

Faith in the God Who Keeps His Word

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 19 October 2025

Preacher: BK Smith

[0:00] Please turn in your Bibles to Romans chapter 1, sorry, Romans chapter 4. Went back in time there for a second, please forgive me. Romans chapter 4.

! Before I get into it, I just kind of want to make a few announcements, prayer requests, and we'll have a time of prayer here briefly. Just so you know, we're going to pray for Pastor Corrente. David's actually in Comox giving some relief.

Pastoral relief, one of the blessings of having three pastors here that are capable of preaching is we get to loan out our riches and to support other churches.

So pastors in other places where a little bit smaller, where they do not have that blessing, we get to support them in that. So I want to pray for that. Number two, I want to thank you once again.

There's the mission update.

Just heading to the Philippines. The goal has been met. We've actually gone beyond the goal. So I've kind of extended the need, and I wrongly reported what was going on.

[1:06] We're actually, the excess money that we have coming in for this trip is going in to sponsor a pastor who lives in Pakistan, and bringing him over to Manila where he can spend two years in residency to get his Masters of Dominity.

And that's done through TMAI. That is the ministry that I'm connected with through my seminary.

And some of the money I've subdivided. I hope you guys didn't mind.

If you guys remember a couple years that I went, there is the ministry that reaches out to the homeless kids, where many of them live in graveyards. If you don't know that story, I would gladly share that story.

But there are families that actually live in graveyards, and they're paid to live in these graveyards to keep the tombstones clean. And during that time, they go through the dump that's in that area.

That's where I was last year, and I'll probably be going again when I'm there next month. And what the kids do is they just search through the junk and then sell it to these guys that are literally waiting outside of the cemetery.

[2:20] So this one church that we're associated with, they're very geared to bringing the gospel, kind of an Awana Grace Kids type of ministry to them. So they have asked for some funding. So we've just talked about that.

So we're prayerfully considering those two things. So if the Lord has laid it on your heart to give to those things, just mention Filipino missions and we'll sub-direct accordingly to those needs.

Dave actually made a big mistake today. I'm sorry to tell you. Membership class is not right after. It's at 12 o'clock. I need a little time to breathe and get energized again for the membership class.

In case you didn't know, we're serving you lunch at the same time. So no need to run down the subway, grab a sandwich. Now, if you did not sign up and you said, I forgot, can I come? Guess what? I'm giving you time to run down the subway, pick up a sandwich or chips, and come back and join the rest of us.

Let me go to the Lord in prayer who is both gracious and mighty. Dear Lord, Heavenly Father, we thank you for the God that you are.

[3:30] Father, we thank you for your grace that is not just simply poured out on us in here in Squamish, but it's worldwide. We give you thanks for the ministry that is in the Philippines.

We give you thanks for the ministry that is in Comox. We give you thanks for the ministry that is at The Rock locally downtown. Father, we give you thanks for these churches that are active in training pastors, in raising up evangelists and teachers and preachers to continue bringing your word.

We live in a world that we paid any attention to the political pundits. The world is coming to a head. Even Bill Gates mentioned that we're coming to this climax of humanity.

Although we do not subscribe to that same climax, we do believe that we are coming closer to a time when you will make things all right again.

that you are coming to judge the living and the dead. That you are coming to usher in your kingdom fully, completely.

[4:48] That every tribe and tongue will bow down and declare that you are indeed Lord. Father, we thank you for your word. We thank you not only does it inform our minds, but it penetrates our hearts.

It reveals the lies that we believe which have been peddled by this world. It flushes them out so we can have true truth, true eyes to see what is really going on in this world.

We give you thanks for these things. We ask you for your blessing upon this time. My words and those that hear this message in your most holy and precious name.

Amen. Now if you're new, you're just dropping in today. I'm going to give you a quick overview.

There's five essential questions that the book of Romans answers. The first three chapters of the book of Romans is dedicated to answer the question is, why is the world so messed up?

Why we have this crime, war, desolation. Why is everything messed up? Why is man so broken? And in answering that question, it reveals why we're broken as well.

[5:58] Why we need Jesus. Now the section that I'm in today, Paul has been answering in chapter 4, the next question is, how can we be made right with God?

And you're going to hear these terms. You're going to hear this term justification. Now that term justification is kind of a theological term, but it means to be made right with God, to be in harmony with God.

And that happens in only one way. And that happens only when we believe in the righteousness that he gives us. And that righteousness that God gives us is the righteousness of Jesus Christ. And that righteousness comes from the cross. It comes from Jesus Christ resurrecting from the grave. Now this section is an incredible section that we're getting into this morning.

This is for the person who says, hey, I get it. I understand, BK, what you're saying. That I'm not justified by works. Like there's no amount of works I can do to make my relationship right with God.

[7:12] There's no laws. There's no amount of laws that I can follow to make my relationship right with God. There are no rituals that I can do to make myself right with God.

But I only can be made right through this term called by faith alone. Now I'm going to be honest with you.

And you guys can tell me whether I'm right or wrong. Faith is hard sometimes. We struggle with faith.

We struggle with the circumstances of life. We struggle with the own fights that we have in our own hearts. We struggle when we look around at this world.

But in the first part of Romans 2, Paul showed us how Abraham was justified.

[8:09] That was the last two weeks. This morning, I want to tell you why faith matters. And not only why it matters, but what does saving faith look like even in the trials and tribulations of life?

And the person, if you can imagine with me, this is a courtroom. Paul is the expert litigator, think law and order. I haven't watched that show in about 20 years, but it's still going, I know.

You know, the lawyers, they're the experts in the law, make the case. And I believe more than anything else, this is a question our generation needs an answer to.

It's how do I get right with the holy God? And not only that, how do I know that my faith is saving faith? How do I know the faith that I have is the faith that God gives me his righteousness to?

The fact is, we live in a world full of counterfeits. A lot of people claim faith. It sounds like faith. They tweet like faith.

[9:24] But something happens when the storms of life come in, or they didn't get exactly what they wanted in life, faith disappears.

Here's the thing. If there's anything that you can take away from this sermon this morning, is that true saving faith clings to the promises of God when every part of human reason says, let go. True saving faith clings to the promises of God when every part of our human reason says, forget about it. True saving faith clings to the promises of God when every ounce of our human reason says, move along.

So this morning, Paul is going to show us, through Abraham, what real faith looks like. He's going to take us to a time when Abraham had no law to keep.

He's going to take us to a time when actually Abraham had no strength left in his body. When Abraham had absolutely no reason to continue in his faith except the word of the living God.

[10:54] And what's amazing is, Paul is telling us here, that this truth wasn't just written for Abraham. It's not just a story, a historical reality.

Paul tells us in this passage that this message was written for you as much as it was written for me. Today. Not 2,000 years ago, but today. This is a much needed message.

So if you want to give a title to today's message, write this down. Faith that takes God at his word. Faith that takes God at his word.

So the first thing I want to call your attention to in the text is what God's promised to Abraham. That this faith, this promise came by faith, not by Abraham keeping the law.

So this is my first point. There's going to be three points. Second point, and the first point I'm going to have five sub points. And the second point you'll see three sub points.

[11:58] And they'll be all on the screen, so don't panic. You'll follow. All right. So let's look at the promise that came by faith, not by law. Romans 4.13. Paul writes, For the promise to Abraham and his offspring that he would be heir to the world, did not come through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.

Now, Paul begins with God's promise. Now, if you're not sure what God's promise is, this promise is an allusion to Genesis 12 and later Genesis 15.

Genesis 12 is when God called Abraham, who was a pagan man living in a pagan world, and he calls him to follow him and come to what we know as Israel today.

Come, follow me. And he did so. And God made a promise to him. This was called the Abrahamic covenant.

This gives us our whole understanding of the Old Testament and the New Testament. Now, the promise gave Abraham included both earthly and spiritual dimensions.

[13:16] The earthly dimensions included land, descendants, and blessing to the nation. Now, Paul's focus here isn't the land portion, but the spiritual blessing portion.

He talks about the inheritance of salvation that extends to every believer through faith. And I'll just read it briefly to you. This is Genesis 12.3. He says, I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse.

And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed. All right? And that blessing will come through Jesus Christ, the new covenant. Now, that blessing, we read a little bit last year, remember?

When if you look at your first book of the Bible in the New Testament, you got Matthew, and there's this genealogy, and you're like, man, this is really confusing. But the first one associates Jesus Christ with Abraham.

All right? This is, there's a line that goes right to Abraham. Abraham. So here Paul is shifting our attention from what Abraham did to what God said.

[14:30] So everything in salvation begins and ends with a promise from God. So under my first point, I want to give you five facts, or five points, five observations about this promise.

First of all, this promise predated the law. It predated the law. This is Paul reminding his readers that Abraham lived hundreds of years, actually we believe over 430 years, before Moses ever walked down Mount Sinai with the tablets in his hands.

So when Abraham was declared righteous, and we see this in Genesis 15, 6, there were no Ten Commandments yet. There was no sacrificial code. There was no priesthood. There was no temple. So if Abraham was counted righteous before the law even existed, then it's impossible that this righteousness came through the law, because that's what people were arguing at that time.

That this righteousness must be coming through the law, and that's what Paul's arguing. And he simply says, you can't keep what hasn't been given. You can't keep a law that you don't have. [15:47] So if righteousness were tied to law keeping, Abraham couldn't be saved, because there was no law to keep. So that's the first point.

This promise that God gave Abraham predates the law. Second observation, the promise and the law are actually opposite systems.

They're opposite systems. Look at verse 14. For if it is the adherents of the law, sorry, who are to be heirs, that's rightfully entitled, to faith is null, and the promise is void.

What Paul is saying here is, if inheritance depends on performance, then your faith is actually meaningless. Picture a father giving or promising his son a gift.

I'll give you this inheritance when I die. But then he adds, unless you fail me in any way. See, that's not a promise. That's now a contract.

[16:54] When you make grace conditional on law keeping, it's no longer grace. That promise then turns into a paycheck.

And if you remember last week, we talked about the difference between a paycheck and grace. When you work for your employer, you're put in those 40 hours, or 50 hours, or 60 hours, and he gives you that paycheck at the end of the pay period.

You don't say thank you for this grace. You thank him for paying me for the hours that you owe me. You're in a binding contract.

Paul is saying that this isn't so right here. Why? Let's look at verse 15. He says, For the law brings wrath, but where there is no law, there is no transgression.

Now let me remind you what the purpose of the law is. The law is meant to expose sin. The law is meant to condemn us.

[17:59] The law never erased sin. And the law at no point made us right with God.

It was never meant to save us. It was only meant to show us we need saving. Now, some of you are nodding along with this, and let's be honest, deep down, you still believe that if you live some sort of righteousness, some sort of law, God will be happier with you.

If I keep these rules, my life will go smoother. If I follow along with all these laws, my kids will love Jesus.

My family will be blessed. My job will be stable. I will have good help. If you're thinking that way, let me remind you, that is not grace.

That's called a spiritual transaction that you've designed before God. That's just another version of the prosperity gospel with a religious coding.

[19:16] Let this truth sink in. God doesn't bless you because you've earned it. He blesses you because he's gracious. You with me on that?

God doesn't bless you because you've earned it. He blesses you because he is gracious. You keep the law to make God love you more.

You don't keep the law to make God love you more. You keep it because you already love him. See, obedience isn't leverage. It's love.

The promise of God rests on grace, not on our ability to perform. But it's based on God's faithfulness to keep his word.

You with me on that? It's all based on God's faithfulness to keep his word. Here's the third fact about this promise.

[20:19] Grace makes the promise certain. Grace makes the promise certain. Let's look at verse 16. If there is a mic drop in the passage, this is it, boom.

This is why it depends on faith. That word guaranteed.

That word guaranteed. See, grace guarantees what the law can only demand. Faith secures what works could never purchase.

and here's the thing if the promise depended on you it would collapse every time you sin John MacArthur put it plainly he says if your salvation depended on you keeping the law you would lose it every time but if it depends on God it stands forever see Martin Lloyd joined made this crucial insight he said we often think of our faith and God's grace as two equal parts you with me my grace and or my faith and God's grace they're both equal that's what brings salvation have any of you guys gone zip lining no Jerry no never come on some of you guys have gone zip lining alright I'll tell you what happens you put on a harness okay you got this harness and you get this hook you put in and there's this cord or this strap that is about this long a lot of people think this is what holds you together this is what keeps you safe that's not what keeps you safe what keeps you safe is when you attach this to that big cord that big metal wire that goes between mountains you with me on that that's about as much as your faith connects to what God does right

God's grace is that cable but you go around bragging hey look at this right I got this belay I got this two inch strap this is keeping me safe no it doesn't go ahead jump off the mountain and see what happens splat right grace doesn't matter doesn't mean God no longer cares how we live what it means is he's changed the way we live and this is what I mean by this under the law you were told what to do you were given commandments we're familiar with the ten commandments there's actually 613 laws under the mosaic law that Israel was to keep so under the law you were told what to do but under grace you're now given a heart to do it I'm going to give you an example in Deuteronomy 22:8 there is this law

[23:25] God told Israel he said when you build a new house make a parapet for your roof so that no one falls off now what a parapet was a small fence or like a railing system because in that time during the hot summer summer it's hot there a lot but you would use the rooftop as a patio sometimes people would sleep up there and there was this simple law put up a railing so none of your neighbors fall off your house okay you with me on that that was one of the laws now you and I are not required to build a parapet around our roof that no one falls off right so we ask what is God teaching he's teaching you to love your neighbor protect your neighbor's life take responsibility for the safety of others how do I do that I don't know maybe when it snows shovel the sidewalk so your neighbor doesn't slip on the ice you with me on that under the law you were told what to do under grace you're now given the heart to do it and you understand that obedience comes far more than what the law prescribed you see grace doesn't erase that command it fulfills it the Holy Spirit now writes that same love on your heart you don't obey to earn God's favor you obey because his favor has already been given you guys get that

God has already given you favor you don't have to earn it here's the thing you don't have to pay him back for it you do it because you're thankful and you love him see that's the difference between law and grace the law commands from the outside grace transforms from the inside now I want to give a little bit of a pastoral clarification this has been a big topic in our growth group I don't know but I know in a couple of the growth groups this has been the topic that we've been taught to think of the Christian life almost like it's an updated version of the life of the law right if you obey well enough God will be happier with me and life will go smoother now listen the law was holy and good but we need to understand this the law was never life giving the law was never meant to give life the law could tell you what to do but it could never give you the power to do it and this is why in this promise Paul says the promise rests on grace and it's this point I've been driving home for the last three weeks under the new covenant obedience isn't about earning it's about loving it's about earning not loving we don't keep God's commandments to stay in his favor we obey because we already have his favor do you know that as a believer in Jesus Christ God loves you do you know that as a believer in Jesus Christ God loves you he loves you he knows you he intimately knows you he loves you so much that he sent his only begotten son to die on the cross so we could have a relationship with me that's how much he loves you his only son he sent his son to take the wrath that was rightly for us and he poured it out on his son that moment on that cross so not only do we know this love of

God we're now his children we've been adopted as sons and daughters see the moral heart of the law shows us what God values but the old covenant systems the rituals the sabbaths the

regulations all pointed forward to Christ but now that Christ has come our rest is not in a day but in a person do you understand we rest in him the law demanded grace delivers the law said do and live grace says believe and live and I'm going to be honest with you this is a truth most of you will struggle with for the rest of your lives and it all comes down to are you willing to take God at his word so let's look at the fourth fact about this promise this promise that we see extends to actually to every believer

Romans 4 16 not only to the adherent of the law but also to the one who shares the faith of Abraham who is the father of us all what that verse essentially means is we as Gentiles are welcome there's no second class citizens and we're going to talk a little bit more and we get into Romans 5 on this but that's why the scripture says neither Jew or Gentile male or female slave or free if you believe in the God who saves by grace Abraham is your spiritual father he is your example and that is why he is on the court docket this morning the Abrahamic covenant simply says I will bless those who will bless you and him who dishonors you I will curse and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed and the fifth point of this promise it comes from the faith in the God who gives life comes from faith in the God who gives life verse 17 this is the statement that seals the argument as it is written

[30:02] I have made you the father of many nations in the presence of the God in whom he believed who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist what kind of God did Abraham believe in he believed in the God who created everything out of nothing he believed in the God who speaks words into being he believed in a God who gives life to the dead you see these are the foundations of what true faith is true faith doesn't come from our ability to perform but it comes in our faith of a God's ability to create to redeem and to resurrect listen

I know it's tough some of us still live like the promise depends on how many devotions we did this day or how pure our thoughts are or how generous our giving is now don't misinterpret me I'm not saying those things don't matter but those things do not sustain your salvation you are not hanging on to God by your fingertips God has already got you by the hand and that's why Paul says the promise rests on grace you see this is the God that Abraham believed in the God who gives life to the dead and calls all things into existence that that did not previously exist but the story isn't over yet because that kind of faith doesn't live in the abstract right it's wonderful to say you have faith but until that faith is tested that's how we know the measure of that faith so it's one thing to say you believe in the God of the promise but it's another thing to keep believing when every visible sign screams hopeless and that brings us to point two of the sermon what kind of faith did Abraham have

Abraham had faith that believes against hope Abraham had faith that believes against hope let's look at verse 18 of chapter 4 it says in hope Abraham believed against hope that he should become the father of many nations as he had been told so shall your offspring be okay let me just paint the scene for you for a moment Adam at this time or Abraham sorry is pushing a hundred years Sarah is 90 the nursery is empty the promise is still unfulfilled and every human biological possibility is now long gone

God's word says to Abraham you will have a son Abraham's body says I think that ship has sailed see this is the point where faith either collapses or clings to God Paul writes in hope he believed against hope that means when every human reason to hope was gone Abraham still hoped not because he was naive not because he was stupid but because he was convinced that God's word carried more weight than his current circumstances tell me that truth doesn't speak to our hearts does God's word carry more weight than your present circumstances faith let's look at the three qualities of faith here one faith looks beyond what is visible faith looks beyond what is visible let's look at verse 19 it said he did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body which was as good as dead and when he considered the barrenness of

Sarah's womb you know what that is that's honesty see Abraham didn't pretend the facts weren't there no I'm really virile man I really got it I can go back to work you know he faced reality head on the situation did look impossible but here's the thing faith doesn't deny reality faith defies despair faith defies despair it acknowledges the fact but refuses to make them final you with me on that the facts aren't final you see faith doesn't close its eyes to the fact faith opens its eyes to God you with

me on this one it's not the circumstances that direct our faith it is God who directs our faith

[36:08] Abraham doesn't look at himself and says I still got it I think I can do it he looked at God and said God's got all the strength that I need that's the first quality of faith the second quality of faith is faith takes God at his word verse 20 no unbelief made him waver concerning the promise of God but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God notice the verb tense he grew strong what that tells us is faith isn't static faith stretches or strengthens as it stretched we know the story of Abraham his faith wasn't perfect but we did know he persevered he stumbled I think

Hagar was a little bit more than a stumble but when God spoke again Abraham believed again and here's the secret Abraham gave glory to God you see that means Abraham's focus wasn't on the barrenness of Sarah's womb but on the fullness of God's character the more he magnified God the smaller his problems became you see that's the posture of faith it's not fixating on what's missing but worshiping the one who never fails you here saying BK I want that faith tell me how to have that faith worship worship God not just today but in your life a disposition of worship study God's word know God practical step read a book or listen to a sermon dedicated to the character and attributes of God you figure those things out you figure life out not saying you're going to understand God perfectly but you're going to understand yourself before God I just I'm trying to order next week I'm hoping to have 10 books based on the practicality of character of God if you want them come see me I'll sell them to you for what I get I think I'll get a good deal on them but I want you to have easy books that are access so you can study the character of God and know who he is and here's the third quality of faith that Abraham models to us faith is fully convinced of God's power God knows but does he have the strength to do it is he capable of doing it verse 21 fully convinced that

God was able to do what he had promised this verse verse 12 are 12 the most liberating words in the entire chapter God was able to do what he had promised see the bedrock of faith is not I am able but he is able you're struggling with faith put up a sign on your fridge he is able focus on that you see faith doesn't rest on probabilities it rests on the power of God faith doesn't say can I trust enough it says can God fail and the answer to that is never you see when the promise and the circumstances of life collides faith sides with the promise picture a farmer standing in a barren field the soil the soil is cracked and dry he's got one seed left in his hand everything says it's hopeless but he kneels buries the seed and prays for rain this is

Abraham hope planted in dust waiting for divine rain see here's the thing faith doesn't flourish in greenhouses faith grows in the desert and some of you know exactly what I'm talking about your faith flourishes in the desert of life the trials and tribulations that have stretched you which have caused you to cling to the promises of God and not the circumstances of life let me ask you two simple questions has God called you to trust him in an area that looks impossible have you been praying for perhaps a prodigal child a spouse or waiting for provision or holding on to a promise that feels past its expiration date don't let your circumstances interpret

[41:51] God let God interpret your circumstances why because the text says because when everything looks dead he's the God who raises the dead you see faith that believes against hope is the faith that glorifies God every time you choose to trust in his word instead of your fear heaven rejoices when you stand in the dark and say I still believe God is magnified faith that glorifies God just doesn't believe in miracles it believes in the God of miracles you with me we don't worship what God does we worship God so Paul has shown us that

Abraham's faith wasn't just theoretical it was tested it was stretched and it was proven genuine Abraham believed the promise he did not believe the law and he trusted the word over the evidence but Paul's not done yet he's about to tell us why all this matters for you and me today see Abraham's story wasn't just meant to inspire us it's written to include us the faith that justified Abraham is the same faith that justifies you and me because it looks the same to the same God who raises the dead so let's go to our last point what type of faith did Abraham have faith that looked forward to Christ we're going to begin in Romans 4 22 25 this is why his faith was counted to him as righteousness now but the words it was counted to him were not written for his sake alone

but for ours also picture

Paul on the episode of law and order he's gone to the jury he's talked to the judge and it's almost now he's looking right into the camera and he's staring directly at us and he simply says that verdict of righteousness counted to him wasn't just for Abraham it was written for you in other words Abraham's faith wasn't a museum piece for theological study it is a pattern for saving faith for every generation you see God didn't write Abraham's story so we could admire a hero Paul wrote it so we imitate his faith in the God who keeps his promises now what kind of faith is that one we see that the faith that looks forward to Christ is the same kind of faith we need you see the faith that justified Abraham like I said is the same faith that justifies you and me Abraham believed God could bring life out of a dead womb That's what it comes down to!

We believe God brought life out of a dead tomb! Paraphrasing Piper here! Abraham believed God could bring life out of a dead womb we believe God brought life out of a dead tomb See the parallel?

[45:40] Both require faith in the God who raises the dead Abraham looked forward to what God promised we look backward to what God fulfilled You see our faith is built on the promise that was answered We don't need to speculate we don't need to guess it happened the direction changed but the object of faith is the same the same God same grace and the same righteousness that is credited by faith that's why verse 24 says it will be counted to us who believe in him who raised from the dead Jesus our Lord the second element of this faith is the faith in God who raises the dead and notice don't miss his description he says him who raised from the dead Jesus our Lord that is the essence of our

Christian faith it's a resurrection faith the God of Abraham called life out of barrenness the God of the gospel called life out of the grave Piper says the empty womb of Sarah points forward to the empty tomb of Christ here's the good news the same power that raised Jesus from the dead is the same power that justifies you and I today you see being made right with God justification is not an abstract idea death it's the overflow of resurrection power into an ungodly life when you believe God applies the finished work of Christ to your account God doesn't make you better God declares you righteous you with me on that one God doesn't make you better God declares you righteous and he does not do that someday he does it right now the third element of faith that we're supposed to take out from this and

I want to look at verse 25 for this verse 25 it says verse 25 here Paul says delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification three phases here one delivered for our trespasses that means we were substituted Jesus Christ substituted for us Jesus didn't die as a martyr for a cause he died as a substitute for sinners if you want to have the peace of Jesus Christ you need to come to terms that you are a sinner and that you are messed up as this messed up world is see Jesus Christ was handed over to the cross because of my sin because of your sin for this is why Isaiah 53 5 says he was pierced for our transgressions every nail every lash every drop of blood ours was the guilt he was the payment notice the next term raised for our justification that's what's called vindication the resurrection is the father's divine amen to the son's cry it is finished if

Christ stayed dead we'd have no proof the payment was accepted but when Jesus Christ came out of that empty tomb the receipt was stamped paid in full see the resurrection is God's declaration that Jesus' sacrifice worked sin was atoned for justice was satisfied wrath was removed and righteousness was secured my friends if you want assurance that your sins are forgiven do not look to your performance look to the empty tomb I'm going to be honest with you this morning this passage leaves no middle ground you either trust your performance or you trust his promise you either rest in your works or you rest in his resurrection here's the thing about

Abraham he didn't have all the details we do but he had the same kind of faith he trusted God to do the impossible and now on this side of the cross we have even greater reason to believe because we don't just believe God can raise the dead we believe he has amen so let me ask you is that where your faith is placed is your faith in that God are you resting your soul on the promise that Christ died for your sins and rose again for your justification if you do amen that saving faith it's not a vague belief in something spiritual optimism about life doesn't save us faith says God has spoken Christ is risen

[51:53] I will trust him so let me conclude this sermon faith in the God who keeps his word I want to make one point clear faith is not pretending it's trusting what I mean by that is all too often I have known and I met various Christians during my life who believe that greater faith is not recognizing that life is somehow tough right it's this stoic belief that oh yes it's hard but you know what I know I've lost my foot but there's people who've lost two feet right I know I lost my home but you know what there's people who've lost three homes like there's this false dishonesty with God see faith isn't pretending the pain isn't real it's about trusting the

God who's greater than the pain see faith isn't closing your eyes to the facts because we get accused of that all the time it's about opening our eyes to the faithfulness of God you see faith isn't denying your weakness it's about depending on God's strength see the reason Abraham's story still preaches today is because the God who spoke to him still speaks to us and he's saying the same thing today trust me take me at my word stop trying to earn what God has already promised to give notice how Paul ends this chapter he just simply says he was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification!

You see that's the beating heart of Christianity! The cross paid our debt the resurrection proved the payment cleared and the empty tomb is God's exclamation point on his promise I will do it! My friends if you're weary take comfort your salvation doesn't rest on your hold of him but on his hold of you let's be honest some of us made have made mistakes life circumstances have changed because of some of our decisions and we think can my life ever be redeemed before God Abraham says yes it can yes it can remember that man David last week he said blessed is the one who is forgiven blessed is the one who is forgiven if you're doubting take courage the same God who raised Jesus from the dead can raise your faith from the ashes of despair from the trials of life where you're wondering

Lord I have failed you I have not believed I don't think I can do it God can raise your faith and if you're here rejoicing take confidence the promise made is the promise kept and it will be kept forever here's the thing faith is not a one time decision it's daily dependence on God every morning every trial every unanswered prayer is always another opportunity to believe against hope my prayer for you is to lift your eyes to the God who keeps his word he justified Abraham through faith he justifies you through

[56:32] Christ the case is closed the verdict stands by grace through faith you are not guilty let's pray dear holy heavenly father what a deep passage it's a simple passage the sermon just falls off the words that have been spoken in your word oh God father I pray that you would hear the cries and even the discouragement of the weary so often this is the ones that were the prodigals who wonder if I can come home back to God like the prodigal son in Luke 15 maybe he maybe he will make me a servant maybe he'll give me a room and I can live with the servants and at least

I'll have food in my belly and a roof over my head but God does so much more takes the coveted ring of ownership and puts it on his son and clothes him with his robe rejoicing that the prodigal has returned the one whose sins have been forgiven is now blessed has now come and is now fully accepted into the presence of God Lord only a great and merciful God are you you can't make this stuff up this is your story oh Jesus and I pray against hope that every person here that this would be their story as well they'd get off that treadmill of faith of trying to earn your righteousness or somehow pay back pray that they'd fully accept that they are indeed love and they now get to love you in return as a son and daughter love their father we're talking about a perfect father who's always been eternally loving father you are great and you are glorious and we give you thanks for these words and

I pray they crush the lies of the devil and I pray they give new life to the saved and all of God's people said amen to