

Through the Bible with Les Feldick, Book 21

LESSON ONE * PART I

OLD ADAM CRUCIFIED - ROMANS 3:19-22

As we begin this book let's continue in the Book of Romans, beginning in Chapter 3. In our last lesson we wound up with God's great controversy with the human race and how He had built His case as a prosecuting Attorney, not against any one segment, race or class, but against the whole human race. And in Romans Chapter 1 we looked at the immoral man; and God tells us why they are guilty. Then we looked at moral man, who on the outside is good. There is nothing anybody can find wrong with him, but God has just as much to say about him as He does the immoral man. The third category was the religious individual who thought because of his religion he had everything he needed to meet his Maker. **Then we came to that great conclusion as we left our last program that all have failed, all are guilty, there is none righteous, no not one.**

So we pick up at verse 19 of Chapter 3, and when I teach this chapter I always like to make a statement that there are two chapter 3's in The Bible that I think are mandatory for every believer to understand. The first one is in the Book of Genesis Chapter 3 where we have the account of sin making its appearance, when Adam rebelled and ate of the forbidden fruit. In Chapter 3 then, mankind is a fallen race, totally disobedient to everything that God says and as a result of their fall we've seen the 6000 years of human suffering, of degeneration, corruption, evil and wickedness; and it all begin back in the Garden of Eden.

So God comes to that conclusion here in Romans 3 that this is the problem, and the only remedy is the one God Himself has provided. This flies in the face of human reasoning, and we will see why here in just a moment. Now as we come in to verse 19 just glance at the verses ahead of it, and you will notice that it isn't a very pretty picture. But that's what God sees whenever He looks at a human being still in Old Adam. That's where He saw me and you, and that's where He still sees every lost person. We are an open sepulcher, our mouth is full of cursing and bitterness. We have no fear of God so that's the picture of the unbeliever that God sees.

Romans 3:19

"Now we know (and when Paul says we know, he's talking about something that is solid ground. This isn't just wishful thinking, this isn't something that only a theologian could dream up. This is basic scriptural fact) *that what things soever the law saith it saith to them who are under the law:..."*

I don't think any of you here in the class have any trouble answering the question, "Who was under the Law?" The Nation of Israel - the Jew! And that's why they were put in that place of special responsibility. God gave them the Law, printed on the tables of stone and it was as plain as day. And the Jew had the whole system of what we call law, the religious, the ritual, the sacrifices, the priesthood, the civil law, and it then all comprised what we call the **Law**. But at the heart of the Law are the Ten Commandments. So as we study these terms, in Romans especially, we are always going

to be careful. Are we talking about the Ten Commandments or are we talking about the whole system of law? In other words if a Jew misused his neighbor, the civil law stipulated how he had to make things right. The ceremonial law designated under a certain circumstance of sin or wrong doing he had to bring such and such to the priest, and so on and so forth. But at the heart of all these laws is the moral Law, or what we call the Ten Commandments. So I think here in the first part of verse 19 Paul is talking about the Ten Commandments, the moral Law. Let's look at the verse again:

Romans 3:19

"Now we know that what things soever the law saith (thou shalt and thou shalt not), it saith to them who are under the law (the whole system of law. The Nation of Israel and they alone were under that. But it doesn't stop there. Now it goes on and says that not just Jewish mouth, but rather): that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God."

Who does that include? Everybody! Jew and Gentile, black and white, rich and poor. Regardless of a person's status he's under that demand of the Law. Most people think that if they can just keep the Law then they become righteous, but that verse says they become guilty before God. We can't stop there without taking the next verse.

Romans 3:20

"Therefore (since the Mosaic Ten Commandments makes everyone guilty, therefore) by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight (now look at this last statement): for by the law is the knowledge of sin."

Now underline that word **'sin'**, because for the first time that we have really seen it in the Book of Romans where it will take the application or the definition that I like to make of the word **'sin'**. Those of you who have been with me during a study of Romans know what I'm going to say. You can put in its place, I think, without exception **"old Adam"** throughout the Book of Romans (of course if it doesn't fit somewhere then back away from it). The old sin nature that each of us are born with. Now let's read it that way, substituting the word **'sin'** with old Adam.

Romans 3:20

"Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of old Adam."

Now I want to give you a couple statements, and I trust you will write them in the fly leaf of your Bible. The first one is this. **We are not sinners because we break the Law.** That's hard to swallow isn't it? Most everyone thinks the reason we are sinners is because we have committed adultery, or have stolen and cheated. **But contrary to that we break the Law (The moral ten) because we are sinners, and sons of Adam.** Now that is contrary to what most religions teach and contrary to what probably nine out of ten church members think today. They think the reason we're sinners is because we are always breaking the Law, and that's not the problem. The problem is we have something within us that wants to constantly break the Law, and then of course when we break the law we are guilty.

But now we need to go back to Adam again don't we? Because that's where it all began. When Adam was created he was perfect, there was not an ounce of sin in him, not even a sinful thought.

He was as pure, I think, as Christ Himself was in His earthly advent. But how long did it last? Until Adam took that step of disobedience back there in the Garden of Eden, and it was a simple step. He simply took and ate of that fruit that was forbidden, and immediately he became a sin-nature individual. Then all he could think, in spite of himself, constantly was that which was contrary to the very laws of his Creator God, and every human being has inherited that ever since. So this is where we are then in the statements I just gave you. **You are not a sinner today because of anything you have done so far as actively performing a sinful act. You are a sinner because you are a child of Adam, and being a child of Adam everything that God says to do, then old Adam says to do the opposite.**

I've been trying to think of a good illustration of this old sin nature because we have millions of people all around us that are good people. You can hardly find a flaw in their lifestyle. They have a beautiful home and family, their children are well behaved, they have never cheated a person out of a dime, they have never been unfaithful to each other, and from all outward appearances they are good people. I don't know if this illustration will make sense to you or not but I want to try it. Take an individual who has a beautiful horse, well trained and groomed. This owner is so proud of that animal that he takes him to the show places, and puts him through his paces. And of course the owner is well-dressed himself. They are a beautiful pair to behold. But after this particular show (and he has won his purple ribbons, and he's sitting there on his beautiful steed accepting all the applause of what they have accomplished. His animal is standing there perfectly contented, beautiful, being held in awe), all of a sudden, as if someone hit that horse with about ten electric cattle prods, that horse just bucked wildly.

Now that is about the end of the analogy because you can never carry spiritual things very far. Alright, that beautiful steed I'm telling you about is a picture of old Adam. You see we can groom him, we can control him a lot of the time, and make him just fool the world that, "Hey, he's okay." But all of a sudden something makes old Adam just erupt like this animal that had been hit with a bunch of cattle prods. Here is what I want you to answer me. What am I likening the cattle prods to? What causes old Adam to suddenly lose his poise, suddenly realize that all that pent up power for wickedness came to the fore front? The Law! Do you see that?

People can have themselves all veneered and be so beautiful, and have everything under control, and then one day the Law comes and they've read it and memorized it, but they never heard it. Then one day the Law comes and it just smashes old Adam, and he erupts. Now let me take you to Romans Chapter 7. It's this chapter that the theologians like to banter back and forth, and I'm not going to pay any attention to their arguments, but rather look at the way this old layman sees it. Start with verse 9. This verse has raised a lot of eyebrows or has caused people to just skim right over it, because they don't understand anyway. Now don't forget the story of my beautiful horse. Here is the Apostle Paul under that same set of circumstances. He's got his life, religiously he thinks, under complete control. A religious zealot who was admired and looked up to by the whole Jewish religious community. Then all of a sudden that horse beneath him erupts, and it changed his life.

Romans 7:9a

"For I was alive without the law once:..."

What does he mean? He knew the Law from the time he was at his mother's knee let alone Gamaliel's. The Law had already been in force for 1500 years before Saul came along. So he says I

was alive without the Law. How could he have been? Because he was part and parcel of that Judaistic society. I'll tell you where Saul was, and that's where most people are today when they read their Bible. They read, but most of the time it goes right over their heads. And the same way with Saul. He thought he knew the Law from cover to cover. He thought he knew those Ten Commandments forward and backwards, but you know what? He had never understood what they really said, it was just so many words. But there on the road to Damascus as he was confronted with the ascended Lord, all of a sudden the Law meant what it said to Saul of Tarsus. And what happened? He realized that he was the biggest law breaker of all. And that's why he claims that he was such a sinner, he had persecuted the believers. But it was when the Law finally got hold of Saul, that he had to recognize, "**I'm nothing!**" So what happened? He said, "**I died.**" Let's look at the verse again.

Romans 7:9

"For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died."

We know he didn't die physically, so where did he die? That old Adam. Old Adam has to die, and that's the theme of this Book of Romans, to deal with that old sin nature that is constantly making man rebel against the very tenets of God. By now you should be able to see what I'm driving at. Is that something we can do in the energy of the flesh? No! There is no way you can deal with old Adam in the flesh, because just like the gentlemen with the beautiful horse. He had trained that animal, he's gained his rewards over him, but then one day when that horse was finally exploded with an outside source of energy, it showed itself for what it really was. It could be just as cantankerous, it could buck him just as far as the worst bronco ever could, and that's where our old Adam is.

And we have to come to grips with that old Adam, and you can't do it by joining a church. Now I'm not against the church, don't ever let anyone get that idea, but rather I'm using the Church as an example that that is not what we have to do in order to get right with God. We have to first and foremost deal with this old Adam, and remember he's in the area of the invisible. You can't lay him out on the table and examine him. Old Adam is in the area of the spiritual, he's in the invisible, and consequently when we start dealing in the area of the invisible there is only One that knows how to do it, and Who is it? The Creator Himself! He is the only One that can delve down into the depths of the spirit. So we have to deal with old Adam then through the work and power of our Creator, our Saviour and our Lord. Now Romans Chapter 3, verse 19 again:

Romans 3:19

"Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law (Israel): that every mouth may be stopped,..."

Now just think about that for a moment. I try to prepare my classes for this and it happens all the time. That good neighbor, friend, or good customer or client comes in and the conversation comes around to these things, and that person will say, "I'm doing the best I can, I think I'll make it. Don't give me a hassle because I'm pretty good. I'm keeping the commandments, I've joined the church, I'm a good family man, I give, so don't talk to me about my having any problem facing eternity." But you see they haven't dealt with the core problem. "Old Adam!" And so the Law is the only way that God can come to that kind of a person and say, "**You're Guilty!**" Do you see that? I don't care

how good they have been, or how good their record is. God still looks back and sees that throat like an open sepulcher. He still sees a mouth that is full of cursing, and thought processes that are as immoral as anybody can get and that is all coming out of old Adam.

Another good illustration is back in the 30's during the bootlegging days. They could outlaw the consumption of alcohol if they wanted to, but you can't stop people from getting it, so the only way they could really deal with the alcohol problem was to find where it was being made, and they tried to get rid of the stills. If you could get rid of every still in the world there wouldn't be any alcohol, and that would get rid of the problem. It's the same way with old Adam. He's just like a still, he just keeps putting it out, and putting it out and putting it out, and I don't care how you try to cover it up or wallpaper over it, it just won't work until we deal with old Adam. Now verse 20, and you can't approach God on the merit of what you have done. We have to come back and realize that God says, **"we can doing nothing to merit favor with Him."**

Romans 3:20

"Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin." We are going to see when we get into Chapter 4 that it's so plain. The Apostle Paul tells us in verse 3 the following.

Romans 4:3

"For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness." And it was his believing that caused God to call him a righteous man, and verse 2 tells us that it was not by works lest he should boast.

Romans 4:2

"For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory: but not before God."

You know I've made the comment to my classes and maybe even here on the program several years ago the following. Have you ever envisioned heaven and you are there because of what you did down here to merit it? You know what I've told people? Everybody would be crossing the street to avoid someone because they wouldn't want to listen to someone tell them over and over all they had done to get there. That wouldn't be heaven, that would be awful. But it won't be that way, because everyone of us is never going to be able to say a thing that we have done got us to heaven. It was only the work of a merciful God. Now let's look at verse 20 again in Chapter 3.

Romans 3:20

"Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin."

The knowledge of sin or the knowledge of our old Adam. And it's the only place you will find it. Now again you won't find language like this back in the Four Gospels. Jesus didn't get into this part of the whole problem. Jesus was more or less just dealing with the Jews under the Law, but now you see the Apostle Paul is speaking out by Holy Spirit inspiration of course and is delving into the whole human race. Not just the problem in Israel and the Jews but everyone. Look at your newspaper today, the whole front page on any paper is covered with the same kind of stuff. Murder,

rape, terrorism, crime, immorality. And why? Because the world is under control of that old Adamic nature with Satan at the top of it. And this is what we must understand. It's old Adam who is at the heart of the sin program. It's old Adam in the realm of the spirit that we have to deal with through the power and mercy and the Grace of God.

LESSON ONE * PART II

OLD ADAM CRUCIFIED - ROMANS 3:19-22

Remember in the last lesson we were saying the Law does nothing but condemn a person. The Law can do nothing that helps us get to heaven. You can keep the commandments until you're blue in the face, and it won't cut any mustard at the Great White Throne Judgment. And remember Jesus Himself told so many, "**And they will say in that day, 'But Lord didn't I do this and didn't I do that.'**" But the Lord will say to them, "**Depart from me, I never knew you.**" And why didn't he know them? Because they had never come God's way. Those of you who have been with me for a long time know that I have two statements that I call absolutes of Scripture. Those two absolutes are in the Book of Hebrews.

Hebrews 11:6

"But without faith it is impossible to please him (God):..." And the other one in Hebrews Chapter 9 is just as important.

Hebrews 9:22b

"... and without shedding of blood is no remission." So never lose sight of those two precepts. Without faith you cannot please God, and you can get nowhere with God without the shedding of Blood, which of course now goes back to the Cross. Now quickly review Romans 3 verse 20 in order to go into verse 21:

Romans 3:20,21

"Therefore by the deeds (or the keeping of the) law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge (or the awareness) of sin." And I told you that was old Adam. Law could do nothing but condemn, it had no power even to the Jew to help them be a Law-keeper, but rather all it could do was condemn him. But look at the verse 21 and see the flip side.

"But now the righteousness of God (not human righteousness, remember that's like filthy rags) without the law (can you get it any plainer than that?) is manifested (put in the spot light), being witnessed by the law and the prophets;"

Paul, you see, comes on the scene rather late in the progressive revelation doesn't he? Here we have come all the way up through the Old Testament even in our study, as we started back there in Genesis and past the flood, the tower of Babel, and to the call of Abraham. Then through the Covenant promises, Isaac and Jacob, and finally here comes the Nation of Israel out of Egypt and into the Sinai, and they receive the Law under Moses. Then along come the prophets all pleading with the Nation of Israel to straighten up their act, because if they don't this is what is going to

happen to them. That's prophecy. And finally prophecy was fulfilled to a great degree when Christ came the first time, every jot and tittle concerning His first coming. And then Israel, under Peter and the eleven, continued to reject all these offers, and when Israel was just seemingly going further and further away, then God did something totally different that even the Jew couldn't understand. He saved another little Jew and told him from day one that He was going to send him to the Gentiles.

I know this is hard for some people to swallow. Turn to the Book of Ephesians. I'm so thankful so many of you are writing and calling and telling me that for the first time you are understanding your Bible, and that finally you are understanding the difference between Law and Grace, and the difference between Peter and Paul. God dealing with Israel through Peter (Gal. 2:7-9) and God dealing with the Gentiles through Paul. You have to get that straight if you're going to understand what God is trying to say. Until you get that straight you're going to be living in a half-world of confusion. Ephesians Chapter 2, and I know we have looked at these verses many times. Remember, the same Apostle that wrote the Book of Romans, writes now to the Ephesians.

Ephesians 2:11,12

"Wherefore remember (and understand), that ye being in time past Gentiles (not Jews) in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision (Jews) in the flesh made by hands." The Jew referred to the Gentile as uncircumcised.

"That at that time..." What time? While God was dealing with the Jew under Law. Those 2000 years from Abraham until the Apostle Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles (Rom. 11:13), comes on the scene. This is what Paul is looking back at and he says, *"That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world:"*

Remember everything that God was doing for the Jew didn't apply to the Gentiles because we weren't a citizen of Israel (Matthew 10:5). The Book says it, I'm not! Gentiles have never had any part of the Covenant promises, nor did they have God in the world as verse 12 says. No wonder they were all pagan. I've said before there wasn't a single person at that time that had the knowledge of the one true God except when God was able to go down and touch Abraham, knowing that he would be a man who would respond. Then beginning with Abraham, God made the promise, **"You are going to have a nation of people that are going to be the only people on earth who have a knowledge of the one true God."** At that time the whole then-known world was steeped in paganism.

We have just returned from a glorious trip to Greece, and Ephesus, and Corinth. All we saw in those ancient cities were temples to the gods and goddesses. All that heavy work that went into building those temples for a female goddess. Think about that. The ancient world was steeped in that kind of idolatry and paganism, with no knowledge of the one true God, and that is what the Apostle Paul is reminding us. Now let's read on and see the flip side of this.

Ephesians 2:13

"But now (oh what a difference. God isn't saying he's only dealing with the Jew, but now he's saying based on the finished work of the Cross that God is now dealing with us Gentiles) in Christ Jesus ye (Gentiles) who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ." I've told you without

faith you can't please God, and without the shedding of Blood there can be no remission of sin. We see that in this verse.

Now back to Romans, and remember the only way you can deal with old Adam is on those two premises. Faith and the shed Blood; you can't escape them. If you think that you can try your dead level best by making sure you are in Church, remember none of that gains you points for your salvation. There is many a soul in Hell tonight who never missed filling their pew on Sunday morning. They thought they were gaining their salvation by good works, but they never understood they were riding that tremendous horse I told you about in the last lesson. That beautiful horse was just loaded with energy to do evil, but they were able to keep it curried, combed and dressed, and maybe they went through life and had themselves fooled all the way. But if the Law could have really manifested itself then their beautiful horse would have exploded also.

Romans 3:21a

"But now..."

This side of the Cross. My class people tell me all they hear Sunday after Sunday is sermons from the Four Gospels. Many pastors refuse to get into Paul's doctrines where the meat is. All of Paul's writings are Holy Spirit breathed, and you have to get into these writings of Paul because in the Four Gospels the Cross hasn't been accomplished yet. Why can't people realize that? Christ wasn't preaching death, burial, and Resurrection during His earthly ministry. How could He, it hadn't even taken place. Oh He knew it was coming, and you know I have shown you Luke 18:31-34 so often.

Luke 18:31-34

"Then he took unto him the twelve, and said unto them, 'Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished. For he shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and spitefully entreated, and spitted on: and they shall scourge him, and put him to death: and the third day he shall rise again.' And they (the Twelve) understood none of these things: and this saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things which were spoken."

So after all these things have been kept hidden for so long, now after Christ has finished the work of the Cross, and ascended back to glory and has sent the Holy Spirit. Now He reveals to this other apostle (Paul), the one nearly everyone likes to push back in the corner. See, they don't want to fool with Paul's writings. But it's to that apostle that all these great truths of salvation are now revealed. And that's why Paul can say it here in verse 21: But now as a result of the ascended Lord revealing to him that the finished work of the Cross did something for the human race, it did the things that man can't do. Reading it again:

Romans 3:21

"But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets;"

That's the Old Testament, absolutely. When I stress the Apostle Paul, you will never hear me say to ignore the Four Gospels, or the Old Testament. Take the whole Book from cover to cover. But you must begin with some basics, and a verse comes to mind that we need to look at. And if these things

aren't true then Paul is going to have the hottest corner in the lake of fire. That's right. If what Paul writes is not true then he is the biggest liar that ever walked, then he's the biggest impostor that ever wrote. But he's not!

I Corinthians 3:9,10a

"For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building. According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation,..."

If Paul didn't lay the foundation, then Paul's a liar, and if Paul is a liar then his writings have no business in this Book. But they are in this Book, because he's not a liar. The Holy Spirit inspired the man to write exactly what he wrote, and so Paul says that he is the masterbuilder. When does the masterbuilder come onto the scene? When the building is half-way up? No, from the ground up. Paul doesn't come in as a masterbuilder and continue on with something that has been building for years and years. Paul comes in and starts with a brand new foundation which is Jesus Christ crucified, buried and risen again! See the difference? That's where he starts his building. And that's what he says in the next verse.

I Corinthians 3:11

"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."

We are being confronted today politically and every other way with a consortium of the religions of the world coming together. I had a young man call me from Iowa, and his pastor had made the statement the previous Sunday morning **that all the religions of the world that are monotheistic, in other words they worship the one God; they are all in Christ, they're all believers and they're all going to heaven.** And this young man told me that he didn't know much, but he had been watching some of our videotapes with a friend and he knew that what his pastor said was not right!

I guess that's not right! These other religions of the world know nothing of Jesus Christ as their foundation, and here is where we have to be adamant. Yeah that's very narrow, I grant you it's narrow, but remember this is a narrow Book, and when people come to me and say, "Now wait a minute the Koran, and the book of this and the book of that, are they all wrong?" I always come back with another question. "Can you name me one other book besides this one that predicted things thousands of years in advance and they happened? Do you know of another religious book that can tell prophecy even five years in advance? The Bible is the only one, and that's why we don't have to take a back seat when we defend this Book. Prophecy has secured it's accuracy. If you can see that what was foretold concerning Christ's first coming, and it all happened, about 360 individual prophecies all fulfilled completely, and then you say that the rest of this Book and future prophecies may not be true, then there has to be something wrong with your thinking. But it is true. Now back to what Paul has just said.

I Corinthians 3:10

"According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation,..." Jesus Christ is the only Foundation for what we believe. Back to Romans 3:22:

Romans 3:22

"Even the righteousness of God (man's righteousness is never brought in here. Not a thing of man's good works) which is by faith (or faith in) of Jesus Christ (watch how it is appropriated) unto all and upon all them that (what's the next word?) believe:..."

Here is another one of the places I tell people to analyze how many different things the world's religions have to put in there. But it doesn't, it's not in there. It says all of this has happened to them who believe **plus nothing**. You must believe the Gospel for your salvation (I Corinthians 15:1-4). And when it's belief plus nothing I know it riles people up but I can't help it. I'm not about to say this verse says to them that believe and repent, and are baptized, join a Church, or anything else you want to put in this verse. But remember it doesn't say it, and we have no right to put it in there.

This is a whole new concept now on this side of the Cross. That because Christ died, shed His Blood, and was able to scream in His final words from that horrible cross, **"It is finished!"** And what is the human race trying to do? Add to it, because they think our Lord didn't quite finish it. "I've also got to do this or that," they say, but remember that's not what The Book says, The Book says it's finished. It's complete! God has done everything that needs to be done to take care of old Adam, to give us a new divine nature, to set our feet on a Rock, all the things that you want to put in there, it was all accomplished when He said, **"It is finished!"** And we just can't add anything to it. And when we talk about believing, I'm not talking about a simple acknowledgment that "yeah, I guess that's the way it was." That's not what we are talking about, we're talking about a genuine heart condition, when that old Adam has been convicted by the Law that has condemned him and then we realize that all of God's mercy has already been poured out, and we merely appropriate it. Thank you Lord I believe it!

I can't understand or comprehend how the Creator Himself came down and took on human flesh, lived those 33 years on the dusty, dirty road of Israel, went to the most horrible death ever dreamed up by mankind, and did it willingly and obediently simply because He loved the human race; and did all that needed to be done in order to just pour it out if they will just believe it. **Believe it, believe it, believe it!** And then when we believe it for our salvation then God gives us the power again to live it. How many people have told me over the years, **"Well, I'll get saved when I can live it."** You can't live it until you're saved. Until we let God get rid of old Adam we are going to be law-breakers, because it's our nature. But when we get to the place we can say, "All right Lord, crucify old Adam," (we'll look at that in the weeks to come) then we'll get to the place where you can say, **"Here I am Lord, do what you want."**

LESSON ONE * PART III

OLD ADAM CRUCIFIED - ROMANS 3:19-22

It's such a joy to be able to teach, and to hear how the Lord is opening hearts, and we ask that you continue to pray for us. Let's get back into where we left off in our last lesson in Romans Chapter 3, but remember we aren't going to rush through this Book of Romans. **This is one of the basic Books of Scriptures for us today. I don't know why it's ignored like it is, except it must be a Satanic conspiracy of some sort because here is where we have to begin to have an understanding of God's tremendous plan of Salvation.** The people of the Old Testament had Salvation, and it's hard to put your thumb on it, but we know they did. We know that Abraham, David, and Moses and all the rest of them are in glory, but they were under a whole different set of circumstances, spiritual as well as physical than we are. But for us as Gentiles, those of us who have not been steeped in the

Mosaic system, then the Apostle Paul is the man we have to listen to. Let me show you a verse in Romans Chapter 11, and this is repeated several times throughout Paul's writings. Some of these things we read, but yet we don't read them. We see it, and yet we don't see it. Here in verse 13 we find a small insufficient verse, but based on what I just said it means everything.

Romans 11:13

"For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles,..."

Now I've been stressing that for five years now on this program. Remember Peter and the eleven were the Apostles of Israel, and Galatians 2:7-9 makes that so plain. They understood that, and shook hands on that agreement. So here is where you have that divergence now not only of personalities, but of doctrine. And here comes these tremendous Pauline doctrines that have never been revealed before. Let's also look at the Book of Ephesians in Chapter 3, because I want you to see why I'm saying the things that I'm saying. So many people have been Sunday school teachers for years, yet have never seen these verses in the manner that it was intended. So many people think they read it, they think they know it, but they don't. Now let's read this verse carefully.

Ephesians 3:1

"FOR this cause (in other words everything that Paul had been writing in the first two chapters, because of this tremendous Gospel of Grace) I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for (whom?) you Gentiles." Do you see that? Now that should tell you something. He was commissioned strictly for the needs of the Gentiles. Verse 2:

Ephesians 3:2

"If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward:"

So many people read this verse but don't see what it has to do with them. Everything we have concerning our doctrines today had to come through this apostle. Just look at that verse again. Don't you see how plain that is? Most people don't want to see it, they don't want to give Paul the credit, they want to think that it's just an extension of what Peter preached. No it isn't. This is a whole new revelation, and look what Paul says in the next verse.

Ephesians 3:3

"How that by revelation he (the ascended risen Lord) made known unto me (Paul) the mystery (now what does the word revelation mean? An unveiling. Something that has been kept under wrap is suddenly unveiled. And that's exactly where's he's at); as I wrote afore in few words."

Ephesians 3:4-6

"Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ (now look at verse 5). Which in other ages (or generations) was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs,..." Now come down to verse 9, and it can't be made any plainer. How can people close their eyes to this? But many do. Look what it says.

Ephesians 3:9

"And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery (or secret), which from the beginning of the world (Adam) hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ."

Do you see what that's saying? That tells us there was a time when no one knew these things, they hadn't been revealed yet, and that is why by inspiration of course, Paul tells us that he received it by revelation. It was now time for it to be revealed, in fact he uses the explanation in the Book of Corinthians **"I am like one born before the due time."** What did Paul mean? He was premature. He came too early according to the whole Nation of Israel. Israel is still blind to these great things that Paul experienced (their day is coming), but that's what he meant when he said, **"he was like one born before the due time."** He received all these revelations and the rest of Israel was blinded. But we aren't blind tonight, or at least we don't have to be. Now let's come back to Romans Chapter 3. And so this great Apostle of the Gentiles, as part of his revelations of this doctrine of Grace is telling us that the Law could do nothing but condemn, and point the finger, and say guilty. And then as we saw in the last part of our last lesson in verse 22:

Romans 3:22

"Even the righteousness of God which is (appropriated) by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:"

Well no difference between what and what? Between Jew and Gentiles. You see the Jew has to come on the level playing ground that we do. He can no longer come in on Covenant ground, he can't come before God today, and say, **"Now wait a minute God, I'm a Jew."** But God says, **"That's not the way I see you. I see you as no different than a Gentile."** A white person can't come to God and say, **"Now I'm coming to you as a white person."** Oh no, there is no difference between white and black, yellow and brown, rich and poor. We come in on the same level playing ground, and we are all alike, we are all sons of Adam. And the only way we can appropriate everything that God accomplished on the Cross is by the two absolutes I gave you in the last lesson.

Hebrews 11:6

"Without faith it is impossible to please him (God),"

We are going back to Genesis and deal with Adam in just a moment, but before we do, let's look at the other absolute.

Hebrews 9:22b

"...and without the shedding of blood is no remission (of sin)."

Both of these knock out the good works people, they don't know what faith is. They don't know what it is to take God at His Word, they say, **"I'm doing it own my own. I think I'll make it."** The other thing that the good works people do is absolutely shun the Blood. People don't like the blood aspect, but you see that was the whole purpose of the Cross. **"He had to shed His Blood."** It had to be a death where that was evident, otherwise you see the Jews could have gone ahead and killed Him their normal way of capital punishment, by stoning Him. But that wouldn't have fulfilled the

shedding of Blood that we have on that Crucifixion. So those are the two imperatives or absolutes, and keep those two in mind as we look at verse 22 once more.

Romans 3:22b

"...by the faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:"

Let's see how that applied to Adam in Genesis Chapter 3. One of the best ways to understand certain tenets of Scripture is to go back to where it was first mentioned, and here it is. Here is the first time we have a man who is going to be faced with both of these imperatives. He has to first and foremost know that he approaches God by faith. Secondly there is going to have to be a Blood sacrifice.

Genesis 3:20

"And Adam called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all living."

Now remember for the early episodes that took place in the Garden we find Adam alone. Eve was inside of Adam at that time. I know people don't like that concept, but that's what the Scriptures teach. Eve was in Adam! And after Adam had named all the animals, he must have been lonely, and God knew he was.

Genesis 2:18

"And the LORD God said, 'It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.'" And so He brought Eve out of Adam and presented her to him as the woman. But she was called Eve, she was called woman, in other words "out of man." Now sometime later we come to the place where Adam calls the woman Eve. And Eve means the "mother of all living." Now think for a moment, you have to put all of this together, and I know it can get complicated. Back there before they ate of the tree, what did God tell them?

Genesis 2:17

"But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."

Well they ate. Now you don't have offspring from someone that dies. But you see old Adam has still got that bell ringing in his mind. Now God told us that after we ate of the tree we are going to die. So evidently Eve is headed for her death, and Adam didn't know how soon, but now remember this faith by definition is what? **Taking God at His Word!** Now here is one of the places I have to suppose. Evidently God had told Adam that in spite of their awful dilemma, he and his wife Eve are going to be the propagators of a whole human race. They are all going to have their beginning in Eve as the mother, and Adam as the father.

Genesis 3:20

"And Adam called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all living."

After having the curse explained to him, and how awful the situation is going to get, we find that Adam then calls his wife the mother of all living. Well I thought that Adam thought Eve was going to die. God must have told him that they were going to have children. Now if God told Adam that he

was going to have children, and he responds by calling her the mother of all living, then what was that? "**Faith.**" He took God at His Word. And that was all the faith that Adam needed to fulfill this first command. Now let's look at this next verse: Remember the second imperative was "without the shedding of blood." In Genesis 3, and verse 21 what happened? An animal or animals were killed, so what's implied? Their blood was shed. A blood sacrifice, but just like the sacrifices at the Temple they weren't just killed or thrown away, but rather those animals were kept for food, and what have you. That was the whole idea of bringing it to the priest, it was their livelihood. So here we have then the faith of Adam when he called his wife's name Eve, he had fulfilled that requirement of believing God. The second requirement finds God providing the sacrificial animals. And remember it's God who is providing them. Now let's look at the text.

Genesis 3:21

"Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins (what did God do with these coats of skins? Covered their nakedness - their physical needs. Now finish the verse, and the last three words are most important), and clothed them."

He wasn't referring to the skins. That was done with the fact that he had made them coats. But the clothing of them is not their physical clothing, but rather their spiritual. Remember in verse 22 of Romans 3 that it was God's righteousness that was imputed unto everyone that believeth. An imputed righteousness, it was an imputed covering. So because Adam had the ability to believe what God said, the blood has now been shed from the sacrificial animals. He not only covers their physical bodies, but He clothes them with a Spiritual garment that now hid old Adam, and he now has the imputed righteousness of the righteousness of God. Now you get a better picture of that if you go on to the Book of Isaiah Chapter 61: The Scripture says it just beautifully, and they all three mean the same thing. When He clothed Adam, when He clothed Isaiah, and when He clothed the believer in Romans 3, it's all the same thing. The imputed righteousness of God.

Isaiah 61:10

"I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God (why is Isaiah filled with joy?); for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness,"

You see the whole purpose of God giving us this Book is to bring us to the point of Salvation. Every human being has to reach that point if they're going to escape God's wrath. And God is going to do everything that He can to keep every person from falling under that condemnation. And God has done that, and He's made it so available. You know I've had people ask in my classes more than once, "**How can God Who is a God of love and mercy possibly consign people someday to that awful Lake of Fire?**" Listen it will be easy, and I mean that. It's going to be easy, because He's done everything that could possibly be done to keep them from it. He's given us The Word, He's given us men who are willing to preach and teach it so we can understand that all we have to do is "**BELIEVE!**" **Faith plus nothing!** See there is no energy involved in believing, it's just accepting what God has said. No questions asked, but people don't want to do that. They simply don't want to believe what God has said concerning Salvation. Reference Romans 1:16, I Corinthians 15:1-4, Romans 10:9-10 and also I Thessalonians 4:14. There are so many more scriptures that Paul uses to show us Salvation. And when we do believe like Isaiah, then immediately because these two

imperatives have now been fulfilled, what happens? He has clothed me with the garments of Salvation, and covered me with a robe of righteousness.

Now you see that's the opposite of what we saw in Romans Chapter 3. Our throats are like open sepulchers, our mouths are full of cursing, our hearts are full of envy and deceit. Those are just the opposite of the righteousness of God. And yet what people try to do is put on their own veneer instead of God's covering. And for their own veneer they're going to work for a whole lifetime. I can remember my dear old mom when I was a child would say, "It takes a lifetime to build a reputation, and about 5 minutes to completely destroy it, and isn't that true? That's what so many people are trying to do and then all of a sudden their old Adam gets the best of them. You read every day about some successful wealthy business-man finally gets caught in a trap of sin and cheating and ends up in prison with his life destroyed. What's happened? His old Adam finally got the best of him; he couldn't control him. But when you're covered with the righteousness of God those things don't happen. Not that a believer can't sin, don't misunderstand me, because we can. But it's a different ball game. Isaiah 61:10 again:

Isaiah 61:10

"I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels."

That's how a believer looks in God's sight when we let Him cover us, but when we try to venerate ourselves all He sees is that open sepulcher. Now back to Romans Chapter 3. So this great covering of the garments of Salvation is imputed, and that's the word Paul will use throughout this whole Book of Romans. And that's a bookkeeping term. It means to put to the account. And so God's righteousness is imputed to us and is covering us tonight, because we have believed what He has done on our behalf.

A question that often comes up is this, "**Les I believe, but it doesn't seem to work that way. I still have the same old problems, and I'm still defeated.**" If that is the case then I think there is something wrong in the believing end of it, because if I understand Scripture correctly when we truly and honestly believe that Christ accomplished everything that needed to be done on my behalf, then He moves right in and gives you and I the power to live that life pleasing in His sight. Oh, occasionally we will fall, we're going to trip, but God is just like a patient young mother. They never give up, they just pick us up and say you're forgiven, you're cleansed, now move on. Now I'm talking about people who are genuinely concerned about dealing with God on His premise. I'm not talking about a flash in the pan, walking down an aisle, joining a church or something like that. For genuine believers to do those things that's well and good, but to simply do that to fulfill a ritualistic demand; forget it. But for the true believer this Book promises that God moves in and He gives us all the power we need to live and walk pleasing in His sight. People around us will notice that we are different, and all this takes place by the power of God.

LESSON ONE * PART IV

OLD ADAM CRUCIFIED - ROMANS 3:19-22

We pick up where we had finished with Romans 3:22. We found that the only remedy for the old Adam is for God to move in His omnipotent all-powerful omniscient way, and put old Adam to death so that we are rid of him so far as his power and influence is concerned, and get on with life with a new nature - a divine nature. Back in Genesis 1 we used the circles to better define the human make-up, and how it pertains to us today. I would like to go over that again as we have new people who haven't seen that aspect before. But let's look first at a couple of Scriptures, the first is Romans 3:23 where this is the crowning conclusion of everything God has said in the first three chapters of Romans.

Romans 3:23

"For all (every one of us - no exceptions. Until God does something we are falling short of the glory of God. We are sinners, or sons of Adam) have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;" Now for a moment let's go to I Thessalonians Chapter 5, and let's begin at verse 23, and remember this is still Paul's writings.

I Thessalonians 5:23

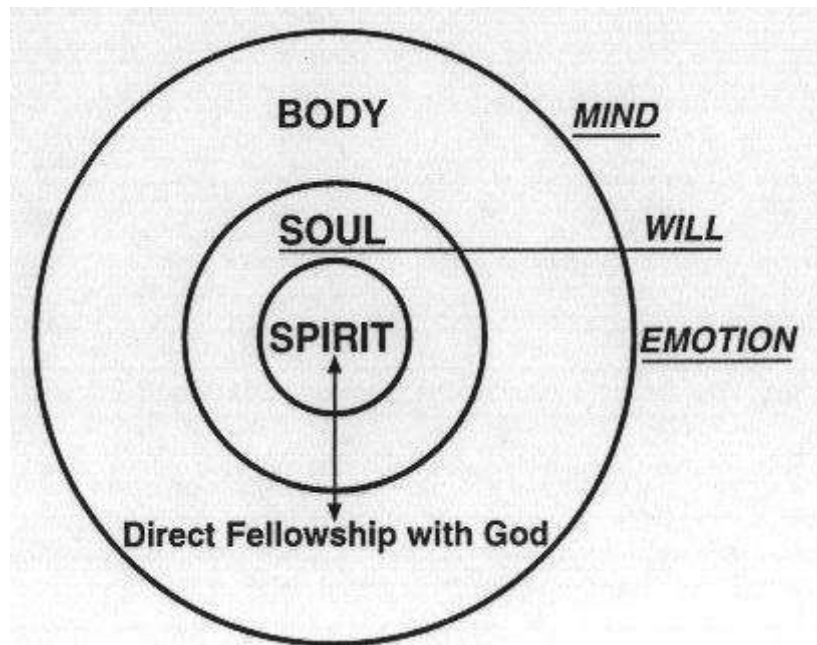
"And the very God of peace sanctify (or sets you apart) you wholly; (completely) and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved (kept) blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

In other words, that part of us that is going on into eternity is not just the soul, and spirit. We are going to go into eternity a complete entity. A body, soul and spirit; that's what The Book says. Now after seeing that let's go all the way back to Genesis Chapter 1, and begin with verse 26.

Genesis 1:26,27

"And God said, 'Let us (that's a plurality word, as it should be. Elohim said let us) make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the thing that creepeth upon the earth.' So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them."

Now when God created man in His image the first thing that you must understand from Scripture is this. God was not in the form of a man! That is not what it means. It didn't mean that God was going to make someone that looked like He looked, because what was God? Spirit! The Triune God is still Spirit, and so the Triune God doesn't say that we are going to make a creature that looks like a spirit looks. So they are talking about something that is spiritual and it's eternal and is that part of us that is invisible even today. And what am I talking about? The personality.



Okay now I have the circles on the board, and if you remember when we were back in Genesis we used the circles (Reference: Book 1 and 2) and over twenty years of teaching I guess more people have commented that they have had more enlightenment from this teaching than almost anything else I've taught.

When God created Adam then, He made him a triune being, he was a three-part being, not a Trinity, but a three-part being as I Thessalonians laid out - body, soul, and spirit. Now the body is just simply the outer tent, the outer covering, and normally I just use the body as the exercise of the five senses, and that's all it's really good for. It's temporary like a tent is temporary. It's here today and gone tomorrow in the overall picture.

Then inside that temporary tent now we have the things that are eternal, and it's in this area where we are made in the image of God. Remember God never had a body with the five senses that He could pattern us after. But here **He was a personality comprised of mind, will, and emotions.** And I'll be in perfect accord with psychology 101 when I call this the personality, or the true person, that's in the area of the mind, will, and emotions. Now I know that there are some differences of opinion in here and I don't mind that, but I'm just looking at the broad picture to give us a real good overview of why God deals with us the way He does and why He calls it the old man, the old sin nature, or the old Adam and why he has to be put to death.

Then the third part of Adam was the **spirit** part of him and it was in the area of spirit. And it was in this area that Adam fellowshiped with God - he had communion with Him. Now in the area of the mind, will and emotion, and this area of spirit, we find them so closely intertwined that it's hard to separate them. But the Scripture says they can be separated. For example in the Book of Hebrews Chapter 4 we find:

Hebrews 4:12

"For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit,..."

So according to that verse there is a difference, but like I said it's pretty hard to define them. I'll just put it this way to make it easy to understand. I'll call the **soul** the mind, will, and emotions, the personality. And the **spirit** is the core of our very being wherein we as believers have fellowship with God. Now the moment Adam sinned, and showed his disobedience, this personality, this mind, will, and emotion became immediately a sin nature. At the same instance, what happened to this spirit and God relationship? It was broken! And you know why it was broken? What happened to the spirit in Adam? It died. So Adam, after the fall is nothing more and nothing less than the body with it's five senses, temporary, and it's going to die. And we know that Adam lived a long time but he died. That old sin nature which made up his personality, had no relationship with God, because it was broken the same as any unbeliever today. That entity of his innermost being is dead, and unfunctional, however I'm not going to call it annihilated like some people do.

Remember way back I used an illustration of a storage battery in a car? I still think it's a good illustration. That spirit of Adam died like a dead battery. Human elements could come in and try to clean it up and fix it up and veneer it, but it's still dead, and it's just like your car battery being dead. We get out to the car and the battery is dead. You won't go get some soap and water and wash the outside of the battery, but rather what you will do is find some outside source of power to regenerate it. And that's exactly where Adam is, he is spiritually dead, and it's going to take an outside power to regenerate him. There again is why good works can't do this.

Now as I have said so often it's hard to explain our plan of Salvation from the Old Testament because it's a whole different economy. So now if you can skip with me mentally at least all the way from Adam up to where we are on the back side of the Cross. Christ has now died, He has now fulfilled all the demands of God on sinful men in the person of Christ on the Cross. The Holy Spirit is just moving up on the population, convicting men by the Law, as we saw in the earlier lessons of Romans, of their need of something because man can't do it on his own. So along comes the Apostle Paul and he lays it out so plainly, and that's why we are going to take our time coming through these Books he has authored, Romans and Ephesians especially. So now Paul shows us that our root problem is not what we're doing, but rather who we are. And who are we? Sons of Adam! And every baby born into the world now is in the same place that Adam was after he fell. They come into the world in that sweet innocent little body with it's five senses, laying with them is that personality, but it's a sin-bent personality. Now it can try to clean itself up as we have seen, and have experienced in the past few lessons. But until God moves in and does things which only God can do, it's all for nothing.

Now the first thing we like to point out is in this area of what I originally called the **soul, the personality and the mind, will, and emotions is that all three of these are invisible**. But are they real? As you sit out there, are you going to argue that you don't have a mind? Of course not. Are you going to try and tell me you don't have a will? Are you going to try and tell me you have no emotions? You mean you've never laughed, or been sad, or upset? Sure you have. Why? Because you have a seat of emotions. Can you find it? No! And I don't care how you look for it, you never will. So if we're dealing with invisible, then we are dealing with the spirit realm, and not the physical.

Now since this mind, will, and emotions that were created in Adam came straight from the Creator Himself then the question is this, "Is that thing going to last a hundred or two hundred years and disappear?" No. How long? Forever. That soul is going to live somewhere forever because again

we're dealing in the spirit. Now I know the Lake of Fire for those that go there won't be living, but nevertheless they will be there, and it's not going to end. Don't ever buy this stuff that says there is an annihilation, because the Scripture doesn't say that. Every Scripture verse that I know concerning the wicked and their doom says forever, and forever, and forever for all eternity. And the reason is that it is an eternal, created thing from God.

All right so what's the dilemma? Everyone of us now as Sons of Adam are born with the body in which is dwelling this personality that's sin bent, anti-God. You might say, "**Well I don't believe you.**" Well let me tell you what the Scripture calls it, other than what we just saw in the Book of Romans Chapter 3. Let's skip forward to Romans Chapter 8. I know good people would like to say, "**Now Les that's not me, because I'm too good.**" That's not what the Book says. The Book says the following beginning with verse 5, and again this is so deep. You don't have to go to seminary for four years to understand these three verses. They are as plain as day.

Romans 8:5

"For they that are after the flesh (the word `flesh' here refers to being controlled by old Adam. It's just a body of flesh, but they're under a personality that is sin-bent) do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. So we have two types of people in that verse. Now verse 6:

Romans 8:6

"For to be carnally (or fleshly) minded is death (spiritual death, that's the end result, and death in that regard is simply separation from God. Not just for this life, but forever); but to be spiritually minded is life and peace."

Romans 8:7

"Because the carnal mind (this carnal mind that is still in old Adam. Now what's the next word?) is enmity against God (good people like to say, "That's not me." Oh yes it is. I don't care who it is, that's what it says. I don't care how good, God sees their mind as His enemy. Boy, this is hard language isn't it. This is tough for people to swallow): for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be."

To think that was us, you and I, before the Lord and Grace saved us. We were enemies of God even though most of us I'll bet were living pretty good lives. We were good citizens, we were respected in our community. But so far as God was concerned, we were enemies, we're nothing more than what Romans Chapter 1 showed us. So what are we going to do? We have a dilemma. The Scripture has said **since day one that the soul that sinneth shall surely die!** Now that's spiritually - it's going to end up in the Lake of Fire. But our merciful God gave us a loophole, and it's not a little one. It's so big that the whole world could walk through it if they would just believe it. So now what does the Scriptures say? You're in Romans so come back to Chapter 6.

I'm answering a question that had come up between lessons. But sometimes these are done for a purpose. Sometimes the Holy Spirit directs us in a different direction than what we had planned.

Romans 6:5,6a

"For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: Knowing this,..."

Here's where true biblical believing comes in. How do we know this? Because The Book says so. That's faith! See? When I can say, "Yes, I believe this! and it's as plain as day. Well how did it get plain to me? That's an act of God responding to my faith. I'll never forget several years ago I had a fellow come into my class. He was a reprobate, and he couldn't believe all The Bible and our teachings. And I used to say if he ever became a believer he would, and he would look at me and wouldn't know what to say. But one day he came up to our home and we went into the kitchen, and I was thinking this morning that our kitchen has probably accomplished more than a lot of church studies have. But anyway we were sitting there and we had the privilege of leading that fellow to The Lord through the Romans Road to Salvation. And what a change in this fellow's life - all of a sudden he could comprehend the Scriptures. He told me just a few weeks ago, **"You know when I lay down to go to sleep, I go to sleep reading this Book, because I can't get enough of it."** And before that he couldn't get any of it.

Romans 6:6

"Knowing this that our old man (who's that? Old Adam! The fleshly body here in the circles, and that mind, will, and emotion that is still sin-bent, that's old Adam.) is crucified (what does crucifixion do? It kills! It puts to death. Okay. What was the first law? The soul that sinneth shall surely die, so how are we going to fulfill it? By identification with His death, and the best way I can put it is this: When you and I can believe that when Christ was hanging there on the Cross, He died your death, and so God saw you and I on the Cross in the Person of Christ. As He laid in the tomb those three days and nights, God saw you and I in that tomb. And when He arose victoriously over sin and death, God saw you and I in resurrected life. Now that's identification by faith) with him, that the body of sin (old Adam) might be destroyed (knocked out of commission, it's lost its power. It's like the breaker on a fuse box, you can shut the power off, but the power is still there, just waiting for someone to flip the power back on), that henceforth we should not serve sin (old Adam)."

Have you got the picture? Because that's exactly where the unbeliever is. He's living to satisfy the desires of Old Adam. But the believer now has let God put old Adam to death, by Crucifixion. But God didn't leave us in the grave, He gave us new life. Let me show you another verse. Let's go to the gospel of John Chapter 12, and drop down to verse 23.

John 12:23,24

"And Jesus answered and said, `The hour is come that the Son of Man should be glorified (now remember this was just before the crucifixion). Verily, verily I say unto you, Except a kernel of wheat fall into the ground and die it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit."

What was he talking about? **His death, burial, and Resurrection.** Now we identify with that. Now, let me quickly put the circles on the board and see if we can make some sense out of it. Here we have the Cross, and as the Law as we saw in earlier programs, the Law convicts us. We are sinners, we are nothing but law-breakers, because of our condition in Adam, so then the Holy Spirit, oh bless the work of the Holy Spirit! God somehow recharges us right here the moment we believe. He

recharges our spirit. He comes in the Person of the Holy Spirit and dwells in us. But old Adam is reckoned right there on the Cross. He's now satisfied the demand of God that he die because he was a sinner. But immediately, God puts opposite to take over a new nature. And it is a created act of God. It is a divine nature. And then with the regeneration of our spirit, the two working in consort are going to have an influence on the physical body. Now where does that leave us? It leaves us with a royal battle. Because even if God does consider old Adam as crucified, and we know he does, God reckons him as dead. But in experience where is he? I've still got mine. But the best way I can reconcile it is that when Christ died and rose from the dead, what did He do so far as Satan is concerned? Defeat him!! But is Satan alive and well? Yes. And so we have to reckon that old Adam is dead, he's crucified, but he's still with us.

LESSON TWO * PART I

REDEMPTION AND JUSTIFICATION - ROMANS 3:25-4:8

Now back to Romans Chapter 3. We have been taking this very slowly because I'm afraid very few people really get a solid understanding of what these chapters are all about. Hopefully we can make it so plain that not one can be left confused. So let's begin in verse 20 for a little review. And the Apostle Paul writes to the believers who are predominately Gentiles, but remember Jews are also eligible for this salvation, and some Jews are coming to know The Lord. But it's predominately God dealing with the Gentile. So for the church at Rome as well as believers today Paul writes:

Romans 3:20,21

"Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin. But now (in other words the Law could not do a thing to bring someone into salvation, but the flip side is we do have something that does, and that is) the righteousness of God without the law is manifested (put into the spotlight), being witnessed by the law and the prophets;"

Here I always have to stop. I emphasize Paul's teaching so much and, for us today I think 90% of our study time in The Bible should be in his epistles. But never will I indicate that you forget about the rest of Scripture. The Old Testament is just as well fitted as the New Testament, and it all dovetails together, and I hope that is what I have been bringing out as we have been studying **Through The Bible** in the past five years. Remember the Old Testament was under predominately the economy of Law, to the Nation of Israel who were under the Law with all their Temple worship, their priesthood, and their sacrifices. But now that God has turned to the Gentiles, then naturally that economy had to slip off the scene as we saw in the Book of Acts, and we have something totally different. This may disturb a few people, but all I ask is don't take my word for it, search the Scriptures. Do you find the same kind of language that Paul uses back in the Four Gospels? I'll tell you before you look that you won't. You won't find it in the Old Testament because this is part of that "**revelation**" that Paul is constantly talking about. **The mysteries, the secrets that had been held in the mind of God until He revealed them to this Apostle to the Gentiles.** And what we have to hone in on is this new revelation.

I've used this illustration many times, and I'll repeat it again. Say you had a will prepared ten years ago, and put it in a strong box for safe keeping. But a month ago you drew up a new will, and put it in the same strong box, and tomorrow you die. When your will is probated which one will they declare valid? The latest one. And it's the same way with Scripture, we have to understand that Paul has now come with new revelations that have never been revealed before, and this is what we will be held accountable for. You know denominations are so stringent and they only want their people to get what they teach, and that's okay if they're lined up with The Book, but you see what I've tried to tell people all these years is this. **When you stand before The Lord one day He's not going to say you were certainly loyal and obedient to your denomination, but rather we are going to be judged according to The Book, and not according to what Les or anyone else says, and that's all I try to get people to see. What does this Book say?** Look at verse 21 again:

Romans 3:21

"Even the righteousness of God (what does that really mean? God can never do anything amiss, otherwise He couldn't be God. So whatever God does is going to be absolutely fair, just, and right) without the law is manifested (is laid out in the open), being witnessed by the law and the prophets;"

It was still based on all the Old Testament writings. You don't throw the Old Testament away. I've had many people tell me that they never look at the Old Testament because that's all outdated. No it isn't. The Old Testament is still applicable. In fact, let me show you a verse right here in Romans to back that up. This verse says it all.

Romans 15:4

"For whatsoever things were written aforetime (Old Testament) were written for our learning that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope."

Not doctrine but rather our learning. See the difference? Doctrine is what we had better have straight in what we believe, so far as our eternal destiny is concern. Doctrine is what we need for living the Christian life today. But for our learning, that is to understand why we have this doctrine. So the Old Testament is still applicable for our learning, to give us the background of how all this fell in place, and that now God can turn to the whole human race with His tremendous plan of salvation. Look at verse 4 again. We have to use the whole Book. Now back to Romans 3.

Romans 3:22

"Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe; for there is no difference:"

Between Jew and Gentile. Everybody is now on the same level. The Jew used to be in a place of pre-eminence, they had the law, the priesthood and Temple, but no more. There is now no distinction between Jew and Gentile. Now verse 23, and this is the capstone of everything that God laid out in chapters 1 and 2. The immoral man, the moral man, the religious man; it didn't make any difference. Every child of Adam is now under this decree.

Romans 3:23

"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;"

No person that has ever lived can merit favor with God on his own. It's impossible, for The Book says **"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."** We're all condemned, and I pointed out in our last series of lessons **"We are not sinners because we break the law, but rather we break the law because we are sinners."** People have a hard time understanding that. We are born sinners. But let's look at the flip side in verse 24. Because of all that God has done it is not a hopeless situation, because here is the promise.

Romans 3:24a

"Being justified..."

I like to define words. To justify someone is to declare them just as if nothing had ever happened. That's justification. To bring it into the scriptural realm, justification is that judicial act of God whereby He declares the sinner who believes, "Just as if he had never sinned." That's hard for us to swallow, that once God justifies us, He sees us just like He saw Adam before he fell? Yes, and that's hard to comprehend. But it's a Biblical truth. We are justified without a cause. In other words God didn't finally get back in a corner and say, **"Okay, I'll justify you, and declare you just as if you have never sinned because you deserve it."** No. God justifies us freely.

Romans 3:24

"Being justified freely by his grace (without a cause even though we don't deserve it, when we believe) through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus."

Many people teach that everybody is going to end up in Heaven, and a lot of folk right here in this area think, **"I'll make it somehow or other."** but that's not according to The Book. It still boils down to that personal decision to recognize themselves as a sinner and that they believe **What Christ has done on their behalf is all that God demands.** We're justified freely by His grace. Very few church people understand this word **'Grace.'** Grace is that attribute of God whereby He, in His love and mercy, pours out on Sons of Adam the opportunity for eternal life if they will just believe the Gospel. (Ref. I Cor. 15:1-4) Now that's Grace. I always like to use the Apostle Paul as an example when he was on the road to Damascus as probably the most perfect picture of the Grace of God in all of Scripture.

What kind of man was Saul of Tarsus? He was a religious zealot but he was contrary to God. He literally hated the name Jesus of Nazareth because he thought it was in opposition to his religion, so he persecuted those who had put their faith in Jesus. He literally committed many of them to prison, and even voted to have some put to death, he was what I've often said was the first man I would have zapped off the scene had I been God. And I think most of you would agree. But instead God saved him - not after he had done a lot of begging, and a lot of crusading saying, **"I've got to straighten up my life so God can do something with me."** No, he was yet breathing slaughter, and threatenings against those believers and God zapped him with eternal life, and confronted him.

Acts 9:4,5

"And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, 'Saul, Saul, why persecutes thou me?' And he said, 'Who art thou, Lord?' And the Lord said, 'I am Jesus whom thou persecutes:...'"

The man was transformed in a moment. And as we will see in Chapter 7, all of a sudden his religiosity just faded away, the Law came alive, and he realized he was a sinner, and the Grace of God just overwhelmed him. And that is where we all have to come, where we realize that there is nothing we can do. Another example I like to give is the children of Israel on the shores of the Red Sea. It looked hopeless, the Egyptian army behind them, populated areas to the left and mountains to the right and the Red Sea out in front of them. Completely hopeless. Did God say, "**Well hurry up and build bridges?**" No! God said almost the ridiculous didn't He? He said, "**Stand Still.**" What did that mean? He meant there is nothing Israel can do. They're locked in, they're at His mercy. And what did God's mercy do? Open the Red Sea. Now that's Salvation Oh it's so beautiful, if only people can understand that we are in that hopeless situation because we are sons of Adam, we're sinners.

Romans 3:24

"Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:"

Now these are all heavyweight words. First, **justification** whereby God declares the sinner just as if he had never sinned. On what basis? His **Grace**, not because we deserve it, but by His loving Grace. But how does he accomplish it through Grace? By **redemption**, and what's redemption? Paying a price. I have a little illustration about redemption that goes like this. This young lad was handy making models and so one winter and spring he labored by the hour to make this special little boat so he could take it down to the seashore for their summer vacation. He put a lot of time and effort into that little boat, and when he finished, he had created a beautiful little thing. So the day came when they went to the beach, and he was playing with his boat, and it did everything that he wanted it to do. But after playing with the boat for a while something distracted the little boy, and he left his little boat there on the water's edge. When he returned for it, the boat he had spent so much time on was gone, and he couldn't find it anywhere. Finally he gave up trying to find it and the family went home.

That winter he was with his mother shopping when all of a sudden he discovered his boat in a pawn shop window. The little lad was just aghast, and said, "**Momma, there's my boat!**" They went in to see what the store owner would say, and they saw a price on it. There was no way the little lad could afford to pay for his boat, and his mom wasn't going to. So he determined that he'd go home and work and save his money until he had enough to buy his little boat back. Well, finally the day came when he had saved enough money, and he went bounding into the pawn shop and the boat was still there fortunately, and so he paid for it. But this is the point I want to make. As he was carrying that little boat home, he was talking to it. He said, "**Little boat you're twice over mine. I made you and now I've bought you back.**" Well, you see that's mankind. God had us in Adam until he fell, and then God lost the human race because of sin, and the only way He could get it back was to in due time pay the price, which He did at Calvary when He went to the Cross. Now that's redemption. God's Grace can be appropriated and that is the price that had to be paid for our redemption.

I have another illustration I would like to share with you. The basic Greek word used in redemption is "**Exagorazo**" - which means to buy out of the market. And naturally we are picturing a slave

market in Paul's day. Slaves would come in maybe from Europe after the Roman legions had brought back the victims of their military episodes, and then these people would end up in the slave market. And you want to remember in those days if they didn't get bought out of the slave market, then the coliseum was the end for them, as they were fed to the lions. So the only hope they had was to be bought out of the market. The next Greek word used in this analogy is "**Lutroo**"- which means after they have been bought out of the market they can be set free. That's exactly where we were. As sons of Adam falling short of the glory of God every human being is in Satan's slave market whether they know it or not. Unless they are purchased out of Satan's slave market they're in pretty much the same situation as going to the coliseum only it's spiritual, eternal, and death. The only hope is that they are bought out of that slave market. And that's exactly what the Blood of Christ did, that Blood paid the price of redemption. He paid it in full, and He has not only bought us out of the slave market but He's also set us free.

Now I'll use this illustration to make a point. A rich Roman goes down to the slave market and he sees a young teenager that is healthy and strong so he buys him and takes him home. He cleans him up, puts him in nice clothes and gives him light duties to perform for him. Then in short order he tells this slave, "**I've also paid for your freedom, and if you don't want to stay here and be my servant then you're free to go any where in the Roman Empire.**" Well in those kind of circumstances what would you and I do? We probably wouldn't go out into a strange land, but rather tell our master that we will stay right here and be his slave the rest of our lives. We've never had it this good before. And that's the way the believer should respond. Once Christ has paid the price of redemption, and not only bought us out of the slave market of Satan, but He also sets us free. You know I'm always stressing that there is no freedom on this planet like a true believer experiences. That's when we come into real freedom. I always have to follow that up with, "**But that's not a license.**" That doesn't mean that we can live for the devil and do whatever we please. Now back to the text again.

He tells us in verse 24 we are justified as if we have never sinned because God's Grace has been poured out on us undeservingly. It's because His shed Blood has paid the price of our redemption. Let me show you another verse. Go to I Peter Chapter 1. Peter is writing this a long time after his earthly ministry with Christ. Approximately thirty years later, and by now Paul's revelation has also been made known to Peter. So Peter can write the following:

I Peter 1:18,19

"Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed (not bought) with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from you fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as a lamb without blemish and without spot;"

Now you can't make it any plainer. And you see why I maintain that you cannot leave the blood out of the picture? And many of us might not exactly like that, but you can't bypass the blood of Christ, because we have been redeemed by the blood.

LESSON TWO * PART II

REDEMPTION AND JUSTIFICATION - ROMANS 3:25-4:8

We love to hear from you and it seems like you're almost right here with us in class as we teach. I've always said I'm not a preacher, but rather a teacher, and there's a big difference. Once in a while I may get close to preaching but I try not to. I want to just teach and keep it on a low level without getting emotional. But we certainly hope and pray the Holy Spirit will continue to open hearts to understand what The Word really says and what it doesn't say. Now let's come right back to the Book of Romans and I believe I could very easily spend five years right here in this Book alone. I heard recently that there was a preacher on the east coast who spent 20 years and never preached a Sunday morning sermon out of anything but the Book of Romans. And I say, "**Praise the Lord!**" because he must have been a good preacher. So we're going to stay in the Book of Romans and pick right up where we left off and that was at verse 25 of Chapter 3, but first let's read verse 24 again.

Romans 3:24

"Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:"

Now I'm going to reflect back about three or four lessons ago where we went over the two absolutes in Scripture. No one can ever detour them or put a bridge over them, or tunnel under them, but must rather face them head on.

Hebrews 11:6a

"But without faith it is impossible to please him (God):...."

Hebrews 9:22b

"...and without shedding of blood is no remission (of sin),"

All right, I want you to see then that here we are satisfying both of those imperatives. We are dealing with the shed Blood because that was the price of redemption. And all of this is appropriated when we believe. And what is believing? Faith! So both of these are in the next verse. The Christ Jesus in verse 24:

Romans 3:25

"Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood (not only faith, but faith in His Blood. There you have both attributes in half a verse, there is no way you can escape it. So God has made Christ then a propitiation when we place our faith in His Blood), to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God." Let's look at that word "Propitiation." We looked at it a long time ago when we were in the Book of Exodus. Now turn to I John 2.

I John 2:1

"MY little children (I love that. I call that the term of endearment), these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if (in other words, we will) any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:"

Now another thought comes to mind. Why do we scripturally need an advocate with the Father? Turn to the Book of Revelation Chapter 12, and I'll show you. And we know that from the chronology of the Book of Revelation this great event will take place at the mid-point of the seven years of Tribulation. At the end of the first 3 1/2 years as I have taught for many years, a whole series of events will take place almost simultaneously. One of those events is what we will read about now. Now remember why we have turned to this passage. **"Why do we need an advocate?"**

Revelations 12:7-10

"And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon (Satan); and the dragon fought and his angels (in other words Satan and his angels are in a warfare in heaven), And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon (Satan) was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth (take that literally, he has had access to the very throne room of heaven and he will have according to this until the mid-point of the Tribulation, but then for the last time he), and his angels were cast out with him. And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ (why?): for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night."

So Satan accuses you and I right there in the presence of God, if I understand Scripture, every time we sin. But what have we got going for us? An advocate. And what's the other word for an advocate? An attorney. We have a legal mouthpiece is the way the world would put it. Just as soon as Satan points the finger at us and says to God the Father, **"Look what that believer just did."** What does Jesus say? **"Wait a minute, he's under the Blood, I've purchased him, he's mine."** Do you see that? All right, now that's exactly what John is referring to in Chapter 2 verse 1.

I John 2:1b,2

"...we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous (that wasn't what I wanted to teach here, I want the next verse): And he (Jesus Christ the righteous) is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."

In Scripture the word 'propitiation' is used only here and in Romans as far as I can tell. And He is the propitiation for our sins. Not for our sin only, but the sins of the whole world. There are those who teach that Christ's atonement was only for those who become believers, it was a limited atonement. Well, that's not what my Bible says. My Bible says Christ died and paid the sin debt for every human being. But it doesn't automatically apply to everyone until they believe. And that's where we must be careful.

So now what's propitiation? We've got to go back to the Book of Exodus at least in our mind. Imagine a floor plan of the tent in the wilderness that we call the Tabernacle. **And remember the tent was divided into two rooms and in the back room, in the Holy of Holies, was the Ark of the Covenant with the mercy seat.** Out in the other room was the **table of shewbread, altar of incense and the candlestick. Outside the door was the laver of cleansing, and out farther was the brazen altar and out farther was the outer fence.** Then on the Day of Atonement, Aaron the High Priest would have to bring three sacrificial animals. He would kill one, and make his way back to the mercy seat and sprinkle the blood on it for his own sins. And then he would take the blood of

the second animal, and sprinkle it for the sins of the Nation of Israel. And then he would go back to the third animal and symbolically lay his hands on the head of that goat and that was called the scapegoat, and then this goat was taken out into the wilderness and set free. If you remember when we studied this back when we were in Exodus, all the materials that made up the Tabernacle, the outer fence of the altar, of the laver of cleansing, of the table of shewbread, the altar of incense, the candlestick, the Ark of the Covenant, the mercy seat covered with gold, made of wood, everything that was in that Tabernacle was a picture of whom? Of Christ the Lord Jesus.

Now then, this is the way I explain propitiation. **Christ was the High Priest, He was the sacrificial Animal. He is the Place of Sacrifice. He's the Laver of Cleansing. He's the Table of Shewbread. He's the Altar of Incense. He's the Candlestick. He's the Ark of the Covenant. He's the Mercy Seat. He is everything that you can possibly think of in that Tabernacle on the Day of Atonement.** The very word 'propitiation' indicates not only is He the Sacrifice, but also the Place of applying the Sacrifice. That's why I like to use this whole system of the Tabernacle as a picture of Christ's finished work of the Cross. That's what we talk about when we say the work of the Cross finished it because He was everything that possibly demanded a Holy God of us. And He did it all on our behalf, and when you put it all together then that's propitiation. What Christ accomplished on the Cross, His shed Blood, with His death, burial, and Resurrection it's all been done on our behalf. Now back to Romans 3:25, and let's read that verse once more.

Romans 3:25

"Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation (when we can place our faith in His what? His Blood. We are living in a sophisticated day when people don't like to talk about sacrificial blood, and we're just not programmed to that, but nevertheless we cannot ignore the demands of Scripture. That God in His own reasoning and line of thought has demanded shed blood for the remission of sin and we can't go against that. So now let's read on) through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness (why do we place faith in His Blood?) for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;"

The last part of this verse says to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past. Now what's he talking about? The Old Testament believers. Remember when I taught the difference between hell and the Lake of Fire a long time ago? I pointed out that all through the Old Testament economy even the believers, with the exception of Enoch and Elijah, when they died they didn't go to heaven, but rather down into paradise. Remember that? They went down into paradise and we get just a little window of information on that in Luke Chapter 16 with the story of Abraham and Lazarus and the rich man in torment. Remember there was a great gulf fixed that they couldn't cross over to each other. Abraham and Lazarus of course were down in that area called hades, or hell, and that explains the creed where it says that Jesus descended into hell, but He went into the paradise side. And then at His resurrection morning He took paradise up to heaven, and so now Paul tells us:

11 Corinthians 5:8

"We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord:"

But in the Old testament it wasn't that way. They couldn't go into Heaven. We know God made two exceptions, but on the whole the believer could not go into Heaven and the question is why? There had been no atoning blood shed. We know the blood of animals and goats couldn't take away sin, it was a stop gap. I've always called it sweeping it under the rug, but once the true atonement had been accomplished there was no reason to send people down into paradise because paradise was taken directly to Heaven. And that is exactly what the Apostle Paul is reminding us. He's not only talking about the New Testament believer, but he's also bringing in the Old Testament saints, because their sins were totally atoned for by virtue of the shed Blood of Jesus Christ, and that brings us right up to date doesn't it. Now verse 26:

Romans 3:26a

"To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness:..."

Paul is constantly hammering home one way or other that there is nothing that we've got going for us. Do you see that? We have nothing good, we have no righteousness, we have nothing to barter, and all we can do is, again like Israel at the Red Sea, to say, **"I'm helpless and hopeless."** But, oh, that's when God steps in.

Romans 3:26b

"... that he (The Lord Jesus) might be just (or fair),..."

I remember sometime ago that someone presented the same question in a book or some material I was reading, and I've always had that question in my mind for as long as I can remember, just like everyone else. How will God justify sending someone to the eternal Lake of Fire when so far as we know they have never had an opportunity to hear the Gospel (Ref I Corinthians 15:1-4). The human response is this, **"But God, that's not fair, because they never had a chance."** Whoever presented that question said this, "You know the only way we can answer that dilemma is that God is never unjust, or unfair. So in His own higher way of thinking, God knows how He will take care of it. We can't comprehend it. But remember that God can never be unfair. He is totally just in all of his dealings.

Romans 3:26b

"...and the justifier of him which (so remember for all this to be consummated, the work of propitiation, the work of His shed Blood, the work of redemption as we saw in the last lesson, He's going to end up being just and He's also going to be just in justifying, declaring just as if they had never sinned, any sinner who is a child of Adam, any sinner who just simply) ***believeth in Jesus."***

Now, of course when Paul talks about believing in Jesus, he's not talking about The Jesus of the Four Gospels, but rather the Jesus after His Resurrection. The Christ of Resurrection and what He did for you and me. Faith in that finished work of the Cross. All that is required is believing. Is anything left out of that verse? Most of the rank and file in the Christian community think something else should also be included be in this verse. They think believing is not enough. They think you have to do this and that (traditions) to become a member of the Body of Christ, but that's not what The Book says. **All the Bible declares is that these things are imputed to us when we believe (Faith + Nothing).** But when we believe, things are going to start happening, we're going to

see some life changes. We're going to see a whole new personality make-up, and some of the things people say must be done to become a Christian will come naturally as a result then of our faith.

Romans 3:27

"Where is boasting then (wouldn't Heaven be an awful boring place if everyone had a story to tell of everything they did to get there? It would be awful, and the next chapter starts out that way by explaining that if Abraham had been saved by works he could have boasted)? It is excluded (you can't argue with that), By what law (what Law says we can't work for our Salvation? the law) of works? Nay; but by the law of faith." Isn't that beautiful, the law of faith without works. I know what the Book of James says; Also remember who the Book of James was written for and to - James 1:1.

James 2:14-17

"What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled: notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone."

Paul on the other hand says, **"It's Faith + Nothing!"** Until we're saved, and then what follows? Works, of course. We can never come back to God and say, but I did this or that for my Salvation. We have to totally rest on that which has been done on our behalf. Now verse 28: See how often Paul repeats things? And that's by Holy Spirit inspiration, and for a reason. We have to constantly repeat some of these things in order for them to soak in.

Romans 3:28

"Therefore we conclude (hey, there's no more room for argument) that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law."

Isn't that fantastic? We are justified by faith. You know years and years ago I had a lady in one of my classes who said she was a good artist, and one day she came up with a little painting of an odd looking little character with the most quizzical look on his face. And her caption was, **"Faith + Nothing?"** Isn't that perfect? And isn't that exactly the general rule of people when they hear me teach that it's faith + nothing, they just quizzically look at me as if to say, **"Now wait a minute Les, what are you talking about?"** Don't I have to do this and that? No, not for salvation. It is Faith + Nothing, and I know that it may be hard to swallow. But listen, that's what The Book teaches. Now verse 29:

Romans 3:29

"Is he the God of the Jews only? is he not also the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also:" Now that wasn't the concept back in the Old Testament was it? Oh the Gentiles were in God's mind, but remember in Ephesians 2 what Paul says?

Ephesians 2:12

"That at that time ye (Gentiles) were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world:"

That was the Gentiles lot back there before the Gospel of Grace came on along. But now it's on a level playing field. The Jew no longer has an advantage over a Gentile nor do we have an advantage over the Jew. Now to finish the chapter.

Romans 3:30,31

"Seeing it is one God, which shall justify the circumcision (Jews) by faith, and (justify) uncircumcision (Gentiles) through faith. Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law."

In other words, when I stand here and say that you're not under Law, but strictly by faith + nothing, does that mean you throw the Law out to the wind? No! When we get to Romans Chapter 13 Paul is going to say just as plain as English can make it. **"That when we love our neighbor, as a believer, of course, then we fulfill the Law."** We don't cast it out. And I've always put it this way: can you love someone and break any of those commandments against him? It's impossible. And so love is the fulfilling of the Law.

LESSON TWO * PART III

REDEMPTION AND JUSTIFICATION - ROMANS 3:25-4:8

It's been a while since we explained who and what we are. We are not associated with any group, though I certainly have my own church background. We're independent, and not connected to any organization. We're not underwritten by anyone and totally rely on God's people to supply the funds. We never try to trumpet one group over another or twist arms. We're just here to teach The Book. I'm so thrilled that we can get letters from all different backgrounds; that folk are learning. And that's the only reason I teach. I just want people to study, read their Bible and understand it.

A gentlemen a while back said, **"You know Les, for years I would pick up this Bible and try to read it, and I couldn't understand so I would put it back on the shelf. Then months later I would begin feeling guilty because I wasn't reading my Bible, and I'd pick it up and read it but still couldn't get any thing out of it, but since I now understand your line of teaching I can just revel in reading my Bible."** That's what it's all about. I know everyone doesn't agree with our teaching and I don't expect them to - that's only human nature, but we trust we can always avoid error, and stay as true to The Word as we possible can. Now let's get right back where we left off in the last lesson and begin with Romans Chapter 4. Here Paul is going to come back to Abraham. Now Abraham is one of the Old Testament characters that Paul alludes to probably more than anyone else, and in the Book of Galatians he will even say:

Galatians 3:7

"Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham."

That's thrown a curve at many people. Does that mean when you become a Christian you become a Jew? Heavens no! Gentiles are Gentiles, and our Salvation doesn't make a Jew out of anyone. But it's just that Abraham was saved by Faith + Nothing. Abraham didn't sacrifice, didn't practice circumcision, nor did he have the Law. Abraham simply did what God told him to do, so he was saved by faith + nothing, and that's exactly where we are. That's the connection: Abraham and Christians today entered in by faith and faith alone. So Paul uses Abraham over and over. Back to Rom. 4:

Romans 4:1

"WHAT shall we say then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found (as a Jew)?"

What was Abraham by birth? A Syrian. Abraham had two brothers you remember up there in Haran in Syria. But Abraham by virtue of his call and by the Covenant promises, becomes the father of the Hebrew Nation. But his blood didn't change, he was still genetically a Syrian. So although Scripture considers Abraham the father of the Jewish race, and consequently the first Jew, genetically Isaac would be the first Son of Promise, and then would be what we would call the first real Jew. Abraham came out of Ur of the Chaldees, then came into the Land of Promise after believing God.

Romans 4:2

"For if Abraham were justified (notice Paul is still dealing with this whole business of justification. And Abraham becomes an ideal example of a man who was justified, declared as if he had never sinned, because if Abraham were justified) by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God."

If Abraham were given the ability and freedom to boast or to glory he would have had a lot to brag about. After all Abraham became a great man. He's known throughout all of history. But he couldn't boast one word before God. You know I'm always reminded of Job. For a moment let's go all the way back to that Book, sometimes I think these things just add a little salt and pepper to a lesson. For a moment let's look at Job Chapter 38. Job, if you remember, was in a dilemma wasn't he? Here he had been living a righteous life, he was the pillar of his community, and yet all of a sudden God permitted Satan to strike him, and took away everything that he had. Then his three "friends" came along and told Job all the reasons for his problems. But yet you really don't get to the crux of Job's problem until you get to this chapter. And Job did have a problem. We don't like to admit that, we like to think that Job was perfect. No he wasn't! Had he been perfect I don't think all of these things would have befallen him, but God had a tremendous lesson even for Job. And He could have said the same thing about Abraham.

Job 38:1-4

" THEN the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said, `Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge (who is God referring to? Job's friends. He says who are these guys that try to spew out all this stuff without any knowledge)? Gird up now thy loins like a man (what's God saying? He says don't be a wimp. Stand up like a man. I've got some things I want to ask you Job); for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me (now this is lowering the boom). Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding.'"

See what God is doing? He is putting Job in the place of not being able to say a word. Job didn't know how creation happened. He couldn't tell God how He did it, but God says, "Tell Me if you know." What's implied? Job thought he knew a lot. See that?

Job 38:5,6

"Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it? Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the corner stone thereof?"

What could Job answer? I don't know. But up until this time Job thought he was a pretty important person, and he had been. And it was the same way with Abraham. Abraham was a man of stature in his day and time, and yet when he came before God, could he boast? Not a word. He had nothing going for him. All Abraham could do was be a man of faith. Take God at His Word. And that's the lesson the Scripture is trying to show us. Back to Romans 4.

Romans 4:3

"For what saith the scripture?..." Not what anyone else says. Paul uses this again in the Book of Galatians, and let's look at it.

Galatians 4:30a

"Nevertheless what saith the scripture?..."

Do you see that? The Scripture is what counts and nothing else. What does the Scripture say? That's where we have to prepare ourselves when we meet Christ one day. I remember many years ago (I guess the Lord was already preparing me to teach even back then) we had a young couple that started attending our Church, and that was when we were still up in Iowa. They were from two totally opposite denominational backgrounds, and naturally they were having some problems in their home life and spiritual life because of these diverse views. So after attending a few times our pastor asked me one day if I would just go out to their home and teach that couple on a one on one basis. I had never done anything like that before, and I was probably shaking in my boots, but I'll never forget what a tremendous learning experience that was. Because when we sat down at their kitchen table, and I begin to open the Scriptures as best I could she immediately backed away and said, **"Now wait a minute Les, we have always been taught that we don't go by what any book says, but rather what our Church teaches."**

Now what's this poor old farmer going to do with something like that? I'd never been confronted with anything like that before. I thought that everybody went by what The Book says. But she was quite adamant, and it took me almost all evening to convince her that whatever Church anyone belongs to was men, those were human beings, but The Bible is The Creator God speaking. So we finally brought her around to where she could see that, and they both came to know The Lord. But even today there are so many that tell you the same thing. **"I don't care what you say, I go by what my Church says."** And that's fine if their Church lines up with The Book, but if it doesn't then those people are in trouble. They're going to be in eternal trouble. Back to Romans Chapter 4.

Romans 4:3a

"For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God,..."

There's a tremendous difference between believing God and believing in God. At first glance the average individual says, **"What's the difference?"** It's just one little preposition. Hey, it's all the difference in the world; this is the difference between Heaven and hell beloved. For the most part the world believes in God. They believe in God and prayer but know nothing of believing God. When you believe in God you just recognize He's up there, that He is in control or whatever. But when you believe God then you become a person of **"Faith."** Do you see the difference. When you believe God, now you're taking what He has said and you're believing it then and that's faith. For example, He tells us how to be saved here in Paul's epistles, and when we believe for our Salvation what those Scriptures say then we are saved (Reference: Rom. 1:16. I Cor. 15:1-4, Rom. 10:9-10 & 13). When you simply believe in God you're just recognizing His presence. Here in verse 3 we see that Abraham didn't believe in God, but rather he believed God. In other words when God said it Abraham believed it. That's the beauty of it. He believed God, and as soon as he did:

Romans 4:3

"... and it (it modifies his believing) was counted unto him for righteousness." Remember Abraham was a pagan, an idolater. Let's look at it. Come back to the Book of Joshua Chapter 24.

Joshua 24:2

"And Joshua said unto all the people, `Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Your father dwelt on the other side of the flood (river) in old time, even Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nachor: and they (the whole family) served other gods.'"

They were all idolaters, and you want to remember that was only about 200 years after the Tower of Babel. And there probably wasn't a single believer in the One true God left. The whole world was steeped in idolatry including Abraham's family. And that's why God had to tell Abraham in Genesis Chapter 12 to leave his family, his city, and go to a land that He will show him. He did not want Abraham's family down in the Promised Land because of their idolatry. So into this idolatrous home, and this idolatrous city of Ur God in His Grace again just about like He did with Saul on his road to Damascus. God in His Grace reaches down to one man Abram.

Genesis 12:1

"NOW the LORD had said unto Abram, `Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred (God wanted the break from idolatry), and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee:'"

Now when God said for Abram to do all that, what did Abram do? He did it in response to faith. And now in Romans 4, verse 3 we see God counted him righteous for believing Him. You see Salvation is so confound and so complex yet it's so simple. It's simple when we first enter in, even a child can understand it, but you see as we grow in our faith as a believer, we begin to realize how complex it all is. We'll never plumb the depth of it, it's impossible. I can't comprehend that the Creator of the universe permitted those Romans soldiers to nail Him to that wooden Cross and raise it up. I just can't comprehend that, but He did. I can't comprehend how the God of creation hung there and suffered and shed His divine Blood to be buried, and raised from the dead just for you and me. And I always try to make this point to believers. **"If you would have been the only person on**

earth Christ would have still gone through the work of the Cross." That's what we call a personal Salvation. We have to understand that. Christ didn't just put the human race under an umbrella, but rather He died for every individual. And that's why it becomes an individual responsibility to believe the Gospel. After Abraham believed God, then God could look at Abraham and say, "**As far as I'm concerned you have never sinned. You're justified.**" What had Abraham done? Nothing! He believed, and as a result of his believing he left town no doubt about it. But it was his believing that put him in a right standing with God.

Romans 4:4

"Now to him that worketh (tries to merit favor with God. Here we're talking about Salvation, not about Christian experience and works) is the reward (of Salvation) not reckoned of grace, but of debt."

Who are we going to put into debt if we can do this by works? God! And you'll never put God in debt because He's beyond that. But the human race is still trying to put God in debt by saying, "**But God, I've done all this and that and you owe it to me to let me into Heaven.**" No, He doesn't. He'll never owe any man anything, not even a righteous man like Abraham. We just have to understand that we're all sinners by virtue of being born from Adam, and that the only remedy for our sins is The Gospel, **that Christ died, was buried, shed His Blood, and rose from the dead for you and I, and when we believe it for our Salvation it's just like God saw Abraham believe, then God imputes to us His righteousness.**

Romans 4:5a

"But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly.."

That flies in the face of human reasoning, but that's the only kind of person God can deal with. He's the one that recognizes that he's ungodly. I always think of this analogy. Take a swimming pool full of kids on a hot day. They are screaming and having fun, and the lifeguard sits up here seemingly uncaring. But if they're doing their job they're not, and out of all that noise going on, what can they hear in an instant? Just a little plea for help. Immediately that life guard is in the water bringing salvation to that drowning kid. I liken that to exactly where God is. He looks at this whole world with all of it's activity, and turmoil, and commotion, but what's His ear constantly tuned to? A sinner crying out, "**Lord Save Me!**" And at that moment He's there. But God can't until we cry out for help. Now come back to the lifeguard again. What if one of those kids is just having a ball even though he's in deep water and he's in no trouble at all, but the lifeguard comes to take them to the edge of the pool. What would that kid think? "**Hey, I don't need you.**" It's the same way in the spiritual realm. God isn't going to go in and try to save the person that says, "**I have no need.**" He'd be totally rejected if He tried. So what does God wait for? That cry for help.

Matthew 9:11,12

"And when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto his disciples, `Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners?' But when Jesus heard that, he said unto them, `They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick.'"

It's the same way spiritually; when we realize our need and cry from the heart for Salvation, then God is there instantly. And it's all based on believing it, do you have the kind of faith that **"Yes the God of creation took on human flesh, went to the Cross, suffered, died, shed His Blood as full payment for our redemption, and then rose victoriously over sin and death and the old Devil himself, and is now able to impart eternal life."** Verse 5 again:

Romans 4:5

"But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness."

LESSON TWO * PART IV

REDEMPTION AND JUSTIFICATION - ROMANS 3:25-4:8

Now to return to our study in the Book of Romans, and that would be in Romans Chapter 4. We have been talking about Abraham of course who had been steeped in idolatry as a young man in the city of Ur, and where upon God reached down in Grace, and told him to leave the city, his family, and go to place that He would show him. And Abraham believed God! Now we'll look at verse 5 again, where Paul again is building his case that Abraham was declared righteous only because he believed God. Now we're going to carry that a little further in these succeeding verses.

Romans 4:5

"But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness."

So when you believe on the one that can justify ungodly people, then that faith or that kind of believing is counted. Now that word **counted** here comes from a Greek word that was a bookkeeping term, and is used in many other places in Romans as **imputed** or **put to the account**. In fact let me show you the same word in a setting that will be easy to understand. Let's come back to the Book of Philemon and it's the same identical word, and yet here it is used in a way that we can readily understand the setting. Now if you remember Onesimus had been a slave and had run away from his owner Philemon, and while he was away Onesimus had come across Paul's Gospel and had become a believer. And now Paul says to be an obedient believer that he should go back to his master Philemon, but he doesn't want Philemon to come down hard on Onesimus as a disobedient slave, and so Paul is pleading with Philemon to accept the man back as a Christian brother without any punishment. Now as we come into verse 18, we will find this such a beautiful illustration of the word 'imputed' as we see it in the Book of Romans. But let's begin with verse 15:

Philemon 1:15-18

"For perhaps he (Onesimus) therefore departed for a season, that thou shouldest receive him for ever; Not now as a servant, but above a servant, a brother beloved, specially to me, but how much more unto thee, both in the flesh, and in the Lord (now Philemon now has a real servant in Onesimus, not only for his physical need but Onesimus is now a believer, and that would give him a

fellowship)? *If thou count me therefore a partner, receive him as myself* (Paul is saying to Philemon, when Onesimus comes back to you open the door to him like you would if it were me). *If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, put that on mine account;*"

Now what's Paul talking about? Impute it to me. Paul says if Onesimus owes you anything of monetary value then don't take it from him because after all he was still just a common slave, but rather Paul says, "**Put it to my account and I'll pay it when I come.**" Now it's the same Greek word that we see back here in the Book of Romans as counted in verse 5. In other words here as an unbeliever we have this long list of debts that there is no way we can pay. It's just a burden, and there is no way we could ever pay it off. But by virtue of our believing the Gospel for our Salvation, what has God done with that debt? Canceled it! And on the other side of the ledger God puts the whole bank roll of heaven to our account. Now again that's beyond our comprehension. But that's what Salvation does. It cancels our sin debt and never again will God confront any believer with his sins.

I remember years ago I was asked to call on a couple who had been going through some trying times, and the husband had a debilitating disease, and I didn't know them that well. I had never met them but I stopped by at the insistence of some of their friends just to encourage them a little bit. And as the lady of the house escorted me to the door as I was leaving she said, "**Les isn't this all because of some horrible sin in our past?**" I said, "Now wait a minute. Are you believers, do you know the Lord as your Savior?" She said "**Oh, yeah.**" I said, "Then don't you know what the Scripture teaches that all your sins have been forgiven?"

Colossians 2:13

"And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses (past, present, and future):"

It's been wiped off the slate and never will you be confronted with sin when we stand before God. If The Lord should come this very moment and you and I had done something this day before noon that was wrong, and we hadn't had time to confess it, do you think we are going to come up in The Lord's presence and have Him say, "**Now wait a minute that Wednesday before noon you sinned and haven't taken care of it.**" Why of course not. We're forgiven the moment we sin, and that's so hard for people to comprehend. They say, well, then that's license. No it isn't. That's just simply the Grace of God that says **that God will never come back at us and accuse of still having sin on our ledger.** It's been wiped completely clean, and the whole bank roll of Heaven has been put to our account. And what am I talking about? God's righteousness! All of God's righteousness has been imputed to our account, and that's what it said concerning Abraham. Now let's read on.

Romans 4:6a

"Even as David..."

Now the Old Testament economy, when it comes to forgiveness and Salvation as I have said so often, is hard to put your thumb on it. It's hard to reckon some of these things. They had Salvation, no doubt about it. But it wasn't as delineated as we see it now in Paul's teachings. For us, I mean the whole thing is just laid out so beautifully. It's explained and we can understand it. But nevertheless

there was still a Salvation in the Old Testament that Paul could go back and relate to, and he even uses David, and we don't ordinarily think of David as the man of faith that Abraham was, but here's what it says.

Romans 4:6

"Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth (puts to the account) righteousness without works,"

God imputes righteousness without our doing a thing. Now let's not confuse that with Christian good works. Turn with me for a moment to the Book of Ephesians, Chapter 2.

Ephesians 2:8

"For by grace (the unmerited favor of God) are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves (there isn't anything you and I can do for Salvation except believe): it is the gift of God:" Just ask yourself this question, Do you work for a gift? Do you merit a gift? Never! If so then it would no longer be a gift.

Ephesians 2:9

"Not of works, lest any man should boast."

Now look at verse 10. As a result of our faith in the finished work of Christ being accomplished on our behalf, and it is now appropriated by our faith, God has imputed His righteousness to our account, but what does He expect?

Ephesians 2:10a

"For we are his workmanship,..."

In other words when God saves us He doesn't leave us like a wreck, but rather He makes us a new person. He gives us a whole new personality, we're not the old person we used to be, so we are a new creation. Now I stand to be corrected but I believe the word "workmanship" has the same Greek connection as our word "symphony." And I like that. There are a lot of people who don't care for symphony music, but I still like a beautiful symphony orchestra. I think it just has sounds that are unbelievable. Now in that symphonic music are all these various types of instruments, and they all melt together for that beautiful sound. Now what brought all that together? The composer. As he sat and was able to put all the scores of all these various instruments together and when they all play the song, out comes this beautiful music. Now that takes something. All right, now that's where we are, when God transforms us and makes us His child we become a symphonic work of art. We become a thing of beauty. That's what we should be, we're His workmanship. We are the result of the work of the eternal God because we believe.

Ephesians 2:10

"For we are his workmanship, created (what does that imply? Just as big a miracle as when God created the universe, and I want people to know that. that when God saves a son of Adam and makes

him a new person, it's as great a work of creation as when He created the universe in the first place. That's what people need to comprehend, that as a believer we are a unique creation of the only Creator in the universe, and that's God Himself) *in Christ Jesus unto good works* (absolutely!),...."

God expects the believer to perform the good works, but not for Salvation. Good works are a result of Salvation. Remember when we were studying in the Book of Matthew, Chapter 25 at the end of the Tribulation. Christ will bring all the survivors before Him in Jerusalem. There won't be many of them, but the ones that survive He is going to separate them. The believers from the unbelievers, sheep and goats, and He's going to say to the sheep the following:

Matthew 25:31-34

"When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels (that's us as believers) with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations, and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats; And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, 'Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:'"

It wasn't their good works that performed their Salvation, but rather their Salvation that caused them to perform the works. And then when He comes to the goats, the unbelievers He said:

Matthew 25:41-45

"Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, 'Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels; For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not; sick, and in prison and ye visited me not.' Then shall they also answer him, saying, 'Lord, when saw we thee an hungred or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee?' Then shall he answer them saying, 'Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me:'"

What's Christ saying? You didn't receive, and believe their message of Salvation, but on the contrary you rejected it and you had no concern for their physical needs. So Depart: Well what was their problem? **They didn't believe.** And why had the ones on the right, the sheep, met their need? **Because they were believers.** Their good works followed their Salvation. And it's the same way here in this verse in Ephesians. I think anyone can understand that our society today would not be in the mess that it's in, our welfare system wouldn't be the gross mismanaged mess that it is if the Christian community would have done their good works from day one. But we failed. See, in reality all these welfare programs should have been carried on by the believing element. But you see, too many Christian good works have gone by the board, as well as everything else, but here the Scripture says:

Ephesians 2:10

"For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained (what does that mean? This is the way He set it up, and this is the way He planned it that the Christian community should be the practitioner of good works) that we should walk in them."

Now go to I Corinthians Chapter 3. We've touched on these things before, but we need to repeat some of these things from time to time. Now here Paul is dealing with this other side of our Christian experience. He's not dealing with the Salvation end of it, but rather the works/reward part of it. And let's look what he says:

I Corinthians 3:9-11

"For we are laborers together with God (we can't do anything alone): ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building. According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder (Paul says), I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man (believer) take heed (be careful) how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."

In other words, He's the foundation of our Salvation experience. He's the foundation of our Christian life, and by virtue of our Christian life and works we become builders. We are building onto this building that we are constructing with God, and God gives us six materials to build with. Three of these materials will withstand the heat and fire, and three of them will go up in a puff of smoke. Now let's look what the Scriptures say:

I Corinthians 3:12,13

"Now if any man build upon this foundation (as believers) gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; Every man's (believers only) works shall be made manifest (put in the spotlight): for the day shall declare it (the day when we come before the righteous Judge in Heaven), because it shall be revealed by fire;..." This is not hell fire. One of the descriptions of Christ is that He has eyes of fire as we find in Revelation Chapter 19.

Revelation 19:12

"His (Christ) eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns: and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself."

So as we come up before Him, and I think it will be at the judgment seat of Christ in II Corinthians Chapter 5, it will not be for Salvation, never to answer for sin, but we'll have to answer for rewards. What, as a believer, have we done to further the Kingdom. And so those fiery eyes will penetrate our whole Christian record. What did we build with? Was it wood, hay, and stubble, or gold, silver, and precious stones or maybe a mixture of both. Now when those fiery eyes are finished, what's going to be left? Only the three elements that won't melt in heat. So that means only the gold, silver, and precious stones. And on that basis God is going to give us rewards then for eternity. Responsibilities is what I think the rewards will be. This has nothing to do with the crown, but responsibilities that will be given to us in the Kingdom.

Now then, believers have a lot of wood, hay, and stubble, and it will count for nothing. Others are going to have a little gold, silver, and a few precious stones symbolically, and they're going to receive rewards. Others are going to have a lot of those, and they will receive a lot of rewards. So what's the whole lesson? Yes, we're saved by faith + nothing, but what are we immediately to do? Work and serve, and do everything to God's glory because the rewards are piling up. I heard many years ago someone put it just that way. **"Everything that you do for God's glory, you're sending**

ahead." It's waiting for us. It's going to be there when we get there, and then we're going to be able to cash in on these rewards. While we're here let's clear up a few false impressions as we read verses 13-15.

I Corinthians 3:13-15

"Every man's work shall be made manifest (not a single believer will escape these fiery eyes of the Lord as He judges our works): for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned (he's got nothing but hay, wood, and stubble. He never worked for the gold, silver, and precious stones), he shall suffer loss (not of his Salvation, but rather of rewards, he'll have none): but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire."

Now that's what The Book says. You and I might think that they won't deserve being saved, but your Salvation is not based on works. Their Salvation was based on their faith and nothing else. We should always strive for rewards and live a fruitful life for our Lord. And listen, those rewards are going to be enjoyed for all eternity. What's seventy or eighty years in this life by comparison? It's absolutely nothing. You know Paul used so often the analogy of the Olympic athletic, Why do you suppose they trained? Why did they strive to win? Because of that silly little wreath that they could take home, and it would be dried up even before they got home. So Paul's analogy is this: **"If those men did all of that just to get a silly little wreath for their rewards, then how much more we should strive for rewards when we have something that's not going to shrivel up and die, but is eternal."** Now back to Romans.

Romans 4:6-8

"Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputed righteousness without works, Saying, `Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.'"

Why? Because they are all forgiven!

LESSON THREE * PART I

THE IMPUTED RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD: ROMANS 4 - 5:5

I might tell you that these little books that are transcribed from the videotapes are now even being used in foreign countries by foreign missionaries. We also had a gentlemen call this week and order some for a prison in Ohio. So the Lord is using every means to get The Word out. We're just here to teach The Word and let the chips fall where they may, and you would be surprised how people's eyes get opened to what The Book really says, and what it doesn't say.

Turn to Paul's writings in the Book of Romans Chapter 4 and we'll review just a little. When I speak of the writings of Paul, I am not elevating the man. Don't forget, he was merely a human instrument that God used and spoke through as He wrote. It was the same way with the other writers of

Scripture. I read famous men who will make a statement like this. **"Well you know Luke must have been a tremendous researcher. Luke must have been a tremendous note taker,"** They insinuate that these men wrote on the basis of information they were able to collect. But no Word of Scripture came to pass that way; every writer of this Book wrote as he was moved by the Holy Spirit. So when I speak of the writings of Paul, I'm not talking about the man and his intellect, but rather I'm talking about the man God used to put these things in print. I was looking at a verse last night in II Corinthians Chapter 10 and it was so applicable where they said his speech was contemptible.

II Corinthians 10:10

"For his letters, say they, are weighty and powerful; but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible."

We know Paul was not a very handsome orator, but his letters were weighty. Even though the Apostle Paul addressed many many people face to face, what he says here on the printed page is different than what he probably said verbally, because this is The Word of God. Paul may have been able to preach and teach these basic things, but it still didn't have the weight and impact of his written letters, because these have become The Word of God. And I'm quite sure even as Paul was writing these various letters to the various Churches that he did not know that one day these would become part of the written Word. But God knew better. So always remember these writers, when they wrote, were moved by the Holy Spirit to pen The Word, and did not have to rely on 1st or second hand information from someone else.

We begin our review here in the Book of Romans. And the first thing the writer does here is take us back to Abraham. Now that's Old Testament isn't it? So it would behoove us to go back to Genesis Chapter 12 and review a little bit about this great man Abraham who is referred to quite often in Paul's epistles, and certainly has been established as a great man of faith all through Scripture. Why does Paul, by inspiration, refer back to Abraham when he is teaching a lesson on justification by faith and faith alone? Let's begin with verse 1.

Genesis 12:1-3

"NOW the LORD had said (back in Chapter 11 how they left Ur of the Chaldees) unto Abram, 'Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee (future tense, a promise): And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing; And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee (and in this next statement is the very epitome of this whole Covenant promise), and in thee (through the man Abraham) shall all families of the earth be blessed.'"

Not just Israel, but the human family would benefit from the promises and Covenants that God is making with this man. Look for a moment at the timeline we use occasionally. In our mind's eye, flash all the way back to Adam, and we know that about half-way between Adam and the Cross we have the appearance of this man Abram who later of course becomes Abraham. Now we know that 400 years before Abraham came on the scene we had the flood. And about half-way between the flood and Abraham we have the Tower of Babel. And so we saw that for the first 2000 years there was complete failure on the part of the human race.

Then God in so many words said, **"I'm going to do something totally different."** God had given the opportunity for Salvation to the whole human race, all they had to do was be prompted by conscience that they had sinned, and they rebelled against the laws of conscience that God had placed there. Then all they had to do was bring a blood sacrifice, confess their sin, and God would accept them; it was that simple. But what did they do with that plan? They rejected it totally, until finally it had gotten so bad that God had to destroy the generations with the flood, and started over with Noah and his three sons. And then within two hundred years the offspring of those three sons are again in total rebellion, they were in total ignorance of God's offer of Salvation, and tried to make their own way. They tried to approach heaven through their own false worship leading to the Tower of Babel.

Try to put yourself in God's position, and I know that's an extreme statement. Here He has offered a restoration and reconciliation. If they would just do what He had asked them to do by bringing a blood sacrifice, He would accept them. And we have that typified with Abel. Remember Abel was accepted because he did what God had told him to do. Cain of course rejected those instructions; he rationalized and thought he could go his own way, but nevertheless after 2000 years of God dealing patiently with those early people, He finally came to the point where we will see Him do something completely different with the man Abraham. He took that one man in whom He found a particle of faith, who would be obedient to what God told him. So in so many words God said, **"I will make him a whole group of promises in Covenants, and out of him I'm going to bring a special race of people who will be different than all the other nations on the planet, and I'm going to work a plan of Salvation through that race of people."**

Now just as soon as God revealed even the embryonic part of that plan of redemption you can rest assured that the Devil kicked into high gear. I've had people ask me over the years, **"Why have the Jews suffered so much."** Well that's the basic reason. Just as soon as God revealed that this special nation of people would bring about the plan of redemption, the Devil turned everything loose on them. And if you'll read your Old Testament you will see the evidence of how Satan has tried to thwart God's plan of redemption by destroying the people through whom the Redeemer must come. Don't forget that, if Satan could somehow disrupt the plan of God for the Nation of Israel, then he would disrupt God's whole plan of Salvation, and so they have been under constant attack.

Now of course they didn't keep Israel from producing The Messiah, so now you see Satan has yet another goal and that is to interrupt God's prophetic program. Think for a moment. If the Nation of Israel should suddenly disappear from view then prophecy would be left hanging on a string, and The Book would be a lie. Do you see that? So the whole Satanic thrust against the Nation of Israel is to destroy them, wipe them off the scene so God's prophetic Word cannot be fulfilled. Then all of a sudden you can see why a man like Hitler would turn against them. Why do the nations of the world even today constantly bombard that little nation with all their accusations. Now on the other hand I always try to make people aware of the fact that that doesn't make Israel's government perfect. The Jew today is not perfect; he is just as much the son of Adam as the rest of us. Their government is just as corrupt as any other government. I still get the Jerusalem Post and constantly they are rooting out corrupt individuals in their government. That part isn't any different. But in the big picture we have to understand that everything that is going to happen prophetically to this planet is centered on that little nation of Israel. And so Satan is still trying to disrupt God's total program by getting rid of that little nation.

Now a most sinister thing I think is happening **and if it weren't that I know the Scriptures has guaranteed this nation will never fade off the scene** I would have to wonder if this nation will survive, because I read recently in the Jerusalem Post that 52% of all Jewish marriages are now mixed marriages. They are marrying Gentiles. Let's go for a moment to the Book of Matthew Chapter 24, and I'm still talking about the man Abraham. Here in this chapter The Lord Jesus made a graphic statement. Lets start in verse 32.

Matthew 24:32-34

"Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh (in other words it's a prophetic picture): So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it (the second coming of Christ) is near, even at the doors. Verily I say unto you, `This generation (now that doesn't mean a generation in time like 40 or 50 years, but rather the Greek word here is `genea' which means the race, the breed of the Nation of Israel) shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled."

Now that's a promise from the Creator Himself, and if it weren't for that I think we would have reason to think that, yes, the Nation of Israel will yet disappear. Remember the whole world is against them, and they are intermarrying at an alarming rate. How long would it take for them to lose their identity if they keep on intermarrying at the rate of over 52%? Not long. I feel this is just another sign that points to the fact we are so close to the end, because in spite of everything that is going against this little Nation of Israel, we know they will not disappear until everything is fulfilled.

Now coming back to Genesis Chapter 12, we find God has promised this man Abraham a nation of people that would bring about the Redeemer and King, and the nation, and their geographical area and through it all God's purposes would be fulfilled. Now when we teach about Abraham, I always like to point out that all the things concerning Abraham and his earthly people the Nation of Israel are always **"earthly."** There is nothing heavenly connected to this little nation. But when we get to the New Testament and we come to the Body of Christ, the Church, there everything that is promised is **"heavenly."** This is why, Paul by inspiration, uses Abraham as an example of faith, and it is still appropriate for you and I as New Testament believers, even though Abraham is part of the Old Testament program. We have no problem with Abraham being the father of the Jewish people, we know that came about genetically through Isaac, Jacob, and the 12 Sons. But we get a curve thrown at us when we as believers of the Church Age, are connected to Abraham to the place where the Scriptures say that we are children of Abraham. I hope I can show you. Now after the Abrahamic Covenant in Genesis 12 where God promises him a nation of people in a geographical area of land, and one day they will have a government and a King. Turn to Chapter 13 where God enlarges on this Covenant promise of Chapter 12.

Genesis 13:16

"And I will make thy seed (or offspring) as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered."

In other words, there would be a great offspring of Abraham through Isaac, Jacob, and the Nation of Israel. You want to remember that we are dealing now with over 4000 years of time. Even though

they have been a small nation, yet there have been tremendous numbers of people that have come out of this Covenant promise. But now as you turn to Chapter 15, God does something totally different. He gives this man a promise that ties him to us in the Church age today, and we find that in verse 5.

Genesis 15:5

"And he brought him forth..."

I think the Lord dealt with Abraham on a face to face, eyeball to eyeball basis. I think God came down and took on human form like He did at the calling out of Ur, because the word in the Greek in Acts Chapter 7 is 'optomai' which deals with the sight and Stephen rehearsed that The Lord appeared 'optomai' to the man Abram, and of course the word also appeared back in the Hebrew, so I'm sure that's how God dealt with the man. And of course it's very evident in Genesis Chapter 18. So I believe that God and Abraham are standing there on the mountains of Central Israel, looking out in all four directions. Now let's finish the verse.

Genesis 15:5

"And he brought him forth abroad, and said, 'Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars (not the particles of the dust as we saw in Chapter 13), if thou be able to number them:' and he said unto him, 'So shall thy seed be.'" What's He talking about? A spiritual relationship of people. Abraham is not only getting the view of the earthly promises that are going to come through the Nation of Israel, but he is also getting a view of the heavenly people that will also be part and parcel of His promises. Remember the last part of Chapter 12 and verse 3:

Genesis 12:3

"...and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." Not just the Jews, but all the families of the earth would be blessed. Now let's come back to Romans Chapter 4. I want you to keep what we just looked at in your mind for at least the next two or three lessons. We are going to be looking at Chapter 4 which is constantly referring back to Abraham in detail. I'm not going to rush through this because I think these are things that very few believers comprehend, and hopefully we can open some eyes. Let's read.

Romans 4:1,2

*"WHAT shall we say then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found? For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God." If Abraham could have merited favor with God by his works then what would he have naturally done? He would have gotten puffed up and proud. And he would have been able to tell his people around him, "**Look what I have done to inherit eternal life.**" But you see he couldn't because he did not work for his Salvation. **He did nothing but believe God.** Now verse 3:*

Romans 4:3

"For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness."

Abraham didn't repent, he didn't get baptized, he didn't join something, he just simply believed God. That's what The Book says. Now Abraham wasn't any better morally than anyone else. It wasn't that he was such a holy man, he was very ordinary, because we saw that in later chapters where he had his failures like everyone else. But yet this whole premise of faith - remember Hebrews 11:6 says:

Hebrews 11:6

"But without faith it is impossible to please him:..."

And by that faith then Abraham so pleased God that God called him a righteous man. It was just that simple. What's the lesson? That's also exactly where we are. That when we believe what God has said, and stand on it by faith, then God does the same for us. He declares us righteous. He declares us justified from all things.

Romans 4:4

"Now to him that worketh (that's 99% of Christendom, they think they've got to do something, they can't just rest on what God has said; they've got to do something, but that's human nature) is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt.

We were in Colorado last week holding a seminar, and while there we had a chance to do some trout fishing, and for the first time in all of our trips there we literally got skunked. But something compensated for that, as there was a gentleman just down a little ways from us and we had been tossing comments back and forth for a little while, and finally we got close enough together to introduce ourselves, and he looked at me again and said, "**You're the guy on television.**" Anyway, he was a pastor of a small Church there in the Denver area. He said, "**I appreciate your teaching because you get so down to earth and to the truth of it all.**" He said that people were missing it. He went on to say that he had a lady come to him in his ministry recently. Previously, she had been in two other organizations, had been baptized, and had joined three churches of his denomination. Then she came and wanted to join his church. When he asked her if she had ever had a Salvation experience, and had she ever believed The Gospel (Ref: I Corinthians 15:1-4), she looked at him with a blank look and said, "**I don't know what you're talking about.**" He asked her about all the other places she had joined, and she said that none of them had ever asked her. Well, this is exactly where the Church is in trouble. They are not pointing these people to the fact that there has to be a personal Salvation. So when he led her through the plan of Salvation she was gloriously saved and he said she went away a happy woman. Here again it's not what we do, or who we join up with, but rather what do we do with The Gospel. Now looking at verse 4 again.

Romans 4:4

"Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt." That person can never have grace if they have worked for their Salvation, because now they've earned it. But we will never put God in debt for a dime. He will never find Himself in debt to any human being. So the whole admonition is this. "We have to come God's way, and that way is by God's Grace through faith + nothing."

LESSON THREE * PART II

THE IMPUTED RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD: ROMANS 4 - 5:5

Let's pick up again in Romans Chapter 4, and we will still be dealing with justification by faith + nothing. As I said in the last lesson, we will be taking our time because few people have a real understanding of what Paul is trying to teach in these chapters. Now of course justification goes all the way into Chapter 5, and then when we get into Chapter 6, we'll be taking a good hard look at old Adam. And again, that's a part of our Salvation experience I think very few people are aware of. Remember as I have told you before, **"We're not sinners because we have broken the Law, but rather we break the Law because we're sinners."** And we're sinners by virtue of being born from Adam, but we'll deal with that in Chapter 6.

Now let's begin with verse 5 of Chapter 4. Every time I read verse 5, I think of a situation when we were still teaching up north. A gentlemen came to our class one night; he was the last man I would have ever dreamed would have come to a Bible class, and especially to one of mine. In fact I was so unbelieving that when he rang the door bell, and we were just about ready to begin our teaching, I didn't even think about inviting him in, I thought he had come for some other reason. So we talked on the front porch for a minute or two, and he finally said, **"Well, don't you have a class here tonight?"** And I said, "Yeah, you mean you came for the Bible class?" And he said, **"That's why I'm here."** I just felt like two cents, but anyway we happened to be in verse 5 in our study, and that's why I always think of that incident every time I teach Romans 4:5.

That evening is just as vivid as if it were last night. There was only one chair left in our living room and it was right next to my right. So we began our study and I asked the gentlemen to read verse 5. Now I have never done that, never in all my teachings have I asked somebody to read a verse. And here I ask a poor guy that I had heard was down at the very bottom, he had hit the skids, and was running with the totally wrong crowd, to read this verse. You talk about stupid - in fact that night I lost sleep over that. How could I have done that? But you see God overrules, and so the poor guy read the verse for us, and then I made another big stupid error. I asked him to comment further on the verse. Now let's read the verse, and I'll show you how stupid I really was.

Romans 4:5

"But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness."

So after he read the verse I asked him, **"What kind of people does God justify?"** Imagine asking someone who had never been approached with these things before, and put him on the spot. But the gentlemen answered right, he said, **"The ungodly."** And of course he knew that was what he was. The reason it left such an impact on me was that he came back for the next three Saturday nights. And I think it was after the third Saturday night in the middle of the week that he called early one morning. He called so early that he was afraid he may have gotten me out of bed. He hadn't as I was already drinking my first cup of coffee. He said, **"Les, you had to be the first to know because at three o'clock this morning I woke up and realized I'm losing everything, so I just cried out, "God, my life is a mess." So I slipped out on my knees and asked God to save me, and now it's just like a load has been taken off my shoulders."**

Now that Salvation was genuine because that young man just immediately made a complete turn-around in his life. He became concerned about other lost people so much that he even had us move our class to his home for three or four Saturday nights and he went to every length including baking pies and making homemade ice cream for refreshments, because these ungodly friends had promised him that they would attend our Bible study if we would meet in his home. And the poor guy even asked us to delay starting the class that evening to give his friends extra time to get there. He would walk to the window and I almost cried with him as he said, "**Les, they promised that they'd be here tonight.**" But they didn't come, so he asked if he could have it again next week. And for the next several Saturday nights it was the same story. He went to every extreme to get the refreshments ready and his house ready, and our class people cooperated, but he would look down the road in vain. And it just broke his heart. Simply because he wanted them to have his new found faith.

As I was thinking about sharing this incident with you last night the thought came to mind that just one verse of Scripture was what impacted the man. The Holy Spirit used my stupidity to do something that I've never done before or since; to not only ask him to read the verse but to also make a comment on it. But you know he told me, "**Les, that verse just plagued me day after day after day.**"

Romans 4:5

"But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly,..." And he told me that there was no doubt that was exactly what he was.

Many things we just can't figure out. It wasn't too long after that, that we moved to Oklahoma, and then we heard that The Lord had taken him home as he had been involved in a terrible automobile accident. But he had left his testimony, because everyone that called to tell us about his going home told us, "**Les, he's in glory!**" And I have no doubt, because he had such a confirmed faith that this verse meant what it says. That God justifies the ungodly the moment we believe the Gospel. **He didn't join something, nor did he go through a prescribed ritual. He just simply believed for his Salvation that Christ died for him, and rose from the dead.**

And then the Apostle Paul, by inspiration as I pointed out in our last lesson, goes back again to the Old Testament and even goes as far as King David. How even David was a man of faith, and we know that he wasn't exactly a perfect man was he? He had his failures, and downfalls, but still God could count him righteous because of his faith. Then you come down to verse 9 and Paul is going to pick up again with Abraham.

Romans 4:9

"Cometh this blessedness then upon the circumcision only (Jews), or upon the uncircumcision (Gentiles) also? for we say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness."

And now verse 10. Oh, I love the way the Scripture does this. In fact, I've always told people that when they start talking to others, use The Lord's format. How did The Lord invariably open a conversation? With a question. And if they would ask Him a question then He would return with a question. Now the Scripture does the same thing. The Holy Spirit says:

Romans 4:10

"How was it then reckoned (how did the man receive this righteousness?)? when he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision."

Now don't forget, back for the first 2000 years there was no hint of circumcision. There's been no hint of the Mosaic Law. And so Abraham comes out of Ur of the Chaldees, he's a Syrian by birth, and so he comes out of it as a non-Jew, because the Nation of Israel isn't on the scene. So this is what the Holy Spirit is pointing out, Abraham didn't come into this faith by virtue of his Covenant relationship, but rather God dealt with him when he was still in Ur of the Chaldees. He was in the midst of idolatry, and it was on that basis that God said, "Leave and go to a place that I will show you." And by faith, what did Abraham do? He left. Not after circumcision was implemented, but before. Now why? Because you see that's where we fit into the picture. We're not part of the circumcision covenant, we are uncircumcised so far as relationship in Scripture is concerned. Now verse 11:

Romans 4:11,12

"And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised (so Abraham came into this justification position before circumcision was even mentioned to him): that he might be the father of all them that believed, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also (oh, so now in verse 11 God has just tied Abraham to us. Can you see that?): And the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had being yet uncircumcised."

Now turn with me to Galatians Chapter 3, and maybe I can bring the point home. I hope so, because I've had so many people come into my class over the years that say, "Well our preacher preached that we become Jews when we become a Christian." Horrors! Salvation is a miracle, but it doesn't make a Jew out of us. I mean after all, that's based on genetics, chromosomes and what have you; that's a blood line, and God does not change our blood. He does not make a Gentile a Jew! But the Scripture teaches that there is a relationship between us as Gentiles and the man Abraham.

Galatians 3:6a

"Even as Abraham believed God,..."

Do you see how the Scripture keeps repeating. Remember when I first started these lessons, I told you that I tried to teach on the same format as a famous mathematics teacher here in Oklahoma. I think he was written up in Readers Digest several years ago, because his system of teaching mathematics was raising the grade level of all of his students. It was just so obvious that he had a system that surpassed anyone else in the country. And do you know what it was? Repetition. In other words, instead of just simply teaching one part of mathematics and then when he thought the students had it, moving on to the next one, he would always review from the beginning. Just keep repeating and repeating, he would add something new but kept on repeating. Well, that's the way I like to teach Scripture and that's what Scripture does. It's a constant matter of repetition to get it to soak in. These things don't come overnight. It takes time and many of you know that. This is one of

the reasons that many times I have to slow down. I know I unload so much, and then I have to remind myself that there's no way you can remember all of that. Now verse 6 again:

Galatians 3:6,7

"Even as Abraham, believed God, and it (the believing) was accounted to him for righteousness. Know ye therefore that they which are of faith (or the faith way, as opposed to some other way), the same are the children of Abraham."

Well, that's where some people get the idea that when we are saved we become Jews. No we don't become a Jew, but we have a spiritual connection to the man like we have with no other character in history other than The Lord Jesus Himself. So how and why are we connected to Abraham?

Galatians 3:8

"And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen (or non-Jew) through (or by) faith, preached before the gospel (before there was any inkling of the great plan of redemption as we know it) unto Abraham, saying, `In thee shall all nations be blessed.'"

I've had people tell me they feel that Abraham understood The Gospel according to the way we know it, that Christ would die, would be buried and be raised from the dead. But I disagree with that completely. Abraham had no idea of a Roman Crucifixion; nobody back here knew what a crucifixion was. So it's all a matter of where you place your emphasis, on **justify** or The Gospel. If you put the emphasis on the Gospel, then you get the idea that Christ preached the Gospel unto Abraham. He couldn't have, because then I would have to feel that somewhere between Abraham and Paul, The Gospel would have popped up. There would have been some sort of a reference to the death, burial, and Resurrection as a means of Salvation way back there somewhere. But it isn't, and as I have pointed out in these lessons, you search the Four Gospels and you can't find that they would be saved by believing that Jesus died for the sins of the world, that he was buried, and rose the third day, because it's not in there. And we have no right to put it in there. Just leave everything exactly where it is. But now Paul will say, for example in Ephesians Chapter 2:

Ephesians 2:13

"But now (things have changed) in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ." That tells us that it hasn't always been that way. Now looking at Galatians 3:8 again:

Galatians 3:8

"And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, `In thee shall all nations be blessed.'"

We also saw that back in Genesis 12:3 didn't we? That it would be through the Covenant promises to Abraham that the whole human race would enter into a Salvation experience. Why? Because through the promise to Abraham came the Christ. And even though the Covenant people, Israel, rejected Him and nailed Him by virtue of the Roman army, to a Cross, what did He become? He became the Saviour of not Israel alone, but the whole human race. And this is what we're trying to

show here, that Abraham entered in by faith and faith alone based on what God said to him, and that was what? Leave Ur. It's just that simple. **"Leave Ur, and I'll show you a place that I want you to go."** Now that's faith. Now there's a lot of people that will say, **"Yeah but it was his works that saved him when he left Ur."** Oh no, because Abraham was a believer before he even got out of town. He was already declared righteous before he left the city wall. Why? Because he believed God.

Now it's the same way with us, a lot of things follow our Salvation experience, absolutely they do. Most of you who know me know that I will not just run and tell someone that I led so and so to The Lord until I see that changed life. Then I'll gladly share it, but you see when there's a genuine Salvation, there's going to be a change in lifestyle, there's going to be a change in heart attitude. And Abraham experienced that the moment he believed just like others that we have dealt with. The moment they believe, it's just like the one I just shared with you. At three o'clock in the morning he asked The Lord to save him, and by five o'clock he was able to tell me what had happened. Why? It was instantaneous, he didn't have to grow into it. It wasn't a evolutionary process.

All right, why and how are we tied to Abraham. Well maybe I can clarify it. Abraham entered in by faith + nothing. Now as soon as Abraham goes beyond the rite of circumcision, 500 years later here comes Moses and the Law. Now even these good Jews back here are going to be saved based on their faith, but by faith alone? In other words could a Jew during the Temple period say, **"Now Lord I know I've sinned, I know that I've broken the Law, but I'm not going to bring a sacrifice."** Would that have worked? Never! He was now tied to a faith + works. You get to Christ's earthly ministry, now they are still under the Law, and I can prove that very easy. The one that came to Jesus in the Book of Matthew:

Matthew 19:16-19

"And behold one came and said unto him, 'Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?' and he said unto him, 'Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.' He said unto him, 'Which?' Jesus said, 'Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother: and Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.'"

So Jesus told him to keep the law, but as John the Baptist began to preach along with the keeping of Law, and with the bringing of the prescribed sacrifices for Salvation experience, now what did they have to do? Repent and be baptized. That was John's message. But remember that was for the Nation of Israel, and their national sins, they were to repent of them, and they were to show their repentance with water baptism, absolutely they were. But that was part of faith + sacrifice, works, and whatever you want to add in there.

But then here comes the Apostle Paul and he says it's faith + nothing so what does that tie us to? To the only other man that God dealt with on that basis. Do you see it? That's how we're tied to Abraham, he was saved by faith + nothing, and we're saved the same way, but everybody in between were saved with faith + works. Oh don't lose that, and once you can separate the two, then it's easy to understand. Yes, Abraham had the promises of a spiritual seed in the heavenlies, because they were going to come in by faith + nothing. But his physical relationship was with the Nation of

Israel, the earthly people of God, the dust of the earth. Now come back to Romans Chapter 4, but we are still going to be dealing with Abraham, he is the epitome of an example of faith.

Romans 4:13

"For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law (that came first, and the whole nation of Israel was put under it at Mount Sinai, and remember the Law was severe, a burden, a yoke of bondage that Israel couldn't bear), but through the righteousness of faith."

Romans 4:14

"For if they which are of the law be heirs (in other words just the children of Israel through their law-keeping then), faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect:"

We cancel it. Another scripture comes to mind along these lines. Turn to Galatians Chapter 4, and remember this little letter was written specifically to the Churches of Galatia, that they were not under Law, but rather Grace. Remember the Judaisers were trying to put them under Law. So this is why this letter was written, to prove to these Gentile believers that they were not under Law, but under Grace. Here Paul has used the analogy of Isaac and Ishmael. Ishmael was of the flesh, he was earthly, and not of the spiritual seed, not of the promises that Isaac was. Let's begin with verse 30:

Galatians 4:30,31

"Nevertheless what saith the scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son (Hagar and Ishmael, they stood for the Law, the flesh): for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman (they could have no interrelationship). So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free."

Galatians 5:1

"STAND fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised (and you can put in there anything that man can do to merit Salvation. If you have to add anything, and in this case Paul is naming circumcision then), Christ shall profit you nothing."

Now that's scary. The first time I saw that verse it just shook me to my boots. To think that any person who tries to add something to the Gospel of Grace, faith + nothing, he then cancels the work of the Cross for himself. Now that's enough to scare anybody, because multitudes of church people are doing that. Yeah, they say but I can't be saved unless I do this or do that. We have to believe that when Christ died and rose from the dead that He did every thing that a Holy God could demand of us. And all that Holy God asks is believe it, and if we won't believe it then we stand under the anathema of a Holy God who is angered by the simple fact that we will not believe Him. And that's what faith is all about, that we can honestly look at the Scripture, and recognize the fact that God has said it, and I with all my heart say, **"God, I believe it."**

LESSON THREE * PART III

THE IMPUTED RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD: ROMANS 4 - 5:5

I've had people ask me what qualifications I have. Well, I'm just a layman, and a rancher, but I've spent a lot of time in The Book. People also ask me how I got the ability to teach. When I was in the service I was working in an operating room and they were doing kidney surgery on a fellow. We were all around that operating table and the tubes were going in and out of this guy from every body opening. The doctor was flushing those kidneys, and we were oooing and aaahing, and the Colonel stopped what he was doing and said, **"Wait a moment folks, anyone who has done this procedure as often as I have can do the same thing."** And you know that's the way I have to look at my teaching experience. If you teach 5, 6 or 7 nights a week for over twenty years then you could also do what I'm doing. That's just where it comes from. When you're in The Book that often, and you've got people bombarding you with questions, if I didn't learn, then there would be something drastically wrong. But anyway that's where I have gotten my education. Questions over the years from our students have made me study.

Now back to our study. We are still dealing with Abraham as the epitome of a man of faith who was justified by doing nothing, he merited nothing. He was raised in, and living in abject idolatry, he had no knowledge of the One true God, and yet God saw in that man the potential to believe what He said, and so he spoke to him, and as I have said before, I think God appeared to him in a physical form, and more than once. He came down and communicated with this man, and so now Paul, by inspiration, again goes back to Abraham as the perfect example of what it is to be justified, made totally righteous by faith and faith alone. Let's start with Romans 4:13, and we'll come on down to where we left off in the last lesson.

Romans 4:13-15a

"For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his 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: Because the law worketh wrath:..."

Now that's hard for people to swallow, if only they knew that's what this Book says they wouldn't be so glib, and say, **"Well I think I'll make it because I'm keeping the commandments."** Hey the commandments can only bring them one thing, and that's the wrath of God, it's not going to bring them to Heaven. I had a lady call the other day and ask, **"Now that we are under Grace does that mean we don't have to keep the commandments, and don't have to pay any attention to the Law."** Oh listen, I've never said anything like that. In fact I'm always saying that Grace is not a license. Let's turn for a moment to Chapter 13. Nowhere do I or the Scripture teach that just because we are saved by Grace that we are now free to do as we please. Those Ten Commandments are still the perfect Law of a Holy God, there's no denying that. And so Paul makes reference to them throughout his letters, but here in Romans he refers to them more than anyplace else.

Romans 13:8

"Owe (or defraud, that's what the word 'owe' really means) no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another (and remember my definition of love which is seeking the other

person's highest good) *hath fulfilled the law.*"

And that's the only way you can fulfill the Law, Israel certainly couldn't fulfill it, they couldn't keep it, they were constantly breaking it. But you see when love is operating, then you can't break the Law. If you really love someone you can't talk about them behind their back. If you really love someone you're not going to steal what is theirs. If you really love someone you're not going to enter into an immoral relationship, not if you really love them, and I've tried to stress this to young people. And when some young fellow says, "**Oh, if you love me!**" Bologna! That's not love, that's instant gratification. Always remember, true love seeks the other person's highest good, whatever that may be. Now verse 9, and with this as the backdrop, under Grace what does it say?

Romans 13:9

"For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet;..."

Plain enough? Absolutely that becomes the guideline for Christian life. We're not free to break the Law, but it's just that we are not under the demands of the Law. In fact several years ago I would use this illustration in my classes here in Oklahoma of two kinds of marriages. Let's just say we have an arranged marriage by the parents of a young man and young lady that have been brought together without any love involved, no romance, no courtship. I can visualize in order for that couple to get along even for twenty four hours, that you will find that she's going to put a list of rules and regulations on the refrigerator door that lets the old boy know what she will stand for and what she won't. You will do this, and not do that. So what does he do? Well, he looks at those rules like a bull at a new gate, and says, "**Huh, I can do better than that,**" and he puts his list up right beside it. And his list says to her you will and you will not, now what is that? That's legalism. That's law.

But let the two people come together by virtue of a courtship, romance, love, and marriage, do they need those lists? No, because love is going to accomplish it without having it written and demanded. It's the same way in the spiritual. Yes, under the law God had to say "**Thou shalt and Thou shalt not.**" In fact I've made the point in my teachings, go through the Old Testament, and see how much love there is. You will find very little, and the reason is love wasn't the key. It was commandments, but as soon as you get into Grace what is it? Love, love, love. Do you see the difference?

Romans 4:15,16a

"Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there is no transgression. Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace;..."

Now **Grace** is the next word that we must stop and define. Again I'm afraid that most of Christendom has no comprehension of this word. **They just don't understand the Grace of God.** It's His unmerited favor, that here the Holy, Sinless, Righteous Creator; Sovereign, Powerful, Infinite God, can reach down and become flesh, and walk those filthy dirty streets of Palestine and Jerusalem. He heard all the foul language of that day, just like it would be today, and He walked in the midst of all that. He went and suffered and died on a Roman Cross. We're talking about the God of Creation remember. Why? **Because He loved mankind**, and that's the only reason, and what's most of mankind doing with it? They're walking it underfoot, they couldn't care less.

And you know I'm amazed that we get as much response as we do, because most people are just totally ignorant of an eternity to come. Some folks were telling me the other day that they had asked someone what was going to happen to them after they died? They responded with, "**Going to Hell I guess.**" They don't know what they're saying; most will say, "**Well I never thought about it.**" They never consider that after this life ends, whether it be ten years, eighty, or a hundred that there's an eternity. We're going to live in eternity someplace, it's either going to be in God's presence or the Lake of Fire out of His presence. But whatever, the Scripture says, "**That if it's going to be of Grace, then we have to keep our hands off of it, we have to let it be totally the unmerited favor of God on our behalf.**" Now that's Grace! Reading on in verse 16:

Romans 4:16,17

"Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all," In what realm? In the Spiritual. And the reason is that Abraham was the first that walked by faith without Law, without circumcision. Abraham came out of abject idolatry, and walked by faith, and that's where we have to come from. Verse 17:

"(As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) (and of course that's back in the Old Testament) *before him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were."* I think that goes back even to the work of Creation where the Scripture tells us that God created everything out of nothing. And that's God's prerogative. He can take that which is nothing, and He can make it something, and only God can do that. I think it's the same way in the spiritual realm on our behalf. We're nothing, but God makes us something. See? Now reading on.

Romans 4:18

"Who (speaking of Abraham again) against hope believed in hope (in other words against common sense. Why? He's a hundred years old. His wife is ninety, and God keeps telling them that they're going to have a son. You're going to have a nation of people come from your body. Now that's against hope, yet against hope what did he do? He had genuine hope, and he knew how ridiculous it may have seem to the human intellect, to the physical understanding of reproduction, he knew that much, yet somehow or other God was going to bring it to pass, and of course we know He did), that he might become the father of many nations; according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be." In other words, out of Abraham and Sarah came Isaac, Jacob, Esau and Ishmael of course. We have all these nations of people that came on the earth. Now verse 19.

Romans 4:19

"And being not weak in faith,..."

You know even ourselves, we're living in a fast paced culture, and it's awful easy to lose faith. Things begin to overwhelm us, and it's so easy for any of us to suddenly think, "**Where is God? I just can't sense His presence. Why are these things falling in on me, where is He?**" I imagine that people ask that everyday. Calamity, and accidents strike, and the first thing the human mind says is, "**Well where's God.**" And it's so easy then for faith to literally get crushed under the

circumstances. But always come back to this man Abraham. I think Abraham was about fifty years old when God made all those promises to him while he was in Ur. And Abraham didn't leave Haran until he was seventy-five years old. He didn't father Ishmael until he was near eighty. And then finally, when he was a hundred and Sarah ninety, God performs and the promises become fulfilled. But you see he had almost fifty years with just the promises and nothing had happened.

I look at the circumstances and I can't blame old Abraham a bit for listening to Sara, and having a child by a slave girl. Can you? My, after all, God wasn't doing anything. And you see this is where we come from so often. But God you're not doing anything. Hey, we must sit back and and remember this is how God works. His wheels grind slowly, but surely. And finally after fifty years of promises here comes the child. Unbelievable? Yeah, from the human element. But you see it becomes a New Testament illustration. Oh I sometimes think all these things happened on purpose so that we could have it in our New Testament. Now finish verse 19:

Romans 4:19,20a

"And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb (remember she's ninety): He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief;..."

How many times have you gone back and looked at Israel when she stood at the gates of the promised land at Kadesh Barnea. They had just come from Sinai and they now have the tabernacle, the priesthood, and everything is now in place and God has promised that He would drive out the Canaanites by using hornets, and whatever needs to be done so that they will leave everything for you. Their gardens, their vineyards, and orchards, and fields and houses; everything is going to be ready for you. He would drive them out, and all they had to do was walk in and take it. And poor old Israel stood there. What was their problem? UNBELIEF!

They couldn't believe what God said, and so their step of unbelief was, **"Well, Moses send in spies. If the spies come back and tell us that we can do it then we'll go in."** That wasn't God's idea. God never instructed those twelve spies. He finally condescended, and said, **"Yes, go ahead."** But you see they were gone forty days and then they came back with that horrible report, **"Oh we can't take it, because they're like giants and we are like grasshoppers in their sight."** And they moaned and groaned all that night. What was their problem? Unbelief, and to show you that in Scripture, let's go for a moment to the Book of Hebrews Chapter 3. Let's jump in at verse 16. I feel the Apostle Paul wrote this great book.

Hebrews 3:16,17

"For some, when they had heard, did provoke: howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses, But with whom was he grieved forty years? was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness?..."

Usually when I teach this verse we have to remember that we need to back up just a few weeks, and around Mount Sinai. Moses had been up on the mountain for thirty or forty days, and the children of Israel said, **"Oh we don't know what's happened to Moses."** So they go to Aaron and what do they ask for? An idol, and Aaron goes along with the idea, and comes up with the craziest story you

ever heard. He said, "**He had thrown this gold in the fire and out came this golden calf.**" We know that's ridiculous, but that's what it says. Nevertheless, not only did they make the golden calf, but what was their behavior around it? Abject immorality as was always part and parcel of idolatry. Here they were in their stark nakedness and abject immorality. And of course God judged them for those sins, and a few thousand died because of it.

But nevertheless when they get up here to Kadesh Barnea, and the land is in front of them, it wasn't the unbelief that they practiced around that old golden calf that brought in the wrath of God. Oh that was easy for Him to forgive, but it was their unbelief that they could not take the land that God said they could. And that was His controversy, that was it, it wasn't anything else, but the fact that they couldn't take Him at His Word. Now it's going to be the same way with millions of people that will come before the Great White Throne. We're talking about good people, but what was their sin?

Unbelief! They could not believe what God said concerning the work of the Cross. And I grant you that it is hard from the human element to comprehend that the **Creator God took on flesh and was crucified, was buried and rose from the dead. And by that act of death and suffering, and then being raised from the dead, then God can pass out Salvation to the whole human race**

(Reference I Corinthians 15:1-4). It's hard to comprehend. I explained pardon several lessons ago. I maintain that every human being that has ever lived has already been pardoned by virtue of the work of the Cross. Their pardon is accomplished, the only reason they're not going to receive it is they will not appropriate it by faith. And you see that's what's going to make their eternal doom so horrible. For jillions of years they are going to say, "**I rejected my pardon.**" And this is what we have to understand; and this is where it becomes our responsibility to let people know that they don't have to go to that awful place, they don't have to be separated from God. Their pardon is already done, just believe it. Now read on in Hebrews Chapter 3.

Hebrews 3:18,19

"And to whom sware he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that (were immoral? No, but to them that) believed not? So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief."

And we have the same problems today. Oh if I can clean up my act, and change my ways, then I'll become a Christian. But that's not the way you do it. You do it when you are yet ungodly, and we'll come to that when we get to Romans Chapter 5. Now continuing on in Romans Chapter 4 for a few more minutes.

Romans 4:20-22

"He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; And being fully persuaded (there wasn't an ounce of doubt in Abraham's mind that God was going to do what He said He was going to do) that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform. And therefore it (his believing + nothing) was imputed to him for righteousness."

I mentioned a few lessons back that 'imputed' was a bookkeeping term in the Greek. It was just like putting it on the account. And so Abraham's believing was literally placed to his account on the ledgers of Heaven that he is now a righteous man. Now verse 23.

Romans 4:23,24

"Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him;" It's not going to stop with Abraham. But now it leaps almost four thousand years to your time and mine, and here we are almost four thousand years after the fact, and it's still appropriate.

"But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed (we can get the same put to the account as Abraham did. And how do we do it?), if we believe (oh listen, how many different groups have put everything else in there except that? If we do this and if we do that, but beloved that's not what it says. If we believe) on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead;" There's your Gospel again. Do you see it? That Christ died for you, was buried, and rose from the dead. And that's all you must believe for your Salvation. (Reference I Corinthians 15:1-4 another good one is Romans 10:9-10) Now let's finish the chapter with verse 25:

Romans 4:25

"Who was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification."

Oh, if Christ had not been raised from the dead, then the Apostle Paul couldn't have written about justification. Then the plan of redemption would have never been complete. But He did. He arose victorious over sin, the old Devil, the old flesh, and the world around us, and we take it by faith. Another verse came to mind in II Corinthians that we need to use right here.

II Corinthians 5:21

"For he (God) hath made him (The Christ) to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

What does that mean? We know Christ was God, we know He was sinless, we know He never committed a single sin, not even in the thought processes. So what has He done with that? He has imputed it to our account. And now God looks on you and looks on me, and He doesn't see Les Feldick or any of you by name, He sees Christ! Because everything that Christ was and is has now been placed on you. How? **By Faith!** But you see it doesn't stop there. Of course we're going to get busy, of course we're going to be a testimony, of course we're going to have a concern for lost people. There is nothing that thrills me more than to have a new convert be suddenly overwhelmed with the lost condition of their family, or loved ones, their neighbors, or the people they're working with. And they get consumed with the fact that these people are lost, and that's as it should be. That's how God intended it to be. That's why He's left us here, that we can constantly remind lost people that it isn't what you do, or what you think you can become, but rather it's what you do in the area of faith. Do you believe it? Have you appropriated it? Have you genuinely considered Who Jesus was?

I had a gentlemen several years ago come into my kitchen, and his first question was, "**Who in the world is Jesus Christ?**" And it was a legitimate question, because he didn't know. But listen, when the Holy Spirit begins to reveal to our understanding who He is then we know that He's the God of glory who died for us.

LESSON THREE * PART IV

THE IMPUTED RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD: ROMANS 4 - 5:5

We will begin with Romans Chapter 5, but before we do it's always so good to be able to share with you in each lesson. Sometimes we have as many as ten different denominations that will attend our study. But our main goal is to help everyone learn how to read their Bible and read it with understanding, and of course through the process we like to see folks come to a saving knowledge, and be sure of their eternal destiny.

We have with us today two very special guests. Keith Decker of Decker & Sons Publishing who does the final proofing and gets each of these books ready for the printer. Also, with Keith today is his mother Marjorie Ainsborough Decker who, of course, is world-renowned as **Christian Mother Goose**. We have such a sweet relationship with this family and it's such a joy doing business with people like these. We just absolutely love the Decker family, and think Keith is doing a fantastic job getting these books printed.

Let's begin our study for this lesson, and we'll begin with verse 1: And the first word in Chapter 5 throws you right back into Chapter 4. We won't do that, but the *Therefore* means everything we have just studied in Chapter 4. Abraham as a perfect example of having entered into a Salvation experience by faith and faith alone, and how that even though it seemed impossible yet he never wavered in his faith. Except through the eyes of faith, I can't comprehend that the Creator God Himself, the God who controls everything, took on human flesh. He walked the streets of Palestine, He went to that Cross, and died for me. I can't comprehend that, except through the eyes of faith. I can't explain it, and there's no way you can explain it. But this is exactly where God wants us, and that is to simply say, "**Lord I can't understand it, but I believe it.**" There's not a shadow of doubt in my mind that this is all true.

Romans 5:1a

"THEREFORE being justified by faith,..."

Paul has said that over and over in the past couple of chapters. Why? Because it's got to be driven home that you're not justified in what you do. When I say you're not justified by works as the Scriptures say, what are we referring to? Well the best generalized answer is, works according to Scripture, and its work in salvation is anything you can do in the energy of the flesh. Anything that you can say, "**Hey, I think I'd better do this so I can merit heaven.**" That's works. Now you can just start numbering them.

I'll never forget years and years ago, Iris and I read a little book that was in the location of Southern Missouri, and it was about a teenage boy and his dog. There came a point in his life when he thought he had to keep peace in the family, and he wanted to set his mom's mind at ease so he came to the conclusion that he had better go to church and join up. Very typical. So he joined the church (that's a work), but joining the church never saved anybody. A lot of people got the idea by walking the aisle, that that's how you're saved. Hey that never saved anybody. I've got nothing against people making a genuine profession of faith, by walking the aisle. But the walking of the aisle is a work, and it won't bring Salvation. Giving, tithing, can become a work; lot's of people think that if they can give enough then they can buy their way into Heaven. No you can't! Keep your money, because God can't use it anyway. So any of these things that you can do in the energy of the flesh is works.

Baptism is something that if one pastor won't do it, then another one will. All you have to do is say, **"Hey I want to be baptized and join the Church."** They'll do it, but what is it? It's a work. It's something that you have decided to do. And you can just go on and on and on. You can go visit the sick, give to the poor, but remember that's all works. Which in their own respective places after believing The Gospel for your Salvation, then that's fine. That's what God expects, but you see the world out there is trying to do that for Salvation, and it won't work, God won't recognize it. So here we have to come back to scriptural premise, **"The just live by faith."**

Romans 5:1

"THEREFORE being justified by faith (+ nothing), we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

Remember the account of the gentlemen we discussed earlier. Remember he called me just two hours after he asked God to save him, and when he called me he had total peace. A total load taken off his shoulders. And that's what Salvation does. We have seen it over and over and over. And I guess I've been privileged to have some of the most ungodly people. I mean the very worst. The kind you would think would never have a drop of spiritual interest in them, and then they come to the tremendous realization that their sins are gone. **They're forgiven, they're justified, they're cleansed.** And in verse 1 once we have this justification by faith, now we have peace with God.

Now peace, of course, is something that the world is looking for tonight, but the world understands peace in a whole different light than Scripture does. When the world speaks of peace what are they talking about? Absence of war; and my that's noble. I hate to read about the ravages of Yugoslavia and other areas, it's awful. And, oh, it would be great if we could outlaw war, but there will be no peace until the Prince of Peace comes at His second coming. And the world politicians can't seem to understand that. Now of course I recognize that they have to work for peace. You can't just let the thing fall completely apart, in fact I've said before that I'm not alarmed at the population increase, because we are so close to the end that this is all part of the end scenario. Yes, there's a population explosion. Egypt, one of the poorest nations on earth is a good example. If it weren't for the billions from Uncle Sam, they would all starve. Oh, but this population explosion is all part and parcel of getting the world ready for the return of Christ.

I told my Sunday School class way back in the 60's that I wasn't worried about an atomic bomb destroying the world, and I never have been. You might say, **"Les, you're crazy!"** No I'm not, because I know this world is not going to end until it ends God's way in God's own time. And so why get all shook up about it. Now, if you really look back at the time of the dropping of the first bomb 50 years ago, how many times political things happened that before that time, the world would have been in war. But it didn't happen. Why? Because of the nuclear energy that was sitting back there in the closet someplace, and God wasn't about to let it be used. So what did He do? He kept the thing from igniting. I'm thinking right now for example the time we shot down an Iranian plane in the Gulf. Ordinarily that would have precipitated war, but it didn't, and why? Because God's in control.

The men of this world are not going to bring the end of the world. They are not going to bring in a nuclear holocaust until God says it's time. I'm sure that during the Tribulation there will be nuclear warheads exploded. I'm positive of that, but it's not going to happen until that time. Man is not going

to destroy this planet. God is! So I don't worry about these things that so many people are shook up about. Now hear what I'm saying. I'm against pollution, I'm against trashing the planet, my heart weeps when I drive along my beautiful valley road, and see trash on it. I hate it, but I'm not going to say that if we don't clean it up that we're going to destroy the planet. These are just signs that we are getting so close to the end.

And as I mentioned just a few lessons ago, as we look at the Nation of Israel, and how close they are coming to being assimilated, losing their identity, well all that tells me is that we're just that much closer than what most of us realize. All right, so as believers we have peace with God, not just the absence of war, but a relationship. Several Scriptures just came to mind, let's turn to the Book of Colossians Chapter 2 for a moment. This is a verse that is so precious to me, because of what I see in it. A lot of people may not see it as I do. Verse 14 is the verse we are looking for, but let's begin with verse 13. And remember that Paul always writes to the believer. Colossi was in Gentile territory so it was probably a congregation of mostly Gentiles. I feel that almost all these congregations had some believing Jews. But predominately Gentiles, so now look what Paul says even to you and I, the Church, tonight.

Colossians 2:13

"And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh (old Adam), hath he quickened (made alive, He has done something in the area of the Spiritual) together with him (that is when Christ was raised from the dead we also were raised from the dead), having (now that word 'having' is a past tense participle) forgiven you (how many?) all trespasses (do you believe that? Well you had better, because that's what God has said);"

Colossians 2:14

"Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us (the Law! All the ramifications that were against mankind. His inability to keep it, it's severity. If someone was caught picking up sticks on the Sabbath, what was the sentence? Death! The same for adultery. Boy if that still applied today there wouldn't be many left would there? It was severe, and drastic, but now what has happened to it?), which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross;"

Now how graphic can you get? When He hung there on the Cross the laws and ordinances that were against us were nailed there as well. That ended it. And that's why He was the fulfilling of the Law. What put Him on the Cross? His laws, and remember how you fulfill the Law? **LOVE!** (Romans 13:8) How did Christ fulfill the Law? His love, the ultimate by being nailed to that Cross. All right let's look at another one in Colossians Chapter 1:24. Where Paul speaks of being a minister in verse 23:

Colossians 1:24,25

"Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions (his suffering) of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church: Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God;" Oh everything was fulfilled when He went to that Cross. Another one that comes to mind is in Ephesians Chapter 3; let's look at it.

Ephesians 3:10,11

"To the intent that now (after the finished work of the Cross and the revelation of this great Gospel of Grace) unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church (the true believers) the manifold wisdom of God, According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord:"

Why did God do it all? You know I've had questions come in over the phone such as, "Well if God knew that the world was going to end up in such a mess, and that men would rebel so, then why did He ever make them in the first place." Well it all boils down to that question we've had since we were kids. Who am I, where did I come from, and why am I here. Why are we here? We're objects of God love. Now to be an object of love, what does the giver expect in return. Love, and that's why He made the human race. Angels couldn't respond, and so He made the human race with that indwelling attribute of will to either respond to His love or to reject it. And so that's why He had to bring Satan on the scene so we could exercise that choice, otherwise there would be no will exercised. So the whole program of the human race was that God could have prepared people to fellowship with. And to return or extend His love to them that had responded of their own free will to His love. And that's why we are here, and that's why the vast majority of mankind are given the free option to reject it if they want to. Remember, God doesn't want someone in His Heaven if they can't respond to His love. But to those who respond to His love, He's prepared things like what Paul says:

I Corinthians 2:9

"But as it is written, 'Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.'"

Oh listen, the world out there I know thinks that we're a bunch of kooks, and fanatic nuts, and I know they do. And I just tell them, "Hey, live it for 70 or 80 years." So what. But I've got an eternity of the things that will make the best this earth can offer seem like an old pig pen by comparison. But you see they can't understand that we have simply responded to an extended love, and that's why He went to the Cross; it was love. Now what was the final eternal purpose? Paul doesn't really tell us here in Ephesians Chapter 3, but if you will come on over to II Timothy Chapter 1 we will find out.

II Timothy 1:7,8

"For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind (the world may think we're nuts, but God knows better). Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God;"

Now listen what kind of power are we talking about? We're talking about the kind of power that can fling the stars, planets, sun and the moon into orbit without the benefit of a rocket or computers, and they never bump into one another, they're all out there in perfect synchronization. That's the kind of power we're talking about. I mean it's mind boggling. Now reading on.

II Timothy 1:9

"Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works (see how The Bible put down works for Salvation?), but according to his own purpose..."

You know back in the Book of Acts, Peter makes it so evident that before anything was ever created the Triune God had a meeting in eternity past, not that they had to sit around the table and banter it back and forth, but nevertheless the Trinity got together and agreed on creation, on mankind, knowing that he would sin, and they set up the plan of Salvation out of which the Son would come down and die, and be raised from the dead. That's all part of this eternal purpose that God implemented before anything was ever created. Now finishing that verse.

II Timothy 1:9

"Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,"

Isn't that glorious? I mean this is past human understanding, you and I are here today as recipients of His grace, but God knew about us way way back before anything was created. We're not an accident in time, we are according to His divine and eternal purpose. Now let's return to Romans Chapter 5 again for a few moments. Remember verse 1 says, we have this peace that passeth all understanding. Peace with God. How many people have to lay their head on the pillow at night and toss and turn until their guilt complex runs rough shod over them. They know they're not at peace with maybe fellow men or maybe with government and certainly not with God. But the believer can put his head on the pillow and be at perfect peace with his Maker. Know that the work of the Cross has settled everything. Know that all these promises are true if we believe them. We rest on them. Now verse 2:

Romans 5:2

"By whom also we have access (how?) by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.."

In other words God's unmerited favour has just opened the windows of Heaven, and made it accessible to every human being anywhere and everywhere. But there has to be a door of access, and what is it? **"FAITH!"** Remember when we first started our series of lessons on Romans. I gave many of the things that God did the moment we believed. He sanctified us, He forgave us, He justified us, He glorified us, He baptized us into the Body, and on and on we went. And I said about everyone of them - **"did you feel it when it happened? Could you see it when it happened? Could your neighbors see it when it happened?"** So how do we know these things happened? The Book says so! And that's faith! Everything becomes a reality then by faith.

So we have access into this grace when we stand and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. But we're not just pie in the sky people. I've said over and over through the years, **"Listen, just because you become a believer, you're not going to have a rose feathered pathway. You're not going to live in a Garden of Eden."** We're still in this old world. We're still in a body of flesh. We're still living in a time of trials and tribulations. That's part of it and God isn't removing us from that. He is simply saying, **"I'll see you through it."** We can go through valleys but God will always escort us. He will never forsake us. And so that's what He's saying here - that now we're going to have tribulations.

Now when I read of the potential of persecution coming on believers, even in America, the potential is there. The world is getting adamant, it is getting as one lady told me in her own church environment. She said, "**Les, they're getting aggressively in opposition to me.**" Just because of her stand on the Gospel. Even within her own church circle. And so we can recognize the creeping tremors of persecution that are coming up. And so we may have to face some tribulation. Not The Tribulation, but tribulation. We may go through some times of trials and sufferings. But if we go through tribulation then we know that we're going to gain something from it and what is it? Patience. Whenever I see this verse, I think of another little almost amusing anecdote.

One of our friends when we were still living in Iowa, had a large family. Seven or eight kids, just boom, boom, boom. And when you've got that many kids, you're going to have some things that try your patience. And so that mother, one day, said, "**Oh Les, some days I get so impatient. Will you pray with me that the Lord will give me patience with these kids?**" I said, "**Now wait a minute. Do you realize what you're asking for?**" And she said, "**What do you mean?**" I said, "**There's only one way God will give you patience and that's tribulation.**" She said, "**Forget it!!**" But you see, that's exactly how God works. When we go through tribulation it's going to teach us patience. And I've experienced it and I imagine many of you have. You go through a workplace situation, or whatever it may be, and it's a trying experience. What's the end result? Patience.

Romans 5:3

"And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience;"

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