

Only Imputed Righteousness!

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[0 : 00] This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfredo, Georgia. It is our prayer that you will be blessed by the preaching of God's Word.

We're in Romans chapter number 4 today. We're excited about looking at this with you. As we've been going through the book of Romans, Romans chapter 3, we're seeing justification by the fact that He has placed it, His righteousness in us.

I place my faith in Christ, He places righteousness on my account. But we get to Romans chapter number 4, and we're going to look at it today as a court case. And I'm going to get some help here in a second.

We're going to look at it as cross-examining Abraham, or as Jewish people would know him, as Father Abraham. I've never been in a criminal case, and that's good, and you're glad to know that.

But I've sit in a case or two, and I've never been in here, but you read in books or in television, you would see where a person is being cross-examined, and the person they bring up as the key witness for the defense ends up being the key witness for the other side there.

[1 : 05] And that's what happens here. They bring up Abraham, and Paul begins to cross-examine the testimony of Abraham. And the Jewish people say that Abraham is not a good case example for righteousness by ritual rights, or by good works, or by the law, the three cases that they were making.

But they find out in Abraham and also in David that they were made righteous by faith alone in God. And so we'll look at that there. If you'll turn with me to Romans 4, we're going to read down to verse number 16, and then I'll pray.

Romans 4, 1. What shall we say then that Abraham, our father, as pertaining to the flesh, has found? For if Abraham was justified by works, he hath whereof the glory, but not before God.

For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God in it, and it was counted or imputed unto him for righteousness. Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt.

But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith not works is counted or imputed for righteousness. Even as David also described as the blessedness of man unto whom God imputed righteousness without works, saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, whose sins are covered.

[2 : 27] And this is a quote from Psalm 32, which we had already read. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin. Cometh this blessed then upon the circumcision only, or upon the uncircumcision also.

For we say that the faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness. How was it then reckoned? When was in circumcision or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision.

And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith, which he yet being uncircumcised, that he might be the father of all them that believe.

Though they may be not circumcised, the righteousness might be imputed unto them also. And the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of that father or our father Abraham, which of being yet uncircumcised.

For the promise that they should be the heir of the world was not to Abraham, or to a seed through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect.

[3 : 35] Because the law worketh wrath, for there is no law, there is no transgression. Therefore it is faith that he might be by grace. To the end of the promise might be sure to all seed, not to that only which is of the law, but to the also which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of the psalm.

Verse number 15 says, Because the law worketh wrath, for there is no law, there is no transgression. Verse 16 again, Therefore it is of faith that it might be by grace.

Before I pray this morning, let me tell you a story. A few years ago, a few of us from the training center went to a funeral. One of our students' sister had died in a horrible killing.

Her boyfriend at 16 had shot and killed her. And I just recently saw on the news, the 16 year old boy, who is now 17, was sentenced to life. I won't mention the name of the student, most of you probably wouldn't know him.

But we went to a funeral, and on that day, a preacher that none of you would probably know, but he preached, and as he began to preach, he began to talk about the law. And those of us that love grace, we were very thankful that he began to talk about the law, and the ten commandments, and he began to show our need for a savior.

[4 : 48] And as he went on, all of us in our hearts, we hoped and we waited for that moment, that when he told us that we are sinners, that he would transition, and then he would say, but there's grace for the rebel, and there's grace for the sinner.

But we never got to that point in the sermon, and it ended with telling us that killings like this will continue in America, if we don't bring the ten commandments back, and we put them in our yards, and we talk about it more.

And I don't disagree with the application that the ten commandments ought to be placed in our yard, but if the ten commandments is placed in our yard, then we must be faithful to the great commandment, of loving our neighbor, and going out, and sharing the gospel.

And so we left that day very heavy, there was hundreds of students there, and they were restless, and you could tell most of them probably never been to a funeral before, and they were brought down very low, and saw themselves as sinners, that the gospel was never shared with them that day, and we left feeling very heavy, and upset that the gospel was not shared to those people, that grace wasn't given.

Here in Romans chapter number four, we find that the law is not sufficient, that they must know about Jesus, and we find that the law has its place, that the law must lead us to a savior.

[6 : 06] So as I think about that day, and as we look here, I'm thankful that the law, and ritual rights, and all that, and good works, it isn't what saved Abraham, and it isn't what will save any of you here today, but those things are able to point us, to a wonderful savior.

Let's pray. Heavenly Father, I said you'll be with us, as we look at Romans chapter number four, as we look at the life of Abraham, I pray that it will help us Lord, in our witness among people in our community, and around the world Lord, I pray that you'll be with the work, that's going on around the world, through our missionary endeavors, as the gospel being preached, as we've sent out missionaries today, Lord, that will use and show the law, and that they will use it, to let people see their need of a savior, that they'll be faithful in preaching, the ending of the story, where your grace is sufficient, so that you'll be with us today, that we'll make application, that we'll apply what we hear, to our hearts and minds, in Jesus name I pray, Amen.

So as I said, we're going to look at Romans chapter number four, and ask brother Hugh, if he would mind helping me here today, I thought he was probably, the most equipped to be father Abraham, I thought about asking Robert, Robert has a beard, many of you may not know that, but Robert also has a beard, but brother Hughes is the best here, and the church voted, among us bearded men, so we'd have father Abraham, here today, and maybe you could imagine, a trial going on, and behind this wall, there would be people, they were called upon, there'd be a jury there, but they're going to cross examine, father Abraham, and Paul's going to talk about, father Abraham, here today, and I've already asked about this, I would never mess with a bearded man, without getting permission, all right, but as we look at father Abraham, you would ask, why would Abraham be brought up, why would he make a great example, for the point that Paul wants to make, and he's been making it, here in Romans three, and just hitting it, and hitting it, and hitting it, and it's amazing, that these Jewish people, their hearts have not broken, and they're still, hanging on to their religion, and they haven't let go, we can only be made righteous, by Christ imputing his rights, to center account, and no one has ever, will receive any other way, not Abraham, and not your godly grandmother, and not your family member, and not your co-worker, no matter who you've known, and no matter who's in your family, no matter how good, and sweet they were, their goodness, and their sweetness, is not the reason, that they're in heaven today, if they are, is because they recognize, that they were a sinner, in need of Jesus, and Christian,

I'm going to challenge you, at the end of the day, to make sure, when people look at your life, and they see what God's doing, in your life, that you constantly point them, to the fact, that anything good in me, is from our heavenly father, and that I'm a sinner, in need of forgiveness, so they call Abraham, so why did Paul choose, to discuss the life of Abraham, it's an apt choice, because Abraham, was basically the man, who the Jews were using, as their proof of justification, by law, by legalism, as I said, they were their key witness, but it also becomes, Paul's key witness, in this case, because they'll find out, he isn't saved, on the reason, that they thought, that he had been, they had been taught, that having them as a father, would merit them salvation, or give them a head start, on the competition, listen to what's said, about father Abraham, by John the Baptist, in Matthew 3, but when he saw, many of the Pharisees, and Sadducees, come to his baptism, he said unto them, oh generation of vipers, who has warned you, to flee from the wrath, to come, bring forth therefore, fruits meet for repentance, and think thou now, to say within yourselves, we have Abraham, to our father, for I say unto you, that God is able, of these stones, to raise up children, unto Abraham, and now also, the axe is laid upon, the roots of the trees, therefore every tree, which bringeth not, forth good fruit, is hewn down, and cast into the fire,

I indeed baptize you, with water unto repentance, but he that cometh, after me, is mightier than thee, whose shoes I am not, worthy to bear, he shall baptize you, with the holy ghost, with fire, whose fan is in his hand, and shall thoroughly, purge the floor, and gather his wheat, into the garner, but he will burn up the chaff, with unquenchable fire, such strong words, being given here, he's saying, you say you have father Abraham, as your father, and you think that provides you, protection in the afterlife, his goodness, is going to be merited, unto your account, and he can tell you, that there's no salvation, found in that, that God will make, children of Abraham, that are spiritual, and that he can raise up, children of Abraham, from these stones, so they, when Paul brings up Abraham here, the children of Israel, the Jewish people, are thinking, oh good, I'm glad they brought up Abraham, because they're going to help, make my case for me, because if anybody, was saved by the law, or by good works, or good needs, it would be, father Abraham, and that's not the case, they're going to get blindsided, by some truth, about their family members, any of you ever study, the genealogy, of your family, and find something, neat about them, something going on, maybe somebody was famous, or you found something, about a person, their ancestry, that you didn't know, before, you know,

[11:07] I don't know, that I have any famous Cornwells, brother Hugh, on Wikipedia, I went on there, and I'm number nine, on famous Cornwells, because I put myself on there, and Wikipedia, hasn't taken me off yet, and I didn't know, I could do that, you can edit Wikipedia, and so I didn't, I added myself, the famous Cornwells there, but I've never learned, anything surprising, about my family, it's always surprising, because I want you to see, these Jewish people, what they thought about Abraham, which was supporting, good works, is going to get me to heaven, good works, I don't, what Paul's talking about, is a new faith, it's a new gospel, this is not what was been taught, in the Old Testament, that's what they're telling themselves, and Father Abraham, is our key witness, in the fact this, Paul takes that apart, and says, you don't know, about Father Abraham, what you think you know, about Father Abraham, Jesus often would refer, to Abraham, to illustrate what was necessary, to enter in heaven, Matthew 8, 10, when Jesus heard it, he marveled, and said to them, that followed, verily I say to you, I have not found, so great faith, no not in Israel, and I say unto you, that you, many shall come, from the east and west, and shall sit down, with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven, but the children, the king shall be cast out, into the outer darkness, there shall be weeping, and gnashing of teeth, and he says here, to them, he says, you should marvel, at this fact here, that I say unto you, that this Gentile person, will one day, be with Abraham, in heaven, because in the mind, the Jewish people, they knew that father Abraham, was in heaven, and whatever he did, to get in heaven, is what they wanted, to do, they would have been shocked, when Jesus told a story, about a rich man, that didn't go to heaven, or the Abraham's bosom, but Lazarus, got to go there, that this poor,

Gentile, poor man, would go into heaven, but that rich man, didn't get to go, John 8, and many times in the Bible, they were very proud, to be Abraham's children, father Abraham, Abraham's life, demonstrates how good works, religious rituals, or the law, is not able to make, a man righteous, let me tell you, some things about Abraham, he doesn't get circumcised, for 13 years, after he was declared righteous, we're going to look at that, God says he's righteous, 13 years later, we find the ritual, of circumcision, his life was not just, filled with good works, but it was better than most, but that had no impact, on God choosing him, for service, God chose him, for service, not because he was, the greatest, but because God did it, to show his greatness, and then also, the father Abraham, here lives, 430 years, before, the law was given, to them, and so Paul, is making, that case, thank you brother Hugh, you did a great job, as father Abraham,

I couldn't think of, anybody better for it, so next we have Alex, that comes up here, who will be David, so we cross examine Abraham, and so they're like, good we like Abraham, but now that they begin, to question Abraham, they're thinking, maybe we don't like Abraham, so now we go, to King David, you're awake now, aren't you, alright, and so we have David, here with us today, and so they would like that, they're like, oh David, once again, another person, that will prove our point, of righteousness, given to us, by our good works, our religious rituals, and, by the law, and so why is David, brought into the story, because as Paul Harvey would say, we get to find out, the rest of the story, and then Psalms 32, is quoted there, to say that, blessed is the man, whose sins are not, imputed into his account, so Abraham lived, before the law, and so you may say, for a second, I object, okay, you may be in the courtroom, and say, okay, Abraham was before the law, and he got saved, by faith in God, not because of the law, but that he put his faith, in God, and that was counted, to him for righteousness, but what about, all of us that were, born after the law, was made, now we must live by it, so we brought David, up here, to find out,

King David here, was born, after the law, and we're still going, to find about him, that he is blessed, because of the fact, that his faith in God, imputed his, God's righteousness, unto his account, so it was a great witness, to come up there, they both testified, of being forgiven, by God's grace, and the best part, and the only part, that really matters, about the testimony, of Abraham, and David, is true of the testimony, of me, and you, they were people, that were saved, by faith, it could only be, by grace, which would bring glory, to God, if it was by faith, because if it was not, of faith, then it would be, of works, and if it's of works, it brings glory, to man, and not to God, and we were created, to bring glory, to him, and so, his extending grace, to us, by faith, brings great glory, to our heavenly father, thank you David, you can go back, to looking down, at the ground, if you'd like, I was just playing, he was wide awake, you don't sit on the front row, unless you want to do that, and so as we looked, at that there, we looked at Abraham, and we looked at David, and their people, one of our missionaries, of Burkina Faso, so people came, and they're questioning, about people groups, and we study missions here, and we see that, there's a value to that, but they asked him, they said, who is the people group, that you're trying to reach, here in Burkina Faso, he says,

I have one people group, I'm trying to reach, and Keith Shoemaker said, I'm trying to reach, lost people, I'm trying to reach, lost people of any kind, out of any tribe, out of any language, if they're lost, because he saw life, pretty simply, there's those that believe, and unbelievers, and that's the greatest division, in the world, that we're all divided in here, the day, and around the world, but you could also say, there's people that are believers, in God, and grace, and there's people, that believe in works, and there are people, that aren't believers, in the grace that he gives, and so we find here, a case being made, against works, and for grace, and Abraham was brought, to witness, and David is brought, to witness, and we're always looking, for confirmation, from others, that what we're doing, is right, aren't we, the Jewish people here, were saying that Abraham, he was made righteous, by good works, and David was made righteous, by the law, so that's the course, that I want, to take, they knew if anyone, was righteous, it would be one of them, I read this the other day, it said the footsteps, of a child follows, are most likely, to be the ones, his parents thought, they covered up, the footsteps, of a child, a child follows, are most likely, to be the ones, that his parents thought, they covered up, father Abraham,

[17 : 37] Abraham was seeing, his people here, and they were so stuck, on the idea, that their good works, were getting them to heaven, I know that it would, break his heart to see, because he longed, for the day of Jesus, and it would break his heart, to see the people, that was his physical ancestry, saying that good works, is going to get me to heaven, because remember Abraham, and his lack of patience, went and had a child, and became Ishmael, and then came to him, he said have faith, have patience, in what I said, and his lack of faith, in that moment, caused a great problem, and now because of that, there's a fight, in the Arabic world, and the people of Israel, going on there, and so he would hate, to see those people, following in the footsteps, of not living by faith, in God, they thought his goodness, carried over to their account today, they thought they had, inherited his righteousness, unbeliever, who is it that you're looking at today, you may be looking, the people around you, somebody may be a Christian, in your family, or maybe somebody, that you work with, and could I challenge you, you may be looking at people, that are made righteous, but you may be looking, at the wrong parts, of their life, and you may be mimicking, something that you shouldn't, be mimicking, you should mimic, their faith in God, you should mimic the fact, that they repented, that you should see, that those people, that are believers, that are here today, are believers, because of their faith in God, and it's not the works, that they have, believer in here,

I've already said in here, does your life, show a marked difference, between that of an unbeliever, and when it does make a difference, are you pointing people, to the fact that you're a sinner, who has the rights, in God's presence, has no right, in God's presence, but only by grace, believer in here today, are you pointing people, to the fact that God's grace, did something in your life, or are you okay, with them thinking, that you're a really good person, because if so, you're taking his name, in vain, in the sense, that you're stealing, his global fame, he did a work, in your life, and if you're a good dad, you're a good husband, you're a good worker, any of those works, that are going on, is a work he's doing, in your life, and you should point to him, and his glory, and you should let people know, you know people, that get saved later in life, and many of you did in here, we know your story, we know that you didn't deserve, to be saved, and we know that you lived, a wild life, and then one day, God saved you, and you love to share that story, can I tell you, no matter what age, you were saved in here, you did not deserve, to go into the presence of God, and you were a sinner, and by simple faith, and a perfect savior, you were saved, and that's the part of your story, that you need to make sure, that everybody who knows you, understands, and you're showing them, from the word, so now we get to the motives, being questioned, so Abraham, they're turned upside down, on their, oh they're turned on their head, about their belief in Abraham, and he says, it's not what you thought about Abraham, that he didn't get made righteous, the way you think, and you're not going to be made righteous, in that way, you're only going to be doing by faith, and he said, let's question some of these motives, in Romans 4, 4 and 5, they begin to talk about, the good works, it says, now in the hymn that worketh, is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt, but the hymn that worketh not, but believeth on him, that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness, if your works, makes God have to place you in heaven, then you're saying, that our heavenly creator God, is indebted to you, is that not unbelievably arrogant, that a human would ever believe, that our good works, would make God indebted to us, you know, you find people, and they're working their way to heaven, and they would tell you that, but could you imagine, if they ever really thought about, what they were saying, say, well I see that you're trying to do good works, that merit your way to heaven, do you know what you're really saying, that you think your good works down here, makes God a debtor to you, and now he has to place you, in heaven,

I don't imagine they see it that way, and they also don't see the fact, that the works that they have to meet, is perfectness, is righteousness, you know, when you ask people, you see somebody out running, and you say, hey what's your, what do you plan to run the mile in, what's your goal for running a 5k, they may say 30 minutes, which would be a great goal, none of them ever say, I plan to run a 5k, in zero minutes, that's never their goal is it, they're always like, I want to get a little lower, nobody ever says, I expect, I'm going to run in the 5k, for coming, or for the India project, and my goal is not zero minutes, but God says, that's what you have to obtain to, if you want to run the 5k, and what I run it in, you have to run it in zero minutes, you have to be at the ending, at the same time, you're at the beginning, and if you're trying to work, your way to heaven, you're going to have to pertain, righteousness of God, and perfection, you can't run it in 30 minutes, you can't run it in 25, you're going to have to do it, in zero minutes, and that raises the standard, to where it belongs, and that will help them see, that they need to go, to a savior, and that's where the law, comes in, because when I get ready, for that 5k, my favorite moment, in a race, is before we start, because I have some really nice, running shoes, and I'll have my number, like everybody else will have, and I will be, even at the front of the line, with the people, that are going to win, the race, but it isn't until the race starts, and the law is placed, beside my ability to run, that you realize, that Trent is in need, of oxygen, and he needs some help, because I can look the part, and a lot of us, can look the part, and your friends, and family, and maybe you look the part, but when the God's law, is placed beside us, when you begin to run the race, you say,

I am not worthy, I am not a person, that is righteous, I need the righteousness, of God placed, on my account, and I don't care, how fast a runner you are, or how good a person you are, you'll never obtain, zero, and you'll never obtain, that righteousness, unless he gives it, to you, so first of all, we see it's not, the good works here, Pharisees, older brothers, in the prodigal story, and moral Americans, you have a problem, with the grace, that is spoken about, you have problems, with Matthew 12, in the parable, that says, one guy worked the full day, one guy worked half a day, and one guy worked, for a couple hours, and they all got paid, the same amount, because we are self-made people, and the harder I work, the more I'm supposed to get, and you don't like, that story of grace, that we're not rewarded, upon our performance, whatever I get, a result, to my hard work, we think, anyone who has worked, less than me, they have not worked, enough, that's what happens, in that story, they didn't work, as long as I did, they shouldn't get paid, as much, and who do we believe, in America, who do we believe, typically in America, should go to heaven, everybody that's as good, as me, or better, goes to heaven, and everybody that's, slightly less than me, or less, they do not, because we believe, that we are the gold standard, when it comes to righteousness, and we are not, problem with payments, by works options, it doesn't pay, for your past sins, fallen creatures, can't meet the required, standard of perfection, the death of Christ, on the cross, was pointless, and not only, would it be pointless, it would be a pathetic, attempt by our God, to merit our attention, if our God, was not dying, in our place, for our sins, and we were able, to do it ourselves, it would be the act, of an insecure God, at a pathetic, pathetic attempt, that gained the attention, of man, which he had lost, is that how you view God today,

God would have to share, his glory, with us, if we were able, to merit, our own salvation, and he's a jealous God, and he will not, so Abraham, they, so they're questioning Abraham, and the Jewish people say, okay, I hear what you're saying, Paul, about Abraham, but his motive, was the fact, that he thought, that he was earning, his salvation, through good works, and he says here, that is not, what Abraham was doing, and it's not, what you can do, secondly, what's the motive, being questioned, God didn't make Abraham, righteous, because of his, adherence, to the religious rituals, verses 9, and 10, cometh thou this, blessedness, upon the circumcision only, or upon the uncircumcision also, for we say, that faith was reckoned, to Abraham, for righteousness, so those, that have performed, the religious ceremony, of circumcision, is faith only for them, or is it also, for those that were not, of the circumcision, and we're told, that it is for both, it's in Genesis 15, that he is counted, it is counted on him, the righteousness, and it's 13, or 14 years later, in Genesis 17, when he is 99 years old, that he is circumcised, circumcision, in verse 11 says, and you receive the sign, of circumcision, a seal of righteousness, righteousness, of the faith, it was a sign, it was a seal, of righteousness, that was given to them, by faith, our pastor makes a great deal, to make mention of this, and I'm glad, so glad that he does, we'll see people baptized here, and as they're getting, to the baptism pool, he says,

[26 : 13] I want you to know, that this is a sign, of a symbol, of something that has happened, on an inward, inside of their heart, that they have placed, their faith in Jesus, and outward, is an outward showing, and that's what they're teaching, that this circumcision was, the symbols, and works around the tabernacle, could not get the job done, Hebrews 8, 7, for if that first covenant, had been faultless, then should no place, have been sought, for the second, his death, made atonement, for the sins, of those in the old, and new covenant, in the old testament, they were saved, by faith in God, and the animal sacrifices, did not take away, the wrath of sin, it just was a symbol, of their faith in God, and that the death of Jesus, I thought it was paid for, they would say, the Jewish people listening, they would say, I thought our sins, were paid for, and the old testament, they said no sir, no animal sacrifices, have ever had the power, of the cleanse, but only Jesus, Hebrews 9, 26, for then must he have, often have suffered, since the foundation, of the world, but now, once in the end, the world, has he appeared, to put away sin, by the sacrifice, of himself, that only faith, in Jesus, has ever taken away, the sins, and the wrath of sin, for man, so Abraham was saved, the same way, that you are today,

God didn't make Abraham, righteous, because of the fulfilling, of the law, so it wasn't good works, it wasn't religious rituals, and we also see, that it's not, by the law, 13 says, for the promise, that thus should, the heir of the world, was not the Abraham, or to a seed, through the law, but through the righteousness, of faith, for that which are, the law, be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise, made of none effect, how many of you, think you're pretty good, at math in here, would you raise your hand, all right, good job, Todd, see if you can pay attention here, okay, this is a simple math problem, that will solve, a theological problem, for you, Abraham was born, at 215 BC, according to Genesis, around there, Genesis 11, 26, he died in 1840 BC, in Genesis 25, Moses was born, at 1590, and he died, when he was 120, and so between the death, of Abraham, and the birth of Moses, there was 250 years, Abraham was 85, in Genesis 15, when he was made righteous, so how many years, is it between the time, of Abraham, and Moses gives the law, and the answer is, given to us, in the back of the book, just like in math class, you know, you have, you look at the back of the book, and you get the answers, so before you go, and do that, we find the Galatians 3, 17, and he said, and I say, and this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed, before God in Christ, the law, which is 430 years after, cannot disannul, that which shall be made, of the promise, of none effect, saving you the math today,

God gives a simple math problem, that solves a very hard, theological problem, for people, that I have to be saved, by adherence to the law, and he says, let me remind you, that Abraham, which you know, who's in heaven, Abraham, which you call, father Abraham, Abraham, that you put so much faith in, because he's, you're of his ancestry, he was 430 years, before the law, was even given, isn't that powerful, and the fact, that it's brought up again, in Galatians, may be a clue to us, those of us, who find themselves, in a court case, with the word of God, on our side, trying to show people, that they're not saved, by the religious works, that Abraham, 430 years before, so it wasn't good works, it wasn't religious rituals, and it wasn't the law, that saved him, and David was brought in here, as a character witness, as we saw earlier here, Psalms 84, and verse number 3, which is also written by David, as we saw Psalms 32, this is the heart of David, yea, the sparrow has found, a house, and a swallow, a nest for herself, where she may lay her egg, and even nine altars,

O Lord of hosts, my king, and my God, and David here, is saying that, a sparrow, and a swallow, which is two birds, that we find in the Bible, the sparrow, has very little value, you could buy two of them, for a certain cost, you could buy one, for like 15 shekels maybe, and you could buy two, for 30 or something, and it's like, if you buy two, we'll throw in one free for you, and the sacrifices, it was the very cheapest thing, that you could get, and the swallow, represents a restlessness here, and so David here, speaking poetically, he's saying, that the sparrow, which has very little value, and the swallow, which is restless, they have found a place, in your holy temple, and he recognized, that the unworthy, and those that have little value, to this world, have found a place, in your presence, and he is saying, I have, as well, David knew, like the guy, at Rite Aid, CJ, he knew what a true blessing was, he knew that it was a blessing, that God would allow him, into his presence, and David did not go in there, boasting, or arrogantly, because he knew, he was only allowed in there, by faith, and what God had done, there, so we get called, to the bench here, in closing, so we find here, with Abraham, he was brought upon, and what they believed, about Abraham, wasn't true, and what many people, in this community, believe about Abraham, isn't true, and what most people, believe about their good works, is not true, and then we look at the motives, and we find, why it is, that God saved him, and it was faith, alone, so we're called, to the bench, bench in legal context, means simply, the location, and courtroom, where the judge will sit, we learn, that the system, doesn't work, as we thought it did, we learn, what was most important, about the life, of Abraham, and that it's not, his behavior, that we should try, to get people to mimic, but it is his, belief, we could stand today, and say,

Father Abraham, and it would be, the oddest ending, to a church service, we ever had, on a Sunday morning, and you remember, that story growing up, because it's the time, that you got to punch, your sister in the face, while you're in, vacation Bible school, Father Abraham's one of them, so are you, you move your hands around, and we talk about that, most children don't know why, we are Father Abraham's children, but we're glad, to sing the song, and it lets the children, get energy out of him, but we're told in Galatians, that spiritually, we are the children, of Abraham, and that when God, made a promise unto him, that his seed would be, as the sands of the sea, that today, we are part of that promise, and the promise, wasn't given to him, by law, but it was given unto him, before the law, and it was given to him, based upon his faith, and all of you, that have put your faith, in Jesus, if you're in Jesus, then you're now, part of that, someone has said, that Abraham believed God, when he did not know where, Abraham's a believer, Abraham believed God, when he didn't know where, he started deputation, to the mission field, like so many of our missionaries, and he didn't even know, where he was going, he didn't know how, at 1111, he knew that God, would raise up Isaac, but we didn't, he didn't even know, how that would happen, and he didn't even know, why at times, but he was simply, a believer, and we find that, over and over, he believed for a city, he believed for a son, and most importantly, he believed for a redeemer,

[33 : 13] Hebrews 11, 13, these all died in faith, speaking of Abraham, and those, of Hebrews 11, not having received, the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed, that they were strangers, and pilgrims, on earth, Hebrews 11, 19, Abraham believed, that God had power, over death, accounting that God, was able to raise him up, even from the dead, from whence he also, received him, a figure, you know, we go back to Genesis, we find Abraham, about to kill his son, and you're thinking, what is going through, the mind of the dad, to be willing, to do this, because what's logical, the believer, is not logical, the unbeliever, he believed God, and he believed, that he was able, to take the life, of his son, and we learn, in Hebrews 11, that he believed, that God was powerful enough, to raise his son, from the dead, he was a believer, and it says, in John 8, 56, that he rejoiced, to see this day, your father Abraham, rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it, and he was glad, Abraham is in heaven, by this time, he longed for that day, he longed for me, when I was absent, and you despise me, when I am present, is what Jesus is telling, through the apostle Paul, to them, those Jewish people there, that he longed for me, that day that he would see me, and I am present, in your day, and they still, did not want to see me, so it is by faith, so that it can be by grace, verse 16, therefore it is of faith, that it might be, by grace, and until you face, the reality, of your ungodliness, and your incapacity, you will be unredeemable, is that a sad statement here, you see, it's not the worst sinner, who loses heaven, it is the one, who thinks himself, the least sinner, who loses heaven, it's not that you're in here, that the worst sinner, that God cannot save you, because he has saved people, that are far worse off, than where you're at today, but it's the one in here, the day that sees themselves, as the least sinner, that he is not able to save, because he has chosen, that faith, is the instrument, that he will use, to bestow his grace, isn't that heavy today, as we think about it, and so do you understand, in my beginning illustration, why so many of us, were happy about the fact, that this man was speaking, of the ten commandments, and he was letting, these high schoolers know, that they had transgressed, against the holy God, and that they were sinners, and we were so thankful, that this, that part of the story, was being told, but the gospel, has to come in, when that's told, let me end with a story here, from the Philippines,

Ed you'll appreciate this, Felix Giordia, was 60 years old, he lived in the Philippines, way out there, nobody out, where nobody else lived, he farmed a simple little farm, and he saved his money, for years to buy an ox, to help him plow, he finally saved enough money, and went out to look, for an ox to buy, and you know what he found, he found that all the money, he saved was worthless, because the government, of the Philippines, had ordered, that all the Philippine paper money, be exchanged, for a new currency, and all savings, stashed up in the old currency, after a certain date, was useless, and so in 1975, he had a little school boy, write a letter for him, because he couldn't read, or write, and the little boy, wrote to the president, and he said, after all Mr. Giordia, is only poor, and he doesn't read, and he doesn't write, and he's just an ignorant, rice farmer, can't you please, let his money be good, he got a letter back, and it said this, the law must be followed, because the deadline, for exchanging bills, has already passed, the government, can no longer change, your bills, with the new ones, even the president, of the Philippines, is not exempt, from this rule, but the letter, did not end there, he added this, however, because I believe, that you really worked hard, to save this money, and I'm changing your money, for new money, for my own personal funds, and now you will be able, to buy your ox, and the letter was signed, your friend,

Ferdinand Marcos, the president, of the Philippines, this man had no right, but the president, gave him, of his own funds, you and I, are in the same position today, all the stuff, that you've been piling up, your whole life, that you expect, to walk in, and purchase your redemption, for in heaven, it is completely, useless, but the president, and the leader, and the king, of that holy place, called heaven, he gives you, of his own account, his righteousness, and he didn't look down, and see your good works, in this story, but he saw, all that you have saved up, and all you did, it is completely useless today, and it's only by him, bestowing grace to you, can you now, receive that, redemption, Christian in here, can I challenge you, point everyone, that is looking to you, and your morality, to a savior, and how meaningless, your goodness was, in receiving, the imputed righteousness, of God, unbeliever in here, you may have stockpiles, of righteousness, and of good works, but can I tell you, that that is no currency, that the law, has showed you, that you're a sinner, and it may have driven you, to be a more moral man, or more moral woman, or a teenager, but only by the grace offered, that was offered, that David, and the Abraham, that is offered to you, the day, will his righteousness, be placed, in your account, isn't that a sad story, that man worked, and he had that, but what a glorious story, when grace was bestowed, isn't it a sad story, when you hear the law, but you don't hear of grace, and the day, these people, in Romans 4, they were hearing, the law that you know about, it's pointed you to something, and it's pointing you, to this message,

I don't know the hearts, but I know my heavenly father, knows the heart, of everyone in here, today, and I know that, no matter where you're at, there's no sinner too great, that he is not willing, to save, and to redeem, and to bestow, his righteousness upon, but you must come to him, recognizing your need, for a savior, and I pray that, that's what you will do today, and Christian, I pray that you'll take this, as a challenge, the people know that story, about you, have they ever heard, that you were a sinner, in need of a savior, are you sharing that with them, or do you frustrate them, and the fact that, they think that, if life is about, doing good works, you're so much farther, ahead of them, that they're never going to, catch up, and they spend their times, trying to match, what you're doing, and they're trying to, catch up with you today, they need to see, that the goal, is righteousness, that can only be given, by God, would you bow your heads, and pray with me, for a moment, as a Christian, will come to the piano, and every head bowed, and every eye is closed, Heavenly Father, I pray that you'll be with us, here in this moment,

Lord, the Apostle Paul, as he did to the Jewish people, listening Lord, as he's done to this, congregation today, Lord, he has allowed people, to see, that their good works, and their religious rituals, and the law, will not save them, but they need the grace, that is offered, through faith, in Jesus Christ, and so, Heavenly Father, I pray that, right now, that you will convict, the hearts, of someone in here, that the Holy Spirit, will do the work, of someone, and they will put, their faith, and trust, in you, as Christ, begins to play, the piano, I just ask you, in here today, we have trained counselors, we never want, to embarrass you, but we take you, to a room, and let you ask questions, about Abraham, David, or anything else, in the Bible, and if you are in here today, and you say, I have a stack of cash, and I know it isn't, going to get me anywhere, but I want to know, about this grace, that is offered by Jesus, would you raise your hand, not unto me, but unto the Heavenly Father, and say, today I recognize, my need, for his grace, to be offered, is that your story, in here today, has the law, brought you to this point, would you raise your hand, and acknowledge me, those of you, of you in here, that did not raise your hand, and those that profess, to be believers, as I do, would you take this challenge, and would you come, find a place, at the altar, and pray for a co-worker, a friend, family member, would you thank him, that your goodness, did nothing in your salvation, because it was filthy rags, and will you worship him, for his holy name, will you worship him, in the 10,000 reasons, that is given, the heart of every believer, in here, in response to this verse, should be in worship, to him today, because of the grace, that was offered, to us, this message, was recorded, at Vision Baptist Church, in Alfredo Georgia, for more information, log on to, www.visionbaptist.com, where you can find, our service times, location, contact information, and more audio, and video recordings, works, kop których,