

**Monday, November 21, 2022 ◻ Romans 4:5–8**

*Questions from the Scripture text: About what sort of person does v5 speak—what doesn't he do? What does he do instead of work? In Whom does he believe? Whom does God justify? By what mechanism (accounting/imputing or debt) is he justified? Through what instrument is this righteousness imputed to him? To whom else does the apostle appeal as teaching this (v6)? In what condition is the man that David describes? How did this man come into a state of blessedness—Who did what to him? Apart from what? What three things do vv7–8 describe this man as doing? What two things were done to his lawless deeds and sins (v7)? Who did not do what to his sin (v8)?*

**What does a believer contribute to his righteousness or blessedness?** Romans 4:5–8 looks forward to the devotional in this week's midweek meeting. In these four verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **faith must be the only instrument of our justification, because God justifies the ungodly one who does not work.**

**Justification by faith must be justification by faith alone,** v5. The Spirit taught us, in v3–4, that justifying faith is not a work. Now, He makes it very clear that justification by faith will not allow the addition of any works or godliness.

Justification is specifically for "him who does not work." Bringing any of our works at all into the equation removes entirely the possibility of righteousness. God justifies not those of substandard godliness but the entirely ungodly. Godliness cannot even begin until justification!

The righteousness that believers have accounted for them (calculated as theirs) isn't just unmerited righteousness but demerited. Believers don't get "better" than they deserve; they get *the opposite* of what they deserve.

**This is not new in the age of the gospel,** v6. The Davidic beatitudes of Psalm 32 give us the portrait of the blessed man. David, a man "after God's own heart," was a great sinner, even after decades of walking with the Lord. Yet, he describes a life of blessedness in which a man is saved by God (cf. Ps 32:6–7), gladdened by God (cf. Ps 32:7c), and led by God (cf. Ps 32:8), while surrounded by covenant love (cf. Ps 32:10b) and filled with gladness (cf. Ps 32:11).

**The believer's contribution to his blessedness,** v7–8. What "works" does the blessed man contribute to his coming into such a state of blessedness? "lawless deeds ... sins ... sin" (v7–8). Or, as our version of Psalm 32 itself has it, "transgression ... sin ... iniquity" (cf. Ps 32:1–2). There is a way of thinking that says that God's grace produces much, but then that we supply the faith or the choice. Or even that God supplies the faith, and that the faith is received as if it were a work good enough to make us right with God.

But these miss what Paul and David both say by the Spirit. We do supply much—our contribution to our salvation is the sin from which we need to be saved! This is the only thing that we contribute.

**The Lord's contribution to the believer's blessedness,** v7–8. We supply the lawless deeds, but the Lord supplies the forgiveness (v7a). We supply the sins, but the Lord supplies the covering of the sins (v7b). We supply every single sin, but the Lord supplies by Jesus the righteous (cf. 3:26) calculation of that sin away from our account. Faith, then, sees that we supply only that which is bad, and that the Lord saves us by supplying in Christ every good thing necessary.

**What did you supply to your salvation? In what must you hope, for righteousness? In what mustn't you hope?**

*Sample prayer: Lord, we look to You alone for righteousness, blessedness, and salvation. For, the only thing that we can contribute to these is the sin from which we need to be saved. Forgive us, and count us righteous, for only the works that Jesus has done, we ask in His Name, AMEN!*

**Suggested songs: ARP32AB "What Blessedness" or TPH433 "Amazing Grace"**

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Romans chapter 4 verses 5 through 8. These are God's words. But to him who does not work. But believes on him, who justifies the ungodly? His faith is accounted. For righteousness. Just as David also describes the Blessedness of the man to whom God imputes. Righteousness. Apart from works. Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven?

And whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man. To whom the Lord shall not. Impute. Sin. So far the reading of God's inspired and inherent work. Well, we've been learning that a man has made righteous through faith. In Jesus Christ, in particular That this faith is not a work.

That not only. Is it something for which we cannot boast before God? Because God is the one who gives it. But that the way that faith operates is that the believer is accounted as righteous, accounted by grace calculated by God, to be righteous by grace, rather than rewarded as an obligation of a debt or a wage.

The faith has not something that God accepts as valuable in and of itself. But faith finds. That Christ alone is valuable and hopes only in what Jesus has done. So that if faith were itself valuable it would no longer be faith. Because it would be trusting in itself instead of trusting.

In Jesus. And now, it makes this point. The apostle again, makes this point in verse 5. By show by referring to the two parties involved. The believer here calls the one who does not work. In other words, there is no faith plus works because the the believer who has made righteous or counted righteous calculated righteous imputed to be righteous, That believer is one who refuses to work for his righteousness.

He works because God has counted him righteous. He works because he belongs to God. He works because God is worthy of those works but he refuses to work. For his standing. Because God, Justifies the ungodly. So the man is called him, who does not work, that's his title. Almost sounds.

Like something for a cartoon. What is your title? I am him. Who does not work or I am he predicate nominative there. But that's what the believer is. I believe, we're in Christ as someone who does not work for his justification, refuses to work for his justification. And who is God?

God is the one who justifies whom the ungodly. This of course, drove the papists nuts in the 16th century. How can you say that? God justifies the ungodly. Well. God said that he just buys the ungodly. Those are the ones whom he justifies. If you think that you are going to get yourself more saveable Get yourself ready to be a Christian.

Or any other such nonsense you're in trouble because God doesn't justify the ready. God doesn't justify the improved. God justifies the ungodly. And so, by identifying the man him who does not work and the Lord him who justifies the ungodly. He shows us that justification by faith is justification by faith alone.

And he, He concludes this secures, this affirms, this by using that accounted word Again, accounted or reckoned or calculated, or imputed, but to him, who does not work, but believes on him. Who justifies the ungodly? His faith is accounted. For righteousness. When you realize that your sin deserves hell, You need to remember that.

God justifies the ungodly. God justifies the one who does not work. Resist. The impulse to think, oh, I can make it up to God or I'm gonna make it up to God. You can't and you won't. The only way of being made right with God. Is through faith in Jesus Christ, which says God justifies the ungodly through faith, He accounts us as righteousness, For Jesus's sake.

That's the only way to be right with God. Everything else must fail. Now, he Goes on to show that this is always been the way it was. It's not like Men could be made right with God or justified through works in the past and now that Jesus has come is not possible.

No, it's always been that way. That the only way I sinner could ever be made right with God. Is through the imputation of Christ's righteousness. That being counted As righteousness, not for what we have done, but only for what Jesus has done. And so he's already used Abraham as an example, he's going to return to Abraham as an example next to expiation.

But now he takes David as an example. David, the scripture calls a man after God's own heart. But who else do we know David to be? We know, David to be the one who committed adultery with Bathsheba And murder her husband to try to cover it up. How could he?

Be a blessed man. How could he be a man after God's own heart? Well, part of the answer. Is that the man after God's own heart is Jesus. But another part of the answer is that David was justified made righteous with God. In the same way. That we are.

In fact, David teaches this same doctor Of justification by faith verse 6 says, just as David also describes the blessedness of the man, To whom God imputes and it's that same word that is translated accounted in verse 5. Imputes righteousness. Apart from works. And so, the blessedness of the man in Psalm 32 is great.

He quotes here from Versus one and two of the Psalm. But if we were to go through the rest of the psalm, we'd see that this man is saved by God in verses 6 and 7 that he's gladdened by God and the end of verse 7 that he has led And instructed by God in verse 8 of Psalm 32, that he is surrounded by the steadfast law of the Covenant and love of God.

Well, in verse 10 of Psalm 32 that he is filled with gladness by God in verse 11 of Psalm 32. How do you come into the state of a blessedness in which you're saved by God? Gladdened by God, led by God surrounded by God's love and filled with God's gladness.

And the answer is. Justification. Through faith alone being counted righteous. Apart from works. So, he quotes now in verses 7 and 8 from the first two verses of that Psalm, To show us. That David describes the Blessedness of the man to whom God imputes, calculates righteousness, apart from works, Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven?

And whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord shall not impute. Sin. So what does the believer, contribute? To his blessed state of being right with God and blessed by God under the favor. And blessing of God, The smile of God verse 7 and 8.

What does the believer contribute? Lawless deeds. 7a. Sins. Seven, b. Sin. Verse 8. Or if we were to go back to Psalm 32 itself, we'd see that our English translation has this those three words as Transgression. Sin. And iniquity. What do you? And I contribute to our salvation, we contribute, what we need to be saved from.

You don't contribute meaning well, having better intentions going to do better this time. Turning our heart to him making a choice. Any any of that? We don't contribute anything to our salvation. Except the sin. From which we needed to be saved. There's a way of thinking that says God's grace produces much, but then we supply the faith of the choice at the end.

That's nonsense. God justifies. It is to him who does not work. That God justifies. God, justifies the ungodly. There's even a way of thinking that says, God supplies. The faith. But then he receives the faith as being Good enough. No. The reason he supplies the faith for our justification is because only Christ is good.

Not. Because faith is good enough. Faith says nothing in me or from me is good enough only Christ. And what he has done Has any good in it? So what Paul and David both say in by the Spirit is that we do supply? To our salvation. We supply the sin.

From which we needed to be saved. And that is the only thing that we supply. So if our contribution, our Lawless deeds, sins and sin, what does God's contribution? 7a forgiving us, seven B covering Person and eight imputing reckoning, accounting us. As righteous. The Lord then supplies all of the righteousness.

By his mercy, by his decree. And in Christ by his atonement. But his obedience, All that gets counted for us, is counted for us from Jesus. It isn't invented. It isn't pretended, It's real. And it's accounted as ours. Through face and Jesus Christ. So, the only thing you supply to your salvation is your sin.

Therefore you mustn't, hope and your faith. Or anything else. But only in, Jesus himself. And what he has done. Let's pray. Our father in heaven. We thank you that You have made us righteous with your own righteousness in Jesus that you made him. Who knew no sin to be sin.

So that we might be Your righteousness in him, forgive us. For thinking that we Could earn our own standing with you. Or maintain our own standing with you by anything that we do. We thank you that you are the one who Who does it? Help us to see the Hatefulness of the sin from which you have saved us.

Recognizing that this is what we have contributed. And that Anything that we provide apart from Christ? Would only come would only be sin? We ask it in Jesus name. Amen.