

Review of Reasons to Understand the Gift of Righteousness¹

1. **PEACE:** We can live with the knowledge that we have peace with God. *Romans 5:1*
2. **LIFE:** We are able to truly LIVE by the gift of our right-standing with God. *Rom. 1:16-17*
3. **REIGN IN LIFE:** Those who receive the abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness will REIGN though Jesus. *Romans 5:17*
4. **MATURITY:** Being accustomed to the word of righteousness is an indication of our maturity and puts us in a position to teach others. *Hebrews 5:12*
5. **NO WRATH:** We no longer fear the wrath of God because we have been made righteous by His blood. God is for us, not against us. *Romans 5:9*
6. **CONNECTED:** Our righteous standing with God keeps us connected to Christ. *Gal. 5:4*
7. **RIGHTEOUS LIVING:** Because we are made righteous we have the ability to live righteously (instead of trying to be righteous). Righteous living is a fruit of having been made righteous. *1 Peter 2:24, Ephesians 2:10, 1 John 3:10*
8. **TIME TO LOVE:** Since we do not have to focus on making ourselves righteous by endless spiritual disciplines and religious obligations, and because we can walk confidently in God's love and acceptance of us, we have the ability, time, and resources to love each other. *1 John 4:7-8*

Review of Romans 1-3

In Romans 1-3 all are declared guilty before God because all are unrighteous (*Rom. 3:10*) and since God has revealed Himself to all men through creation (*Rom. 1:18-20*) and no one has ever perfectly kept the Law which accuses us (*Rom. 3:20*), we have no defense. Both Jew and Gentile are guilty as charged before a perfectly holy and righteous Judge (*Rom. 3:19*). We deserve a verdict of death as the wages for our sins (*Rom. 3:23*). However, God is a righteous judge and He also loved us even though we were His enemies (*Rom. 5:10*). Someone had to pay the penalty, and that Someone is His Son, Jesus. He who knew no sin became sin for us so that we who knew no righteousness might become the righteousness of God in Him (*2 Cor. 5:21*). Instead of being declared guilty for what we have done, we are declared innocent when we put our faith in the One who became sin for us. By faith we are made holy and blameless in His sight.

Colossians 1:21-23 And you, who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled²² in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy, and blameless, and above reproach in His sight—²³ if indeed you continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, and are not moved away from the hope of the gospel which you heard, which was preached to every creature under heaven, of which I, Paul, became a minister.

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Romans 4

Romans 4:1-5²

What then shall we say that Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh, has found? ²For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. ³For what does the Scripture say? "ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD, AND IT WAS CREDITED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS." ⁴Now to the one who works, his wage is not credited as a favor, but as what is due. ⁵But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is credited as righteousness.

1. Paul is not saying that Abraham is our forefather according to the flesh; he is asking what Abraham accomplished in His flesh (his own effort)³.
 - a. *Abraham was justified by faith for over thirteen years (see note 3 at Ro 4:10) before he performed the act of circumcision that the Jews were insisting was necessary for right standing with God.-Andrew Wommack's Living Commentary.*
 2. This is simply saying that Abraham had nothing to boast about before God.
 3. The reason righteousness was credited (imputed) to Abraham was because he believed God.
 - a. *The actual payment had not been made, the actual bestowal of righteousness had not been consummated, and for the reason that our Lord had not yet paid the penalty of man's sin and had not yet been raised from the dead.-Wuest*
 4. One who works is paid. He gets what he earns. He deserves his wage.
 5. We, apart from works, by simply believing (having faith) in Him, are justified (made righteous before God). We did nothing to work for it. We don't earn it. We get what we don't deserve.
- Ephesians 2:8-9⁴*
For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, ⁹ not of works, lest anyone should boast.

Romans 4:6-8

Just as David also speaks of the blessing on the man to whom God credits righteousness apart from works: ⁷"BLESSED ARE THOSE WHOSE LAWLESS DEEDS HAVE BEEN FORGIVEN, AND WHOSE SINS HAVE BEEN COVERED. ⁸"BLESSED IS THE MAN WHOSE SIN THE LORD WILL NOT TAKE INTO ACCOUNT."

6. In verses 1-5, Paul is calling Abraham as a witness that God imputes/credits righteousness apart from a person's works and now he calls David to the stand.⁵
 - a. *"Blessedness" is makarismos, "a declaration of blessedness." Makarios in classical Greek means "prosperous," in the New Testament, "spiritually prosperous."-Wuest*

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³ Wuest Word Studies

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⁵ "According to Jewish law, a question was settled by two or three witnesses. Paul calls two witnesses from the Old Testament to testify to justification through faith." 4:6-8-The Nelson Study Bible

7. In verse 7 he quotes David saying that the ones who lawless deeds have been forgiven and whose sins have been covered is blessed.

8. Blessed is he to whom the Lord will NOT take into account his sins.

Psalm 32:1-2

*Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven,
Whose sin is covered.*

² *Blessed is the man to whom the LORD does not impute iniquity,
And in whose spirit there is no deceit.*

- a. We are blessed, spiritually prosperous, when we know our sins have been forgiven, our sins are covered/removed, and the Lord will not take our sins into account.

Romans 4:9-13

⁹ *Is this blessing then on the circumcised, or on the uncircumcised also? For we say, "FAITH WAS CREDITED TO ABRAHAM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS." ¹⁰ How then was it credited? While he was circumcised, or uncircumcised? Not while circumcised, but while uncircumcised; ¹¹ and he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while uncircumcised, so that he might be the father of all who believe without being circumcised, that righteousness might be credited to them, ¹² and the father of circumcision to those who not only are of the circumcision, but who also follow in the steps of the faith of our father Abraham which he had while uncircumcised. ¹³ For the promise to Abraham or to his descendants that he would be heir of the world was not through the Law, but through the righteousness of faith.*

9. So who receives this blessing? Is it only the Jews, or do not the Gentiles also receive the blessing?

10. It is important for Paul to emphasize that righteousness was imparted to Abraham before He was circumcised so that righteousness does not come by circumcision.

- a. *Therefore, the rite of circumcision (or any other act of obedience) cannot be a prerequisite for justification.-Andrew Wommack*

11. Circumcision did not make Abraham righteous. It was a seal of righteousness he received by faith while uncircumcised. This allows him to be a father to those who are uncircumcised; that is, the Gentile, who BELIEVES so that they also may be credited with righteousness.

12. Abraham is also father to the circumcised (Jew) who believes. He is father to all those who believe both Jew and Gentile.

13. The promise that God made to Abraham while he was uncircumcised was that his descendants would be heir of the world. This did not come through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.

- a. This also meant that the promise made to him was pre-law. The promise is never through the law or good works.
- b. This shows that the world will be won by the true Gospel of grace and faith, and not of religion and mixture.

Romans 4:14-15

For if those who are of the Law are heirs, faith is made void and the promise is nullified;¹⁵ for the Law brings about wrath, but where there is no law, there also is no violation.

14. Paul continues his argument that it is not those who obey the Law who are heirs. If this were true...if righteousness could come by the law...then there is no faith or promise, only works.

- a. *For, assuming that those who are of the law are heirs, the aforementioned faith has been voided with the result that it is permanently invalidated, and the aforementioned promise has been rendered inoperative with the result that it is in a state of permanent inoperation.-Wuest*
- b. *If law/legalism/self effort, made us heirs, spiritually prosperous, then faith is void, and the promise nullified, so when we allow legalism/self effort in our lives it voids our faith and the promises.*

15. If there is no law, there can be no violation. If there is a law, there is a punishment.

- a. For example if there is no sign that says, "Stay Off the Grass" at a certain location, then there is nothing wrong with walking on the grass and no punishment for doing so. However, if the sign tells us to stay off and cites a city ordinance, we stay off the grass. If we don't, we can be punished with a fine.
- b. Before the Law, Abraham lied and put his wife's life in jeopardy, but never rebuked him or punished him. His righteousness was based only on his faith in the promise of God.
- c. Before the Law, the Children of Israel complained and God did not punish or rebuke them, but rather provided for them. After the law was given, they were punished for the same behavior.

Romans 4:16-17

For this reason it is by faith, in order that it may be in accordance with grace, so that the promise will be guaranteed to all the descendants,¹⁷ (as it is written, "A FATHER OF MANY NATIONS HAVE I MADE YOU") in the presence of Him whom he believed, even God, who gives life to the dead and calls into being that which does not exist.

16. God promised to make Abraham a father of MANY nations, not just of the Jews. The promise was to Abraham and his Seed, meaning Christ.

Galatians 3:16

Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, "And to seeds," as of many, but as of one, "And to your Seed," who is Christ.

- a. If the promise had been conditional (based on obedience to the law), it would not have been in accordance with grace by faith.
- b. The promise of new life and covenant with God is guaranteed only by grace through faith those who are of the faith of Abraham who is the father of us to both the believing Gentile and believing Jew.

17. Abraham believed in God who “gives life to the dead and calls into being that which does not exist”. This not only gives reference to the fact that God SPOKE creation into existence, but that God gave life to Sarah and Abraham’s “dead” bodies giving them ability to conceive and bear Isaac.

¹⁸ In hope against hope he believed, so that he might become a father of many nations according to that which had been spoken, "SO SHALL YOUR DESCENDANTS BE."

18. There was NO CHANCE-NO HOPE that Abraham and Sarah and Abraham would conceive because they were simply too old. Even though Abraham knew the facts, he chose to believe God's promise.

- a. “So shall your descendants be refers back to when God told Abraham to look at the stars and the sand. This gave Abraham a visual reminder of God’s promise.

Genesis 15:4-6

Then He brought him outside and said, “Look now toward heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them.” And He said to him, “So shall your descendants be.”⁶ And he believed in the LORD, and He accounted it to him for righteousness.

- b. “God called what was not” may also refer to God renaming Abram Abraham (father of a multitude) and Sarai, Sarah (princess).

 - i. This also gave them another tangible remembrance of God’s promise.

Romans 4:19-22

¹⁹ Without becoming weak in faith he contemplated his own body, now as good as dead since he was about a hundred years old, and the deadness of Sarah's womb; ²⁰ yet, with respect to the promise of God, he did not waver in unbelief but grew strong in faith, giving glory to God, ²¹ and being fully assured that what God had promised, He was able also to perform. ²² Therefore IT WAS ALSO CREDITED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS.

19. Abraham could not ignore the fact that he and Sarah were too old to have children. Yet, he did not allow the “facts” to weaken his faith. We don’t ignore circumstances, but we also don’t make them truer than the promises of God.

20. Abraham grew strong in faith concerning God’s promise and did not waiver in unbelief.

- a. “Staggered”(wavered) is *diakrinō*, made up of *krinō*, “to judge” and *dia*, whose root meaning is “two,” thus, “to judge between two,” thus, “to vacillate between two opinions or decisions.” Wuest

2 Corinthians 1:20 For all the promises of God in Him are Yes, and in Him Amen, to the glory of God through us.

21. Abraham was 100% sure that God was able to do what He promise.

- a. Abraham’s faith was strengthened by looking at the stars in the sky and the sand on the ground, our faith is strengthened by “looking unto Jesus”.
- b. Abraham and Sarah were constantly saying their new names which were to be their new identities. Our identity is in Jesus. As we learn who we are and what we have in HIM, our faith soars.

22. Because of this faith in God's promise, God credit him with righteousness.

Romans 4:23-25

Now not for his sake only was it written that it was credited to him,²⁴ but for our sake also, to whom it will be credited, as those who believe in Him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead,²⁵ He who was delivered over because of our transgressions, and was raised because of our justification.

23. It was not only for Abraham's sake that this happened, but also for us.

24. We also are credited with righteousness when we believe in the in God who raised Jesus from the dead.

25. Jesus was given in death for our transgressions and raised for our justification (our righteousness). We are both forgiven and made righteous.

a. *"Who was delivered up because of our offences, and was raised up because of our being declared righteous."* Young's Literal Translation

b. Jesus' sacrifice was so perfect and so complete that our righteousness was declared by the Father, and He was raised from the dead.

ABRAHAM AND SARAH

Righteousness and Our New Identity

1. Abraham believed God and was imputed as righteous.

Genesis 15:5-7 (NASB)

And He took him outside and said, "Now look toward the heavens, and count the stars, if you are able to count them." And He said to him, "So shall your descendants be."⁶ Then he believed in the Lord; and He reckoned it to him as righteousness.⁷ And He said to him, "I am the Lord who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to possess it."

2. Even after being declared righteous Abraham after this produced a child of the flesh, Ishmael: Genesis 16

3. Abraham received the promise 13 years later after changing his identity from Abram to Abraham.

Genesis 17:5 (NASB)

"No longer shall your name be called Abram, But your name shall be Abraham; For I have made you the father of a multitude of nations."

4. We are made perfectly upright and righteous before God at salvation. As we recognize our identity in Christ (as righteous, etc.) we will be energized to walk in our inheritance. When we start seeing ourselves as the new creations and beloved sons and daughters of the living God, we will have faith to receive the promises of God.

1. Philemon 1:4-6 I thank my God, making mention of you always in my prayers,⁵ hearing of your love and faith which you have toward the Lord Jesus and toward all the saints,⁶ that the sharing of your faith may become effective by the acknowledgment of every good thing which is in you in Christ Jesus.

- 2. Ephesians 1:3** Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ
- 3. 2 Peter 1:2-4** Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, ³ as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, ⁴ by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.
- 4. Ephesians 3:14-21** For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁵ from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, ¹⁶ that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, ¹⁷ that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, ¹⁸ may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height— ¹⁹ to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. ²⁰ Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, ²¹ to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever.
- 5.** After we realize that we are His righteousness and that we no longer need to be sin-conscious, we can MOVE ON to possessing all that He has for us by identifying with the life of Jesus in us.
- 6.** When God changed Abram's name to Abraham and Sarai's to Sarah, He gave them the names of how He saw them. He gave them names which reflected His promise to them. This changed the way they viewed themselves. When Abraham agreed with God by calling himself "a father of a multitude", and Sarah "a princess", what God purposed for them came to pass. Their bodies changed and became young again.
- When we view ourselves with the names our Father has given us, Son, daughter, beloved, the disciple whom Jesus loves, etc. we too will spiritually prosper.

GRAPHIC OBSERVATIONS: Abraham, The Law, and N.C. Believers

ABRAHAM	THE LAW OF MOSES	N.C. BELIEVERS
<p>Sin was not imputed before the law.</p> <p><u>Romans 4:15</u> for the Law brings about wrath, but where there is no law, there also is no violation.</p>	<p>Under the Law of Moses, obedience to the law required obedience to <u>all</u> of the law.</p> <p><u>Deuteronomy 28:15</u> But it shall come to pass, if you do not obey the voice of the LORD your God, to observe carefully <u>all</u> His commandments and His statutes which I command you today, that all these curses will come upon you and overtake you.</p>	<p>Sin is not imputed to us for two reasons: 1) We are not under the Law, 2) Our sins are continually cleansed by the blood of Jesus.</p> <p><u>Romans 6:14</u> For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace.</p>

ABRAHAM	THE LAW OF MOSES	IN CHRIST
<p>Abraham believed God and it was accounted to him for righteousness.</p> <p><u>Romans 4:2-3</u> <i>For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God.³ For what does the Scripture say? “Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.”</i></p>	<p>A person had to keep ALL the Law in order for the law to be righteousness to them. It didn't actually make them righteous.⁶</p> <p><u>Deuteronomy 6:24-25</u> And the LORD commanded us to observe all these statutes, to fear the LORD our God, for our good always, that He might preserve us alive, as it is this day.²⁵ Then it will be righteousness for us, if we are careful to observe <u>all</u> these commandments before the LORD our God, as He has commanded us.'</p>	<p>Righteousness is imputed to us by faith in Jesus.</p> <p><u>Romans 4:23-25</u> <i>Now it was not written for his sake alone that it was imputed to him,²⁴ but also for us. It shall be imputed to us who believe in Him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead,²⁵ who was delivered up because of our offenses, and was raised because of our justification.</i></p>
X	X	<p>We are the righteousness of God in Christ.</p> <p><u>2 Corinthians 5:21</u> <i>For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.</i></p>
X	X	<p>We are born again and made new creations through the death and resurrection of Jesus.</p> <p><u>1 Peter 1:3</u> <i>Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.</i></p> <p><u>1 Corinthians 5:17</u> <i>Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.</i></p>

⁶ Galatians 3:20-25

Is the law then against the promises of God? Certainly not! For if there had been a law given which could have given life, truly righteousness would have been by the law.²² But the Scripture has confined all under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe.²³ But before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed.²⁴ Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith.²⁵ But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.

ABRAHAM	THE LAW OF MOSES	IN CHRIST
<p>The promise was given to Abraham before he was circumcised (before He did any act of righteousness).</p> <p>Romans 4:13 For the promise that he would be the heir of the world was not to Abraham or to his seed through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.</p>	<p>Promises were contingent upon obeying the Law.</p> <p><i>Joshua 1:6-8 Be strong and of good courage, for to this people you shall divide as an inheritance the land which I swore to their fathers to give them. 7 Only be strong and very courageous, that you may observe to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go. 8 This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.</i></p>	<p>The promise was given to us while we were still sinners without condition.</p> <p>2 Corinthians 1:20 For all the promises of God in Him are Yes, and in Him Amen, to the glory of God through us.</p> <p>Romans 1:7-9 For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. ⁸ But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. ⁹ Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him.</p> <p>By His promises, we partake in the divine nature.</p> <p>2 Peter 1:4 By which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.</p>
<p>God blessed Abraham for trusting God and offering up Isaac as a sacrifice.</p> <p>Genesis 22:16 “By Myself I have sworn, says the LORD, because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only son— ¹⁷ blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies. ¹⁸ In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice.”</p>	<p>Blessings under the Law were contingent upon obeying the Law.</p> <p>Deuteronomy 28:1-2 “Now it shall come to pass, if you diligently obey the voice of the LORD your God, to observe carefully all His commandments which I command you today, that the LORD your God will set you high above all nations of the earth² And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you, because you obey the voice of the LORD your God.”</p>	<p>We are already blessed with every spiritual blessing in Christ Jesus.</p> <p>Ephesians 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.</p> <p>2 Peter 1:2-3 Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, ³ as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue.</p>

7. Abraham's righteousness was an imputed righteousness/right standing with God.

Our righteousness is not just right standing with God, but the very righteousness of God.

Romans 3:25

Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; God declared His righteousness by Jesus being our mercy seat

8. So because of Jesus it is righteous of God to forgive and not hold our sins against us.

- It is righteous of God to see us as without spot or wrinkle.
- It is righteous of God to never be angry with us.
- It is righteous of God to never rebuke us.
- It is righteous of God to treat us with lovingkindness.
- It is righteous of God to be our personal God.
- It is righteous of God to make us the very righteousness of Jesus.
- It is righteous of God to give us all that we ask for and more.
- It is righteous to make us the true sons and daughters of God.