

***“Romans, Dispensationally Considered —
The Lord Made a Promise to Abraham Changing the Course of History Forever”***

Review: Justification By Faith Removes Fleshly Boasting Forever!

- ***The Law of Faith Has Rendered Works Irrelevant! (Vv. 27-28)***
- ***But What About Jews Who Have Had the Law As Their Guide? (Vv. 29-30)***
- ***All Legal Principles Have Indeed Ended Having Now Been Replaced! (V. 31)***

- ***The Law of Faith Has Rendered Works Irrelevant! (Vv. 27-28)***
 - ***He concludes this teaching by summarizing it all from the other side, that of our flesh. All human works are now irrelevant, if we draw the focus as sharply as the apostle is here. This surely requires some explanation lest we (and Paul) be thoroughly misunderstood.***
 - ***He makes a clear distinction between works and fruit and between law and grace, between the works of law (which are of the flesh) and the fruit of the spirit. Grace has enabled fruit whereas the law had encouraged the flesh. So the works of the flesh could never please God.***

Oh, that believers today might come to understand this critical doctrine. Later in Romans it will be the shining light that has freed so many from the bondage of religion, even the so-called “Christian” religion. For religion is satan’s greatest tool, if we may dare to say so, all of which directly or indirectly, are based on works of law that are required by the organized assembly, whatever it may call itself. And, “boasting” or its equivalent, is the inevitable result. But what does the apostle of the Gentiles say?

Romans 3:27-28

27 Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith.

28 Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.

- ***A conclusion is being drawn here from what has already been written. But the foundation of that conclusion is summarized here in verse 27: though law is the focus, and, one might think, works therefore, since THE LAW, that given through Moses, required many works, the apostle has concluded never the less that boasting (of***

ones own obedience) has no foundation. But how can that be?

Ah, because there is a ^{Now} "law", or "principle" now in place instead of that one given so long before to the Israelites (and not to the Gentiles, as he has carefully made clear). This new law or principle of God's working with mankind is based on faith and by implication FAITH ALONE, since he now states with great boldness, that this principle is founded on faith "without the deeds of the law"!

- So, he writes, that this ~~has already been sufficiently proven that only a summary now is enough. QED.~~
- No boasting at all is therefore allowed ^{for us} because no works of law have been demanded or required by the holy and righteous God! Indeed, they have been EXCLUDED! Faith alone is the only criteria for his full and complete acceptance today under grace. Amen.
- The justification for his conclusion is that as written here, "a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law". But boasting is justified only on the basis of human fulfillment of some aspect of law, in other words, on works that satisfy the righteous demands of a holy God. So no boasting is allowed, and this is all because of the astounding grace gift of our risen savior, Christ Jesus, who has become our substitute, as it had just been written:

Romans 3:25-26

23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

24 Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:

25 Whom God hath 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;

26 To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.

- It is this Jesus whom Paul has declared was the only righteous one! This now stands "declared, now at this time"! But it was not always so, it seems.

There are certainly dispensational implications here. But the bottom line is that all who are saved NOW are justified by faith alone independently of any and all works. Remember, he wrote that to

those “that worketh not but believeth, his faith is counted for righteousness”, Rom. 4:5.

- ***But What About Jews Who Have Had the Law As Their Guide? (Vv. 29-30)?***
 - ***But with all spiritual blessings now upon the Gentiles, what about the Jews. That would be a critical question, wouldn't it?***

Romans 3:27-31

27 Where *is* boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by ~~the~~ law of faith.

28 Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.

29 Is he the God of the Jews only? is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also:

30 Seeing it is one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith.

31 Do we then make void [the] law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish [the] law.

- ***Several points are made here, all in the same dispensational context. One God seems to be the key to our understanding. For the one God NO LONGER has two dispensational plans. There had been two, one for Jews and one for Gentiles, but now there is only one. Whether of the circumcision or of the uncircumcision, there was now only one way and that was through the God-man, Christ Jesus. For justification was now only by faith with no works attached at all. No, not one!***
- ***Israel's legal system was postponed, interrupted, set aside, for a time. The ceremonial law was fully in every way ended through the shed blood of our Lord Jesus. Though some of it had been fulfilled, some remained as promises that had been made regarding a land and finally an inheritance were still not completed — but they would be, in due time. But now grace reigned.***
- ***But What About Jews Who Have Had the Law As Their Guide? (Vv. 29-30)? There is no sacrificial system so there can be no Mosaic Law. And, in any case, it stands proven that “by the law is the knowledge of sin”, not righteousness! So all are the same before***

~~the Lord God now! There is neither Jew nor Greek today (Rom. 2:28, Gal. 3:28, Col. 3:11).~~

- **And so, All Legal Principles Have Indeed Ended Having Now Been Replaced! (V. 31)! It stands proven.**

Our Scripture:

Romans 4:1-5

1 What shall we say then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found?

2 For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God.

3 For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.

4 Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt.

5 But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.

Our Outline Today:

- **Paul Transitions from Law to Promise with Abraham (Verses 1 & 2)**
- **The Truth Is So Simple — Faith Alone Makes the Difference (Verse 3)**
- **The Gulf Between Legal Works and Faith Alone Is Insurmountable (Verses 4 & 5)**

I. Paul Transitions from Law to Promise with Abraham:

[READ] Romans 4:1-2

1 What shall we say then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found?

2 For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God.

- **The question Paul offers to begin this great dispensational transition is a challenging one: What is the basis of Abraham's "boasting"? What does his testimony rest on? Is it "sinking sand" or is it a firm foundation?**

④ Abraham was justified it says, not by works, but by faith. The law had not yet been given, but the Gentiles⁴

had their revelation in the stars and by tradition and their works WERE central to their faith so, just as the Jews under Moses' Law. But for Abraham it was new different, because God had said so.

It was on the promise of God! On his word and only on that did he stand.

Works were not an issue. He surely had them but they were not being counted by God. So it is that simple as it so often is. For faith is simple

The Truth Is So Simple — Faith Alone Makes the Difference:

Amen. This was something new!!

[READ] Romans 4:3 For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.

- **What did Abraham believe?**

What saith the scripture. Paul quotes from Gen-15:6

Genesis 15:1-6

1 After these things the word of the LORD came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward.

2 And Abram said, Lord GOD, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus?

3 And Abram said, Behold, to me thou hast given no seed: and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir.

4 And, behold, the word of the LORD came unto him, saying, This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir.

5 And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be.

6 And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness.

(700 prep. in Heb & Grk)

- **What was distinctive about Abraham's faith that Paul is focusing on here?**

- **He believed God, not in God, and there is a great difference indeed. What is that difference?**

- **God had given direct, verbal revelation to Abraham and he considered that to be sufficient to change the course of this man's life for ever — and it did. How? Because Abraham**

Paul in the
believed God and took him therefore at his word. This is the model for us today.

- **What was the consequence of Abraham's faith?**

Romans 4:3 For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.

- **The details are very important ... what was believed is most critical. It is that way with the Lord of glory. His words make all the difference ... let's see more:** *for it's all about the words, isn't it?*
- **"... the word of God ..."**

[READ] Acts 13:46-49

46 Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that **the word of God** should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles.

47 For so hath the Lord commanded us, *saying*, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth.

48 And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed.

49 And **the word of the Lord** was published throughout all the region.

[READ] Acts 20:32 And now, brethren, I commend you to **God, and to the word of his grace**, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.

[READ] Romans 9:6-11

6 Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel:

7 Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called.

8 That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed.

9 For this is the word of promise, At this time will I come, and Sara shall have a son.

10 And not only this; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac;

11 (For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;)

- ***What is the word of God regarding our salvation? Have you considered what that is or are you assuming something that is contrary to the scriptural evidence entirely? What does Paul say about it in 1 Corinthians 15?***

[READ] 1 Corinthians 15:1-16

1 Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you **the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand;**

2 **By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain.**

3 **For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures;**

4 **And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:**

5 **And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve:**

6 **After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep.**

7 **After that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles.**

8 **And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time.**

9 **For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.**

10 **But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.**

[READ] Ephesians 1:11-14

11 **In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will:**

12 **That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ.**

13 **In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise,**

14 **Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.**

[READ] Colossians 1:1-5

1 Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timotheus *our* brother,
2 To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ which are at Colosse: Grace *be* unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.
3 We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you,
4 Since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love *which* ye have to all the saints,
5 For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in **the word of the truth of the gospel;**

How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord — Author (attributed to): George Keith (1787); Author (attributed to): R. Keen (c. 1787)

**1 How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,
is laid for your faith in God's excellent Word!
What more can be said than to you God hath said,
to you who for refuge to Jesus have fled?**

**2 "Fear not, I am with thee, O be not dismayed,
for I am thy God, and will still give thee aid;
I'll strengthen thee, help thee, and cause thee to stand,
upheld by my righteous, omnipotent hand.**

**3 "When through the deep waters I call thee to go,
the rivers of sorrow shall not overflow;
for I will be near thee, thy troubles to bless,
and sanctify to thee thy deepest distress.**

**4 "When through fiery trials thy pathway shall lie,
my grace, all sufficient, shall be thy supply;
the flame shall not hurt thee; I only design
thy dross to consume, and thy gold to refine.**

**5 "The soul that on Jesus hath leaned for repose,
I will not, I will not desert to its foes;
that soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake,
I'll never, no, never, no, never forsake."**

- ***That great question: What is our foundation?***

*Is it the word of the
Living God, or is it
ultimately our work?* ²/₈

III. The Gulf Between Legal Works and Faith Alone Is Insurmountable:

Now the apostle applies the example of Abraham to ourselves.
[READ] Romans 4:4-5

4 Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt.

5 But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.

- So it is clear... *The gap between works of law and faith is insurmountable because the essence of the matter hangs on what the Lord God COUNTS as righteousness for us. Nothing else is even relevant. This is not a hope so faith but a faith based securely on the revealed word of Almighty God. That word is good news indeed, that is the word of the gospel, the word concerning the grace of Christ and imputed righteousness to our accounts through his finished work. Amen and amen. Are we glorying [boasting] in that and really in that alone, or somehow in our works?*
- When we know what law is and what faith is, the difference should be crystal clear. Is it? Why are so many in confusion and darkness about this? How can we help them to bridge the gap?
- What has Paul done here? He has gone back to Abraham. But in what way. Have we properly considered what he has written here and has it ever made a difference to us as the apostle ~~expects~~ *prays* that it will? Are there any testimonies? ... *mine*

IV. What Difference Does It Make and What Is the Dispensational Issue Here?

- Paul is writing here about the dispensational change that occurred more than once in history. Firstly, he makes reference to Abraham because God had made a change there. ~~What was that change?~~ *Then he applies this to the current situation. Another change had now occurred, he writes here.* *Rehearsal. It had begun something new.*

Conclusions / Application:

"Just as I am, without one plea" Author: Charlotte Elliott

*1 Just as I am, without one plea,
but that thy blood was shed for me,
and that thou bidd'st me come to thee,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.*

*2 Just as I am, and waiting not
to rid my soul of one dark blot,
to thee, whose blood can cleanse each spot,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.*

*3 Just as I am, though tossed about
with many a conflict, many a doubt,
fightings and fears within, without,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.*

*4 Just as I am, thou wilt receive,
wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve;
because thy promise I believe,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.*