to give himself a despair. Under the law, but it's tenfold lash.

Lord, in the last house too, the more I tried, the sooner I died. While the law cried, you, you, you. Hopeless this period of the battle raged.

Oh, it demanded my cry and deliverance I sought by some tenor's voice. While my heart cried, I, I, I. Then came a day when my struggling feet and trembling in every limb at the foot of the tree, where one died for

me. My heart cried, him, him, him, I see it all.

I don't have to find anything in myself I want to give. I've got even glad I'm able to do that. But now we must continue on.

Paul now said, right, that's all about Abraham. Now I want you to look at this man's face. Don't just think it was easy.

It was the hardest thing that Abraham ever had to do. That's hard at night to believe God's word because everything pointed in the opposite direction. And you had the virtue to engage hope, a hope based on human possibilities who believed in a hope based on God's promises.

Not being weak in faith, he said, all right, I'll never consider the facts that are beyond the age. He staggered not at the promise of God to unbelieve but his promise of believing God. But it should be even so.

Therefore, it was included to him for righteousness. Now this is a picture of faith in faith, of justifiability which you and I need to exercise from the beginning and all the way along. And I want to tell you sometimes it's as hard for us to believe that God declared who he still was to be utterly right with himself as it was for Abraham to believe that he was going to have a son.

Abraham's faith was exercised about his son. Our faith has to be exercised about God's son. But sometimes it's just as hard to be the latter as it was for Abraham to be the former.

Now in the Christian life at the beginning and right the way on to the end to me I've discovered there are two big battles. The first battle is to be willing to admit I'm wrong. Oh what a battle with the future.

We'll do anything to admit we're wrong. We'll argue, we'll explain, we'll write letters. Some people even go to solicitors and go to law to prove they're right.

They won't admit they're wrong. But you say I'm not wrong. Even if you were you wouldn't be willing to admit.

Or if I were, where would you be doing it now? I'm going to be willing to admit we're wrong. And of course we've always got an alibi for ourselves. And that is God's great battle with us to bend us this way, to bring us to contraptment to brokenness of the spirit.

This is a thing which in the sight of God is of great price. They say it's our desire not sacrifice, else would I give it. The sacrifice of God of a broken contract spirit.

And brokenness is simply the difference of the opposite to harmony. Harmony says it's your fault, brokenness says it's mine. Oh what a battle.

What a battle. Friends, you won't get anywhere in the Christian life, neither will I. I won't get saved in the first place, I won't go on with him unless I'm willing to be broken in this simple sense. That is all brokenness is.

Is it having shedding tears? Is it going through terrible suffering? It's the willingness to bend us this way. Broken. I'm wrong.

There's the first battle. The battle to admit you're wrong. But then there's a second battle.

The battle to believe you're right. And sometimes that's a bigger battle than the first. Oh the battle.

Well you can see no difficulty at the moment, they'll say, in admitting you're wrong. But Jimmie's believed that God declares wrong to the wrong person to be right. And the devil comes along, he's the accuser of the devil.

And he uses the very law of God which he said, you ought to change it And you see, under the law with its tenfold wrath learning alas how true that the more I tried, the sooner I died while the law cried you, you, you The battle to believe you're right And you've got to. You're not going to victory unless you've won the second battle as well as the first. You're willing to admit you're wrong then can you believe that a man as tall as you have, as tall as you have if the blood is enough for you that you could have the best bird of heaven, if you could be better arrayed as it was never formed before can you believe it? I'll tell you if you can believe it.

If we can believe it. You'll need all the help God can give you even if Abraham needed it. And you'll have to gain hope believing it.

Whether it is sin or not the failure of Jesus you've got to be strong in faith even calling to God that what he promised is indeed a fact for me and if you do it will be imputed unto you for righteousness as it was for Abraham And now we come to the last verse verse 23 Now it was not written for his sake alone that which was imputed unto him but for us also to whom it shall be imputed now what have we got to believe? Abraham had to believe about his son we have got to believe something about God's son and if you are prepared to believe that something about God's son no matter whatever you do, no matter how much your heart and conscience condemns you, it shall be imputed unto you for righteousness If we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead who was delivered from our offenses and was raised again for our justification Well now, I wonder if we are really quite right in our gospel text if we believe that Jesus died for us or if we believe that God raised us from the dead for us That's the way for people That's the way for people God will not let him die for me, how do I know that?

I just can ask The wages of sin is death, alright, he takes my wages he dies to death but I have no guarantee that thereby the wages are really paid and I think perhaps the old hymn writers help us in the matter of this question of assurity they love to talk about assurity it's also used once or twice in the scripture too Assurity He bore on the tree the sentence for me and now both the surety and the sinner are free let me explain it this way John Wesley's father the rector of, what is it, Equus was involved in debt and in those days a man who was in debt could be put in prison a very foolish thing because he had no means of earning any money in order to pay off his debt for that type of loss and here was his rector, with his large family of children he went to prison for debt now let's suppose someone said to Mr.

Wesley I can't bear to see this thing how are your family going to provide for he said, will you allow me to stand surety for those debts to sign for them and Mr. Wesley with gratitude says, my brother I can't stand for that he imagines that he's got an ample bank balance which will easily be enough to sustain these debts but what is his astonishment when he finds that the debts are such that they're more than the bank balance there and he's short, he goes to prison he says, no you can't go there I'm going, I'm the shortest and that man's in prison there's a sense in which Mr.

Wesley's free but not free that debt has not yet been paid when he meets that creditor he's in a deep in his prison but let's suppose three days later that creditor, that man in prison that surety, is seen free it's large in the streets, there's only one entrance somehow the debt's been paid the evidence of which is that he's free and they've got the surety free Mr.

Wesley's free no he can talk to his creditor and shake hands with him and no there's nothing now to do now the Lord Jesus is delivered, he says he's still surety for a sinful world he said to the father concerning this whole world if they had wronged thee or owed thee aught, put that on my account and you would have thought the personal holiness of Jesus himself that he could sustain the whole weight of the world's sins and it would be swallowed up in his holiness and he would still remain in relationship with God but apparently to his son, that is even for the moment extinguished the relationship of Jesus to the Son not even the holiness of the Son of God is enough for the sin of the world and he was delivered into the prison house of death oh it's only there that we see what sin really

is if it flew the sinless one what ever it really is God's life God raised him from the dead if he hadn't been raised from the dead I still wouldn't be free I'd be grateful for that love that wasn't enough am I really sure I can have a clear conscience before God but God declared his infinite satisfaction on this holy work of his Son and he raised him from the dead and kept him in his own right hand the surety of truth and therefore the sinner for whom he stood surety is free God, the counsel and the blessing of God you are if you but realize it as clear of just as it is remember that they were asked in no objection they didn't know what judgment was what had the flood debated until a dove came in at the window with an olive leaf in its beak and that olive leaf told them that there was

one bit of earth which was clear of judgment and the apostolic testimony of the apostle was to tell people there was one person and one only who was clear of judgment it was the Lord Jesus God raised him from the dead he is clear of all the judgment which he took upon him at the cross but the judgment of which he is clear is my judgment therefore I must declare peace peace because of his judgment he took it with man but now he is clear of it because of the power of God God raised him from the dead therefore I am clear too and you know you to believe as you pretended that you are as clear of judgment as clear of the preach as clear of a condemning heart God in his love declares he gives you a family with himself identical with that of his judgment now we see in Christ's acceptance of the

measure of our life Christ's justice is my interpret of peace one more thing we read that the Lord Jesus offered one sacrifice for sins forever sat down on the right hand of the majesty on high but that's the place where no sin can go but the last I saw him was weighed down with the sin of the world but now he's going back into heaven where sin can't go what's happened to my sin in the meanwhile how can he go there he had a ball you know what's happened to him they are gone G-O-N-E as the chorus says gone gone gone gone all my sins are gone if they hadn't gone he would never be able to sit down on my behalf at the right hand of God that's it oh the subject of religion but listen if God is satisfied with his love of peace with the work that he did and demonstrated his infinite satisfaction

in the way that he raised Jesus from the dead can't I do that can't I believe it and can't I go on and I go to go on and I go to go on let me repent get that cycle over and then get this other one over I dare to do it and I pray and I write this off oh thank God for the back off I know this insistence on repentance you say well it can get me into debt it can get me groggy yes of course it can there must be the faith but you know I wouldn't have it any other way because faith only grows and that's on soil the soil that knows its own pain and I have found that believing on the Lord Jesus has been real to me as I am repentant repentance

sometimes pride and repentance and the sweetness as we were singing last night with pride but the sweetness as we were singing that I'm on his palms in marks

of indelible grace it was real to me indelible grace wonderful you see I go yes God doesn't want you groggy if you've got to come down and believe on the Lord Jesus as God is on him who raised him up on my behalf he would raise to me he'd have it for me my advocate now my last thought is are you trying as I sometimes am to find something in yourself of which to believe your hope of peace your hope of salvation your hope of others and are you in despair that you can't hide it you'll never be sure that way you do not need to find anything in yourself on which to believe what you think is there, you think inside you can't really believe on the Lord Jesus I love that, I haven't got believing you've got beyond believing on the Lord Jesus it's life it's life it's the only way, you begin that

way and you go on that way enjoying the sinner's righteousness and the sinner's peace and the sinner's power and the sinner being you everything is on this sweet ground which is available to everyone Heavenly Father we've been talking about mysteries which the angels desire to look into and which even they haven't got a knowledge of because they have never never known a foreign world like this they cannot sing the joy that our rejection brings but they've never known the bitterness of sin, but we have and we only ask thou will lead us to enjoy this redemption and see it strong and have grand pleasure now Lord we commit one another to this, we ask thee to interpret all we've been speaking about to our own personal needs and set us free to be praying and rejoicing in Jesus we ask this in

thy great name the grace the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the mercy of the Holy Spirit be upon everyone

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/18/SID18732.mp3>

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