



World Christian Fellowship

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Romans 49 Justified by Faith - Abraham

Romans 4:1-8, *What then shall we say that Abraham our father has found according to the flesh? ²For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. ³For what does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." ⁴Now to him who works, the wages are not counted as grace but as debt. ⁵But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness, ⁶just as David also describes the blessedness of the man to whom God imputes righteousness apart from works: ⁷"Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, And whose sins are covered; ⁸Blessed is the man to whom the Lord shall not impute sin."*

Romans, from chapter 3 verse 21 on to chapter 8 Paul is talking about that God has provided a salvation is provided by Christ through His work as a free gift to those who believe, not by their own works.

Why Abraham?

Abraham would show the eternal truth of righteousness by grace through faith since Abraham was an Old Testament character.

By using Abraham, Paul is saying this is nothing new, this is something very old.

Abraham even preceded Moses.

Abraham even preceded the identity of the nation Israel.

Abraham really belongs in the patriarchal period, the very primitive time.

He appears early in the book of Genesis.

If Paul can establish that a man in the book of Genesis was saved by grace through faith and not of works, then he has given to us a timeless truth and nothing new at all.

He is not an example of a man who earned salvation by his good works but by grace through believing.

In simple child-like trust, in complete yielded to God, he took God's word at face value, believed God. By that act of faith, he received righteousness.

Romans chapter 4 can be divided up by three ways.

1. Justification by Faith not by works (V1-8)
2. Justification by Grace not Law (9-17)
3. Justification by God's power not human effort. (18-25)

1. Justification by Faith not by works (V1-8)

Abraham story begins in Genesis chapter 12.

God choosing Abraham, who lived in a city called Ur.

As best archaeologists can identify, Ur city probably had about 300 thousand inhabitants. It was a commercial city, a very important city located in Mesopotamia which is on the Persian Gulf.

Those days it was located in the area of two great rivers, the Tigris and the Euphrates. Archaeologists, in dealing with this ancient site, have told us that it probably located itself in about four-square miles of area.

They also have determined that the people, were highly educated, very proficient in math, proficient in astronomy, skilled at weaving and engraving, and commonly wrote.

That is, they had reduced their language to writing even in the time of Abraham by the twelfth chapter of Genesis, and in writing they put their writing down on clay tablets.

They worshiped multiplied gods. They were what we call "polytheistic." They had many gods.

The foremost of which was a god by the name of Nanna, who was the moon god.

Abraham's father's name was Terah, and he was an idolatrous man. He worshiped idols.

Joshua 24:2, *And Joshua said to all the people, "Thus says the Lord God of Israel: 'Your fathers, including Terah, the father of Abraham and the father of Nahor, dwelt on the other side of the River in old times; and they served other gods.*

So, Abraham was raised in a pagan environment. He was raised in an important, educated kind of place, where there may have been effective trades as well as splendid agriculture. But he was raised a pagan. He was raised in a family where they worshiped idols.

God came to this man Abraham in the midst of his pagan environment, and He called to him to follow a new path.

Genesis 12:1-3, *Now the Lord had said to Abram: "Get out of your country, From your family And from your father's house, To a land that I will show you. ²I will make you a great nation; I will bless you And make your name great; And you shall be a blessing. ³I will bless those who bless you, And I will curse him who curses you; And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."*

Now, this is a sovereign call. We don't know any preliminary information about Abraham.

We really don't know much about him, but God called him. God called Abraham and if He had called somebody else, we would have asked the same question with the same answer.

Now God promised him three things.

1. Land, V1
2. Seed, V2,
3. A nation, blessing. V3.

God said through him would come the hope of salvation for the world. Through his loins all families of the earth would be blessed.

Now we who are saved, we who know salvation in Jesus Christ.

Galatians 3:9, *So then those who are of faith are blessed with believing Abraham.*

We have been blessed because the seed came through his loins.

What was Abraham response to his call?

Genesis 12:4, *So Abram departed as the Lord had spoken to him, and Lot went with him. And Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran.*

He just packed up and left.

Instantaneous obedience. He responded to the sovereign call of God.

Abraham was about 60 years of age. He was making a complete break with his lifestyle, his career, whatever that might have been his possessions, his friends, his relatives, his religion.

"and Lot went with him."

That that was a hedge against the will of God. God said get out of there and leave your kindred. Lot went with him and became a serious problem.

Now when he first left, he didn't fully obey God.

Genesis 11:31-32, *And Terah took his son Abram and his grandson Lot, the son of Haran, and his daughter-in-law Sarai, his son Abram's wife, and they went out with them from Ur of the Chaldeans to go to the land of Canaan; and they came to Haran and dwelt there.³² So the days of Terah were two hundred and five years, and Terah died in Haran.*

According to **Genesis 12:4**, Abram was 75 years old when he departed out of Haran.

Get the picture.

God said, leave your father's house and leave your kindred and get out of this place and go to a land that I'm going to show you. But he couldn't shake them. He got stuck with Lot, he got stuck with his father, dragged the whole crew.

They never got past Haran and they stayed there for 15 years.

That was not complete obedience.

15 wasted years, in a sense, still in Mesopotamia, still an idolatrous city, for Haran was as idolatrous as was Ur.

Instead of making a clean break, he had dragged along his relatives.

Terah died at the age of 205 and he died in Haran.

After Terah's death Abram at that point decided to leave.

It's almost as if once he got rid of the tremendous power and pressure of his father, he could get on with it.

When the call of God comes, and someone is sort of stuck with that pressure and reluctant to be fully obedient. But he began to move. After the death of his father.

Genesis 12:5, *Then Abram took Sarai his wife and Lot his brother's son, and all their possessions that they had gathered, and the people whom they had acquired in Haran, and they departed to go to the land of Canaan. So they came to the land of Canaan.*

It wasn't the fullest kind of obedience yet, but it's getting better. At least he's now leaving Haran and he's moving out. He crosses the hot, burning desert to an absolutely unknown place.

I believe at this point his faith is sufficient to be honoured by God.

Genesis 12:6-7, *Abram passed through the land to the place of Shechem, as far as the terebinth tree of Moreh. And the Canaanites were then in the land. 7 Then the Lord appeared to Abram and said, "To your descendants I will give this land." And there he built an altar to the Lord, who had appeared to him*

Now, here we see for the first time the response of a sovereignly chosen man. He responds by worshiping the true God. It's almost as if he couldn't bring himself to do this until he had unloaded his idolatrous father. But he worshiped the true God.

Genesis 12:8, *And he moved from there to the mountain east of Bethel, and he pitched his tent with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east; there he built an altar to the Lord and called on the name of the Lord.*

Now here is the man of faith. He has now come to worship the true God. He has past idolatry. He is moving ahead, and he becomes the model of faith.

He was not perfect.

For sure he was not perfect.

For example, the first test he had to face was a famine, and when he faced a famine, instead of seeking help from God, he decided to seek help from the Egyptians.

Abraham got himself in a compromising situation. Remember he had to lie to Pharaoh. At least he thought he did. If he had trusted God to meet his needs in the famine instead of trusting Egypt, which seemed later to be a rather common problem for the Jews, he could have avoided that sin.

He also maintained that unequal yoking by dragging along Lot with him and that resulted in dire consequences, the greatest of which is indicated to us in **Genesis 19th chapter** in the turning of Lot's wife to a pillar of salt.

In chapter 15 we see Abraham experiencing fear. We even see that man, Abraham, that model of faith, committing adultery in a stupid effort to produce the seed that he wasn't sure God could produce.

Going in unto Hagar, his handmaid, and producing from that stupid act of adultery a nation of proud, arrogant enemies of Israel.

But, in spite of his imperfection, he recovered from his lack of faith and his sin, and he was a man who believed God.

No man is perfect, and no man believes God perfectly.

But Abraham was a model of believing God even with his imperfection. That's comforting!

He picked up and left his city, his homeland, his environment, his idols, and he didn't know where he was going. So, he became the pattern of faith. He believed God for a child when he and his wife were barren all their lifelong.

Hebrews 11:13, *These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.*

He died in faith never having received the promise. He never saw the fulfilment.

He never saw the land, he never saw the nation, and he never saw the blessing. He died. But he died believing that God would keep His word. That's what faith's all about.

Even the pagans were rather in awe of him.

Genesis 23:6, *Hear us, my lord: You are a mighty prince among us; bury your dead in the choicest of our burial places. None of us will withhold from you his burial place, that you may bury your dead."*

They could see a quality about him that made him stand out.

When Sarah died, the pagans wanted to give him the grave site and he wouldn't let them do that. He insisted that he would pay for it because he did not want to be obligated to the world and its occupants. He wanted no such obligation.

When it was time to find a wife for Isaac, he did not want a wife from among the Canaanites, but rather from among those people whom he trusted.

In Genesis 23 verse 4 that all his lifelong he remained a stranger.

He remained a wanderer.

He remained a sojourner.

He never returned to Mesopotamia's lush, green land. which was his home.

Why?

Hebrews 11:10, *For he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.*

He had a divine perspective. A blessed man, overcoming his human weaknesses, overcoming those periods of doubt, overcoming those acts of stupidity, he maintained a life of faith.

He never landed very hard in this world, he always looked for that city whose builder and maker was God. He stepped out of his entire environment to go to a place and to build a nation and to take a land and to be a blessing, none of which he ever really saw. But he died with the faith that God would fulfil it.

Hebrews 11:1, *Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.*

He believed, though he never saw.

Abraham then becomes the model of faith.

He believes what he can't see.

He dies believing what he's never seen.

That is how it is for a Christian. We believe in One whom we have never seen, and we believe we are going to a city whose builder and maker is God. The very moment when we breathe our last breath, we are hoping for eternity, that we will see that place which we have never seen. We are believing in a salvation which we cannot see, a Saviour which we cannot see, a heaven which we cannot see, an eternal blessedness which we cannot see.

So, in that sense, we are the children of Abraham. That is, we carry a faith that is like the faith of Abraham. With all our human imperfections, as with his, we are saved by God through faith. That's Paul's message.

The Jews tried to say that the reason God chose Abraham was because he was a perfect man. But he was hardly.

The reason God chose Abraham was because God is God.

God chose Abraham and Abraham responded and he was made righteous because God chose him and he responded to that choice, not because he was a perfect man.

Paul illustrates to us that we too are saved by God's gracious choice to which we respond in faith.

Abraham was justified by faith not by works.

You cannot do anything on your own effort to gain acceptance with God. You can't do that.

You can't do it on your own.

Romans 3:20, *Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.*

Nobody comes on those terms.

Romans 3:27, *Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? No, but by the law of faith.*

If you were saved by what you did then you get the glory.

You can say, I had the intelligence, I had the foresight, I had the insight, I had the cleverness, I had the righteousness to do good works and to come to God all on my own. Then you get the glory. You get the credit. But not before God. God is not in the business of glorifying men.

God is glorifying Himself. Nobody was ever made right with God by works.

Philippians 3:3-9,

What did Abraham gain?

Nothing.

Not before God.

V 3, *For what does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness."*

Paul always goes to the Scripture.

Here's the issue. Genesis 15:6 he quotes, "Abraham believed God and it was put to his account for righteousness."

It wasn't what he did. It was what he believed, right?

Salvation is by believing.

The essence of Abraham's greatness was that he believed God. God sovereignly chose him. That is the elective purpose of God. And he responded in faith, believing.

Abraham took God at His word, packed up his stuff and left, and with all his human frailties lived a life of trusting God and that was credited to his account for righteousness.

How can a man be right with God?

How can a sin be forgiven and how can he receive entrance into God's kingdom?

Not by his own works but rather by what he believes.

His righteousness, the righteousness of Christ, put to his account.

Now, that's what we mean by justification by faith.

Now justification is a technical term and it sort of refers to a legal status, that we have been declared to be just by our faith.

The Bible says you can't be saved by works but you are saved by faith, therefore faith can't be a work biblically.

? Faith is never the basis of justification. It is never the reason for justification. It is only the channel by which justification is received.

Faith is simply a convicted heart offered the gift of salvation which responds by reaching out. So don't get the idea that faith is a work that you do for which you're rewarded by being saved. It's only a channel.

God does not justify the believing person because of the worthiness of his faith but because of the worthiness of the

One who is believed in. It is only the empty hand that takes the gift.

Acts 13:38-39, *Therefore let it be known to you, brethren, that through this Man is preached to you the forgiveness of sins;³⁹ and by Him everyone who believes is justified from all things from which you could not be justified by the law of Moses.*

There's no work that can justify you!
It is simply receiving the gift.

V 4-5, *Now to him who works, the wages are not counted as grace but as debt.⁵ But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness,*

The faith of Abraham was the genuine kind. He heard the facts. He believed them. He desired them. He entrusted his life to the living Lord in hope of eternal fulfilment.

Genuine faith. He was committed to the outworking of genuine faith which is obedience and worship. It was not something of his own effort, it was all of grace.

Romans 11:6, *And if by grace, then it is no longer of works; otherwise grace is no longer grace. But if it is of works, it is no longer grace; otherwise work is no longer work.*

It's either grace or works. It can't be both, one or the other.

If you did something to earn your salvation it wouldn't be grace it would be wages, wouldn't it?

If you worked for it, God would owe it to you.

But salvation comes by grace, free absolute favour on the part of God.

It was not something Abraham had earned, but something he was given by grace.

V 5, *But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness,*

The faith of Abraham agrees with the doctrine of Paul. It was not a work to be rewarded.

Man cannot do good works of any kind. He cannot do saving works of any kind. He cannot do meritorious good works of any kind. He can do nothing to make himself right with God.

There are four kinds of human deeds.

1. Bad-bad works.

Unregenerate people can't do anything good morally, ethically before God that can bring them into right relationship with Him.

2. Good-bad works.

They are bad works in the sense that they cannot earn salvation, but they are good in the sense that they're philanthropy.

So, on the one hand you have non-Christian bad, and on the other hand, you have non-Christian good.

Neither one of them are going to redeem them.

3. Bad-good works.

Those are the activities of hypocrites. They attempt to do good works, religious works, godly works but they are bad-good works.

4. Good-good works.

He can do bad-bad works, good-bad works, and bad-good works, but not good-good works.

Does that help?

It is impossible for a man to do good-good works, that which can bring him into a redemptive relationship with God.

Because man is incapacitated.

Romans 3:10-11, *As it is written: "There is none righteous, no, not one; ¹¹There is none who understands; There is none who seeks after God.*

By the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified.

Isaiah 64:6, *But we are all like an unclean thing, And all our righteousnesses are like filthy rags; We all fade as a leaf, And our iniquities, like the wind, Have taken us away.*

So, faith then is not somebody doing good-good works for which they are rewarded with salvation, but it is somebody who knows they can only do bad-bad works, good-bad works, or bad-good works, and in desperation they cry out to God to redeem them from their incapacity.

If we received righteousness because of some work of our own doing, then there would be no grace involved, it would just be merit. It would just be like going to work, putting in your eight hours, collecting your check at the end of the week.

You don't go to your boss and say, "I have given a full week, please be gracious and pay me." You don't want grace, you want pay for your works. Your boss is in debt to you. God is not.

God is in the debt of no man. You can earn no saving wages. God owes you absolutely nothing and that is abundantly clear in the Scripture.

You couldn't be saved by your works.

You couldn't be saved by your own works because your works make no provision for your past sin.

You can't be saved by present righteousness because that doesn't do anything with your past sin. That doesn't account for it. That doesn't deal with it.

How can your past sins find atonement if you are redeemed by works?

Secondly, fallen creatures cannot produce the divine standard and the divine standard is "Be perfect."

Thirdly, if you say you are redeemed by works then Christ's death is utterly needless.

Fourthly God's glory would be eclipsed by the glory of man.

And so, verse 5 says: "It is to him that worketh not but believes on the One who justifies the ungodly." And inherent in that concept is that you see yourself as ungodly.

God just accepts anybody, even the goody kind of people along with the vile wretched gutter-type people?

Matthew 20.

One of the most difficult parables for people to understand because we don't understand grace. All we understand is reward and debt and pay and wages, hard for us to understand grace.

Matthew 20:1-2, *“For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. ²Now when he had agreed with the laborers for a denarius a day, he sent them into his vineyard.*

Probably about six o'clock in the morning, that is when their day began in terms of the work, and he went out and got a crew of workers at 6 a.m.

When he agreed with the laborers, he agreed for a denarius a day which is the standard pay for labour.

Matthew 20:3-7, *And he went out about the third hour and saw others standing idle in the marketplace, ⁴and said to them, ‘You also go into the vineyard, and whatever is right I will give you.’ So they went. ⁵Again he went out about the sixth and the ninth hour, and did likewise. ⁶And about the eleventh hour he went out and found others standing idle, and said to them, ‘Why have you been standing here idle all day?’ ⁷They said to him, ‘Because no one hired us.’ He said to them, ‘You also go into the vineyard, and whatever is right you will receive.’*

So, when evening, that's 6 p.m., these guys have been working one hour. The others have been working twelve.

Matthew 20:8-16, *“So when evening had come, the owner of the vineyard said to his steward, ‘Call the laborers and give them their wages, beginning with the last to the first.’⁹ And when those came who were hired about the eleventh hour, they each received a denarius.¹⁰ But when the first came, they supposed that they would receive more; and they likewise received each a denarius.¹¹ And when they had received it, they complained against the landowner,¹² saying, ‘These last men have worked only one hour, and you made them equal to us who have borne the burden and the heat of the day.’¹³ But he answered one of them and said, ‘Friend, I am doing you no wrong. Did you not agree with me for a denarius?¹⁴ Take what is yours and go your way. I wish to give to this last man the same as to you.¹⁵ Is it not lawful for me to do what I wish with my own things? Or is your eye evil because I am good?’¹⁶ So the last will be first, and the first last. For many are called, but few chosen.”*

God bestows grace, the same grace, the same magnanimous grace, the same benefits of grace on the people who just slide in by the hair of their chinny-chin-chin, just as much as those who have served their whole life long. That's hard for us to understand someone like this. That's grace, equally bestowed on all.

Romans 4:5, *But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness,*

Whoever they are, whenever they come, the grace is the same for them all. Because of faith it is accounted to them for righteousness.

We are not righteous, but righteousness is put into our account! A marvellous thought!

Job 9:20, *"If I justify myself my own mouth condemns me."*

You can't justify yourself. What you want to do to be saved is to do the very opposite and affirm that you are ungodly, that you are utterly ungodly.

That was the problem with the Pharisees all along. They never would admit their ungodliness, so they were unredeemable, because God only justifies one kind of person.

What kind of people God justifies?

Ungodly.

All the kind of people there are. But not all of them are willing to admit it.

God can only justify the ungodly. That's why when anyone thinks they are okay the way they are then they are unredeemable.

The Pharisees never were willing to accept that estimation of themselves, they rejected Jesus Christ.

Luke 5:31-32, *Jesus answered and said to them, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. ³²I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance."*

Man is ungodly.

How can a just and holy God just simply forgive the ungodly?

Because He has been freed to impute righteousness to them because their sin has been imputed to Jesus Christ.

When He died on the cross, He bore in His own body our sins, that we might be the recipient of His righteousness.

Abraham's experience is not just isolated.

Paul picks another great personality in the history of Israel, David.

V 6-8, just as David also describes the blessedness of the man to whom God imputes righteousness apart from works: ⁷“Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, And whose sins are covered; ⁸Blessed is the man to whom the Lord shall not impute sin.”

Paul used Abraham against them, now he is about to use their other great hero, David.

In verse 7 a sinner characterized by iniquity and sin.

In verse 8 a sinner characterized by sin.

In both cases the Lord forgives and does not hold that sin against the person. So, we know that that didn't happen by works because both verses define the individual as a sinner.

How can you say a sinner is blessed?

You can only say that if he's been forgiven, or if the Lord does not put his sin to his account.

That is exactly the case.

It doesn't come by works but by faith.

The truly blessed man is the one who is forgiven of his sin.

This is a quote from **Psalm 32:1-2**.

At that juncture of David's life, he knew guilt. He had been involved in an adultery. He had been involved in what amounts

to murder. He had desecrated his throne and the sanctity of his own virtue. He was a vile wretched sinner.

In **Psalm 51**, he went through such agony and such pain. He felt as if God had abandoned him. He was under the horrible experience of guilt.

He says in Psalm 32 that his life juices dried up, and that's what happens when guilt occurs. Anxiety creates pressure in the head that restricts the flow of the blood, another of the life juices.

In the midst of all of that he experienced the goodness of God. No wonder he said twice, "Blessed is the man whose sins the Lord forgives." "Blessed is the man to whom the Lord does not impute sin." That's the truly blessed man.

David knows forgiveness. So, David supports Paul's point.

Abraham was a pre-Mosaic figure,
David was a Mosaic figure.

Abraham predates the clear definition of the Mosaic covenant and so we see that God redeems people pre-Mosaic by faith.

David shows us that God redeems people in the Mosaic era by faith.

The New Testament carries it into our own era.

Always, at all times redemption is a matter of faith resulting in imputed righteousness.

David, great king of Israel, describes the blessedness of the man unto whom the Lord God imputes righteousness apart from works.

In verse 5 he says He justifies the ungodly in that his faith is counted for righteousness and here David basically is saying the same thing, that the Lord does not impute his sin to him but rather righteousness, apart from his works.

What righteousness is it?

The righteousness of Jesus Christ imputed.

Psalm 84 for a moment. So many different scriptures deal with this issue, it's hard to select them. But this,

Psalms 84:1-2, *How lovely is Your tabernacle, O Lord of hosts!
²My soul longs, yes, even faints For the courts of the Lord; My heart and my flesh cry out for the living God.*

Here is an individual who seeks fellowship with God.

Here is an individual who experiences intimacy with God.

Here is one who is known by God and knows God.

Here is one who's entered into a relationship, who's made things right with God.

Psalms 84:3-4, *Even the sparrow has found a home, And the swallow a nest for herself, Where she may lay her young Even Your altars, O Lord of hosts, My King and my God. ⁴Blessed are those who dwell in Your house; They will still be praising You.*

What is this saying?

A sparrow is the biblical symbol of worthlessness, basically, the biblical symbol of worthlessness. You could buy sparrows so cheaply, five for two farthings. Sparrows were cheap. They were two for a farthing, but if you wanted to buy two farthings worth, they would throw in an extra sparrow. Worthless, cheap.

But, in a right relationship with God, the one who is worthless becomes infinitely valuable. The sparrow has found a house. The swallow is the symbol of restlessness, restlessness.

But the swallow has found a nest for herself in the presence of God. The worthless becomes infinitely valuable. The restless finds rest.

There is a marvellous transformation. God looks at the sinner, the ungodly. When in faith they reach out to embrace the Redeemer, knowing in Him alone is there hope for salvation, at

that point God accepts the cry of the sinner and does not impute sin to him anymore.

That sin is transferred to Jesus Christ. He bears it on the cross. His righteousness is transferred to that sinner.

That is the divine transaction that we know as salvation. That is blessed.

Your sins are enough to damn.

My sins are enough to send me to hell forever, to say nothing of the anxiety they cause if they are unforgiven.

The Lord just sends our sins away? How far?

Psalm 103:12, *“As far as the east is from the west, so far hath He removed our transgressions from us.”*

That is blessed.

Leviticus 16:21-22, *Aaron shall lay both his hands on the head of the live goat, confess over it all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions, concerning all their sins, putting them on the head of the goat, and shall send it away into the wilderness by the hand of a suitable man. ²²The goat shall bear on itself all their iniquities to an uninhabited land; and he shall release the goat in the wilderness.*

The priest put his hands on the goat and the goat was sent away. That's where we get the idea of the scapegoat, sent outside the camp.

What did John the Baptist say of the Lord Jesus Christ?

John 1:29, *The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"*

Forgiveness means removal of our sins, all of them.

When Jesus died on the cross, He not only dealt with the sins of the people who would come afterward, but He dealt with the sins who had come before. Abraham's sin was dealt with on the cross, too! No longer was sin covered anymore, it was uncovered and sent away.

The only way that God could ever not impute our sins to us was to impute them to someone who would bear their penalty. And that's what He did, and then imputed His righteousness to us.

Conclusion:

Felix Jardeo was 60 years old. He lived in the Philippines, way out where nobody else lived. He farmed a simple little farm. And he saved his money for years to buy an ox to help him plough. He finally saved enough money, and he went out to

look for an ox to buy. You know what he found? That all the money he had saved was worthless because the government of the Philippines had ordered that all Philippine paper money be exchanged for the new currency called **bagong lipunan** and all savings stashed up in the old currency after a certain date was useless. So, in 1975 he had a little schoolboy write a letter for him because he couldn't read or write, and the little boy wrote to the president. He said, "After all, Mr. Jardeo is only poor, and he doesn't read, and he doesn't write and he's just an ignorant rice farmer. Can't you please let his money be good?"

He got a letter back. It said this: "The law must be followed because the deadline for exchanging bills has already passed. The government can no longer change your bills with the new ones; even the president of the Philippines is not exempt from this rule." But the letter didn't end there. It added this: "However, because I believe that you really worked hard to save this money, I am changing your money for new money from my own personal funds and now you will be able to buy your ox." The letter was signed, "Your friend, Ferdinand Marcos, president of the Philippines."

The man had no right.

The president gave him out of his own funds.

You're in that same position and so am I.

All the stuff we have been piling up all our life that we expect to walk in and use to purchase our redemption is useless.

Nothing you can do or say is going to make it valuable, but when God sees the hungry heart, He puts His currency to its account. Blessed is the man who has had the righteousness of God imputed to him.