

Paul's 5 PIECES OF EVIDENCE THAT PROVIDE FOR HIS LEGAL "PROOF" THAT JUSTIFICATION UNTO ETERNAL LIFE REALLY IS BY GRACE THROUGH FAITH ALONE IN CHRIST ALONE:

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Exhibit A: 3:27-31 — The legal operating force and justice of the court.

Exhibit B: 4:1-8 — Historical Precedent and Conclusive Evidence.

- Historical Precedent = citations of previous cases tried by that court that serve as examples for justification in subsequent cases—it is a previous judicial decision that may be used as a standard in subsequent similar cases.

- Conclusive Evidence = is (a) that which the law does not permit to be contradicted, and  
(b) No evidence is by law made conclusive unless so declared by statute (i.e., an already enacted law).

- This is the nature of this piece of evidence—Paul not only cites the historical precedent cases of Abraham and David, but he also submits into the record the recorded historical cases and appeals to the written record as recorded in God's word—a record that the law does not permit to be contradicted and in which declared by "statute" (or by the already enacted law of God's word), which declaration makes this evidence "conclusive"!

ASSOCIATED EVIDENCE:

Exhibit C: 4:9-12—Direct Evidence.

- Direct Evidence = is that which proves a fact without an inference or presumption and which in itself, if true, establishes that fact.

Exhibit D: 4:13-16c—Corroborative Evidence.

- Corroborative Evidence = is additional evidence of a DIFFERENT character to the SAME point.

Exhibit E: 4:16d-25—Cumulative Evidence.

- Cumulative Evidence = is additional evidence of the SAME character to the SAME point.

**EXHIBIT B: Historical Precedent & Conclusive Evidence.****ROMANS 4:1-8 (Abraham and David)**

- Note that it is interesting that these are the very two Biblical figures used to introduce the Christ (Messiah) to Israel in Matthew's gospel:

Matthew 1:1 - *The book of the generation of Jesus Christ,  
the son of David, the son of Abraham.*

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Review from pg.81 C/N

- Historical Precedent = citations of previous cases tried by that court, that serve as examples for justification in subsequent cases - it is a previous judicial decision that may be used as a standard in subsequent, similar cases.

- Conclusive Evidence = (a) that which the law does not permit to be contradicted, and  
(b) no evidence is by law made conclusive unless so declared by statute (i.e., an already enacted law).

- This is the nature of this second piece of evidence Paul presents to prove that JUSTIFICATION UNTO ETERNAL LIFE really is by GRACE through FAITH ALONE in CHRIST ALONE without works of any kind at any time.

- Paul not only cites the HISTORICAL PRECEDENT cases of Abraham and David, but he also submits into the record the recorded historical cases, and appeals to the WRITTEN RECORD as recorded in God's word -- a record that the law does not permit to be contradicted, and in which it is declared by statute (the already enacted law of God's word), which declaration makes this evidence "conclusive!"

**HISTORICAL PRECEDENT CASE/WITNESS #1: ABRAHAM**

Romans 4:1-5

- 1 What shall we say then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found?
- 2 For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God.
- 3 For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.
- 4 Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt.
- 5 But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.

## Rom. 4:1 SUMMARY COMMENT:

- The apostle Paul introduces his first **historical precedent** as a question to raise the issue in one's thinking of how **anyone at any time** gets justified unto eternal life, and the first man to whom Paul appeals is Abraham.

- Note: *What shall we say **then*** (Inferential Conjunction οὐν [oun] = a word of logic that displays great vocabulary control in order to flawlessly present a logical argument or proof, which under the inspiration of God the Holy Spirit provides solid understanding of the doctrine that effectually works within the human spirit of the saints for their edification and education as the ambassadors for Christ they ought to be.)

- Paul's legal proof of how justification unto eternal life takes place FOLLOWS ("**then**") in sense and sequence the first exhibit of evidence provided in Romans 3:27-31.

- By presenting the case for justification unto eternal life in this way, Paul is going to produce evidence **from Israel's program** in order to prove that justification unto eternal life is NOT an issue or doctrine that is different in God's program with Israel than that in His program with the church the body of Christ, but in fact it is EXACTLY THE SAME IN BOTH PROGRAMS!

- (And Paul can just as easily make his argument from Israel's program [in fact easier] than he can from God's program with us the church the body of Christ.

- Therefore in God's court of justice where eternal life is concerned, the "HOW" of justification unto eternal life has always been, is, and always will be THE SAME: FAITH, ALONE WITHOUT WORKS, and the historical case of Abraham will prove that issue.

- Paul states that Abraham is *our father* (πατήρ [patēr]). This points up what will be fully treated later on in the book of Galatians: that of the dual fatherhood of Abraham.

1) Abraham is called father in Israel's program in the sense of being the founding member of a new racial entity God will utilize to repossess this earth from the Adversary and his cohorts. Abraham is the father of the Jews as the founding member of the nation Israel.

2) Abraham is called father in the sense of being something very special in connection with the wisdom and genius of God of displaying the justice of God in providing for the justification unto eternal life of all believers, regardless of program.

- And this sense has to do with the line of grace, promise, faith, belief, forgiveness of sins, and imputation of +R on a non-meritorious basis.

- Abraham is presented as *our father, as pertaining to the flesh, ....*  
 (σάρξ [sarx] = often used of natural, physical origin or natural generation;  
 however, “flesh” [sarx] can also be used to describe one’s natural thinking “in  
 Adam” - i.e., the natural weakness of the flesh in connection with wanting  
 and desiring to operate under a performance system).

- That is, Abraham is the fleshly physical origin or founding member  
 of the nation of God’s own creation, the nation Israel.

- However, Abraham is also our “father” in the sense of being the  
 chief or head figure of what God designed and purposed to do by  
 His grace in connection with, among other things, justification unto  
 eternal life.

- In any event, Abraham is introduced into evidence by the apostle  
 Paul as an historical precedent-setting case whereby God set and  
 settled the pattern for justification unto eternal life wherein all  
 aspects of the “flesh” [sarx], along with any and all production that  
 comes from it are totally and completely inadmissible in this court  
 of God’s justice for eternal life justification.

Rom.3:19-20; Gal.2:15-16 - Note how this issue of “*the flesh,*” falls on the heels of  
 what Paul has already set forth concerning the flesh [sarx],  
 and which subject he will pick up and deal with in further  
 detail over in Galatians.

- The critical principle to the issue of what Abraham found as pertaining to  
 “*the flesh*” is that of a human beings’ capacity to produce by its own energy,  
 works capable of justifying them in the eyes of God’s justice - the flesh  
 cannot produce anything that God’s justice can possibly accept, and Abraham  
 proves that very thing, even as one who got justified unto eternal life  
 BEFORE the law was given.

- Note that Paul’s question in verse 1 ends by asking, “*What shall we say  
 then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found?*”

- “*hath found*” (Perf.Act.Infin. εὐρίσκω [heurisko] = to find,  
 discover, or ascertain by examination)

- Perf. Tense = Abraham found this out in the past over in  
 Genesis 15 with the result that it remained in his thinking  
 for the rest of his life - and since it gets recorded on the  
 page of God’s word, it will remain forever!

- This phrase is not found (no pun intended) in the W&H  
 Greek text - (see the RSV).

- The NIV changes the word, or rather translates the word as “discovered.”
- But let’s note the superiority of the King James as well as the flawless accuracy of the KJ translators in using the word “*found*” - in other words, what’s the difference in “*found*” and “discovered”? aren’t they both ok? doesn’t the Greek mean both? Let’s find out:

- The following information is found in Crabb’s English Synonymes.

- *Find* is most probably connected with the Latin *venio*, signifying to come in the way; *discover*, meaning to uncover comes from the Latin *espicio*, signifying to see a thing out.

To *find* is the general term simply meaning to come within sight of a thing. We *find out* a thing by carefully going over it.

But what is *discovered* IS ALWAYS REMOTE AND UNKNOWN and when *discovered* is something new. A piece of money may be *found* lying on the ground; but a mine is *discovered* under ground. And what is not *discoverable* may be presumed NOT TO EXIST.

*Find out* and *discover* differ principally in application; the former being applied to familiar, and the latter to scientific objects.

- In understanding the close shade of meaning in the terms *found* and *discovered*, the more excellent of the terms in connections with the context of Romans 4:1 is that Abraham *found* and not that Abraham *discovered*. That is, in connection with how God’s justice operates in justifying a man unto eternal life, there was never anything to be *discovered* as if it was some remote and unknown aspect of God’s Jehovahness and grace that was presumed not to exist, for it was, indeed, in existence and was indeed apparent to anyone who cared to look. Abraham becomes the classic example of that process of justification unto eternal life, and he *found* that out by carefully going over it. God’s operation of justification unto eternal life was close and familiar, and Abraham *found* it out. It was not some new scientific *discovery* or some new breakthrough, for it was an apparent aspect of God’s Jehovahness and it was and is the monopoly of God, never to be credited to man’s wisdom or man’s *discovery* or man’s breakthrough!

- In essence, the excellency of *found* means that God gets all the credit in the process, Abraham only *found out* what God’s grace had been doing all along. *Found* preserves the doctrine of grace, *discovered* gives man a measure of credit/merit he does not deserve!

- Admittedly, this is a nitpicking, hair-splitting issue, however it serves as a prime example of the wise use of the English language by the KJ translators - and it serves to illustrate the fact that words, (*English words*), mean something. And the shades of meaning of the words of God found in your KJ Bible are there to flawlessly and fully engage your thinking, even in the minute details often thought of as unimportant by modern Bible correctors.

- (Note that the KJ translators had “discovered” available to them, but they did not use it - they used it twice in Acts)

- Its not just an issue of a ‘beloved old text’ that has great ‘poetry and symmetry’ and is given to ‘ease of memorization’ - its an issue of **flawless accuracy!!! - And absolute, final authority!!!!**

- This “find” that Abraham came upon will be the subject of the rest of chapter 4. (But it will corroborate what Paul set forth back in 1:17.) And when chapter 4 is over, the issue will be settled in the human spirit of the ambassador for Christ.

#### **Rom. 4:2 SUMMARY COMMENT:**

- “*For*” (Particle γάρ [gar]) is the particle of further amplification and explanation. Hence, Paul begins in verse 2 to further explain what Abraham found in connection with his flesh, and that is that it in no way contributed in any way, shape, or form to his own justification unto eternal life.

- “*if*” (Particle εἰ [ei] ) is used with the indicative to indicate that a 1st class conditional phrase is being set up in the protasis - a condition that simply stumps the apostate fundamental commentators. It means “if” and it is true!

- Again, a scholar comes up to this verse knowing little to nothing of God’s program with Israel as opposed to His program with us the church the body of Christ, and they have to make some dumb statement as, “the first-class condition, though true, is assumed to be true for the sake of the argument.” This is simply double-talk for not being able to admit their stupidity and inability to deal with the two justifications in the salvation package deal that every Israelite was supposed to possess.

- Knowing the background material we have already covered concerning the fact that this IS, of TRUTH a real kind of justification, there is no need to sweep it away as some kind of fancy debating technique used by the apostle Paul.

- Abraham really was justified by works, but that kind of justification is totally inadmissible in this court of God’s justice!

- And not only that, but as we will see, this is also why the use of the word “*glory*” is the better and more excellent word to describe what Abraham would have in connection with being justified by works, rather than saying that he would have something to “boast” about as in the NIV, NASV, or RSV!

- “*For if (and it is true) Abraham were justified (Aor. Pass. Ind. δικαιόω [dikaioo]) by works (Abl. of means Neut. Pl. ἔργον [ergon]) he hath whereof to glory (Acc. Neut. Sing. καύχημα [kauchēma] = the result of boasting or the ground of glorying and exultation - it is a contextually sensitive term); but (strong adversative conjunction ἀλλά [alla]) not (strong negative conjunction οὐκ [ouk]) before God (Preposition πρὸς [pros] = before, face to face with. + Acc. of extent Masc. Sing. θεός [theos] w/ Art. ὁ [ho] = God).*

- In the protasis or premise Paul asserts the truth that Abraham was justified by works and Genesis 22 as well as James 2 corroborate that fact, but if he tried to produce any kind of works in the court of God’s justice unto eternal life, it not only would be out of order, inadmissible, and thrown out of court - but if God allowed it to be presented as justifying Abraham unto eternal life, Abraham, and not God, would have something to “*glory*” about.

- Notice that unlike the NIV, NASV, or RSV, who all use the term “boast” as the translation of [kauchēma], the KJ translators, who had the term readily available to them, instead chose to translate the term “*glory*” - another closely related term with shade of meaning that flawlessly communicates according to the context what the mind of God intended to be communicated.

- Again, from Crabb’s “English Synonymes” 1830, pg. 526:

To *glory* is to hold as one’s *glory*; to *boast* is to set forth to one’s advantage. The two terms denote the value which the individual sets upon that which belongs to himself.

To *glory* is more particularly the act of the mind, the indulgence of the internal sentiment: to *boast* denotes rather the expression of the sentiment. To *glory* is applied only to matters of moment; *boast* is rather suitable to trifling points. A Christian martyr *glories* in the cross of Christ. A soldier *boasts* of his courage and his feats in battle.

*Glory* is but seldom used in a bad sense, and *boast* still seldomer in a good sense. It is an unbecoming action for an individual to *boast* of any thing in himself. An Englishman *glories* in the reflection of belonging to such a distinguished nation, although he would do very idly to *boast* of it as a personal quality.

- Notice that the KJV remains true to the context of the passage with the use of the more excellent of the terms, *glory*, not “boast.” And the reason for it being the more excellent term is found in the shade of meaning between *glory* and *boast*.

- We know that *glory* is held as one’s glory.
- But *boasting* is setting something forth to one’s own advantage.
- We know that *glory* is a thinking term - the act of the mind.
- But *boasting* is an outward expression.
- We know that *glory* applies to matters of important moment.
- But *boasting* is suitable to trifling or unimportant points.
- We know that *glory* is almost always used in a good sense.
- But *boasting* is almost always used in a bad sense.
- We know that *glory* can be becoming when used in a true sense.
- But *boasting* is almost always unbecoming action.

- Therefore, in our passage of Romans 4:2, the 1st class condition tells us that it is true that Abraham did justify himself by his works - something that we know is true from Genesis 22 and James 2. And, further more, Abraham’s justification by works really and truly would mean that he would have something to “*glory*” in - NOT “*BOAST*” IN, for “*boasting*” would mean that Abraham really never was justified by works - which is plain not true! He was justified by works - just not unto eternal life - he was justified by works in the eyes of men as the Friend of God.

- In Romans 4:2, if the premise were NOT TRUE (which the context and the Greek grammar clearly state that it IS true), then Abraham would be totally out of line and attempting to set forth his own production of his own justification unto eternal life by his works to his own advantage. And in this sense, the proper word to use to describe that would be to BOAST.

- But the KJ translators use of “*glory*” aids us in understanding the context of the passage without getting off track. It tells us that there is no problem whatsoever in understanding that the phrase, “*if Abraham were justified by works*” really is a true thing. He really was justified by works. And therefore because of that, Abraham could then properly possess a mental attitude of “*glory*” in the grandeur of his being the Friend of God.

- Moreover, this makes all the more sense out of the last phrase of verse 2, as well as sets it up to be the most powerful phrase in the verse: “*BUT NOT BEFORE GOD.*” The rightful implication being that this “*glory*” of his being justified by works as the Friend of God while good in its rightful place, is totally out of line and inadmissible to justify Abraham unto eternal life in God’s court of justice for eternal life. In this case all Abraham’s works mean NOTHING!

- Being in a Friend of God maturity status really is something that one could “*glory*” in before men. That is one could relish or glory in the grand privilege of being in such as status as the Friend of God so as to put on display godliness and make an impact on the nations of the world for the cause of ones Heavenly Father.

- (But “boasting” in this status would be totally out of line!)

- Therefore, once again you have the excellency of the English in your King James Bible. Once again, you have flawless accuracy in paying close attention to context. And once again you can have absolute certainty that the Bible you hold in your hand has flawless accuracy and absolute authority!

Romans 4:1-2

1 *What shall we say then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found?*

2 *For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God.*

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

### **Rom. 4:3 SUMMARY COMMENT:**

- Paul now sets forth the core element of this historical precedent evidence: the very record of scripture itself.

*“For what saith the scripture (γραφή [graph8])?”*

- Paul’s appeal is to the written record of God’s word as recorded in Genesis chapter 15:1-6 (:6).

*“Abraham believed (Aor. Act. Ind. πιστεύω [pisteuo] = to be fully persuaded of a thing and hence to believe it; non-meritorious positive volition) God,”*

*“and it (Abraham’s non-meritorious belief) was counted (Aor. Pass. Ind. λογίζομαι [logizomai] = to put down to his credit, to credit to his account) unto him”*

*“for righteousness (δικαιοσύνη [dikaiosun8] = in the thinking of the Judge, (God Himself), Abraham’s receiving of the gracious offer of pardon from all his sins, plus the additional imputation of the very righteousness of God based upon a non-meritorious system of perception: BELIEF (or faith) ALONE, the justice of the court is thereby satisfied in light of Abraham’s coming substitute and kinsman redeemer (the Lord Jesus Christ) and therefore the Judge may pronounce the defendant (Abraham) RIGHTEOUS.”*

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### Background to Genesis 15 -

- Now were going to start in Genesis, which the name “Genesis” means beginnings. So, Genesis is the book of beginnings. Such as Abraham and the starting of the nation of Israel, in Gen. 12:1-3. There are four other beginnings in Genesis, five total.

1. Gen. 1:1-25 = “beginning of the world.”
2. Gen. 1:26-2:25 = “beginning of man.”
3. Gen. 3:1-24 = “beginning of man’s sinfulness and Satan’s ruler ship of the world.”
4. Gen. 4:1-11:32 = “beginning of man’s devolution.”
5. Gen. 12:1-50:26 = “beginning of Israel.”

- In Gen. 1:26, man was to have “dominion” of the earth. Man was created to be the ruler of the earth, for God, until He established His kingdom.

- (1:28), “*subdue it*”, (שָׁבַד [kabash]) means to conquer it, military term meaning to take it by force.

- By this time, when man was created, there was a need to conquer the earth, to be on guard, to repossess the earth: Gen. 2:15 - “*keep*” (שָׁמַר [shamar] = to keep, guard, watch, protect, etc.) -- note: how could you conquer the earth if there was nothing to conquer it from?

- This is because Satan had already fallen by this time. God created the earth to be His residence, and man was to prepare it for Him. When God laid His foundation on the earth, (Psa.104:3) He built it to rule from.

- In Gen.2:8, God created the garden so when Adam was done subduing the earth for the day, he could get some “R and R” military term, rest and relaxation, then go out and do it again the next day. But, Adam didn’t guard (“keep”) it very well.

- In Gen. 3 Adam lost the privilege to prepare the world, and his dominion, and to subdue the earth.

Gen.3:15 - It’s here that the battle for the earth and for mankind on the earth is first confronted, and the gospel information for that is found.

- Gen. 3:22-24, Adam was no longer the ruler of the earth; he had no right being in that garden. But, God would still use man to repossess the earth, thus making a challenge for the Adversary. The Angelic Conflict is on!

- NOTE: When it comes to taking the fight to the Adversary, the Lord actually calls for it to happen - that is the Lord tells His enemies to come and fight Him - in fact, there are only 2 places God tells his enemies to come and fight Him:

- Isa. 50:8 - The Cross

- Zeph. 3:8 - At His 2nd Advent - His return to have “His day.”

- In order to have a proper “gist” appreciation for what God is going to do with Abram, you should at the very least have a basic grasp on three major issues that occur between Genesis 4-11 when Satan’s Policy of Evil gets itself underway .... and then you will naturally understand and see how God is going to deal with that policy of evil.

- Satanic corruptions (actually, the story of Satan’s successes) and God’s judgments between Genesis 1 & 12:

Gen. 4 - 1) Cain and Able (Religion)

Gen. 6-9 - 2) The Flood (Humanism) - (6:5, 11, 12)

Gen. 11 - 3) The Tower of Babel (Internationalism)

- The 3 most important things to understand so that you clearly understand and appreciate what God purposed and designed to do with Abram, (i.e., Israel):

- 1) God’s original plan and purpose for mankind on this earth.
- 2) Satan’s usurped dominion of Adam and the earth by his Policy of Evil.
- 3) God’s purpose and design to destroy Satan and his PoE and then repossess the earth.
  - (By the time you get through the first 11 chapters of Genesis, it becomes apparent that God will NOT repossess this earth with all or “any old” nation or nations as a whole; (Gen. 3-11 gives you that to understand!).

- The human race became a willing and cooperating tool in the hands of the Adversary - Gen.11

Gen. 12:1 - God separates or SANCTIFIES Abram unto Himself for His useful purpose.

- Note: “Now the LORD had said unto Abram,”

- Note these three items:

- 1) (:1) “unto a land that I will shew thee:”
- 2) (:2) “a great nation/name”
- 3) (:2) “and I will bless thee/thou shalt be a blessing”

(“blessing” everywhere now)

- All of which corresponds to three major issues involved with Adam:

Adam	1) Greatness
and	2) Special Land
Abraham	3) Blessing

Gen.12:2 - Note again that "Great" concept:

- Gen.10:6-10 - Satan attempts to produce a great ("mighty") nation [internationalism].
- (The greatness of the human race (a name) under his authority) - see 11:1-4

- Note that in the core of what happens between chapter 12 and 15 you have that battle of Chedorlaomer and up pops Melchizedek (King of Righteousness) the King of Salem (King of Peace).

- Note Gen:14:19 "*the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth*" - this is what the battle is all about!

- see Isa.14 - Satan's 5 "I wills"

Romans 4:1-2

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**Rom. 4:3 SUMMARY COMMENT CONTINUED:**

- With a basic and simple understanding and appreciation of the background to Abraham's personal salvation and the way in which God established His covenant with Abraham from Genesis chapters 12-15, two very general but profoundly powerful Biblical doctrines emerge:

- 1) All that God did for Abraham in justifying him unto eternal life, and even in covenanting with him all that He covenanted for, God did by His **JEHOVAH-NESS** and **GRACE**.

- It was God doing ALL of the work; functioning with His unified attributes (Jehovah-ness) to the benefit of Abram, and yet never compromising any one, or combination of His divine attributes at any time or any where in the process.

- Abraham provided NOTHING whatsoever for his justification, further, he could produce NOTHING to justify himself, for he was DEAD to do it!

- This means that Abraham was dead to produce any works of any kind for God to justifying him with, or even aid God in justifying him - or for that matter, as even a supplement to God's work!

*Genesis 15:4-5*

4 *And, behold, the word of the LORD came unto him, saying, This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir.*

5 *And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be.*

*Genesis 15:12*

12 *And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and, lo, an horror of great darkness fell upon him.*

*Genesis 15:17*

17 *And it came to pass, that, when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces.*

- In addition to using the five animals of vs. 9 (all of which depict as aspect of God's Jehovah-ness in fulfilling the 5 mandates of the Davidic covenant), God established and confirmed the covenant to Abram and his seed in the highly significant manner described in Genesis 15:17. This He did in view of having informed Abram of the coming horror of his seed's Satanic captivity.

- With the first 3 animals divided and laid out as per verse 10, followed by the undivided birds; and with the sun down and it being dark as per verse 17a; the rest of verse 17 describes how God confirmed the covenant by passing between the divided pieces of the first 3 animals in a very special manner. When God manifested Himself in the darkness to be passing between the pieces as "*a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp,*" He did so representative of exactly **how it will be** that He will be seen by the **remnant** of Israel when He comes to them at the end of His day. For following Israel's final Satanic captivity, the LORD caps off fulfilling the first 3 mandates of His "Jehovah-ness" by coming to them out of the darkness of that time in the very manner that passages like Psalm 18:7-12ff describe.

- Psalm 18:7-12ff

- So then this covenant for inheritance that God made with Abram is both a fundamental and preparatory component in the overall matter of God educating Israel in His "Jehovah-ness" and grace. When, therefore, God actually began to educate them, the saved in Israel could readily look back upon the covenant, knowing the surety of their inheritance because of God's "Jehovah-ness" and grace to them. Moreover, in view of the manner in which God made the covenant, they can also look forward to the time when in their final darkness and horror of Satanic captivity He will come to them as the "*smoking furnace*" and "*burning lamp.*"

- Abraham, therefore, is utilized by the apostle Paul in Romans chapter four as the most powerful, classic, Biblical, historical precedent-setting example of how the justice of God operates to give justification unto eternal life strictly and solely based upon His Jehovah-ness and grace.

2) The **ONLY** way in which Abraham could ever be justified unto eternal life (having his sins forgiven and the Righteousness of God imputed to him); to be saved from the debt and penalty of his sins, was by **FAITH** and **FAITH ALONE!**

- God's clear declaration is that faith, and faith alone, is His one and only requirement for justification in His sight!  
(All that is required is to BELIEVE the message of God's grace!)

- This is exactly what Paul presents in Romans 4:1-8 in his second most powerful piece of evidence that God can only justify the unsaved unto eternal life by GRACE through FAITH and faith alone, and the historical precedent-setting case of all time is in the person of Abraham.

- The power of this evidence is two-fold: not only does Paul present the most powerful historical precedent-setting case in all of human history for one being justified unto eternal life (Abraham), but by making his appeal to the scriptures (*For what saith the scripture?*) he gives further weight to this piece of evidence by making it carry the additional element of CONCLUSIVE evidence.

- Therefore by making this appeal to the written record of how business is done in the court of God's justice for eternal life, and by selecting this particular passage in Genesis 15:6 with its close connection with God's confirmation of His covenant with Abraham (entirely a grace process) - which is a section of scripture that Paul will deal with extensively in Galatians 3:17-18, the nature of which no law can subsequently come in and "disannul" - what you then have in Romans 4:1-3 is not only the powerful evidence of historical precedent, but on top of that you have presented at the same time the power of conclusive evidence which proves the way God's justice has always justified the unbeliever unto eternal life is by GRACE through FAITH ALONE without works of any kind at any time, and this "law of faith" (Rom.3:27) has not, can not, and will not be overturned, countermanded, or contradicted by any subsequent law or laws of God or mankind forever!

- The principle of justification by grace through faith alone remains firmly fixed, rigid, and immutable (never to be changed) for all men for all time!

- Therefore it is folly and heresy in its **HIGHEST** sense to say that God ever did, or now is, or ever will justify someone unto eternal life by mixing faith (or simple belief) up with:

- water baptism, raising your hand, praying the sinner's prayer, praying anything at all, walking an aisle to an 'old fashioned altar,' giving your life to God, making Jesus the Lord of your life, ceasing to sin, confessing with your mouth, inviting Jesus into your heart, making a public (or private) confession, asking Jesus to come into your life, asking Jesus to save you, dedicating yourself to Christ, signing any kind of a card, joining a church, paying money, being good, doing good things to people you don't like, making any kind of commitment to God or anyone else, confessing your sins, going to church or any kind of crusade or revival, promising anything to God or any deal-making with God, going to Israel, depriving yourself, doing penance, seeking third-party help, law keeping, weeping tears of repentance, etc., etc., etc., .....

CONCLUSION: From, *Satan and His Plan of Evil* by Keith Blades, pp. 338-391

## SLANDERING THE GRACE OF GOD

Along with the perversions of the gospel there are often some slanderous expressions that accompany them. They are designed to bolster the idea of the necessity of works for salvation, while at the same time ridiculing the idea that salvation is as free as God says it is. Two of the most common of these slanders or slams, against the free gift of salvation and the simple requirement of faith in Christ are the belittling expressions “easy-believism” and “cheap grace.” These denigrating expressions are often heard from ones who preach perversions of the gospel of Christ. They employ them to mock the idea that being saved can be as easy as the simple issue of faith makes it to be. Those that hear them are supposed to be impressed with the innuendo contained in the expressions, and they are made to think that the idea of free salvation is ludicrous. But, in truth, such expressions are only backlashes from the flesh nature of these false evangelists. They are expressions from their wounded fleshly pride and ego as they arrogantly take offence at the notion that they can’t do something to justify themselves in God’s sight. The flesh rejects and opposes the grace of the gospel in the first place, and pride is its grace-rejecting policy. In its pride the flesh spits out the foul taste of grace and expresses it through disparaging remarks such as these.

When examined in the light of the gospel these two expressions really fall into two separate categories of slander. The first - “easy-believism” - is just plain foolish slander. It foolishly speaks against what God so plainly declares. But the slam of “cheap grace” is abominable and God-insulting slander. It strikes out at the very character of God and declares that He Himself and what He offers is cheap. Only a highly offended flesh nature could express such things as this. Only one in full cooperation with the policy of evil, either by being one of Satan’s false evangelists, or by being removed from the grace of Christ unto another gospel, could express such things as this.

“Easy-believism” is foolish slander because God Himself declares that that is just what He has made salvation to be - something that is *easy* to have because He offers it as a free gift and it is received simply on the basis of *belief* in Christ as one’s completely sufficient Savior. When the apostle Paul warned the Corinthians about the tactics of Satan’s policy of evil in their midst, and spoke to them about the ones who would be preaching “another gospel” and the like, he warned them that the “*simplicity that is in Christ*” was at stake and under attack.

3 “*But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, SO YOUR MINDS SHOULD BE CORRUPTED FROM THE SIMPLICITY THAT IS IN CHRIST.*” (II Corinthians 11:3)

Everything that needs to be done for our salvation has been accomplished by God in the redemptive work of Christ on the cross. Every single thing necessary for propitiation, expiation, forgiveness, imputation of righteousness, and the like, was fully provided for and completely settled through Christ’s death, burial, and resurrection. All the work of salvation; all the difficult things in providing for it; all the effort expending activities required to bring it about; were accomplished by the Lord Jesus Christ for us. As such, nothing difficult, hard, or laborious either remains for us or is enjoined upon us. Instead, God offers salvation as a free gift of His grace; as something *easy* for us to have since all the work for it has been done for us by our Redeemer. Indeed, there is *simplicity* in Christ. *Simplicity* because every single work necessary to provide for salvation has been done for us by Christ, and because the salvation is received on the basis of simple faith in Christ as the all-sufficient Savior. “Easy-believism” is really what God has made the appropriation of salvation to rest upon. He’s made it easy to have, with it being the free gift of His grace, and with belief being the sole requirement for receiving it. Therefore, when the expression “easy-believism” is spouted off as a slam against the preaching of faith in Christ as the sole requirement for salvation, it is in truth downright foolish slander. Few things are more absurd and foolish than to deny what God so plainly declares, and nothing could be more foolish than to slander the only hope of salvation. Easy-believism, in reality, is men’s *only hope of being saved*. If God did not make it so that salvation was an absolutely free gift to us, easily received on the simple basis of faith in Christ Jesus as Savior, *then no one ever could be saved*. Therefore, how more foolish could one’s word be than to ridicule the only hope one has of salvation.

On the other hand, the slam of “cheap grace” is abominable, ungodly, revolting slander. By this expression the arrogant rejecter of the gospel looks at God, and what He so freely offers, and declares both Him and it to be *cheap*. This is because, in the expression, *cheap* is not an adjective that can be applied to the issue of grace, without at the same time being applied to God. Grace is part of God’s attitude towards us, because God is a God of grace. Therefore, by the expression, God Himself is declared to be cheap. This is an abominable insult to God. His grace can be abounding, great, exceeding, manifold, and the like, but it cannot by nature be *cheap*. There is nothing in God, or that He ever does, that is cheap, worthless, vulgar, inferior, or paltry. The word cannot be associated with God, except by those who on the basis of their pride

reject Him and what He offers. Only the pride of man can see anything cheap in, or about, God.

The abomination of the expression, though, goes beyond this. Since the word *cheap* cannot legitimately be applied to grace without implicating God, it must also be applied to what it is that He gives by His grace. Therefore, not only the gracious giver, but also His gracious gift, is being described as *cheap*. This, horribly enough, is just what this expression really does. It declares that God Himself is cheap and His gift of eternal life is cheap. The blasphemy associated with this is appalling. There is nothing cheap about God setting forth His only-begotten Son as a propitiation for our sins, and there is nothing cheap about the gift of eternal life. Instead, both defy the ability of language and heart to express the glory and magnificence of them. Nor is there anything cheap about the capacity of God's grace in Christ to motivate a Christian to live a godly life. Hence, only a heart and mind distorted and corrupted by fleshly sinful pride could possess such a low opinion of grace and respond to the gospel of God's grace in Christ with such slander as contained in the expression "cheap grace."

These two slanderous expressions, and others of their kind, often team up with the various perversions of the gospel to help enforce the acceptance of the perversion for the truth. The policy of evil against the gospel truly has a ready and capable ally in the flesh nature of man. Not only does the flesh nature find the false gospel naturally appealing, but the flesh of those who accept it will also boast itself and express its disdain for God's grace with such slanderous remarks as these. Therefore, men's flesh will gladly cooperate with the policy of evil in the propagation of, and vouching for, the false gospel. Also, unfortunately, too many careless and assuming Christians also cooperate in this by simply parroting misstatements of God's requirement, and not being clear and plain in their preaching of the gospel of Christ.

### **Rom. 4:4-5 SUMMARY COMMENT:**

4 *Now to him that worketh* (Pres. Mid. Part., Dat. of Personal Advantage Masc. Sing. ἐργάζομαι [ergazomai] = to work, labor, perform, **commit**, produce, earn by working, to exert one's powers and faculties, etc.) *is the reward* (μισθός [misthos] = dues paid for work, wages, the fruit of one's toils and endeavors, lawful compensation for work accomplished or services rendered) *not reckoned* (οὐκ [ouk] + Pres. Pass. Ind. λογίζομαι [logizomai] = used in the accounting sense meaning, to count, to compute, to "reckon" in the sense of computing or arriving at an amount of wages appropriate to the earnings of the one doing the work - {1st of 3 usages in Rom. 4}) *of grace* (Prep. κατὰ [kata] w/ Acc. of Standard + χάρις [charis] = according to the norms and standards of grace, i.e., God doing all of the work), *but* (Strong Adversative/Alternative Conj. ἀλλὰ [alla]) *of debt* (Prep. κατὰ [kata] + ὀφείλημα [opheilēma] = that which is owed, just and legal dues, that which is subject to collection, legal obligation).

5 *But* (Adversative Conj. δέ [de]) *to him that worketh not, but believeth on him* (Pres. Act. Part. πιστεύω [pisteuo] = non-meritorious positive volition, a faith response, to believe) *that justifieth* (δικαιώω [dikaioo]) *the ungodly* (ἀσεβής [asebēs] = the alpha privative plus [sebo], meaning to worship or have sacred respect and awe towards God, hence one that is destitute of respect or reverence for God - the opposite of "godly" - hence, one that thinks, lives, and labors with the Adversary - and in this context one who is an unjustified unbeliever), *his faith* (πίστις [pistis] = having full conviction of and being fully persuaded in the truth of a matter; belief; non-meritorious positive volition) *is counted* (λογίζομαι [logizomai] = to count, compute, to impute) *for righteousness* (δικαιοσύνη [dikaiosunē] = the clear and legal thinking of the Judge in pronouncing one "right" or "just" before the court - hence, grace takes care of the provision for the negative side of the ledger, i.e., one's sins paid for by the cross-work of the Lord Jesus Christ, and grace also takes care of the positive side of the ledger by the addition of the Righteousness of God put down on the account of the believer).



- Therefore, justification unto eternal life is a grace production all the way:
  - God does all the work;
  - you get all the benefit;
  - at no compromise to God's Jehovah-ness.

### **Rom. 4:6-8 SUMMARY COMMENTS:**

6 *Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth (λογίζομαι [logizomai]) righteousness (δικαιοσύνη [dikaiosun8]) without works,*  
 7 *Saying, (quotation from Psalm 32:1-2a) Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered.*

8 *Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not (οὐ μὴ [ou m8] = not never) impute sin.*

- David is the apostle Paul's second historical precedent-setting case - however, note that when Paul appeals to David in connection with being justified unto eternal life, he DOES NOT appeal to him in the same way in which he appealed to Abraham.

- Paul says, "*Even as David also DESCRIBETH the BLESSEDNESS of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works.* Paul presents David as a man who ALREADY IS justified unto eternal life, and not only that, but he is presented as an already justified man UNDER THE LAW.

- By using the term "*describeth*" the Holy Spirit would have you look at David as one who already is justified and specifically views the results of that justification "*without works*" (Paul's commentary on the Psalm 32 passage).

- Moreover, the context makes it clear that we are not to be concerned with WHEN David got justified, or any kind of statement about God justifying him, for that was already given in the case of Abraham.

- Now you are to look at a man who IS justified, but you are to look at him in a particular context - which is exactly why Paul takes you back to a particular Psalm (Psa. 32) and quotes it.

- And that particular context has as its issue that, if WORKS were ever an issue in justification, DAVID WOULD HAVE LOST HIS JUSTIFICATION!

- Psa. 32:1-2a - Note (:2b) deals with sanctification, and as such is not quoted by Paul.

- Note that the condition of "blessedness" David is in which Paul describes as being "without works" is in view of the circumstances of David's own ADULTERY! (Bathsheba)  
 (see II Samuel 11-12 for the details)

- David's justification is described as the "*blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness **without works***" otherwise David could not have been justified in connection with Bathsheba because something else would have been imputed to him - his sin!

- And this is why the Holy Spirit, as the sole possessor of the copyright of the holy scriptures, makes the adaptation in Romans 4:8 "*Blessed is the man to whom the Lord **will not impute sin***" from the Psalm 32:2a passage that says, "*Blessed is the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity*".

- That is, in the case of one who is already justified unto eternal life without works, which is a function of God's grace - that grace function makes it so that sin will never be imputed to the one who has been justified by grace through faith without works.

- The point is that only the unbeliever gets his sins imputed to him by God.

- Therefore, Romans 4:1-8 are to be looked at as a PACKAGE. That is, the historical evidence of what God did in justifying Abraham and the result of that justification in the life of David forms a package of doctrine one needs to realize the fullness of the operation of God's grace in the issue of justifying someone unto eternal life.

- The value of the two of these historical precedent-setting cases taken together as a package produces the full importance and significance of this second piece of evidence.

- To do so, Paul uses two men out of Israel's program in which there is no disputation whatsoever as to whether these two men were justified - Abraham was justified, and a statement is made in which no Jew would ever bring into question his justification - David was justified and no Jew (or even Gentile) would ever doubt his justification (David is even mentioned as one of those who will be in the resurrection of the "just" and every Jew knows that David will be in the kingdom).

- So, since David is a justified Israelite, the idea is to look at something in connection with his justification that he himself said when, if you want to see the total and complete work of God's grace in connection with justification - and that being the possibility of ever losing that justification - here is someone that, if ever there was a possibility of losing it if it ever could be lost, and if works were ever counted for justification, here's a guy that would have been condemned on the basis of his "works" --- and yet the testimony of scripture is that he understands he is justified unto eternal life, and that works are not counted in connection with his justification!

- The significance of this historical precedent-setting evidence is to take both Abraham and David and set forth the facts which provide for one to understand and appreciate that, JUSTIFICATION UNTO ETERNAL LIFE: YOU GOT IT BY GRACE THROUGH FAITH WITHOUT WORKS, AND YOU KEEP IT WITHOUT WORKS!

- Works do not factor into justification in any way to get it or to keep it!

- It is necessary to put the whole package together of the two issues of Abraham and David whereby Exhibit B (the evidence of historical precedent) produces solid and indisputable proof that one is justified by grace through faith without works of any kind at any time (Abraham = without works of any kind; David = without works at any time).

- Abraham = without works of any kind;

- David = without works at any time.

(The same could be said for both, but taken together they form in your human spirit the doctrinal way in which your Heavenly Father wants you to understand and comprehend [components] justification.)

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## ASSOCIATED EVIDENCE - Romans 4:9-25

### **EXHIBIT C: Romans 4:9-12 - Direct Evidence = that which proves a fact without an inference or presumption and which in itself, if true, establishes that fact.**

- Paul now presents his third piece of evidence of his legal proof that “*The just shall live by faith*” (Rom. 1:17), that is, that being justified unto eternal life in the eyes of God can only be by grace (God doing all of the work) through faith alone in Christ alone, without any works of any kind at any time.

- Presented in exhibit C is Biblical, doctrinal evidence associated with Abraham which presents Abraham as the FAITH-FATHER example of all those who get justified unto eternal life. Furthermore, Abraham will serve as the faith-father example in a dual role: as the faith-father of the uncircumcised Gentiles, and as the faith-father of the Jewish circumcision Israelites.

- Paul will present direct evidence in association with Abraham that will prove a fact: the fact that at the exact moment in time in which Abraham was justified unto eternal life he was ***not*** circumcised, thus becoming the faith-father of all Gentiles (the uncircumcised).

- The inference or presumption would be that Abraham was circumcised, and as such is the faith-father of all Israelites, which is true, but the idea is to take the inference and presumption out of the equation and look at the cold facts of the case - which is, that the moment Abraham expressed his faith he was uncircumcised!

## ROMANS 4:9-12 (Abraham justified before he was circumcised)

9 *Cometh this blessedness then* (Inferential Conjunction οὖν [oun] = a word of logic that is designed for the reader to understand that this package of doctrine follows upon the previous information) *upon the circumcision (Jews) only, or upon the uncircumcision (Gentiles) also? for we say* (Retroactive use of λέγω [lego] - i.e., we can say this from an already established fact - a fact that was established previously in verse 3) *that faith* (πίστις [pistis]) *was reckoned* (λογίζομαι [logizomai] *to Abraham for righteousness* (δικαιοσύνη [dikaiousunē] - i.e., fully justified unto eternal life).

10 *How was it then reckoned? when he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision? Not* (οὐκ [ouk]) *in circumcision, but* (ἀλλά [alla] = Adversative Conjunction) *in uncircumcision.*

11 *And he received the sign* (σημεῖον [sēmeion] = a sign, mark, token; a signal or cue that has significance; a designator which is valuable not so much for what it is, as for what it indicates of the grace and power of the Doer - God, Himself) *of circumcision, a seal* (σφραγίς [sphragis] = a seal or mark of permanent ownership which warns intruders not to intrude, i.e., a signet of security, authenticity and ownership. Note that while a seal is most often thought of as a signet made for security reasons (which does fit the context), a seal is also used in the sense of proof of ownership, all of which Abraham has: he has righteousness or justification by grace through faith alone, and his circumcision was the signet of God to indicate the excise of the flesh of Abraham's reproductive organ, signifying God's grace operation and His Jehovah-ness would give Abraham what he could not get for himself - and God would give it to Abraham totally apart from Abraham's flesh-works: and moreover it would indicate the life of the line of the Seed was strictly the owned possession of God, Himself! But the issue of what God is going to do with Abraham and the circumcision as a nation of His own creation to repossess the earth from the Adversary is for another time and place.) *of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised: that* (purpose clause) *he might be the father* (the faith-father) *of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised* (Gentiles); *that righteousness might be imputed unto them* (the Gentiles) *also:*

12 *And the father of circumcision* (Jews) *to them who are not of the circumcision only, but who* (Gentiles) *also walk* (στοιχεῖω [stoicheo] = to proceed in a row as the march of a soldier, hence, to go in order, to walk the line, to keep in step) *in the steps* (ἵχνοσ [ichnos] = a footprint or track) *of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had being yet uncircumcised.*

### Rom. 4:9-12 SUMMARY COMMENTS:

- CONTEXT: In approaching this passage from a systematic perspective (doctrinal whack-a-mole), the doctrine of Abraham's circumcision and 'fatherhood' would often be taken up. And seeing that Paul is dealing with Abraham, his circumcision and fatherhood, the scholarly Bible teacher would think that he (and Paul) must now account for everything pertaining to Abraham and his fatherhood - which would include the aspect of the NATURAL fatherhood of Abraham.

However, Paul makes it clear from verses 1 and following that he doesn't care about the natural fatherhood of Abraham right now. Paul is NOT interested in a discussion of the doctrine of circumcision in all of its points. Specifically, Paul is not concerned with the natural fatherhood of Abraham, but with the SPIRITUAL fatherhood of Abraham. Paul only cares about the issue of Abraham's justification unto eternal life. And in connection with that Abraham has a dual fatherhood:

- 1) Abraham is "*the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised*" (believing Gentiles);
- 2) Abraham is "*the father of ... the circumcision*" (believing Jews).

- Therefore, the issue here is those who are Abraham's children as per Abraham being a SPIRITUAL FATHER.

- Note that there is another entire group of individuals that could be dealt with - (and most commentators and Bible teachers interject into the context as having to be dealt with) - and that group has to do with Abraham's natural fatherhood of that nation of God's own creation: Israel - and all of the "many nations" that proceed out of Abraham.

- And there you have not only the line of Isaac, Jacob, and all of Israel, but you also have to account for those of the line of Ishmael - i.e., Muhammadanism or Islam (which came in after the apostle Paul), i.e., Muslims/Islamists claim Abraham as their father also - and they claim it through Ishmael. Therefore, every Arab can claim Abraham as their father.

- So you would have to account for both Jews and Arabs in connection with the natural fatherhood of Abraham.

- But Paul is not concerned with the natural fatherhood of Abraham, rather he is concerned with that spiritual fatherhood of Abraham.

- And in connection with that spiritual fatherhood of Abraham, he is the father of believing Jews and believing Gentiles.

(Remember that every Jew had to be circumcised on the 8th day, hence, there were many Jews who were circumcised who were not believers! Natural Jews, not spiritual Jews.)

- Therefore, for a Jew, Abraham was their natural father, but on top of that he was also their spiritual father (if they believe as Abraham did in the gospel given to them).

- Note that the gross misunderstanding of circumcision being both natural and spiritual in Israel's program is produced in the doctrine of the Pharisees. But Paul is not going to deal with Pharisaical doctrine here - for he has already dealt with it in the issues connected with the gospel back in chapter 2.

- So, contextually, only TWO groups are being viewed by Paul:  
 1) Jews who have been justified unto eternal life;  
 2) Gentiles who have also been justified unto eternal life.

- The third group (the natural seed of Abraham) is not dealt with in the context of what this passage in Romans is dealing with: being justified unto eternal life.

ROMANS 4:9-10 (Section 1, Exhibit C): In the case of Abraham, was he really justified unto eternal life by grace through faith alone without works of any kind? Was righteousness imputed to him without works? Could his circumcision be considered a work that established his justification? If so, could a Gentile ever be justified apart from the work of circumcision?

If the mechanical means of Abraham receiving the imputation of righteousness (and thus being fully justified in God's sight) can be pinpointed, and if that pinpointed time occurred prior to even his circumcision, then Paul has legally established the fact of justification by grace through faith without works! (This is exactly what DIRECT EVIDENCE does!)

- Note that Paul (and God Himself) considers righteousness to be imputed immediately and simultaneously upon ones belief in the gospel. Hence, it is to be understood, doctrinally, that at the very moment one believes all of his sins are immediately forgiven and at that same moment righteousness is imputed, fully justifying that person. And we also know from the account of David that the condition of being justified unto eternal life is permanent (which will entail "*much assurance*" [I Thess. 1:5] from the "*much more*" assurance passages in chapter 5).

- ROMANS 4:9-10 ~ 9 *Cometh this blessedness* (the condition of being justified unto eternal life) *then* (following the previous doctrine) *upon the circumcision* (Jews) *only, or upon the uncircumcision* (Gentiles) *also? for we say* (from verse 3 and Gen. 15:6) *that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness* (imputation of +R).  
 10 *How was it then reckoned? when he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision.*

- Both the question that is raised and dealt with, and the evidence that is being set forth are natural out-workings of Paul's legal proof:
  - The naturalness of the question that is raised in verse 9 is directly due to the use of Abraham as an historical precedent-setting case. And the terminology surrounding Abraham, as well as Abraham himself, would be well known and familiar to the recipients of the letter to the Romans.
    - Couple with this the vast doctrinal corruption that existed in every city: spewing out of every Jewish synagogue was the vain, religious, corrupt, Pharisaical doctrine concerning circumcision and the natural righteousness and natural holiness of those of the circumcision.
  - Hence, there would be a very strong influence upon the readers of the letter to the Romans to think about Abraham and all that is connected with him (justification being one of the issues) as being only possessed by those of the circumcision - Jews only.
  - But even this serves God's purposed design to educate us as His "sons" - for it sets the stage for Him to drop into our thinking the general doctrines surrounding the spiritual faith-fatherhood of Abraham.
    - This sense and sequence of sound doctrine will serve not only to educate a son in the doctrinal issues of justification unto eternal life, but also to develop the son's thinking in terms of always being oriented properly to the grace-gift relationship of the Heavenly Father, as opposed to the works-debt relationship of the flesh nature.
    - Moreover the proper sound doctrinal thinking produced by the questions and answer Paul sets forth in verses 9-10 develops within the human spirit of the son to think of the power and excellency of grace (God's Jehovah-ness doing all the work) and his total inability to ever produce his own justification OR ANYTHING CONNECTED WITH THAT JUSTIFICATION (such as his own sanctification or exaltation)!
    - Furthermore, unbeknownst to the son, God is also laying the groundwork for dealing with the attacks from the Adversary which would attempt to attract the son (because of the Adversary's powerful ally: the flesh nature) and lure the son into the trap of a Law system of works-debt. (Dealt with in the book of Galatians)

ROMANS 4:11-12 (Section 2, Exhibit C): Correct fundamental doctrinal understanding of the sign of circumcision.

ROMANS 4:11-12 ~ 11 *And he (Abraham) received the sign (the valuable designator that indicates the grace and power of the Doer - God Himself) of circumcision (cutting away the flesh of the male reproductive organ), a seal (mark or proof of permanent ownership, security, and authenticity of the grace-gift of Abraham's justification unto eternal life) of the righteousness of the faith (imputation of +R upon Abraham's non-meritorious positive response) which he had yet being uncircumcised: (reason #1) that he might be the father (the faith-father example) of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised (Gentiles); that righteousness might be imputed unto them also:*

12 (reason #2) *And the father (faith-father example) of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only (Jews), but who (Gentiles) also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had being yet uncircumcised (pinpointing the moment of Abraham's justification unto eternal life).*

- The declaration made by the apostle Paul at the beginning of verse 11 (*"And he received the sign of circumcision"*), Paul knows that every Jew who heard these words would acknowledge that that is just what circumcision was: a sign. But because of the corrupt doctrine that the majority of them had been taught, they misunderstood that the sign had been given, not due to God calling Abraham out as one who already possessed natural righteousness and natural holiness for which God gave him this sign as a token of that - but that Abraham received the sign of circumcision AFTER God had justified him unto eternal life on the basis of his faith. And that "sign" therefore, first and foremost, serves as what the next expression in verse 11 says - (it's a "sign" alright, but it serves first and foremost as) "a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised".

- Wherefore, the general way in which apostate Israel looked upon the issue of circumcision was to mistakenly take it for a "sign" of natural righteousness in God's sight. And they therefore believed, God was dealing with Abraham as a naturally righteous man, and all of his seed (as long as there is no pollution in the line) has that natural righteousness transferred to them.

- Paul does indeed acknowledge that circumcision is a "sign" but it is to be understood in connection with the fact that God had justified Abraham by his faith, previously to God giving Abraham the circumcision sign.

- And as such, first and foremost, it served as a "SEAL of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised." And the first thing that does is to mark him out as someone God is going to be able to use in His plan and purpose because Abraham now is a justified man in God's sight.

- And note: Just as in any legal court room case, or in any legal investigation - or setting forth any legal evidence - one of the critical means for establishing facts in the case is to set a correct time line of the events as they actually transpired.

- So Paul establishes a legal time-line of the events as they actually transpired:

- 1) God justifies Abraham on the basis of his faith alone in the gospel message presented to him - hence, Abraham is justified by grace through faith alone.
- 2) Then on the basis of Abraham being previously justified, God can now utilize him for His designed plan and purpose, and He begins with having Abraham circumcised to create a “seal” of the fact of his righteous standing in God’s sight as one now qualified to be utilized by Him.

(And now “the rest of the story” is where the rest of the doctrine of circumcision comes into the picture.)

- And when the rest of the doctrine of circumcision is taught - and the rest of the full package of what circumcision was to mean in God’s program with Israel - the rest of the doctrine pertains to the roll and function that those of Abraham’s seed have in God’s plan and purpose.

- And contained in that doctrine of circumcision is the issues surrounding what separates them from the rest of the world (the Gentile world).

- Note that this is what is then called upon by Paul for us to understand and appreciate over in Eph. 2:11-18ff.

- But note that while “circumcision” and “uncircumcision” comes up again, it does NOT come up, nor is it dealt with on the basis of Romans 4!!!

- When Paul brings up those called the “circumcision” and the “uncircumcision” in Eph. 2 he is bringing it up on the basis of what the rest of the “sign” of circumcision meant that allowed a Jew to come along and call a Gentile an uncircumcised man and institute the ordinances of the Law that said to put that Gentile on the other side of the wall (:14) because he was uncircumcised - and you’re circumcised, so you stay on this side of the wall - they’re “far off” you’re “nigh” unto me.

- NOTE: This is the importance of learning sound Bible doctrine in the order and in the sense and sequence that your Heavenly Father places it in His word! (Just think of all the doctrine contained in the scriptures between Romans 4 and Ephesians 2!!!)

- All that should be noted at this time is that the whole package of the doctrine of circumcision is NOT being taught here in Romans 4:11-12.

- Often people will deal with this passage and say that this is all that circumcision ever meant - but that is NOT all that circumcision ever meant.

- It's the FIRST thing circumcision meant in the doctrine of circumcision when God taught it to the people of Israel!

- And the first thing they are supposed to recognize on the basis of the first things that are said about it in Genesis chapter 17, is that when God circumcised Abraham, it was a "seal" of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised.

- And then when God came along and said, "*This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee; Every man child among you shall be circumcised.*" (Gen. 17:10), and then Abraham ends up taking Ishmael and circumcising him and all that were born in his house as well (Gen. 17:23); from this time on they are not being circumcised because they are justified - they are being circumcised because "*this is my covenant*" between Me and your seed. And that "sign" is to be a "token of the covenant betwixt me and you" (Gen. 17:11) [or a memorial to all generations]. And that's the issue that is called upon over in Ephesians 2 that marks Abraham and his physical seed out from the rest of the world.

- This is the FIRST issue in the "sign" of circumcision. And the first issue of it pertained to Abraham in connection with his SPIRITUAL FATHERHOOD.

- And it is a "*seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised.*" And therefore if circumcision is going to be properly taught in Israel, the first thing anybody was to ever say about it was that, since it was a "seal" of Abraham's own justification unto eternal life in God's sight, then in order for us to be more than just the seed of Abraham - in order for us to be the CHILDREN of Abraham, then we've got to be justified in God's sight just like Abraham was!

## ASSOCIATED EVIDENCE - Romans 4:9-25

### EXHIBIT D: Romans 4:13-16c - Corroborative Evidence = additional evidence of a DIFFERENT character to the SAME point.

- Again, all five exhibits of evidence presented by the apostle Paul are presented to give the understanding and appreciation in the form of a *legal proof*, that from the point of view of God our Heavenly Father, justification for any one is accomplished at any time **by His grace** and bestowed upon the recipient by **faith alone without works**.

- All five exhibits of evidence can stand alone as single, powerful evidence in their own right - powerful enough to prove justification by grace through faith against any opposing argument, but taken together they produce a legal proof powerful enough to silence any and all objections, and form the center for understanding the doctrine of justification in all Biblical Theology.

- It is the proper information given at the proper time for proper edification in the “son” from the perspective of the One who wrote the curriculum (God the Heavenly Father, as opposed to the wisdom of theological scholars!)

- All of this is to say that this fourth piece of evidence goes, once again, to prove that “*The just shall live by faith*” (Rom. 1:17), and they get that eternal life by grace (God doing all of the work) through faith alone, in Christ alone, without works of any kind at any time.

#### - NOTE ON THIS CORROBORATIVE EVIDENCE:

In this piece of evidence, Paul will present something that is ASSOCIATED with Abraham (hence, “associated evidence”), however instead of sticking with the same nature or character of evidence that he has been presenting, (i.e., issues surrounding when and how Abraham was justified - issues Paul will again return to in verses 16d-22) Paul now produces evidence to prove that justification unto eternal life is not obtained by any kind of law-keeping whatsoever.

- That is, Paul has already proved that the basis for one being justified unto eternal life must be obtained on the grounds of grace-gift, and not works-debt (4:4-5), but now Paul will prove that being justified unto eternal life is totally exclusive from the Law (either the 10 commandments or the 603 additional commandments).

- The simple point to be seen is that Abraham was fully justified unto eternal life BEFORE the Law was ever given, and in fact, since law-keeping is a system of works (if ... then) it is excluded in every way for producing self-justification.

- Wherefore, Paul strengthens and supports his legal proof with evidence that has a different character (i.e., it looks at something that didn't exist in Abraham's day [the Law]), but because it is of such a powerful issue now, must be addressed and understood to have nothing whatsoever to do with anyone at any time being justified unto eternal life before God's eyes.

- Therefore this is **associated evidence** because it deals with Abraham, our faith-father example. It is **corroborative evidence** because, even though it could stand alone as powerful evidence of justification by grace through faith alone, and even though it drives to the same point, it strengthens and supports all other evidence in this case, but does so from a different characteristic - the issue of the Law.

### ROMANS 4:13-16c (Abraham was justified without law-keeping)

13 *For* (Particle γάρ used as a causal conjunction to set forth the principle proposition in a subordinate clause, which is to introduce exhibit D in Paul's legal proof) *the promise* (Article ἡ [h8] + Nom. Fem. Sing. ἐπαγγελία [epaggelia] = from [epi] = an intensifying prefix + [aggello] = to proclaim or announce in public, hence to make a public decree or announcement - note that the Greek does little good in understanding the term, and in fact most of the Greek dictionaries and lexicons just jump to say something like, "well, it means a promise." [epaggelia] is the assurance that something will be done; a legal term noting a summons or promise to do or give something. It was used militarily to make a declaration of war on another country with the understanding that they could count on being attacked because the attacking country said so - hence, a promise to attack.) *that he* (Abraham) *should be the heir* (κληρονόμος [klironomos] = to deal out or dispense, hence one who receives an inheritance) *of the world* (κόσμος [kosmos]), *was not* (οὐκ [ouk]) *to Abraham, or to his seed through the law* (νόμος [nomos] without the article = the law of Moses, but with focus upon the nature or character of the law - that being one of "if ... then" or works-debt), *but* (Strong Adversative Conjunction ἀλλά [alla]) *through the righteousness* (δικαιοσύνη [dikaiosun8]) *of faith* (πίστις [pistis]).

14 *For* (Particle γάρ used for further explanation and further amplification) *if they which are of the law be heirs* (and they are not heirs by the law), *faith* (not "doctrine") *is made void* (Perf. Pass. Ind. κενόω [kenoo] = to receive or make empty; to pour out completely; to totally divest; to render nugatory, useless, ineffective; to deprive of force - the idea being that faith is totally useless, null and void, if justification unto eternal life is by the law), *and the promise made of none effect*:

15 *Because* (Causal use of γάρ [gar] to give the reason why the "promise is made of none effect" if it is attempted to be obtained by law-keeping) *the law* (now with the article = the Law of Moses) *worketh* (κατεργάζομαι [katergazomai] = performs, accomplishes, achieves) *wrath* (ὀργή [org8]) : *for where no law is, there is no transgression.*

- This is the part of the legal proof that destroys legalism as a part of justification unto eternal life!!!

- 16 (16a) *Therefore it* (justification unto eternal life - the promise of life with God) *is of faith* (πίστις [pistis]), *that it might be by grace* (χάρις [charis]);
- (16b) *to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed;*
- (16c) *not to that only which is of the law* (Jewish Israelites under the Law of Moses), *but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham* (all those that existed before the Law, and all those Gentiles that existed under the law);
- (END OF EXHIBIT D)
- (16d) *who is the father of us all*, (beginning of Paul's last piece of evidence)

### **Rom. 4:13-16c SUMMARY COMMENTS:**

1. Due to the general low regard of the vast majority of Bible teachers and writers (Pastors, teachers, seminary and Bible institute professors, biblical scholars, etc.) have for such issues as “*rightly dividing the word of truth*” as well as the Bible's own sense and sequence; coupled with an unending zeal to correct the English and ignore the most important rule in interpretation, viz., that **context** trumps all, this passage of God's word is usually grossly mishandled, misunderstood, and as a result misapplied.

A. This is especially important as mishandling this passage will result in a direct attack upon the issue of God's word ‘rightly divided.’

B. The misunderstanding of this passage usually runs something like this:

- The issue involves something Paul says in not only verse 13, but primarily what comes up in verse 16 that is said on the basis of what verse 13 says.

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.*  
(Romans 4:13)

- (then the explanation of the necessity of that in :14-15)

*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,*  
(Romans 4:16)

- Someone then comes along and says, “Look, it is evident by what Paul says here that we have that exact same inheritance that Abraham has. Because verse 16 says that “*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*” and moreover verses 17 and following go on to confirm that that includes us Gentiles!

- Therefore the conclusion is made that there is no big program difference in this dispensation of grace, in fact we've got the exact same inheritance that Abraham and his physical seed have as well.

- At this point, it will often be presented that we are today spiritual Israel. And spiritual Israelism is often taught on the basis of this. (Which is what you believe if you think that the church, the body of Christ is somehow divided up into the 12 tribes of Israel, or if the country in which you live [the USA, for example] is divided up into the 12 tribes of Israel.)

- A misunderstanding and misapplication of this passage, based upon mishandling it, also ends up with the common and mainstream teaching of most good, godly, evangelical, fundamentalist, prophesy-writing tradesmen teaching that all the members of the church today will be coming back with Jesus to establish His kingdom of heaven on this earth. A misunderstanding which totally conceals and obscures correct Biblical truth and ends up cooperating with the Adversary and neutralizing the impact that the church, the body of Christ is supposed to be making in this dispensation of grace.

(A total victory and success in Satan's policy of evil!!)

- And again, this is all taught this way because Paul says in verse 16 that "***the promise***" is "***sure***" to us Gentiles also. That is, that exact same **promise** back in verse 13 - that Abraham "***should be the heir of the world***" and that very **promise** is "***sure***" to us as well.

- So what is done is that you end up tying the term "***promise***" and making the phrase "***that he should be the heir of the world***" to refer to the establishment of the kingdom of heaven on this earth (WHICH IT DOES NOT)!

- It is right at this exact point where CONTEXT is thrown right out the window!!! (And exegesis will never get you out of this problem - correcting the translation will never help you here - neither will isagogics or categorical doctrines and systematic studies --- the only thing that will help you is to be familiar with Israel's program and to have paid attention to what God has already said to Abraham!)

C. The **CONTEXT** tells you that neither the "***promise***" nor "***the heir of the world***" is having anything to do with either the establishment of the kingdom of heaven on this earth, or with the land covenant made to Abraham!!!

- The "***heir of the world***" is simply an expression denoting one who will inherit something from another - and it is expressed that way here in Romans because that is just the way in which God expressed it to Abraham back in Genesis 15.

- The "***heir of the world***" is simply an heir of God who is going to be involved in what God is going to do in His world.

- And note that Abraham was PROMISED on the basis of being JUSTIFIED UNTO ETERNAL LIFE that he was God's "heir" and he would be directly involved in doing what God is doing in His "world."

- He's (Abraham) not going to, therefore, be an "heir" of the debt and penalty of his sins, and inherit what the Adversary is going to inherit!

- Most Bible teachers (et al.) make the "*heir of the world*" in Rom. 4:13 to be the entire issue of what Abraham is promised from Genesis 17 on, once he is physically circumcised, and God begins to describe to him what is going to happen with his physical seed and the nation that they are going to be made in to; and the possession of the gates of their enemies; and the land flowing with milk and honey; and all such matters that will involve the establishment of God's kingdom on this earth.

- BUT ROMANS 4:13-16 IS ALL PRE GENESIS 17!!! This inheritance was given just as Paul says it was in verse 13 "through the righteousness of faith."

- In other words, Abraham already knew about this inheritance ON THE BASIS OF GENESIS 15:6! (And not on the basis of anything said after Gen. 15:6).

- Granted, in connection with that covenant God makes with Abraham and his seed, there are a whole bunch of things involved - there's more than just the issue of being an heir of God in what follows Gen. 15:6 - but what Abraham knew he was to be a participant in on the basis of his "righteousness by faith," he knew at that time he was God's heir, and as God's heir he was going to participate with God in what God was doing with His world He had created.

- Gal. 3:29

- Note that this same issue is taken up by the apostle Paul over in the book of Galatians, (although approached from a different perspective, its the exact same issue - and the reason it is approached from a different perspective is because of what the Galatians heard). But when you are over in the later part of Galatians 3 and Paul is talking about us being Abraham's "children" and ends up in verse 29 saying,

*"And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." (Galatians 3:29)*

**The promise Paul is talking about is the promise of LIFE WITH GOD! (Eternal Life with God in all that He is doing!)**

(Which is the context in the previous vss. in Gal. 3!)

- And this understanding of the use of the term “promise” as well as the phrase, “the heir of the world” keeps to the CONTEXT of making all that pertains to this aspect of God’s “promise” to Abraham of eternal life with Him ALL OF GRACE.

- Just as Paul expresses in Romans 4:16, “*Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; ...*”

- And it not only does that, but it makes it so that the inheritance issue is NOT the issue of inheriting the land, the milk and honey, or the royal family’s roll in the land, or any of the other inherited issues that goes into making up the kingdom of heaven on the earth.

- All that is in view is that most fundamental heirship of God issue of being a child of God and an heir of God - which is the issue of LIFE WITH GOD in what He’s doing in this world.

D. Therefore it is to be expected by the author (God the Holy Spirit) of Romans chapter four that the reader keep in mind the STRICT CONTEXT of the passage so that the following words stay within the confines of the doctrine of being justified unto eternal life:

- **grace** (God does all the work, you get all the benefit, yet at no compromise to God’s own integrity)

- **faith** (or belief)

- **promise** (A promise is specific and binding - in promising, the faith of an individual is admitted upon his WORD, and built upon as if it were a deed. A promise can be made only by words, and the word of the promiser (God) is, as it were, put in pledge. *Promise* supposes an accordance where all the gain is on the side of the person to whom the promise is made (you, the believer), and all the power of benefiting on the side of the person (God) who makes the promise.)

- **heir, heirs** (heirs of God’s eternal life)

- **heir of the world** (heir of life with God in all He is doing in the world He created.)

- **seed** (i.e., spiritual seed)

2. Just as Paul establishes a time-line of events surrounding Abraham’s circumcision which proves that he was fully justified before he was ever circumcised in the flesh, so too does Paul establish a time-line that sets forth the proof that Abraham was fully justified unto eternal life BEFORE God made the Law contract with the nation Israel.

A. We know from Galatians that Abraham’s justification unto eternal life took place 430 years BEFORE the Law was given to Israel through Moses.

*And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, **which was four hundred and thirty years after**, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect.  
(Galatians 3:17)*

3. Therefore in association with Abraham and his justification unto eternal life, Paul corroborates that it was BY GRACE THROUGH FAITH ALONE and had nothing whatsoever to do with the Law of Moses because it was accomplished when that law did not even exist!

- (Which is additional evidence of a different character, but to the same point = Corroborative Evidence).

### **ASSOCIATED EVIDENCE - Romans 4:9-25**

#### **EXHIBIT E: Romans 4:16d-25 - Cumulative Evidence = additional evidence of the SAME character to the SAME point.**

- Paul's final piece of evidence sets forth to prove that "*The just shall live by faith*" (Rom. 1:17), which is accomplished by grace (God doing all the work) through faith alone, in Christ alone, without works of any kind at any time.

- NOTE ON THIS CUMULATIVE EVIDENCE:

Paul's final piece of evidence is also ASSOCIATED EVIDENCE in that it, too, is associated directly with the way in which Abraham believed God and had God's own righteousness put on his account (Exhibit B). But in this last, powerful piece of evidence Paul will bring out the very details of what constituted saving faith in Abraham. And because of the nature of how Paul goes into the details of what saving faith is all about, he INCREASES or ENLARGES our understanding of that "*law of faith*" given in Exhibit A. This is altogether proper, fitting, and necessary, especially in a legal proof, as it gives further support of earlier evidence by clearly and carefully defining it, but at the same time it also brings greater severity upon the offender who would seek to circumvent the justice of the court as well.

#### **- PAUL ANALYZES (4:3) ABRAHAM'S SAVING FAITH!!!**

#### **ROMANS 4:16d-25 (The details of Abraham's saving faith in God's word)**

*16d ... who is the father* (πατήρ [patēr] = used in a wide sense of chief, leader, originator of something, i.e., one who gives the first conspicuous or influential example of something) *of us all* (πᾶς [pas] = all who are justified unto eternal life), *17 (As it is written* (Perf. Pass. Ind. γράφω [grapho] = as it stands written in the past, with the result that it stands written forever [which no Bible corrector could ever say]), *I have made thee a father of many nations*, (quotation from Gen. 17:4, but to be understood from the standpoint of what put Abraham in a position to be that father of many nations, which is the very issue of what he believed back in Genesis 15 when God justified him unto eternal life - the covenant of the land and the city Abraham looked for is NOT the issue here.)) *before him whom he believed, even God, who*

*quickeneth* (Pres. Act. Part. ζῳποποιέω [zoopoieo] = from the root ζάω [zao], meaning to give or have life, to make alive; note that every other English translation changes “quickeneth” to “gives life” or something like that, totally unaware of the more excellent term “quick” which gives far more exacting detail and meaning to the passage. While “life” does indicate a state where all the organs are performing their functions and the bodily fluids are moving, being in a state of action - “quicken” embraces all of the meaning of the word “life” or “alive,” but it also carries a shade of meaning that communicates many things that “life” does not. For instance, something that is “quickeneth” does not merely have life, but movement to it; it has direction and is to reach its objective without delay; it has animated action of rousing into the **fullness** of activity. [Note how this is connected with God’s word, which is the very basis of His promise being believable - Psa. 119:50, 93.] *the dead* (νεκρός [nekros] = dead, lifeless), *and calleth those things which be not as though they were.*

18 *Who against hope* (ἐλπίς [elpis] = absolute confidence) *believed in hope* (the full, confident expectation contained in God’s promise in the gospel that he was given), *that* (Prepo. εἰς [eis] = indicating movement towards something) *he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be* (quotation from Genesis 15:5 - which is why we know how to view the quotation from Gen. 17).

19 *And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead* (Perf. Pass. Part. νεκρόω [nekroo] = to make dead, to put to death, to receive (Pass.) deadness, i.e., dead to reproduce any seed), *when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness* (νέκρωσις [nekrosis]) *of Sara’s womb:* (note that his predicament was doubly dead because it was compounded with Sarah’s “deadness” to reproduce any children)

20 *He staggered not* (Neg. οὐκ [ouk] + Aor. Pass. Ind. διακρίνομαι [diakrinomai] = to separate, make a distinction, to be in strife with oneself, to doubt, hesitate, waver; in the English the term “stagger” when used as a verb indicates to begin to doubt or waver in an argument, opinion, or purpose; to become less confident or less determined) *at the promise of God* (i.e., the promise of life with God) *through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God;*

21 *And being fully persuaded* (Aor. Pass. Part. πληροφορέω [pl8rophoreo] = from [pl8r8s] = to fill up, + [pherw] = to carry or bear something - hence, to bear or bring fully; legally, to carry **full evidence** of a thing; to give **total proof** which yields a mind that is **fully settled** and convinced **beyond any shadow of a doubt** --- in the Pass. Voice, Abraham received the full persuasion of his mind, that is, based upon the nature of the gospel information given to him [a grace function], and upon the nature in which it was directly given by “*the word of the LORD*” which came to him in a vision (Gen.15:1), and the Lord’s personal presence, Abraham’s mind became convinced, settled, and fully persuaded based upon the facts of the case that God’s Jehovah-ness and grace could and would accomplish exactly that which the **word** of the LORD said would take place. One persuades a person by means of words alone.) *that, what he had promised, he was able to perform.*

22 *And therefore it* (Abraham's "belief" (:3) or "faith" (:20)) *was imputed* (λογίζομαι [logizomai] = to reckon, count, impute - note that every English translation (including the "corrected" translations) attempts to standardize the term to either "reckon" (ASV, RSV, NRSV) or "credited" (NIV, NASV), or as some would deal with it, "imputed/credited" [take your pick!] - but only the KJV has the term [logizomai] translated in 4:3 as "*counted*" and in 4:22, 23, and 24 "*imputed*" - and note that "count" and "impute" DO NOT MEAN THE SAME THING! There is a very important reason that these terms are translated as they are in the KJV that is integral to support the evidence that Paul is presenting!) *to him* (Abraham) *for righteousness.*

23 *Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him;*

24 *But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead;* (νεκρός [nekros] in the Plural - which proves nothing!)

25 *Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.*

### - The FINAL PIECE of Evidence:

#### 1) Preparatory Considerations.

- Do not get off track by WHEN Abraham was justified.

- Abraham was justified just exactly when God said he was, and exactly when the Bible tells you he was: Genesis 15:6!

- The issue of WHEN Abraham was justified unto eternal life is settled before you ever get to this passage: Romans 4:3!

- Therefore when you see Genesis 17:4 being brought up in Romans 4:17, the last thing that should ever come into your mind is that it has anything to do with when Abraham was justified—it is being brought up for an entirely different reason!

- To understand what that reason is, one must first come to understand & appreciate some more basic and fundamental questions: Why is there a need for this last piece of evidence at all? Why aren't the first 4 sufficient? And why does this last one take up the most space?

#### 2) The Nature of Final Evidence.

- The nature of the evidence being given is going to be such that it produces the exact same thing that the evidence that was given in the first two parts of the gospel produced in Romans 1:17-3:26— "*that every mouth may be stopped*" (Rom. 3:19).

- This is done in 5 pieces or exhibits of evidence in such a way that there is POWER in the first evidence given, and POWER in the last. So that you have a piece of evidence being held back to the end that has equivalent strength with the evidence that was set forth first.

- By doing so, you have POWER at the beginning of the case, and POWER at the end!

- Therefore the ORDER of the evidence given, even as much as the evidence itself, is what CONVINCES those who are to be convinced by the evidence that the case has been PROVEN beyond any shadow of a doubt!!!

- A good trial attorney will set forth evidence in the case he is trying in a particular order. That is, when he is setting the evidence in front of the jury or judge, he has got his reasons for why he presents the evidence in the order in which he does.

- And sometimes there is good reason for holding back a piece of evidence until the very end.

- If final evidence is weak, and cannot be equal to primary evidence, then that is going to provide for leaving a doubt in the mind.

- There can be many reasons for the order of giving evidence even if you take the evidence being presented in a very general sense. But if that final piece of evidence also necessitates some PREVIOUS EVIDENCE being set forth first, in order to make that final piece of evidence have the full KICK or full potential that it is designed to have, then that becomes the obvious reason for holding it back to the very last!

- And this last piece of evidence rests upon the necessity of understanding the evidence Paul set forth first regarding Abraham:

- Ex. 1 = The Legal Operating Force and Justice of the Court in which the case is being tried.

- Ex. 2 = Historical Precedent (Abraham & David)

- Ex. 3 = Abraham fully justified before he was circumcised.

- Ex. 4 = Abraham fully justified without law keeping.

- At this point the case is proven LEGALLY, but to stop every mouth, it must also be proven in one other way!!!

- And so Paul is going to now return to that evidence already set forth—but when he returns to it, he doesn't simply return to it as a "recap" of previous evidence: he returns to it, and looks at it again in a very particular way, and in a way that necessitates him looking at something that God said about it, some 13 years later!!

- (Note, that on top of this, this piece of evidence makes up the largest amount of information of all of them!) That is, in the amount of detail given, you know that there is an awful lot that is being conveyed to you!

### 3) The Basic Reason for Paul's Final Evidence.

- Because this piece of evidence occurs last, and because it returns to the first evidence given, it has some power or "kick" to it, that, once it is grasped, and once it does its effectual work, the issue should be SETTLED in your mind (and anyone else's mind) - no shadow of a doubt whatsoever remaining that justification really is, and only ever could be, and always will be, by grace through faith without works of any kind at any time.

### 4) The Final Evidence.

#### A. The Proper Point Of View.

- Note the way in which Paul is presenting this last piece of evidence: again, it is supposed to link up or connect with something he has already presented—connecting with the first piece of evidence, for sure, but also it connects with that second piece of evidence—Note:

*22 And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness.*

- This tells you that all that Paul is presenting has to do with an **analysis** of what he has presented back in (:3) ...

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

- Hence, everything in this last piece of evidence deals with that context!!!! No other context is being presented, or dealt with, nor is it to even be thought about at this time!!!

- Therefore, you've got Paul going back to the first evidence given, and based upon things that have been said up until this point, something else can now be understood and appreciated about that evidence first presented that even seals the matter and settles the matter, fully and finally!

- Paul is now going to go back and take a real close look at Abraham's faith. And he's not going to simply look at the fact that Abraham "believed" God and "it was counted unto him for righteousness" (4:3) - Paul is now going to ANALYZE saving faith!

- And in analyzing it, he sees and deals with TWO main things!  
And the last of these two main things is that in which the judicial act of God's response now looks at FAITH as the WORTHY thing to impute for righteousness.

**- PAUL ANALYZES SAVING FAITH FROM GOD'S POINT OF VIEW:**

- It is critically important to first of all have an understanding and appreciation of why it is that Paul describes Abraham in the way in which he does when he begins this final piece of evidence because that's the issue that will set you on the right track!

*16 .... who is the father of us all,*

- Paul now returns to look at Abraham as the "father of us all," one more time, but since he doesn't just stop there, we know that Paul is not just wanting to reiterate that point, but he is going to return to that issue and look at it in another way. Paul is going to look at it so that it forms a separate piece of evidence—with all the features that the last piece of evidence has—its going to have something in common with the 1st piece of evidence. The 1st piece of evidence looks at faith from a legal perspective, "*the law of faith*" (3:27) - and the last piece of evidence is going to look at faith from another perspective other than a legal one.

- Paul is NOT just restating what he has already proven about faith. That is, we already know that faith, in order to be legally acceptable to God's justice has to be without works—Paul has already proven that, and that's not what this evidence is designed to do.

- The issue in closing the legal proof and bringing it full circle is not to say that faith excludes works which are OFFENSIVE to God's justice, but faith also does something else which makes it acceptable and well-pleasing to God's justice.

- (And now the issue is: what is that "something else?")

- It takes looking at Abraham as "*the father of us all*" in the way in which Paul looks at him to discern what that is.

- And because of what that is, there is a reason to look at something that happened to Abraham 13yrs. after he was justified, because it puts that issue on display!

- This is the frame of mind that should be produced in you when you get underway with the evidence at the end of (:16).

16 ... *who is the father of us all,*

- Then Paul pauses, and puts something in parenthesis:

17 (*As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations, before him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the death, and calleth those things which be not as though they were.*)

- We know that the quotation in the parenthesis comes from Genesis 17:4—some 13 years after Abraham was justified back in Genesis 15:6.

- We know that Romans 4:19 is going to come along and give a description of something about Genesis 17. Therefore even before Romans 4:19 does that, the fact that Paul quotes from Genesis 17 at this point sets the stage for the fact that we're going to have to take a look at something that happened a lot later on in Abraham's life, after he was justified, when it comes to appreciating the full impact of this final piece of evidence.

- (And that is the significance of Paul putting the quote in parenthesis in Romans 4:17).

- We also know that Abraham is established as “the father of us all” by God at the time of his justification in Genesis 15:6—and we know that from Romans 4:11 which tells you that.

- We also know from the way in which Paul quotes Genesis 17:4, “*I **have made** thee a father of many nations*” that when God is speaking to Abraham in Genesis 17 He's talking about him being made a father of many nations AS A PAST TENSE EVENT!

- i.e., God says in effect, “You know that as I am now speaking to you here in Genesis 17 that I have already done this to you!”

- Therefore the issue of Paul bringing up Abraham as the father of us all on the basis of what God says in Genesis 17, is so that we realize that the significance to the impact of this final piece of evidence is going to display itself in connection with what takes place in Genesis 17—even though the actual justification took place back in Genesis 15.

- (This QUALITY of Abraham's faith—(which is the other side of the coin about faith—that makes it so that God's justice responds to faith, and only faith, like it does) - is something that was not put on display until Genesis 17 - but it was in existence right from the beginning.)  
{God just didn't say anything about it at that time.}

- The nature of this kind of evidence is to come along and pull out something that happened later on in someone's life that harkens back to something that actually got itself established several years earlier to indicate that what took place several years earlier, really did take place.

- This is the issue of something that comes along later in someone's life, or experience, etc., that would ONLY exist because of an already established fact that took place in the person's life sometime earlier.

- (Illustration: Medical education)

- CRITICAL UNDERSTANDING:

What is CRITICAL to understand is that you understand that in the case of Abraham's saving faith, even this matter that gets put on display some 13 years after he was fully justified, WAS IN FULL EXISTENCE (and fully in existence - not just an inkling or just a notion or vague idea) in Genesis 15:6.

- (For in order to be actual and real justifying faith, it had to possess all these components, or else God could not have justified him.)

- Therefore the issue sitting in Genesis 17 does not do anything to either **add** something to that faith, or to **certify** Abraham any more as being fully justified as when he expressed his faith back in Genesis 15:6.

- (If Abram had died one second after Genesis 15:6, he would have died a fully justified man.)

- What the Genesis 17 passage simply does, is to put on display a facet about Abraham's justifying faith that he had 13 years earlier that God did not see fit to say anything about, or make an issue about until 13 years later.

- Therefore, Paul careful in quoting Genesis 17:4 so that it sets us up to have this final piece of evidence find its validation there in Genesis 17, but he couches it within the framework of what took place in Genesis 15. (Which is what Paul takes great care to make sure that we do by ending the parenthesis and in the rest of Romans 4:17 and down through verse 18 he takes us right back to Genesis 15:6!)

- But all the while you are to see that it is 13 years later in Genesis 17 that puts this side of the coin of saving faith on display.

(This is great precision and accuracy in presenting critical information!!!)

- Paul expects us to be going back and forth between Genesis 15 and 17 to gain the full impact of this final piece of evidence.
- But Genesis 15 is where the full justification took place!
- Genesis 17 is where something else about it was put on display.
  - And what that “something else” is, we become aware of in the balance of what Romans 4:17 says.

*17 .... before him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were.*

- Note the first phrase: *before him whom he believed, even God, ...* When Paul describes Abraham this way, as being “BEFORE HIM WHOM HE BELIEVED, EVEN GOD,” Paul is pointing out that Abraham is perceiving God in a particular way. And while it is Abraham’s faith that is being analyzed, the idea is to look at his faith AS GOD, HIMSELF VIEWED IT. That is, we are now going to view Abraham’s faith from God’s perspective - and we are going to see what it is in this other component of faith that makes it so perfectly acceptable to God - so much so that He is fully pleased and delighted to exchange faith for His own righteousness.

- And what is presented in TWO COMPONENTS of saving faith in (:17) is the fact that God, not only can legally respond to faith, but it is also the WORTHY thing in His sight (the ONLY worthy thing in His sight) that can be responded to, because of the nature of it.

(Now that we have the proper point of view, let’s go on to the two things...)

B. The TWO THINGS (4:17).

(1) - “*who quickeneth the dead,*”

(2) - “*and calleth those things which be not as though they were.*”

- (These are two things that make it so that when they are perceived, the one believing (Abraham in this case) realizes that God ought to be believed!)

- Note that when Abraham believed, he didn’t say, this #1 and this #2 are pleasing to God - it is **this verse** that tells us, that when we are looking at it from God’s perspective, resident within the reason why Abraham believed God, which is made up of two things, is why God was pleased to impute righteousness to Abraham or anyone who believes.

- The issue is: What does “quickeneth the dead” and “calling those things which be not as though they were” mean to GOD!

- THE MISCONCEPTION:

- Because it is most common to take the position that Abraham was JUEL when a Bible corrector or scholar says he was, instead of when the Bible itself tells you Abraham was justified, it is also the most common way of looking at this “deadness” referred to here as that of Abraham’s reproductive deadness.

- The only way in which you would ever conclude that the “deadness” being spoken of in (:17) was the sexual or reproductive deadness of Abraham, is to do so based upon the false presumption that Abraham could not have been fully justified unto eternal life when the Bible says he was (in Gen. 15:6; Rom. 4:3) - and that because of the inability to square what happened with Abraham and Hagar in Genesis 16.

- If you were being properly educated in the proof being made by the apostle Paul concerning justification unto eternal life being by grace through faith alone in the CONTEXT of the Romans 4 passage, Abraham’s reproductive deadness wouldn’t even have entered your mind at the point of verse 17!!!

- WHAT IS BEING DESCRIBED IN VERSE 17, IN BOTH OF THE PHRASES “*who quickeneth the dead*” AND “*calleth those things which be not as though they were*” ARE NOT DESCRIBING ABRAHAM OR ANY ONE ELSE - WHAT IS BEING SAID HERE IS SOMETHING THAT IS A DESCRIPTION ABOUT GOD! (Not about Abraham, his body’s deadness, or his spiritual deadness, or any other thing about him!)

- In the context it doesn’t really make any difference who’s dead! It’s all about what God can do!

- What Paul is doing is to analyze Abraham’s faith - and that faith really began with a **thinking process** about the One he’s being asked to believe.

- And that’s the issue in God that makes FAITH the WORTHY thing in the eyes of His justice whereby He can come along and say, “That’s equivalent to my righteousness, here, you can have it in its place.” And when that worthy aspect to faith is understood and appreciated, then you will see why God can then judicially (as well as \_\_\_\_\_ly ) impute righteousness to one who expresses faith, and faith alone for salvation from the debt and penalty of his sins.

- Therefore, for someone (or anyone) to honestly believe what God says in His message for justification unto eternal life, the thinking process that brings them to the issue of placing their full confidence and trust in what God has said, is based upon (whether they are cognizant or aware of it or not) it is based upon the realization that the One that they are believing in IS WORTHY TO BE BELIEVED. And there are identifiable and definable reasons why He is worthy to be believed!

- And when that is recognized by the justice of God, that is why God is able, then, to say, "That's worthy of and equivalent to my righteousness: I can give it to you!" (This is the fully developed concept to the imputation of righteousness mentioned at the end of the passage.)

- What you have here (in :17) are two things that Abraham acknowledged, not about himself, but ABOUT GOD, when God began speaking to him.

- It is apparent that there is something more going on here - just by the amount of, as well as the kind of information being given in this passage.

- There is more that is going on that simply coming along and making a dictionary definition of "faith" - which you could get in any dictionary - or over in Hebrews 11:1 - but in Heb. 11:1 you don't have the kind or amount of information given to you that you do here! (See also Heb. 11:6)

- There is a full-blown analysis of faith being presented here, not just a working definition of it - and more than that it is going to prove something in the overall aspect of God being "*just and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.*"

(1) - The First Component of our Faith God Perceives:

"*who quickeneth the dead,*" - This is the simple, yet profound issue that is related to the very first thing God told Abraham in Genesis 15:1, "*Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield,*" - it is the component of faith that God looks at and realizes that when someone believes Him for what He says, and in connection with what He says, He has told them **SOMETHING THAT SEEMS IMPOSSIBLE**, and yet they believe Him because they realize **HE'S GOT THE POWER TO DO WHAT HE SAYS HE WILL DO!**

- This, coupled with the second thing, makes God thrilled to impute righteousness. It resonates within Him even to the point that His justice can come along and respond to that faith, not only because it excludes works, but because of what "imputation" means!

- Note that even though this sounds simple (and it really is simple), but when its looked at from God's perspective, *that's* what makes it to be the profound thing that it is. Because that now sets the stage for the rest of the verses to teach you WHY that is so pleasing to God - and that's the reason, once it is fully developed and understood, that God can come along and say, just as it is stated in (:22) "*And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness.*" and make that shift from "*count*" to "*impute*" and give us the full and total package of understanding WHY He is able to respond to faith the way He does!

(2) - The Second Component of our Faith God Perceives:

***"and calleth those things which be not as though they were."*** - This is something that would naturally go along with someone who's got the power to do what he says. And it's more than just having the "will" to do it. This is something (just like "*quickeneth the dead*") that ONLY GOD could possess.

Q: If someone has the power to do what he says - does that necessarily mean it's going to get done?

- (Ex., I have the power to take my horseshoes and throw them through my neighbor's window - but it doesn't mean I'm really going to do it.)

- Is it God's "will"?? -

- I've got the will to do a whole bunch of things, and God's got the will to do a whole bunch of things. So "will" isn't really the core of this issue.

- Remember that what is being described in these two things that define saving faith, it is describing something about GOD - something that only God has the ability or power to do. And what that is, is humanly impossible!

- One "key" to identifying this second thing lies in the expression just following Paul's parenthesis: "*before him*" - hence, you can go back to the Genesis 15 passage and find something that CONNECTS with the issue of Abraham perceiving something about God that can be expressed in the phrase, "*and calleth those things which be not as though they were.*"

- Gen. 15:1-4 - God appears to Abram in the form of a vision.

- Gen. 15:5 - Now God comes down to Abram and is on the earth, standing right BEFORE Abram, just as Paul describes in Rom.4:17.

- Note: "*he brought him forth abroad*" - that is, God takes Abram from the place of the vision he was receiving and goes someplace else. (Both Abram & God are on the earth looking toward heaven).

- So when Paul says, “*before him whom he believed, even God,*” he is concerned especially with Genesis 15:5 & 6.

- But since Genesis 15:5 starts out with the word “*And*” we know that these two events ( i.e., God appearing to Abram in the vision in verses 1-4, and God coming down to the earth to have Abram physically stand before Him) are LINKED together by God in this historical narrative, here in Genesis.

- So we should know by this that there is something sitting in those first 4 verses, when God first appeared to Abram in a vision and spoke to him, that sets the stage for what Abram then perceives in God when God comes down to Abram and brings him forth abroad to tell the stars, and God tells Abram, “*So shall thy seed be*” and Abram believes Him.

- Gen. 15:1 - “*I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward.*”

- God spells out two things about His Jehovahhness that pertain to allaying Abraham’s “fear” in view of what has just historically taken place with him concerning Chedorlaomer and the battle of the kings.

- But that also got Abraham thinking about God in a particular way!

- And when God told Abram to “*tell*” the stars and “*So shall thy seed be*” down in :5, Abraham (in view of what God said up there in :1) considered God to be the one, and the only one who “*quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were.*” And on the basis of that, Abram believed God and God counted it to him for righteousness. EVEN THOUGH “*So shall they seed be*” SEEMED IMPOSSIBLE!

- Therefore, the two things that Romans 4:17 says about Abraham that we are looking at from God’s perspective actually have something in common with “*I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward.*” -- They are two things perceived about God’s Jehovahhness found in faith that are so pleasing to God.

- One is, that God’s got the power to do what He says He will do, even though what He says seems impossible.

- Which alleviates Abram’s fear coming out of the fight with Chedorlaomer and the kings of what God has already said to Abram ever coming to pass because, “*I am thy shield.*”

- That is, in this context, "I've got the POWER to protect you, and fulfill with you what I said I'm going to do.

- That's the POWER issue.

- Then the second issue: "I am *thy exceeding great reward*." And resident in that is the connection with the issue of "*and calleth those things which be not as though they were*." (Rom.4:17d)

- Note that that "exceeding great reward" issue is all wrapped up in what God has been saying and doing with Abram since He first began speaking to him back in Genesis 12. Remember that God tells him some wonderful things about moving Abram out to a land that God will show him - and the LORD will make his name great, and He will make a great nation out of him - and God will bless him and bless them that bless Abram -- then the Lord has Abram take a tour of that land and perform that gesture of possession in chapter 13.

- But then comes a threat to that because of the battle that takes place in chapter 14 (Abram's got some real enemies and threats to his very existence in that land).

- So Abraham is found in chapter 15 being worried and fearful of the things God has said to him ever coming to pass. Everything seems to be going against it.

- And so when it comes to allaying those fears in Abram - God points to two specific things about His Jehovah-ness:

1) HIS POWER.

2) THE CERTAINTY OF HIS COUNSEL.

("Counsel" is the composite word that deals with purpose, intention, plan, or design.)

- Certainty of God's counsel goes beyond the issue of merely "God is Truth" - i.e., God cannot lie - for even God's holy angels cannot lie. This has to be something more than that - this has to be something that is found in God's Jehovah-ness and found no place else!

- (Just because someone doesn't tell a lie, doesn't necessarily mean that he can do this!)

- Remember that all those things that God has spoken to Abram were things still in the future - they were a FUTURE "reward"!

- BUT THEY WERE ONLY FUTURE IN ABRAHAM'S MIND - NOT IN GOD'S MIND!

- The issue of God saying what He does to Abram in Genesis 15:1 when He says specifically, *“I am ... thy exceeding great reward”* is the issue of God’s counsel - that is, it is the issue of what God intended to do with Abraham - that is, it is God’s plan, purpose, and design in connection with Abraham.  
(That’s what “counsel” means = a resolute purpose, intention, plan, or design.)

- But there’s more to it than merely God’s counsel, purpose, intention, plan or design with Abraham, there is CERTAINTY to God’s counsel!

- In other words, when God speaks this to Abraham, God did not speak about it as if it didn’t exist - God spoke about it as if it DID exist already! (*“and calleth those things which be not as though they were”*)

- Which is why that “So” is so important in Genesis 15:1, and why Paul sees necessary to impress it upon your thinking by quoting it in Romans 4:18 - *“**So** shall thy seed be.”*

- (By the way, the certainty of God’s counsel is the core issue in the attribute of God called “veracity”)

- That is, the One who says what He says is not only truthful when He says it, but He has the absolute certainty of bringing to pass what He says He will do.

- And that’s because He can’t lie;  
And that’s because He’s truthful;  
And that’s because He says things in the form of a promise .... all of those are expressions of the absolute certainty of His counsel!

- What God said to Abraham He said in such a way that it produced in Abraham the understanding that God’s counsel is absolutely certain - .... Because God didn’t say, “I hope to make you seed this way” or “My intention is to someday make your seed this way” - that is, God didn’t describe His purpose or design with Abraham as a process or series of events that have to take place - He described it as a PAST TENSE, already accomplished fact when it wasn’t yet an accomplished fact, and when it seemed impossible to accomplish it at all! (*“**SO** shall thy seed be”*)

- And when Abraham is hearing these things described this way, he is perceiving that God is actually “calling those things that be not as though they were.”

- And it is with this as a backdrop that you must see and perceive what it is in Abraham’s faith (as God is viewing it) that when God imputes righteousness to him, it is seen as the morally and ethically right thing to do, just as when faith excludes works, counting righteousness to that person is the legally right thing to do.

- And it is upon this backdrop that you now have to come along and be able to clearly identify what it is in God that makes His counsel “certain” --- and when that is found, you will know why Abraham’s saving faith (or anyone’s faith) is the WORTHY thing that it is for God to be able to impute for righteousness.

- In the previous dealings with Abraham, God got the ball rolling, so to speak: *“I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward.”* - then Gen. 15:4-5 *“This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir. And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, **SO SHALL THY SEED BE.**”*

- Abraham now perceives God as the only One who has the **eternal power** to “quicken the dead” AND he also perceives God to be the One, and only One who has the **certainty of His counsel** to “call those things which be not as though they were.”

- The only remaining question, then, is: What is it about God that makes His counsel (or purpose, or plan, or design) “certain?”

- To put it another way: There is a reason WHY God has certainty of His counsel. And the reason why God has certainty of counsel is what makes it so that when someone BELIEVES what He says (considering the certainty of counsel of what He said), God is morally right in imputing their belief for righteousness.

- And the reason why someone who would consider God’s certainty of counsel as being a reason to believe Him, is because of the only thing that produces ‘certainty of counsel,’ which is found in something said about God in another portion of Scripture.

- By the time God says to Abraham, "*So shall thy seed be*" He has said enough and revealed enough so that Abraham clearly understood the issue of God's eternal **power** to do something impossible, AND the issue behind what makes it so that he could believe that God's counsel (i.e., His resolute purpose, intention, plan or design), though seeming impossible as well, is nevertheless **CERTAIN!**

- What is it that makes it so you can know with full persuasion that what God has said He will do, even if it seems impossible, He is **certain** to do?

- What is the basis for God's counsel to be certain?

- English "CERTAIN" = determined, fixed, settled; not variable or fluctuating; unfailing; wholly trustworthy or reliable; established as a **TRUTH**.

- In connection with something that God SAYS, there is an attribute issue of God's God-ness or Jehovah-ness that must accompany all that He does say.

- (Especially when he is "*calling those things which be not as though they were*" - He's calling something "so" that has not even happened yet, that's not even in existence yet; ... and that it happens at all seems impossible - there's only ONE thing in God that can enable Him to say that! **ONLY ONE THING!**)

- Answer: The reason why something that God says has behind it the CERTAINTY (settled, unfailing, trustworthy, established truth) OF HIS COUNSEL (purpose, intention, plan or design) is because that behind that issue stand the nature of God's **ABSOLUTE TRUTH**.

- English "ABSOLUTE" = free from all imperfection or deficiency; absolute in quality or degree; **perfect**.

- In this sense, this is something that man DOES NOT possess - only God possesses ABSOLUTE TRUTH.

- And Abraham perceived this: he understood that God, and only God possesses the POWER to do what He said ("*God, who quickeneth the dead*"), and God, and only God, because what He says is a truth in its absolute sense, God, and only God possesses the CERTAINTY OF COUNSEL to do what He said He will do ("*and calleth those things which be not as though they were*").

- Note that by the way in which we talk about “truth,” we would have to put a qualifying adjective on it to be able to adequately and appropriately describe it when it pertains to God!

- That is, there is something about “truth” that NO MAN on his own possesses, even when he speaks the truth!!! (Only God possesses it when He speaks the truth!)

- Num. 23:13-19 (:19) - This is part of what God told Balaam to say to Balak regarding the desire to curse Israel.

- (:19) - This is a very familiar passage that is commonly used in almost any basic Bible doctrine book or systematic theology that describes the attributes of God, and in this case the attribute of His “truth.”

- However, the way in which they deal with the issue really only deals with it in a very shallow way which misses the reason why God’s truth is different from man’s truth as to the nature of divine truth being what it is.

- Note that two things God told Balaam to tell Balak: 1) I’m not a man that I should lie; 2) and neither am I the son of man that I should repent. And in connection with neither lying nor repenting, tell him what I’ve said I shall do, and what I’ve spoken I shall make good on it.

- Note that in very general and shallow thinking it is true that what God is saying here is that He is “truth.”

- But God doesn’t say it that way! He says that there are two things about a man, in connection with truth, that you cannot say about Me! One is, I don’t lie, and the other is, I don’t repent. That is, there are two things that can happen to truth where man is concerned - One is that someone can lie about it, and the other is that someone can change their mind about it and not carry through on it!

(God, in His attribute of truth doesn’t do either one of those things!)

- Hence, in describing truth about God, it not only is impossible for Him to lie, but in connection with what He says in truth, it is also impossible for Him to repent and change His mind to not carry through with what He said He would do! That is, it is impossible for God to say something that He says He will do, and “*not make it good!*”

- This passage is then describing the ABSOLUTENESS of God’s attribute of truth!

- Therefore, the 2nd component of saving faith that God perceives is believing that, because what He says is the ABSOLUTE TRUTH which makes His COUNSEL CERTAIN, He can therefore, can call *“those things which be not as though they were”*.

- THE BIBLICAL ANALYSIS OF SAVING FAITH:

Saving faith is the non-meritorious belief in the gospel of God that is composed of the worthy element of God really having the exclusive power that, even in the face of something that seems impossible, God and God alone has the power to do; and since the gospel of God is expressed in His words to us, saving faith also has the component of belief in the worthy element of the certainty of God's counsel, that when faced with the same issue of impossibility, God can be fully trusted without risk because the absolute truth that He, and He alone possesses as expressed in His gospel is absolutely certain.

- Simplified version: In believing the gospel of God you have believe in God, *“who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were.”*

C. The Display of Saving Faith.

- As Paul begins his final piece of evidence that justification unto eternal life is, always has been, and always will be, by grace through faith, he directs us by way of the parenthesis of verse 17 [*As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,*] to an event that took place with Abraham 13 years after he was justified unto eternal life.

- However, by stating what he does in verse 18, Paul never lets us lose site of the fact that Abraham was fully justified just when the Bible tells us he was: Genesis 15:6.

- Romans 4:18 we are given to understand and appreciate that , as he stands with God and “tells the stars” Abraham recognizes the impossibility of it all. *“Who against hope believed in hope, ...”*

- Verse 18 forces you to see the reality that Abraham was fully justified in Genesis 15:6 with the quotation of Genesis 15:5 - *“So shall thy seed be.”* - but at the same time God chose to put something about that saving faith he had in Gen. 15:6 on display some 13 years later - and we know that because of the way it is stated in Romans 4:18 - *“that he might become the father of many nations, ...”*

- In other words, Abraham perceived something in the expression “So shall thy seed be” that set him on the course of thinking that he would become “*the father of many nations.*”

- And that that he perceived, and the time that would get put on display on the historical stage, happened 13 years later - out in what takes place in Genesis 17, and as explained further by the apostle Paul in Romans 4:19-22!

- And the centerpiece issue is that when that aspect of Abraham’s faith get put on display 13 year after he was fully justified, THERE WERE NO WORKS OF ANY KIND INVOLVED WHATSOEVER!

- He was given some information that composed his “good news” or gospel. And he believed that gospel without works which resulted in God counting his faith for righteousness and God justified him - permanently!

- And, no, he did not hear the message of the death, burial, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ!

- Understanding the nature of JUEL, and the “law of faith” provides you with an understanding that God does not need to have the gospel message the exact same throughout all of human history!

- To say that the gospel has always been the same message is pure stubborn refusal to deal with what the Bible says!!!

- One gospel message? NO!

- Luke 18:31-34

- Mark 16:15ff
- Mat. 28:19-20
- Mat. 24:3-14

- You cannot put works and faith together! They are mutually exclusive!!! (Romans 11:6)

- If eternal life is not based on the simple issue of faith and faith ALONE, then NO ONE ever gets eternal life!!!

- AND THIS IS TRUE IN BOTH PROGRAMS!!!

- Galatians 3 - There is a need for Paul to go over this doctrine again because of the “foolish” Galatians!
  - (:6-12) - Paul verifies the doctrine of JUEL being by grace through faith without works! (Particularly without any additional works of the Law, which is what these Galatians have been deceived into thinking!)
  - (:11) - “*evident*” - (Romans 4)
    - Plus it is evident in Israel’s program! (Hab. 2:4 “The just shall live by faith”) - and Paul is not quoting from his epistle!
  - (:21ff) - The mechanics of how JUEL operated in Israel’s program.
    - (:21) - If there was a way of getting JUEL on the basis of the involvement of anybody’s works, “*verily righteousness should have been by the law.*”
      - But notice what this would have done - if this is true, then it would have SPARED GOD THE SON, the Lord Jesus Christ, from coming into being flesh and dying!
      - See Gal. 2:16, 21!
      - The truth of the matter is, that if you teach that JUEL in God’s program with Israel is by a combination of faith plus works, you are teaching that in God’s program with Israel, THE DEATH OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST WAS USELESS!!!!
    - (:22)
    - (:23) - “faith” = the faith OF Jesus Christ, referred to in (:22) - and that is the message of the gospel we believe in today.
      - Before the faith OF Jesus Christ came (back in God’s program with Israel) - for we can now look back and see how JUEL on the basis of faith alone operated back in God’s program with Israel.
- We know the fact of it, now let’s see the mechanics of it:
  - See Romans 10:13-21 (:17) - let’s see what “word of God” they heard that faith came by, and that God would justify them on the basis of.... - It wasn’t the “faith of Jesus Christ!”

- They didn't hear the message about the faithful performance of the Lord Jesus Christ as their substitute-Redeemer, but they still heard a message that they could respond to by faith (just like Abraham did), and God could justify them by grace through their faith, alone, in that message.

- And that message was wrapped up in the testimony of the Law as it functioned as that "schoolmaster" just as Paul says.

- Gal. 3:23 - Note: "*shut up unto the faith*" = (note that it does not say, "shut up FROM it!), it says, "shut up UNTO" it - if you are shut up UNTO something, you are left with no other alternative but the thing you are shut up unto: FAITH!

- (:24) - "*justified by faith*" - Does he say, "plus works?" NO!

Q: Were those in God's program with Israel justified unto the "schoolmaster" of the Law by faith?

A: YES! Just like the verse says!!

- That Law functioned as a "schoolmaster" - and a schoolmaster schools you in fundamental realities!

- And they were schooled in the fundamental reality of their sinfulness and their inability to do works that would atone for their sins - and their need, therefore, for a substitute, kinsman-Redeemer!

- (Even Job knew "my redeemer liveth" - Job 19:25)

- They didn't know HOW the redemption was going to be accomplished, and they didn't have the details of redemption given to them, but they were schooled in the need for it!

- And when they believed they needed it, God counted their faith for righteousness and justified them unto eternal life.

- Example: Luke 18 - The Lord deals EXCLUSIVELY with JUEL, and teaches the very thing you just saw Paul talk about in Gal. 3 - the "schoolmaster."

- This man will respond positively to that schoolmaster of the Law.

- (:9-14)

- (:10) - Notice they go to “PRAY” - they don’t go to offer an animal sacrifice - (no mention of it at all!) - or to get water baptized.
  - They go to “pray” - to commune with God.  
(But only one of them actually does it!)
- (:11) - The Pharisee only prays “*with himself*” - the Pharisee thinks he has justification (naturally) - and boasts of his sanctification!!
- (:12)
- (:13) - Note the publican is “*standing*” and standing “*afar off*” = (He understands he has no access)
  - He also knew God wasn’t in that house - he had more understanding than that Pharisee ever had!!!
    - (God had left that house at the very start of the 5th CoP!)
    - The publican knew God was in heaven!
  - “*would not lift up so much as his eyes*” = he knew that God’s eyes were more pure than to behold iniquity; and he knew that his eyes were more full of iniquity than to behold purity!
  - All these little details let you know what this man knew from the schoolmaster of that Law!
  - “*smote upon his breast*” = conveys his understanding that he is totally helpless and hopeless to ever justify himself! (He has evidently tried and tried, but failed and failed.)
  - His only hope is in God being merciful - and he throws himself on the mercy of God to do for him what needs to be done, and on the basis of what that Law schooled him in, he believed in his need for a Redeemer without works, and God justified him.
    - P.S. the Pharisee stays un-justified!

Review:

- THE FINAL PIECE OF EVIDENCE:

- 1) Preparatory Considerations.
- 2) The Nature of Final Evidence.
- 3) The Basic Reason for Paul's Final Evidence.
- 4) The Final Evidence.
  - A. The Proper Point of View.
  - B. The Two Things.
  - C. The Display of Saving Faith.

D. Weak Faith or Strong Faith.

*Romans 4:19-21*

19 *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 Sara's womb:*

20 *He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was **strong in faith**, giving glory to God;*

21 *And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform.*

- Note that the two ways faith is spoken of by Paul in Romans 4:19-20 represent two of four ways in which faith is spoken of with similar, but DIFFERENT adjectives:

- "weak faith" - Rom. 4:19 (Abraham);  
 Rom. 14:1 ("*Him that is weak in the faith*" -  
 i.e., the weaker brother)

- "strong faith" - Rom. 4:20 (Abraham)

- "great faith" - Mat. 8:10 (the centurion);  
 Mat. 15:28 (the woman of Canaan);  
 Luke 7:9 (the centurion)

- "little faith" - Mat. 6:30 (hearers of the Sermon on the Mount);  
 Mat. 8:26 (the disciples on the sea);  
 Mat. 14:31 (Peter walking [sinking] on water);  
 Mat. 16:8 (the disciples & the doctrine of the  
 Pharisees);  
 Luke 12:28 (parable of the rich fool)

- At the outset, it should be understood and appreciated that in all these uses of the word "faith," NONE of them should be "corrected" to say weak or strong; great or little "doctrine" or "Bible Doctrine"! Again, if this is done, it is simply dishonest handling of God's word - whether intentional or not, whether admitted or not, whether cognizant or not; it is gross careless and dishonest handling of the words of God.

- “Faith” (πίστις [pistis]) in all four uses mentioned above means faith in its active sense - i.e., the expression of non-meritorious positive volition.

- The Four Adjectives:

- 1) “weak” - ἀσθενέω [astheneo] = weak, debilitated.
- 2) “strong” - ἐνδυναμόω [endunamoo] = “in” + “power;” to gain strength, to make strong, vigorous.
- 3) “great” - τοσοῦτος [tosoutos] = a demonstrative correlative pronoun of degree = so large, so much, etc., great in degree or magnitude.  
- Mat. 15:28 - μέγας [megas] = great or large in size, extent, intensity, authority, importance, age, etc., great of magnitude.
- 4) “little” - ὀλιγόπιστος [oligopistos] = from [oligos] = “little” + [pistis] = “faith” = little faith.

- It should also be noted that because of the excellency of the English language, we are not to simply think of the pairings of the similar words as meaning the same thing - for they DO NOT!

- That is, “weak” and “little” do not mean the same thing, and have entirely different contexts in which they are used. Therefore, “weak faith” and “little faith” are not supposed to be understood as being similar or meaning the same thing.

- Furthermore, “strong” and “great” do not mean the same thing, nor are they talking contextually about the same thing. (And weak/little or strong/great “doctrine” is too stupid to even comment on!)

- Now that we know that we get little to no help from the “original language” and now that we know these terms are used for a specific purpose, i.e., they are not just randomly chosen similar terms, we will look to the CONTEXT to tell us why these terms are chosen to convey something about faith.

- (Here’s a lesson in dealing with words as they occur in a given context):

- If the context is always the same and different words are used (like the four we have before us) - then the way of differentiating between the words would have to be, primarily, based upon a critical analysis of the difference between “little” and “weak” and “strong” and “great.”

- But since they don't occur in the exact same context, then the issue isn't so much word studies (even though distinctions do exist in these words), but the **context** in which those adjectives are used is the best way for determining when it is appropriate to talk about "little faith" in contrast to "great faith" or when its proper to talk about "weak faith" in contrast to "strong faith."

- Context is not just the determining factor, its the essential factor when it comes to these terms, and why in Romans 4, "little" and "great" COULD NOT be used!

(It would be inappropriate and it would be WRONG to talk about faith like that - because the issue here is NOT one of whether Abraham had "little" faith or "great" faith - and the truth of the matter is that you can't talk about Abraham having "great faith" here because the context simply doesn't allow for that kind of faith to be spoken about or thought about with Abraham at this particular time.

Later on, in Abraham's life it would be appropriate to talk about great faith with him - in fact when it comes to sacrificing Isaac (not that the word "great" is used in connection with his faith at that time) - but over in Hebrews 11:17-19, (see esp., :2 & :39 - "*obtained a good report*") note that Abraham is dealt with on more than one occasion - and Abraham's faith, in connection with the things that God said, extended all the way from the time that he is called out of Ur, until he offers up his son, Isaac.

And when it comes to Abraham obtaining a "good report" on the basis of faith, it is dealing with more than one occasion of his faith being put on display.

- This is to simply say that there is ONE PARTICULAR TIME in Abraham's life when God talks about his faith and uses the concept or "weak" and "strong." (Rom. 4) And it only applies here in this particular issue - in connection with his Justification.

- Later on (as over in the account in Hebrews - even though "great" and "little" isn't used specifically there) - God has reason to talk about his faith again, and because of the nature of it in the context in which it occurs, if God wanted to utilize a comparison or contrast Abraham's faith at that time with someone else's faith God wouldn't have used "weak" or "strong" at that point - He would have used either "little" or "great."

- This is only an illustration or example of the precise meaning that is behind these terms and what is supposed to be conveyed by using them the way in which we find them in our Bible.

- In the gospel accounts (Mat. 6:30; 8:10, 26; 14:31; 15:28; 16:8; Lk. 7:9; 12:28) you find the Lord dealing either with members of the remnant of Israel, the 12 apostles, or the centurion - the context in those passages, NONE of those passage are dealing with a context of someone getting justified unto eternal life!

- See Matt. 8:10 - (Among other things, the use of “great” in connection with his faith tells you that that centurion is already justified unto eternal life - he has responded positively to the basic light that has been given to the nation Israel, but he has not become a proselyte - in fact, if he had, he would have been kicked out of the Roman army.)

- See Matt. 15:28 - (This Canaanite [Syrophenician] woman had a tremendous understanding of correct doctrine [more than the Bible Scholars: the Pharisees] - so much so, that when she approaches the Lord based upon the advanced doctrinal understanding that she had, the Lord finally does respond to her - and when it comes to actually healing her daughter, the Lord says to her, “*O woman, great is thy faith*”.

- The point being that when the terms “great” and “little” are used in these passages, the Lord is always dealing with their doctrinal understanding of things AFTER they have been already justified unto eternal life! He’s dealing with issues of their edification. (Granted, it’s not a full-blown sonship type of edification, but that’s not the only kind of edification one can have: there’s edification of the child under the Law, as well.)

- And with the disciples, especially, their edification at the beginning of the climatic stage in God’s program with Israel pertained to them getting all the corruptive doctrine from their upbringing under the apostate religious system cleaned out of their thinking - and getting some very fundamental building blocks for proper edification established within them. (i.e., the old building had to be torn down before the new building could be erected.)

- And most of the struggle those disciples were having had to do with that issue of their childhood, fundamental edification from corrupt to correct doctrine.

- And its in connection with that that the Lord had to chide them from time to time as “*O ye of little faith*” - that is a corrective statement to them that they had learned very little of what needed to be learned. And they were operating more on the influence of the former corruptive doctrine that was still resident within them, rather than on the corrective doctrine He had been teaching them. And they were still struggling to “get it.”

- The fundamental issue in “LITTLE” or “GREAT” FAITH is that, only someone who already is justified unto eternal life, and has got their education and edification underway can be spoken about as having either “little” or “great” faith. And that is because it is an edification issue that has brought about either a reprimand (“little”) or commendation (“great”).

- Now, when it comes to responding to anything previous to that - which would be in the realm of all those issues leading up to and including one’s positive response to gospel information for justification unto eternal life, then the issue with faith is either “WEAK” or “STRONG.”

- Because then you are dealing with the fundamental issue of the kind of positive response that is in line with both God’s legal justice and His moral/ethical justice, to which, when it is not weak but it is strong, He can then respond with the judicial response of justifying unto eternal life.

- If Abraham had weak faith in response to what God had said, then Abraham’s faith would only have been resident in the reality of God’s existence (God consciousness) and that God was talking to him.

- In other words, Abraham’s faith would not have extended to believing in the fullness of what God was saying to him in the gospel information He was giving him - information that embodied the message upon which God could justify him, if Abram believed it.

- (God doesn’t justify anybody simply on the basis of God-consciousness. God justifies on the basis of what He as the LIVING and TRUE God that they are to recognize Him to be, says to them in connection with justifying them. And that requires more than just faith or belief that He exists - but belief in what He says when He deals with you in connection with your hopeless and helpless predicament.)

- And that is precisely where Abraham, standing before God and recognizing that when God said to him, “So shall thy seed be” - Abraham responded by believing that God, who “quickens the dead” is saying this to me; and God,

who "callesth those things which be not as though they were" is also saying this to me.

- Both components have to be present. If not, then it would be "weak" faith. Or if Abraham doubted what God had said and had succumbed to the first half of what Paul said in Romans 4:18 "*Who against hope*" and just doubted that God could ever bring what He said to pass - that would have been "weak" faith. (Which would mean that God's justice could not respond to that kind of faith.)

- God's justice could only positively respond to the issue of believing what He said was true, ABSOLUTELY, and it would come to pass, no shadow of a doubt! That's "strong" faith!

- When dealing with justification unto eternal life, there are two major elements involved: 1) the light of God-consciousness; 2) the message that the God you are conscious of is speaking to you in which He has vested the power to justify you.

- Faith in the first, and doubt in the second, constitutes "weak" faith.

- "Strong" faith acknowledges both, no doubts in connection with either one of them.

- Note that the faith in the second is to be looked at as a "package" - that is, unbelief in God, either being able to "quicken the dead" or in God being able to "call those things which be not as though they were" is to be understood as having no faith at all in the second. In the analysis of saving faith, if only one component is present and the other missing, it is NOT faith in the gospel message God has spoken to you - faith is voided!

##### 5) The Kicker: The Concluding Application (Romans 4:23-25)

- (read :23-25)

- Picking up with terminology that Paul concludes his argument with in connection with Abraham in verse 23, Paul will now make his final conclusion by making application to us, that justification unto eternal life, just as it was with Abraham, is exactly the same with us today.

- This is where the “kick” in final evidence gets revealed - for it is the nature of final evidence to come back full circle to the beginning evidence, and attach itself to it, but to do so by fully and finally putting to rest any and all remaining objections or questions that could possibly be raised and seal up the proof being set forth so that no remaining question could be raised, and so that no shadow of a doubt remains in the mind of the judge/jury.

- The case is proven.
- The case is closed.

(this is where real skill comes in, in setting forth legal proofs!)

- Example: Mat. 22:41-46

- The evidence for this proof of justification unto eternal life being by grace through faith alone without any works of any kind at any time, is presented in two main parts:

- Part One: Exhibits 1-4

- “The law of faith” - i.e., the legal acceptability of faith in the court of God’s justice - and the legal exclusion of works in the court of God’s justice. (Faith is established as the only LEGAL thing the justice of God can respond to.)

- Extremely powerful on its own - almost makes it so that nothing more really needs to be said - but there is something more that could be said, and something more that could be objected to.

- For when you are dealing with intellectual creatures, legalities aren’t the only things that come into play. (Intelligent beings (God, man, angels) operate on more than what is purely legal.)

- And because of this, when it comes to God saying that He justifies by grace, and on the basis of faith without works, i.e., works being legally excluded and faith alone being the legal requirement - there is also a need for another piece of evidence being set forth that will finalize this first part and deal with proof in connection with this other area of concern when dealing with intelligent beings.

- And the “kicker” in the legal proof is found at the end of this final piece of evidence and is seen in a change of terminology that takes place just prior to Paul making his concluding application.

- Part Two: Exhibit 5

- Analysis of Saving Faith:

- 1) The quality of believing God has exclusive power to “quicken the dead”;
- 2) The quality of believing in the certainty of God’s counsel to “call those things which be not as though they were.”

- The “kicker” to shut every mouth of objection:

- 1) God not only justifies unto eternal life on the legal basis of faith without works;
- 2) God, in justifying on the basis of His grace through faith and faith alone without works is MORALLY AND ETHICALLY right as well.

- Romans 4:3 - *“For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.”*

- Romans 4:22 - *“And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness.”*

- *“counted”* in Rom. 4:3 is (λογίζομαι [logizomai] = to count, reckon, compute, impute)

- *“imputed”* in Rom. 4:22-24 is (λογίζομαι [logizomai] = to count, reckon, compute, impute)

- Note that every English translation (including the “corrected” translations) attempts to standardize the term to either “reckon” (ASV, RSV, NRSV) or “credited” (NIV, NASV), or as some would deal with it, “imputed/credited” [take your pick!] - but only the KJV has the term [logizomai] translated in Rom. 4:3 as *“counted”* and in 4:22, 23, and 24 *“imputed”* - and note that “count” and “impute” do NOT mean the same thing!

- Therefore, the key (and “kick”) to bringing the legal proof full circle is to be found in why “count” is used in the first part of the proof, and the terminology changes to “impute” in the final part of the proof.

Q: What is the difference in “count” verse “impute” and why does it matter to the legal proof of justification being by grace through faith without works?

A: From *Synonyms Discriminated* by C.J. Smith:

“Impute expresses **moral causation** or motive; to impute a thing to a person is to make him morally responsible for it.”

- To “count” something to someone is to do it in every legally right way, but to “impute” something to someone not only indicates that it is the legally right thing to do, but it also carries with it the issue that it is the **morally** or **ethically** right thing to do.

- And this is the other thing about intelligent beings that those intelligent beings operate upon: what is legally right or wrong, and what is morally/ethically right or wrong.

- And by changing the terminology of [logizomai] from “counted” in Romans 4:3 to “imputed” in Romans 4:22-24, that final aspect of proof that is made to fully persuade the mind of an intelligent being without a shadow of a doubt is set forth.

- Principle: By looking at Abraham’s faith, **and what’s behind it**, God sets forth the fact that faith is not only the only thing He can LEGALLY respond to, it is the only thing that is MORALLY AND ETHICALLY acceptable to His nature!

- And that’s what attaches it to that first piece of evidence!

- Once something has been proven to be both legally and morally right, there is NOTHING that in an intelligent being’s capacity to object to it! (Because those are the two things all intelligent beings operate on to understand what right and wrong is.)

- The idea is that when faith without works is the basis for JUEL, no legal aspect in God’s being is offended, and not only is there no moral or ethical aspect of God’s being that is offended, it becomes not just the legal thing, but the morally right thing to do to give His righteousness in exchange for faith and declare that person, Justified!

- (Rom. 4:23-25) - Note the “Now” in (:23) with no “then” - this is the end of the proof.

- Faith and faith, alone, is the only thing God can impute for righteousness when it comes to justification in His sight:  
CASE CLOSE; PROOF POSITIVE GIVEN; INDISPUTABLE,  
UNARGUABLE; MATTER SETTLED!!!