

April 11, 2021 - John Messerly

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 11 April 2021

Preacher: John Messerly

[0:00] We welcome you to the media ministry of Bethel Community Church, knowing Jesus, making Jesus known. I appreciate the opportunity to speak with you this morning to continue your series in the book of Romans.

I think it's fantastic you guys are going through a book like this and going through it step by step methodically. And I'm sorry I didn't get to listen to all the messages.

I listened to some of them. Some weren't on the website. But I hope I can continue what's already been started here. I thought I would start off just reminding us of a little bit of what's gone so far in Romans up to this chapter 4.

Our passage today is Romans 4, starting in verse 17 through verse 25. But leading up to it, there's a lot of stuff to be followed.

And I tried, I spent about two minutes verifying this and wasn't able to verify it in those two minutes. But I think it's true. I once heard that in Harvard Law School, when it was first founded back in the 1700s, that they used the book of Romans as their textbook in their course on logic.

[1:21] That it was what they used to demonstrate a logical progression of an argument to teach future lawyers about logical progression, logical arguments, types of arguments, stuff like that.

And it's very true, is that Paul is a very methodical writer as he's going through the book of Romans. And so hopefully a little bit of progression will just help remind us all of where we are in the book. So it starts off talking about how people, mankind knows about God. It talks about in Romans chapter 1 how it says that they clearly in verse 21, or verse 20, it says, So it starts off that man knew God.

Man had a relationship with God, but they ignored that. They had a clear demonstration. Man's put that aside. So people know about God.

They don't believe him. Then it goes on to talk about despite that unbelief in God, even though people might not acknowledge he exists, they want to exchange his glory for idols, for mankind himself.

[2:48] Even though they don't believe in him, everyone will be judged by God. Everyone will be judged justly by God. Chapter 2, verse 5, 6 says, But because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who will render to each person according to his deeds.

The righteous judgment of God. That we even show by judging other people that we know what right and wrong is. But God is a righteous, just God. And everybody, whether they believe in him or not, is going to be judged.

And then he slides in a parenthetical talking about the Jews and the law. And, you know, well, you know, the Jews have the law. What does that mean?

Well, the law doesn't mean anything to the Jews if they don't keep it. Chapter 2, verse 25 says, So the Jews, they're in the same place.

They're going to be judged as well. The law doesn't prevent them from being judged if they aren't following it completely. So then he goes on, well, so what's this judgment?

[4:01] Are there people who are good enough by themselves? And that's what the start of chapter 3 is saying. No, nobody is just by themselves. Everyone is a sinner. All have sinned. All have fallen short.

He goes through this laundry list of the just disgusting nature of, you know, men's hearts. Their feet are swift to shed blood. The poison of asps is under their lips.

Everybody is a sinner. So he says, well, if God's going to judge everybody and everybody's a sinner, then what's the purpose of the law?

And he says, well, the purpose of the law is not to produce righteousness, but it's to alert people to their sin. And verse 20 says, By the works of the law, no flesh will be justified in his sight, for through the law comes the knowledge of sin.

So the law, again, is not going to provide righteousness. The law is not going to overcome that unrighteousness. It is just going to show that that unrighteousness is there. And so the question then is, well, so then how are unjust sinners justified?

[5:10] How are the unrighteous made righteous? And we see that in verse 28 of chapter 3. We maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from works of the law.

Justification by faith. So then the next progression in his thought is he's telling these people, they say, well, so, okay, this is what you're telling us. Does that mean we're just throwing out the law? No. God has always justified people on the basis of faith. Verse 31, it says, do we then nullify the law through faith? Are we throwing it out? Paul says, no, no, may it never be.

On the contrary, we're establishing the law. And that's what chapter 4, what we're speaking about today, that's what a portion of this is, is that God is establishing everything that happened from before, that there's a continuum here.

And so one of the stories that I came across in preparing for this and that Kevin pointed out to me too was from the preacher, Henry Ironside.

[6:16] He said that he was attending an adult Sunday school someplace. And he, the teacher, as he was listening, said, so how did people in the Old Testament get saved? Somebody raised their hand and said, by obeying the law.

The teacher said, very good, let's move on. And Ironside raised up his hand and said, that's not what my Bible says. And then the teacher was like a little nifty. He said, okay, somebody else, somebody else. And they said, by making sacrifices.

He said, that's not what my Bible says. And so the teacher's like, okay, you're the teacher. Tell me what the Bible says on it. He said, it's by faith. My Bible says Abraham was justified by faith.

And so chapter 4 is saying there is a continuum here. We're not throwing out everything in the Old Testament. There's connections between the Old Testament and the New Testament here. And Abraham's righteousness came by faith.

So that's what chapter 4 is talking about. Abraham's righteousness came by faith. And the first part of it, it says, Abraham's righteousness came by faith apart from works. There's no boasting that's allowed.

[7:21] It was not through his works. It was while he was a sinner. If he was justified by works, he'd have something to boast about, it says. But he was not justified by works. His righteousness by faith was apart from works.

Then it proceeds on in the next part of chapter 4. It says, Abraham's righteousness by faith was apart from circumcision. That it said that his righteousness was credited to him, or his faith was credited to him as righteousness.

That was before he was circumcised. And so the Jews who might have said, well, you have to have circumcision with it. That's part of, you know, our hold on the gospel. It says, no, Abraham was justified apart from circumcision.

So apart from works, apart from the law, or apart from circumcision. Then finally, apart from the law or in accordance with grace. And the law wouldn't come for over 400 years.

Abraham was not justified by following the law. And what he's proceeding to say now here is that Abraham was justified by faith that would be in accordance with grace.

[8:30] And just as we start to enter in the passage for today, we're looking at why is it being established? Why is it by faith?

You know, why is God choosing to work this way? Well, it's apart from works. We heard, I think, three weeks ago that there's no boasting in the works. I think David had that thing.

That there's no, God doesn't want it to be something where mankind says, hey, I'm good enough to get this. Look, look at I did it. You need to be like me. There's no boasting involved in a salvation by

faith.

Verse 16 of chapter 4, it says that it would be in accordance with grace. That it would be assured. Basically, that means it's all on God.

It's not something you have to say, am I doing enough? Did I follow the right thing? Did I get circumcised? Did I, you know, obey the law? Have I done it? No. It's all on God.

[9:29] There's nothing in us that confirms this promise. So it's, there's no boasting. It's completely assured. It's guaranteed by God.

It's something that's given to us through grace. It's on him, not on us. And now in verses 16 or 17 through end of the chapter, we're talking about how his faith was grounded.

And I'll argue that the point of this passage is ultimately glorifying God. That by faith, it's glorifying God. Which is kind of the opposite of no boasting. That there's no glory to man, but it's all glory to God through salvation by faith.

So let's read our passage and then just open in prayer here. Romans 4, starting in verse 17 through verse 25. As it is written, a father of many nations have I made you.

In the presence of him whom he believed, even God, who gives life to the dead and calls into being that which does not exist. In hope against hope, he believed, so that he might become a father of many nations according to that which had been spoken.

[10:36] So shall your descendants be. Without becoming weak in faith, he contemplated his own body. Now as good as dead since he was about 100 years old and the deadness of Sarah's womb.

Yet with respect to the promise of God, he did not waver in unbelief, but grew strong in faith, giving glory to God. And being fully assured that what God had promised, he was able also to perform.

Therefore, it was also credited to him as righteousness.

Now, not for his sake only was it written that it was credited to him, but for our sake also, to whom it will be credited, as those who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead.

He who was delivered over because of our transgressions and was raised because of our justification. Let's just go to the Lord in prayer. Our God and Heavenly Father, as we dig into your word now, I pray that you would bless our time, God.

Bless our study. God, you have written these things for us, that we would be encouraged by them, that we would be convicted by them, God. That we would be strengthened in our faith. God, we are grateful for your revealed word and the chance to study it and pray that you'd bless this time.

[11:41] In Jesus' name, amen. Amen. So, I'm kind of from the old school of preaching. I grew up under a lot of sermons that had three points, so I'm a three-pointer.

I grew up with a lot of people who used alliteration, so I don't always use alliteration, but today I just thought it flowed well. And maybe that's, sometimes I think you have to shoehorn a little bit in to get your alliteration.

But the three points I want to talk about that are all alliteration with G's are looking at Abraham, his faith was grounded, his faith was growing, and his faith was glorifying to God.

So, grounded, growing, glorifying. Three points. So, let's start off talking about Abraham's faith being grounded and the need for our faith to be grounded.

What was Abraham's faith in? Well, it says that it was in, in verse 17, it says, God who gives life to the dead and calls into being that which does not exist.

[12:54] His faith was in God and in his promise to be able to create life. And it's, it's really boils down to two things.

It was God's character and God's promise. So, he believed that God was powerful enough to do that he was, that he would not break his word.

And then he believed the promise that was, that was given to him. And the promise for, for Abraham was that, specifically what this is referring to is that his descendants would be as many as the stars.

So God, I mean, what did Abraham know about God's character? What was he believing in when he believed in God's character? Well, you start back at the beginning of Romans, Abraham had nature, right?

He was able to see what from God, from nature. What are the two things? I'm not going to call anybody in the audience, but the two things that we see from nature are God's eternal nature and

his divine power.

[14:05] The fact that God is forever and that God has created everything. He believed in that. He also believed that God was able to give life to the dead and bring into existence that which does not exist.

So, again, going to God's power, going to God's ability to manipulate creation, be able to be the one who made creation, upholds it.

God, he said, God is a God who can do that. You know, and part of the thing that we need to believe, we need to be looking at is who is the God we're believing in. He also believed that when God said something, he would do it.

Verse 21 says, being fully assured that what God had promised, he was able also to perform. And that kind of combines them both, that he would do it and that he was able to do it.

You know, his character and his promise. Those are the two things that Abraham believed in. Now, I'll point out another thing about Abraham. He was called to believe that God would accomplish something in the future.

[15:12] So, he was looking forward to this promise of descendants. At the time that it was given to him, remember, he had nothing. He had nothing but an old, old body and a wife who had an old, old body and God's promise.

And he was looking to the future. And his faith was grounded in that. Now, I want to switch from Abraham and talk about us. So, Abraham was grounded in his faith. We see that very clearly in God's character and God's promise.

Now, us, we're not called to look forward to a promise. Well, in some ways, our promises were called to look forward. But primarily, when we're talking about faith by salvation, or salvation by faith, we're looking back.

We're looking back to something that God has already done and believing that he did it. And so, it's kind of a mirror image of what we have with Abraham. Abraham was looking forward to the promise that God had made.

We're looking back and called to trust that. But we still have the character of God. And instead of a promise, it's Christ's finished work.

[16:24] So, Abraham was trusting in God's character and a promise. We're trusting in God's character and Christ's finished work. And the flip sides are the same thing.

If you look at the end of the chapter, verse 24 and 25, it really shows what our faith should be in. Three key parts of our faith are outlined. Now, you'd argue that there's a lot more things.

If you look at like a catechism or an orthodox statement of Christianity, there's a little more than these three points. But here are three key points for salvation by faith. It says, verse 24, those who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead.

So, believing that God raised Jesus our Lord from the dead. And what does that do? That speaks to God's power, his divine nature.

That he has the power to raise God or to raise Jesus from the dead. Just like Abraham believed that God had the ability to produce seed from a dead body, from his dead body.

[17:28] We believe that God had the power to raise Jesus from the dead. That the physical things we see, this world, is not a barrier or a limit on God.

That God is beyond that. God is limitless. The second thing is that Jesus was delivered over because of our transgressions.

And this speaks to not God's power, but God's character. His divine nature. So, his eternal power, divine nature are the two things.

His divine nature that he is a merciful God. That he is a just God. Those two things involved in Christ being delivered over because of our transgressions. Justice required transgressions to be punished.

Justice required that. But mercy would require finding a way to pay for that. And that's Jesus being delivered over. That God is loving.

[18:29] That he would choose to do that for people that didn't need it. So much about God's character is bound up in the fact that Jesus was

delivered over for our transgressions.

And then the third thing our faith is grounded in is that Jesus was raised because of our justification. And I think this passage talking about raised because of our justification.

There's really kind of two parts to it. Part of it is speaking to Christ's righteousness. So that he satisfied the debt for the sin placed on him.

And death couldn't keep him because it was perfect. In a way, it was a justification of Christ that he was raised from the dead. Because it was saying he was able to take all the sin put on him and still not be subject to death.

He was raised again because he was perfect. But also, Jesus' resurrection is the source of our faith. And I thought it was kind of interesting. I know you guys broke in your sermon series to have an Easter message about the resurrection.

[19:35] But you very well could have used this passage because it focuses on that resurrection being our justification. Because I was telling my daughter when we were talking about Easter, she said, It's because Jesus rose again.

I said, Yeah, that's right. But why is that important? And she said, I don't know. And I said, Well, any good man, outwardly good man, could say, I'm God.

I'm dying for your sins. Now, Jesus did more than that. He did signs and wonders to also confirm it. But the ultimate thing is anybody dying and saying, Well, I took your sins.

How would we know that they were telling the truth? You know, we have the word of God telling us that. But, you know, what's the proof? How is our faith going to be justified?

And it's going to be from him rising from the dead. Something that nobody had ever done. People have been raised from the dead before, but they died again. Jesus rose from the dead and did not die.

[20:38] That is our justification. We read in 1 Corinthians, Paul says, If the resurrection be not true, we of all men are to be most pitied. Because believing that Jesus paid for our sins but didn't die or didn't rise from the dead, it would be laughable.

It would be a joke. But it's our justification. He was raised for our faith to be justified. So it was two parts that showed that we were justified because the sin could be put on Jesus.

And he could take that. But since he was perfect, he rose again. We're justified in that sense. But also we're justified in the sense that our belief is reasonable, is rational, is, you know, it makes sense.

It's grounded in something that is supernatural and divine. So again, talking about our faith being grounded, we looked at Abraham's faith, was grounded in God's eternal power, divine nature, in God's character, in God's promise to come.

Our faith should be grounded in God's character, his power, and in what has been done, the finished work of Christ. So we're saying grounded faith, growing faith, glorifying faith.

[21:55] So we're going to move on to growing faith right now. I think this passage, one of the things it talks about is the difference between justification and sanctification.

It's not the key point, but it's an underlying current that really fleshes out some of what's going on here. The difference between justification and sanctification, if you want to think of it this way, is between a light switch that is on-off and a light switch with a dimmer that goes up and down, and you can control how well it goes.

Justification refers to our salvation at the moment we believe. That right at that moment, God says, I'm imputing Christ's righteousness to you.

You are justified. Sanctification is that process of growing into the image of the Lord Jesus Christ, of the Holy Spirit's work in our life to transform us into his image.

And it's a continuum. So justification, switch on-off. You believe, you're justified. Sanctification is a process by which we're being conformed into the image of Christ.

[23:07] It's like a sculptor. A sculptor doesn't just do one thing and boom. That would be like a mold, right? A mold just, it's done. But a sculptor moves it and conforms it to the image that they're looking for.

And so Abraham, it said, was justified when he believed God's promise to give him a child and descendants as numerous as the stars.

It said, right then, God credited his faith to him as righteousness. Right then, he was justified. While he was uncircumcised before the law, right then, he believed God justified him.

But there was a process here by which it said that, it said, And this is not talking about that initial promise to say, look at the stars, so shall your descendants be.

This is talking about Abraham when he sacrificed Isaac. This is talking about the progression in his faith. And I think it's important for us to realize that faith is not an on-off switch.

[24:39] That it is something that can grow. Your faith can grow. Abraham grew in faith, grew strong in faith. And our faith can grow as we trust God more, as he tests us, as his Holy Spirit works in our life.

Our faith grows. And, you know, the thing I think about is when there was a story in Mark 9, 24, when a parent, you know, went to Jesus and said, heal my child.

And he said, do you believe? And he said, Lord, I believe. Help my unbelief. Trust is something that grows the more we flex it. I think of it like a muscle. You know, first time you go to lift something, you can't lift something very heavy when you're pumping weights.

But as you do more and more, you'll be able to say, oh, I can do more. I can do more. I can take on more. And trust is like that. You know, the example I always give is I'm not going to move to a new house and go to my next door neighbor and say, hey, I'm going to leave town for a week.

Do you mind watching my kids? I don't trust them. You know, no matter how much I think about that person, I can't trust them that much. But if I start off and say, hey, you know, I'm going out of town for a week.

[25:53] Can you watch my goldfish? I watch the goldfish. Goldfish doesn't die. And maybe I say, okay, I'm going to run out to the grocery store, you know, for half an hour. Can you watch my kids? And kids don't die?

Okay, good. You know, little by little, you can trust them more and more until if that trust continues to grow, there's a point where I can say, yeah, I'm going out of town for a week. Can you watch my kids?

Trust is something that has to be worked and to grow and grow. And Abraham, it said he grew in respect to that faith. So his initial belief, that was like justification on off.

He believed his faith was credited to him as righteousness. Boom. But then it said that he grew, he did not waver in unbelief, but grew strong in faith, giving glory to God with respect to the promise of God.

Now, again, what's that promise of God? Well, God gave another promise when, if you remember the conflict with Hagar and Ishmael, that Ishmael was making fun of little baby Isaac.

[26:55] And God said, or Sarah said, you need to get rid of her. You need to cast them out. And Abraham said, what do I do? And God said, send Ishmael away. Through Isaac, your descendants will be numbered.

So God upped the promise. The promise wasn't just, your descendants are going to be like the stars. He upped it and said, okay, now here's the new promise I've got for you. All those descendants, all those numerous, the stars, that's going to come through Isaac.

And God, as we trust him in his word, we'll see more and more promises that we can say, here's a chance to trust him.

And when Isaac heard God say, God said that he was going to test Isaac. That's the first thing in Genesis 22. So that God tested Abraham.

Yeah, Abraham, not Isaac. That God was going to test Abraham through this and said, go sacrifice your son. And it was never about human sacrifice. It was about testing Abraham's faith.

[27:59] About giving Abraham a chance to see how much he believed God. And so Abraham, I'm not going to spend the time to go read it, but read it in Genesis 22.

Said that Abraham rose early. He didn't wait. He didn't procrastinate. He rose early. And he went out. And he took with some servants and his son.

And then when they got to a certain point, he said, servants, wait here. Put the wood for the sacrifice on Isaac's back. They're going up the mountain. Isaac said, but dad, where's the lamb?

And God said, God is going to provide the lamb. So Abraham wasn't just trusting God that he was going to provide his descendants through Isaac. He was also trusting that God was going to provide a lamb.

He had so much trust in what God was going to do. But to get to the point where he took that knife in his hand and was going to slay his son.

[28:56] And the angel of the Lord calls out, Abraham, Abraham, don't touch the boy. But imagine the amount of faith it took for him to do that.

And it says in the book of Hebrews, chapter 11, verse 17 through 19, it says that the reason that Abraham did that is because he believed in the resurrection.

Said that he believed that God could give life to the dead. He said, God is not bound by physical things. He's not bound by working in the ways that we think of with nature.

He can take my dead son on this altar and give me children from him. This 14-year-old, you know, 20-year-old boy, however old he was, not married, wouldn't be married for another 20 years.

And he can give me descendants. He can give life from this. Now, that's a lot further than saying, okay, well, you know, I'm 100 years old and I'm way past my childbearing years.

[29:56] My wife is, but I have faith that God can do that. Well, then we know people who have had kids at 66, whatever. It's not completely outside the realm, but this was death. And that's what we're called to believe with Christ, is that God resurrected Jesus from the dead.

It's a complete confidence that God has that eternal power and divine nature. That God is not limited by the things around us.

So we're talking about Abraham. He grew in faith. He said, with respect to the promise of God, he did not waver in unbelief, but grew strong in faith, giving glory to God, being fully assured that what God had promised, he was able also to perform.

So for some practical application, how do we grow in our faith? What can we do to grow in faith?

Well, going back to that example of the goldfish, if you can't believe God to move a mountain, believe him to babysit your goldfish.

Trust him to babysit your goldfish. You know, look back at ways that God is working. You know, I talk about faith and thanksgiving being two sides of the same coin.

[31:12] Thanksgiving is looking back at things that have happened and said, God did this. Faith is looking forward at things that are to come and saying, God will do this. One way to strengthen our faith is to look back at things in the Bible, at things in our lives, at things in other people's lives and saying, God did that.

It's very easy for us to, in our post, you know, postmodern world, to have naturalism take root and say, God did that.

Or not say, God did that, say that happened because of nature. You know, that that flat tire happened because I hadn't changed him in a while. Or that flat tire happened because that nail was there.

But when we take this perspective of God being divine, God being eternally powerful, we'll say, God gave me that flat tire, so I would be reminded that salvation is by grace and not by anything else.

You know, we won't take the natural explanation and say, oh, yep, that's what happened. We'll say, God did that. Reading the Bible gives us a chance to look at what God did and say, praise the Lord for it.

[32:20] You know, read the Old Testament, see his deliverance at the Red Sea, think, wow, God did that. Stopping a sea, making a sea dry land, easy.

Taking a little tiny shepherd boy and killing a giant, no problem. Taking things in our own life, you know, taking, I call them Ebeneezers or rocks of remembrance, things that I look back to and I say, God worked in this way.

You know, when I have, when I got the job I currently had, I heard about it three different ways and rejected every single way. I said, oh, I don't want that. Nope, I don't want that. And then finally, the third time I was saying, yeah, no, I'm not interested.

And the person said, well, go interview. It doesn't matter. You know, it was like, I didn't want the job. I went in there thinking, yeah, I was going to say, you know, first thing, I want to be able to help with storybook and I want to be able to have four weeks off in the summer. Wanted them to say no and then I was going to walk out. But instead they said, we can do that. And I look back to that as that was God working in my life. I look to that and say, this is God operating. [33:25] This is God doing what only God can do. That's how my faith grows is by looking back in the past, remembering what he's done, giving him glory for it.

So I can look forward and say, God can do this. He did that. So we talked about Abraham's faith being grounded, what it was grounded in, what our faith should be grounded in. We talked about how Abraham grew in his faith and how we should grow in our faith. And now talking about what I think is the key portion of the passage is faith, salvation by faith is glorifying to God.

Our faith should glorify God. You know, we talked about those earlier points in Abraham's life. It was not by works, so it would be a source of boasting. It wasn't supposed to give glory to Abraham. It wasn't supposed to be something that, you know, that came through works. It wasn't supposed to be dependent on man. It was supposed to be assured through God. The next corollary is that it's not glory to me.

[34:29] It's not something I can boast about. It's glory to God. You know, Abraham had a choice of what to believe. He looked around him and he saw his aging body. He saw his wife's aging body.

And anybody in this world who doesn't know God would say, well, that's what you believe in. If you want to know the outcome of this thing, somebody is telling you you're going to have numerous descendants and you've got a 99-year-old body.

That's who you believe, your body. You trust the science. Follow the science, right? But he did the opposite of the men in Romans 1.

What did the men in Romans 1 do? It says they exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for corruptible man. They exchanged belief in God, knowledge of God, glorifying God to believe in the creation.

Abraham said, I'm not going to believe in what I see. I'm going to believe in what I don't see. I'm going to believe in God. He believed that God was more powerful than his flesh.

[35:38] He wasn't ignorant of it. You know, it's one thing for a dumbo to be there and say, okay, yeah, sure, and not know how biology works. But it said he considered, he contemplated his own body.

God's telling me this, but look at me. I can't do this. But he said, despite that, I'm trusting God. It was a reasons thought through faith.

Our faith in God over things of the world gives God glory. That moment that Abraham said the amen, he said he believed God, boom, God was glorified.

And only God saw that, right? God saw it. Abraham saw it. When our faith goes beyond that, that initial justification, that's usually God seeing that.

God gets glory, but it's just with us. But when we grow in that sanctification, when we exercise our faith, when we grow strong, what happens in verse 20?

[36:48] It said, grew strong in faith, giving glory to God. Because when Isaac was sacrificed, who saw that? Who knew about Abraham's faith then?

Abraham knew how great his faith was, but Isaac saw it too. The servants saw it too. Imagine the impact it had on Isaac to see your father's faith that greatly.

Isaac knew the promise. Isaac knew it was going to come through him. And yet he saw his father say, I know God can raise him from the dead. The ultimate reason that salvation is by faith is to glorify God.

God. So in conclusion, we want to be grounded in our faith. We want to know what we're believing. Faith by itself is not anything. There's Muslims who have faith.

There are Buddhists who have faith. Our faith has to be grounded in God raising Jesus our Lord from the dead, delivering him over because of our transgressions, raised because of our justification. And God's character and the finished work of Christ.

[37:57] We should seek to grow in our faith and not waver. James 1 talks about the double-minded man is tossed back and forth. Abraham said was fully assured.

He was growing. He was strengthened in his faith. We should look to find those places in God's word and in our own lives that we can trust God for what he's done.

We can give him thanks and glory for what he's done in the past. And as we do that, as our trust gets stronger, as our faith gets stronger, that will lead our lives to change in ways that glorify God before other people.

Other people will see it. Believers, unbelievers, angels, God himself, he will get glory through us. So, let's close in prayer.

Our God, Heavenly Father, we thank you for your word, God. We thank you for this salvation that is through faith, God. We're thankful that it's not on us. It's on you. And you've given us the opportunity to believe in you, God.

[38:59] May you get the glory. May you get the glory. Pray that you would strengthen us, God. Help us to think of your work at the cross. Think of your promise. Think of your completed sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Believe in that, God, and go forward. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen.

■is■ or bond. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.