

Romans 4 - Part 5
How to be Accepted by God
10/10/2021

Romans 4: (NIV) 4 1-5 What then shall we say that Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh, discovered in this matter? If, in fact, Abraham was justified by works, he had something to boast about—but not before God. What does Scripture say? “Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.” Now to the one who works, wages are not credited as a gift but as an obligation. However, to the one who does not work but trusts God who justifies the ungodly, their faith is credited as righteousness.

How to be Accepted by God

1st) Not By Good WORKS.

Romans 4:1-2 (NIV) What then shall we say that Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh, discovered in this matter? 2 If, in fact, Abraham was justified by works, he had something to boast about—but not before God.

- "...but not before God."
- You don't find your self-worth, your acceptance in achievements or accomplishments
- You find them in Christ
- Question - If it's not by good works, then what is it?

Romans 4:3 (NIV) "What does the scripture say? Abraham believed God and it was accredited to him as righteousness."

- It was Abraham's belief; his faith, that made him righteous.

Gen 12:1 (NIV) The Lord had said to Abram, "Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you.

- "After this the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision. God said I'm going to make you a great nation."
- "God took him outside and said, `Abram, look at the heavens and count the stars if indeed you can count them. So shall your offspring be.'"

Gen 12:6 (NIV) "Abram believed the Lord and it was accredited to him as righteousness."

Romans 4:4-5 (NIV) Now to the one who works, wages are not credited as a gift but as an obligation. However, to the one who does not work but trusts God who justifies the ungodly, their faith is credited as righteousness.

Two Key Words to Understand:

JUSTIFIED -- to be completely accepted by God.

- Just as if I never sinned
- To enter into a right relationship with God

Col. 1:21 (NIV) Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior.

- God becomes my friend, not my enemy

James 2:24 (NIV) And the scripture was fulfilled that says, "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness," and he was called God's friend.

- Under the old way (OT) God grew angry at Israel for their sins. Under the new way (NT) we are saved from God's anger

Romans 5:9 (NIV) Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him!

- Under the old way people were burdened with yearly reminders of their sins. Under the new way God remembers our sins no more

Heb. 8:12 (NIV) For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more."

- Under the old way people the Holy Spirit came upon people temporarily for times of service, under the new way God's Spirit lives in us forever (Eph. 1:13,14)

CREDITED

2nd) Not be **RITUALS**.

- Earn it. Work hard
- Follow rules, regulations and rituals
- Belong to the right group

Romans 3:28 (NIV) "For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from observing the law."

Romans 4:9 (NIV) "Is this blessedness only for the circumcised or also for the uncircumcised? We've been saying that Abraham's faith is credited to him as righteousness. "

Gal. 5:16 (NIV) For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision has any value. The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love.

- Baptism doesn't make you a believer, it shows you are a believer
- Question - If not by rituals then what is it?

Romans 4:6-9 (MSG) David confirms this way of looking at it, saying that the one who trusts God to do the putting-everything-right without insisting on having a say in it is one fortunate man: Do you think for a minute that this blessing is only pronounced over those of us who keep our religious ways and are circumcised? Or do you think it possible that the blessing could be given to those who never even heard of our ways, who were never brought up in the disciplines of God? We all agree, don't we, that it was by embracing what God did for him that Abraham was declared fit before God?

3rd) Not by **RULES**.

Romans 4:16 (MSG) This is why the fulfillment of God's promise depends entirely on trusting God and his way, and then simply embracing him and what he does.

- "Now that I'm a Christian I've got to keep God's favor through following the rules"
- Christianese
- Question - If it's not by rules then what is it?

Romans 4:16b (MSG) God's promise arrives as a pure gift.

- There is only one way we can be acceptable to God. That's faith.

Luke 18: 9-14(NIV)To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everyone else, Jesus told this parable: "Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood by himself and prayed: 'God, I thank you that I am not like other people—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.' "But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, 'God, have mercy on me, a sinner.' "I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted."