

**Not Ashamed  
(Week 10)  
Romans 4:1-8  
"The Testimony of Two Witnesses"**

**Introduction**

**"Abraham believed The LORD, and He credited it to him as righteousness."**  
**Genesis 15:6**

In Jewish Law, a testimony was only considered valid, if it was given by at least two witnesses (Deuteronomy 17:6). As Paul lays out his defense of "salvation by grace through faith", he calls to the stand two of the greatest "witnesses" from Israel's history to prove his point, that no one can justify himself by his works. Apart from God's redeeming grace, no one can be saved. And this marvelous grace can only be received BY FAITH. This is the central message of *Romans* and even Christianity itself, and it stands in contrast with every other religion on the face of this earth. All others beliefs center around man's ability to earn favor with God. But Christianity teaches us, that in order to be saved, every man must first admit that he simply cannot save himself.

If ever there was a person in all of Israel, who would be considered worthy of good standing in the eyes of God, it would be Father Abraham. After all, it was he who left everything to follow God and received the promise of becoming a great nation.

**...“Go out from your land, your relatives, and your father's house to the land that I will show you. I will make you into a great nation, I will bless you, I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, I will curse anyone who treats you with contempt, and all the peoples on earth will be blessed through you.”**  
**Genesis 12:1-3**

In all of Israel, no man was ever revered as much as Abraham. Paul wanted his readers in Rome to understand that even Abraham was not saved by his good works, but rather by God's grace obtained BY FAITH. So, if Father Abraham couldn't be saved by his deeds, what hope did anyone else have of obtaining their salvation by good works? Answer: None. For you see, as good as he was, even Abraham was a sinner! And no sinner can stand in the presence of a Holy and Just God. We need a Savior. Even Abraham needed Jesus. And *The New Testament* tells us that He was told of the One who would one day come and redeem those who would believe. Jesus speaks of Abraham's knowledge of Him:

**"Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day; He saw it and was glad."** **John 8:56**

Not only did Abraham, Israel's greatest patriarch, need forgiveness, but also Israel's greatest monarch, King David. While Abraham was born "before The Law", David came afterward. And even having complete knowledge of The Law, David sinned grievously. Everyone in all of Israel knew full well of David's sin with Bathsheba, and the subsequent murder of her husband Uriah as a consequence. David had no justification for what he had done when he stood before a Holy God. His case was hopeless, but rather than justice, he received mercy. Rather than condemnation, he received grace.

The message therefore, in *Romans* Chapter Four is quite clear. No one can save themselves by good works, and no one deserves to be saved. Salvation can only be obtained, by grace through faith. We are saved when we say Amen to God's promise, Accept His forgiveness, and are Accredited with the righteousness of Christ.

For many years now, Genesis 15:6 has been my favorite verse in all of Scripture. It speaks of how Abraham was saved by grace, through faith alone and demonstrates what we must do to be saved as well. Let us look today, how we can obtain favor with God.

### **Amen (vs 1-5)**

First and foremost, it is important for us to understand that no where in all of scripture does it tell us that God chose Abraham, because he was a great man. In fact, the Book of *Joshua* tells us that Abraham came from a pagan background.

**“Joshua said to all the people. ‘This is what The LORD, the God of Israel says: ‘Long ago your ancestors, including Terah, the father of Abraham and Nahor, lived beyond the Euphrates River and worshipped other gods. But I took your father Abraham from the region beyond the Euphrates River, led him throughout the land of Canaan, and multiplied his descendants. I gave him Isaac...’”** **Joshua 24:2-3**

So you see, Abraham started out just as lost as anyone else in this world. It was God's grace that called him out of Ur of the Chaldeans. Why did God choose him? We may never know. It was a simple case of God's sovereign election. He chose Abraham, because that is what He wanted to do. To credit Abraham somehow, in God's selection of him, is to glorify Abraham rather than God! This is a fact worth remembering, when we begin to think that God saved us because we are wonderful. The fact remains that:

**“There is no one righteous, not even one.”** **Romans 3:10**

And that means everyone, my friends, including one as great as Father Abraham.

It is also important to remember that even though Abraham responded to God in faith by leaving the land of Ur, his faith still had a few flaws in it. For example, God instructed Abraham to leave behind his father's pagan household and follow Him to a place that He would show him. Abraham did follow God's leading, but he took along his father and his nephew Lot. This was not perfect obedience, and although Abraham began his journey with The LORD, his final arrival in Canaan was delayed for fifteen years, until his father died in Haran (**Genesis 11:32**).

And not only did Abraham only partially obey God when it came to his family, he also demonstrated weakness in his faith when famine came to the land, and rather than remain where God had sent him, he journeyed to Egypt and found himself in no small degree of trouble, when he lied to the Egyptians about his wife Sarah being his sister (**Genesis 12:10-17**).

That being said, Abraham, in spite of all his flaws, trusted God when He spoke. After his nephew Lot was taken hostage in the attack upon the city of Sodom, Abraham took all the men in his household and rescued his troublesome nephew. Upon his victorious return he was faced with a challenge. It was very likely that the army whom he had just fought would return in vengeance. Abraham was left with a decision to make, whether to remain independent and fully rely upon God's favor and protection, or forge an alliance with the wicked king of Sodom. Abraham chose the former, and God appeared to Him in a vision and said:

**“...Do not be afraid Abram. I am your shield; your reward will be very great.”** **Genesis 15:1**

It is then that God reiterates His earlier promise to Abraham and reminds him that he will have a son in his old age. This son would be the beginning of a multitude of descendants from Abraham's line. God would indeed make him a great nation, just as He had promised. *The Bible* tells us that Abraham responded in complete faith.

**“Abraham believed The LORD, and He credited it to him as righteousness.”** **Genesis 15:6**

As I stated earlier, this is my favorite verse in all of Scripture. I love the wording in the original Hebrew. The word that is translated “believed” is actually *Aman* (pronounced aw-man'). It is where we get our word “amen”, and it simply means “let it be” or “truth”. In short, when God told Abraham what He was going to do for him, the old man responded by saying “Amen LORD”. He took God completely at His

word. No questions asked. He believed in his heart that God would do exactly what He said He would. My friends, in order to be saved, you must do the exact same thing. God says that if we will put our faith in The LORD Jesus Christ, then He will save us.

**"If you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is LORD,' and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved."** **Romans 10:9**

It has absolutely nothing to do with how good we have been, or even how good we can be. It is a rather simple act of faith, believing that God will do what He has promised. We are saved just as Abraham was saved, by GRACE through FAITH. We are saved by saying "AMEN" to God's promise.

### **Accept (vs. 6-8)**

When David was a young general in King Saul's army, it seemed that he could do no wrong. Why, the people even wrote songs about him! When is the last time that someone wrote a praise song... about you?! The women of Israel danced, and sang about David's wondrous exploits. He was a national hero. It was those very songs that galled the jealous King Saul into murderous rage. And David was forced to flee into the wilderness for his young life. For ten years the young shepherd lived in exile. And throughout all of those years he was on the lam, it seemed that David consistently did what was right, and the people loved him all the more for it.

Beware, when people praise your name, for sooner or later your sinful nature will manifest itself and many will be disappointed. It is so much harder for a person of great reputation to humble themselves and admit they need saving. But all of us must do so in order to receive God's grace. David was a sinner just like all of us. He may have been Israel's most beloved king in the nation's history, but he was a sinner none the less. It just took a lot of years for his weakness to be exposed.

**"Some people's sins are obvious, preceding them to judgment, but the sins of others surface later."** **1 Timothy 5:24**

When King David wrote **Psalms 32**, it was in the aftermath of his sin with Bathsheba. The Prophet Nathan had confronted him and exposed his sin to the light of day. David thought that he had thoroughly covered his tracks, but God cannot be trifled with. He sees the things even committed in the deepest of darkness. And yet, He still longs to forgive. **Psalms 32** is a song that rejoices in the forgiveness of God. It begins with the words:

**"How joyful is the one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered! How joyful is a person whom The LORD does not charge with iniquity and in whose spirit is no deceit!"**

It is of these verses that Paul now reminds his readers in this portion of **Romans Chapter Four**. You see, David, Israel's greatest king, knew The Law very well but had still failed miserably to keep it. According to The Law, there was no sacrifice available for "intentional sin". Therefore, David stood before God with no excuse for what he had done. In his uncontrolled lust for Bathsheba, he had broken not one, but several, of the Ten Commandments. His penalty for such crimes against God was undeniable. He should have been sentenced to death. But God, rich in mercy (**Ephesians 2:4**) offered David something wonderful. He offered him forgiveness for his sin, rather than the death it so completely deserved. What did David have to do? Humbly accept the forgiveness that God offered. Simple as that.

You see, there was absolutely nothing that David could do to "take back" his actions. There was nothing that he could do to undo his adultery, nothing that could bring Uriah back. David stood condemned before a righteous God. This same man that people had admired and had written songs about was a sinner. All that he could do now was acknowledge the fact that he needed forgiveness and accept the grace that was offered. In short, it had nothing to do with David's "goodness", and all to do with God's.

In order for a person to be saved, they must be willing to let go of their reputation, and accept the fact that:

**“...There is no one righteous, not even one. There is no one who understands; there is no one who seeks God. All have turned away; all alike have become worthless. There is no one who does what is good, not even one. Their throat is an open grave; they deceive with their tongue. Vipers venom is under their lips. Their mouth is full of cursing and bitterness. Their feet are swift to shed blood; ruin and wretchedness are in their paths, and the path of peace they have not known. There is no fear of God before their eyes.”** **Romans 3:10b-18**

Yes, that means you David. As well as, the rest of us. It doesn't matter how highly people think of you. God sees you for what you really are. A sinner in need of a Savior. The good news? A Savior has been provided. All that we must do is accept that we need Him and accept the offer of grace that He has given. Want to experience the joy that David spoke of in **Psalms 32**? Then humble yourself before The LORD, and He will lift you up (**James 4:10**).

### **Accredited**

Now let us circle back to **Genesis 15:6** that Paul quotes at the beginning of this passage.

**“...Abraham believed God, and it was CREDITED to him for righteousness.”**  
**Romans 4:3b (Genesis 15:6)**

When Abraham said “Amen” to God's promise, The LORD gave him “righteous credit”. Both in the Hebrew and Greek, the words used here for “*credited*” mean exactly what they seem. It is like a deposit made into one's account. God, in fact, made a deposit of righteousness into Abraham's spiritual account as it were. All the sins that Abraham had committed were washed away, and his record was made spotless. Did Abraham do anything to receive this credit? No, it was granted to him, when he believed.

Immediately following Abraham's statement of faith in **Genesis 15:6**, God makes a Covenant with Abraham. But if you read the text closely, you will see that Abraham is completely unconscious, when the Covenant is made (**Genesis 15:7-20**). So, how did Abraham make a covenant with God, when he was passed out cold? Answer: He didn't! God made a Covenant with Himself, that He would keep His promises to Abraham! My friends, this is EXACTLY how we are saved. We trust in God's promise, and HE does all the work. Once again, reiterating the fact that our works cannot save us. It is the finished work of Christ's death, burial, and resurrection that is God making a covenant with Himself on our behalf. God Himself became a man, and as God, He fulfilled God's plan! When you study Genesis 15, notice carefully, that when God made his covenant with Abraham, there are three parties involved in the agreement. The Smoking Fire-pot, the Blazing Torch, and the Sacrifice. The Father, The Spirit, and The Son in perfect agreement with each other, to keep the Word of God to Abraham!

So you see, if you will but *Amen*, God's promise. *Accept* that you are a sinner and *Accept* God's forgiveness, you will be *Accredited* with righteousness. You will be clothed in the righteousness of Christ Himself to stand faultless before the Throne of a Holy God! Is it any wonder that David declared:

**“Blessed are those whose lawless acts are forgiven, and whose sins are covered! Blessed is the person The LORD will never charge with sin.”**

Have you received your “righteous credit”? What a joy to know that we have been given this amazing gift of grace, simply by trusting in the promise of God.

And let all of God's redeemed and righteous saints say... TRUTH!!!