

## **By Faith** **Romans 4**

Good Morning it is good to be with you all this morning.

So this morning we are going to talk about faith and we will see that faith is the only thing that makes us right before God.

And we will see that faith will produce evidence in our own lives.

### **Mack truck analogy**

When we say we are Christians, there should be evidence of that in our lives.

We have a lot of those who call themselves Christians who have a lot of good things to say, but there is no evidence in their own lives.

And if we remember quickly the key verses from Ch. 3, showing us that justification comes not from the work of our flesh but through the redemption in Jesus Christ

### **Rom. 3:21-26**

21 But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, 22 even the righteousness of

God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference; 23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, 25 whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed, 26 to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

Then if you remember Paul goes on to say, there is no boasting, if we are saved apart from our works, then no one should boast in their righteousness.

You see, we have this tendency to flaunt our righteousness, we like people to know how many hours we read, or pray, or attend services.

Oh I was up all night, just travailing in prayer.  
But really you just ate Onions to Late.

Your righteousness doesn't come if you wake up at 5 or at 11 to pray, it comes from Jesus Christ alone.

And we have Paul here trying to convince the Jews that Salvation comes through faith not works of the Law, or ceremony.

He will use two of the Jewish nation's heroes.

If he can convince them that Abraham was considered righteous not by works, but by faith, then he might be able to convert the Jewish reader as well as the Gentile.

#### Rom 4

4 What then shall we say that Abraham our father has found according to the flesh? 2 For if Abraham was justified by works, he has *something* to boast about, but not before God. 3 For what does the Scripture say? "*Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.*" 4 Now to him who works, the wages are not counted as grace but as debt.

We see John the Baptist dealt with the Jews on the very same issue, of them believing they were justified, because Abraham was their father.

#### Luke 3:7-9

7 Then he said to the multitudes that came out to be baptized by him, "Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? 8 Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance, and do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have

Abraham as *our* father.' For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones. **9** And even now the ax is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire."

And Even Jesus confronted their belief in justification by nationality, and religious works.

John 8:39-41

**39** They answered and said to Him, "Abraham is our father."

Jesus said to them, "If you were Abraham's children, you would do the works of Abraham. **40** But now you seek to kill Me, a Man who has told you the truth which I heard from God. Abraham did not do this. **41** You do the deeds of your father."

And He later tells them in verse 44 of that chapter their father is actually the Devil.

It is something worth noting we are saved by our own faith and not the faith of our ancestors, husband or wife, kids or parents. We alone stand before God.

**Now if Abraham was trying to work his way to God, it would be like him trying to pay a debt off.**

**But it says he believed God and it was counted as righteousness, not he earned God's favor and then it was accounted to him.**

We sometimes picture God as a parent who is giving to us according to our good deeds.

But when we mess up, we think well we have do some amount of good to earn His trust again.

But we just have to simply believe God that His Son is the way to salvation, we may not understand why God made it that way, but we believe, and He counts us as righteous.

I remember a co-worker, who had been pursuing God, asking tons of questions, and one day he said he needed to quit smoking.....

I used it as an opportunity to describe faith to him.

I told him, I know it's hard to believe, but God will give you the strength to quit, you just have to call out to him, and step out in faith that you are healed of this.

He said, well after this pack...

after we prayed, I said if you truly believe He has healed you throw that pack away... he gave it to another guy on the job site.... He hasn't smoked a cigarette since....

Explain: his words "it was difficult, but I had different kind of strength over my quitting this time."

He gave his life to Jesus, and I got to baptize him at the next baptism, it was an amazing demonstration of faith.

He believed God would carry him and He did.

We too have to step out, and let God do the rest.

He tells us to just believe that our salvation, forgiveness of sins comes from Jesus, even when we don't feel like it does, we believe it, and move forward in His Grace, and it changes our lives.

Jesus challenges us to step out in faith in some very practical ways.....I love what Jesus asks of us in Luke 6

Luke 6:27-31

**27** "But I say to you who hear: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, **28** bless those who curse you, and pray for those who spitefully use you. **29** To him who strikes you on the *one* cheek, offer the other also. And from him who takes away your cloak, do not withhold *your* tunic either. **30** Give to everyone who asks of you. And from him who takes away your goods do not ask *them* back. **31** And just as you want men to do to you, you also do to them likewise.

These things seem so impossible! How could I do that?

Loving my enemies is unattainable.

Well, look what was asked of Abraham, and he believed and God did the impossible.

And because Abraham believed, it was accounted him to Righteousness, he believed simply the Word of God.

### Gen 15:4-6

4 And behold, the word of the Lord came to him, saying, "This one shall not be your heir (speaking of Ishmael), but one who will come from your own body shall be your heir." 5 Then He brought him outside and said, "Look now toward heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them." And He said to him, "So shall your descendants be."

6 And he believed in the Lord, and He accounted it to him for righteousness.

You see Abraham believed God...

Even though he was old, his wife was old and barren, he still believed.

This is probably one of the hardest things God asks us to do as Christians, but when we believe Jesus at His Words He gives us the Ability to carry it out, and our actions will line up with our belief.

And the bible tells us our faith is what saves us, faith in what?

Faith in what Jesus did on the cross for us, sometimes we have trouble believing that is all it takes is believing, nothing more, and salvation is freely given to us.

We ask, Lord there must be more! He says I've done it all just believe.

Let's read on.....

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

You see an employer cannot call a wage a gift, because it is earned.

If we worked for our salvation, it wouldn't be grace, if we stand on our own righteousness, then it would be earnings.

Our faith even goes up and down at times, but our salvation comes only through God's efforts,

He gives it to us freely, not as a wage earned but a gift given.

We will be miserable if we are looking to our deeds for the bases of salvation.

*God does not accept the person on account of his works, but he accepts the works on account of the (believing) person-- [Martin](#)*

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Now Paul moves on to another Old Testament Jewish hero.....

**6** just as David also describes the blessedness of the man to whom God imputes righteousness apart from works:

**7** *"Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven,*

*And whose sins are covered;*

**8** *Blessed is the man to whom the Lord shall not impute sin."\**

If it was by David's works that justified him, he would be out of luck.

King David was guilty of terrible sins -- adultery, murder, and lies -- yet he experienced the joy of forgiveness.

We too can have this joy when we stop denying our guilt and recognize we have sinned,

admit our guilt to God and ask his forgiveness, and let go of our guilt and believe God has forgiven us.

This can be difficult when a sin has taken root and grown over many years, when it is very serious, or when it involves others.

Remember, Jesus is willing and able to forgive every sin.

In View of the tremendous price he paid on the cross, it is arrogant to think that any sins are too great for him to cover. Even if your faith is weak, your conscience is sensitive, and your memory haunts you, God's Word declares that sins confessed are sins forgiven

If David was trying to earn salvation, he was done for.

But he believed God to forgive him, and that his belief was what justified him.

Sometimes we don't feel forgiven, but we cannot go off of feelings, or emotion, but faith in what God says.

1 John 1:9 if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

We believe God's Word over all reason and feelings; it is the ultimate authority for us as believers.

Paul continues on now...

### ***Abraham Justified Before Circumcision***

**9** Does this blessedness then *come* upon the circumcised *only*, or upon the uncircumcised also? For we say that faith was accounted to Abraham for righteousness. **10** How then was it accounted? While he was circumcised, or uncircumcised? Not while circumcised, but while uncircumcised. **11** And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which *he had while still* uncircumcised, that he might be the father of all those who

believe, though they are uncircumcised, that righteousness might be imputed to them also, **12** and the father of circumcision to those who not only *are* of the circumcision, but who also walk in the steps of the faith which our father Abraham *had while still* uncircumcised.

**If the Blessedness comes because of faith, it is then available to all who believe, not just those who performed the ritual of circumcision or a certain ceremony.**

You see Abraham was counted as righteous in Genesis 15:6.

He did not receive the covenant of circumcision until Genesis 17, which was at least fourteen years later.

Therefore, his righteousness was not based on circumcision, but on **faith. David Guzik**

You see in Paul's day; the Jews were putting the burden of circumcision on the Gentiles as well.

It was not correct doctrine; we see how Paul shows the Jewish reader Abraham was righteous because of his belief not ceremony.

It was a heart issue as we discussed previously.

Abraham is the father of all who put their faith in God, and God's Son, he is not just father Abraham to the Jews, but to all who believe.

This would have been hard for the religious Hebrew to except, because they took pride in

the fact that Abraham was their father, and their religious practices.

They worked hard to earn their salvation, and exclude anybody else from receiving it.

Do you sometimes think that this gift of salvation is limited to certain people?

Or do you believe that it is available to all who believe, no matter how big the sin or sinner?

### MICHELLE ARCE'S QUESTION ON HOMOSEXUALITY

IF YOU WOULD HAVE LOOKED AT MY LIFE, WHEN I FIRST CAME TO CHRIST, ACCORDING TO SOME CHRISTIAN STANDARDS I WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN SAVED, IT TOOK ME TWO YEARS TO REFRAIN FROM CUSSING, BUT GOD TOOK OTHER STUFF QUICKER.

I still looked very much like the world in some ways, but God was cleaning me up, just not as fast as the religious expected.

BUT IT IS NOT OUR JOB TO PUT THESE HEAVY TRIPS ON PEOPLE, WE NEED TO SHOW THEM GOD'S GRACE, AND HE WILL CHANGE THE THINGS WRONG IN PEOPLE'S LIVES.

God's grace extends to everyone, everyone should have that chance to believe, we can't ever assume someone is too far gone, to be able to grab a hold of God's promises.

We speak truth in LOVE. Love being key. We can have all the right words, and right

scriptures to throw at people, but if it is not done with love, it is worthless.

Make sure you stick with truth, and let God convert the heart, He is better at it than us.

When someone is not on our timeline of healing, it is in our nature, to put heavier burdens on people, more to do's, but it is the goodness of God that leads to repentance.

Give the Lord a chance to work.

You know dealing with Homosexuality in the millennials is really hard sometimes for the older generations who did not have to deal with it as much.

It is more and more acceptable among our even Christian youth.

Sometimes it is easier for us as a church to avoid it.

Me and Jess in ministry always taught that it is a sin, but we did it in love.

You know some the younger generation would get angry when we would teach this in scripture.

But it was interesting they kept coming back- they were drawn back to the grace of God.

And you know we have to simply leave it in God's hands and timing, and not our demands of change.

It never fails as we journeyed through the Word, and I come across this topic, and

someone would always come in who struggled with homosexuality.

It seems to be taboo to the church, especially to us older groups, we rather say it's not welcome here, and not deal with it, then minister to those who struggle with it.

It seems we find it easier to be more welcoming to the drug addict, adulterer, alcoholic, than some sins that make us feel uncomfortable.

But those caught up in homosexuality are just as deserving to hear the gospel, and have us come alongside them in truth, and point them in the right direction in a loving way as we would anyone else.

And maybe they will soon believe- not because it is demanded of them to change-but because their faith will justify them, and then free them.

I admit, I didn't know how to handle this very subject, at first, it was new to me, and we didn't deal with it like our young people deal with it daily.

And it is easier to say you are not welcome here, but the Lord has severely changed my heart on this issue.

We think by throwing scripture and harsh burdens on those who struggle with homosexuality it will fix it.

But we are less as forceful to enforce same standards on a heterosexual man who struggles daily with lust.

Sometimes we put the standards and rules up right away, hey you've been here two weeks, you should be changed by now, and instead of allowing God time to work, we tend to chase people out of church.

Jess has taught me valuable lessons; she is never shocked by the out of the ordinary young person that comes in.

She listens to their story, they are used to adults putting burdens on them to change, a to do list to healing.

They are used to adults judging them at first glance, and Jess listens to them.

And they talk, they would come in expecting a reaction by their clothes or expressions, and they got love.

And these actions are more powerful, than one thousand words of right doctrine.

It opens doors for them to even hear the truth.

We have been involved with ministries, where when you walk in there is a list of rules and guidelines, dress codes, and such.

And we watched those rules and burdens chase the young people right back out.

So we decided early on, if we ever are called to a ministry, we would lead simply by letting God change the heart.

We will teach the truth of God's word, and let God change hearts, we have noticed He is better at it than we are.

It is only when the sinner receives by faith salvation can any changes come.

Not a moment earlier should anyone be expected to leave their sin behind.

Let's move on to the next few verses....

**13** For the promise that he would be the heir of the world *was* not to Abraham or to his seed through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. **14** For if those who are of the law *are* heirs, faith is made void and the promise made of no effect, **15** because the law brings about wrath; for where there is no law *there is* no transgression.

If the state of California said there was no speed limit the CHP could not pull you over for speeding.

Where there is no law there is no breaking of the law.

The Law's only purpose is to show us how much we mess up; it is there to show us we cannot make it on our own.

Its purpose is to bring us to the point to where we have to cry out to Jesus for help, and when we do, He imputes His righteousness to us,

Then the Law no longer has dominion over us, faith voids out the Regulation.

We are righteous by our faith in Jesus. Our lawlessness is blotted out.

Does that mean we now have a license to sin?

Certainly not, then our faith is empty, and we take for granted the sacrifice Christ has made.

in vs. 15 it says the

If the law does not bring righteousness, then why does it exist?

The law brings wrath. In other words, in a world where people can make real choices, the law's presence automatically includes the possibility of failure and the consequences that would follow.

The law's function is to help people realize their great sinfulness and to impose penalties on those who transgress it.

**But if there is no law, neither is there violation.**

If no one defines right and wrong, then no one knows the difference, and no one can sin.

Or, in terms of the gospel, if the punishment required by the law is diverted to Christ, then we are judged "not guilty"

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Paul continues on...

**16** Therefore *it is* of faith that *it might be* according to grace, so that the promise might be sure to all the seed, not only to those who

are of the law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all **17** (as it is written, "*I have made you a father of many nations*" **quoted from Gen 17:4-5**) in the presence of Him whom he believed – God, who gives life to the dead and calls those things which do not exist as though they did; **18** who, contrary to hope, in hope believed, so that he became the father of many nations, according to what was spoken, "*So shall your descendants be.*" **19** And not being weak in faith, he did not consider his own body, already dead (since he was about a hundred years old), and the deadness of Sarah's womb. **20** He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God, **21** and being fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform.

Abraham believed God, when all God had told him was to leave his land and all that was familiar to him, and go to a land that he will give him,

So he left all that he knew, all his comfort, all that was familiar to him, and trusted God more than his circumstances.

And Abraham believed God past his awkward conditions, it was impossible for him to have children at this point, he was too old to function properly, and Sarah's womb was too old.

**But Abraham believed God past all of that. He still had to act in faith.**

**There are things that have to happen before they could have a baby, and they were well past those days of romance.**

**But Abraham still believed God. So they acted in faith.**

**What about when he took his son up to Mount Moriah, his only son who God had promised a nation would come from.**

**And God told him to sacrifice him. Abraham had faith that God would intervene or bring his son back to life, because God's promise meant more than his understanding.**

**What about us? Do we trust God's promises more than our own understanding?**

**Or do the pressures in life block our view of who God is, and block our view of His promises.**

**Does God's way to salvation seem strange, because we simply don't understand it?**

**Or do you hold on to God's Word above all other reason.**

**We have to come to a place where we just believe.**

**Like is says in verse 20 And be strengthened in faith, giving glory to God,**

God will strengthen us like Abraham, when we believe; He will get us through the craziest trials, circumstances, and temptations.

It is easy to have faith when life is easy, it is easy to hold it together, what about when things get tough, will you still believe?

I had a mother come in one day, who's very socially active 14-year-old daughter was going through chemo.

They noticed a bump in her pelvic area, a few months prior to her coming into my office.

They did some tests, had it removed, it was cancerous, and after it was removed the cancer was then found in lymph nodes, and they were having to deal with this, along with another rebellious teenager who had run away, she was 18 at the time, and running in the world.

The mother was broken, but her faith was increasing through it all, she says it has caused her to draw closer to God.

This is not something natural it is something God gives us the strength to endure through, and our faith then begins to be an example to the unbeliever.

She said her other daughter's rebellious friends were coming around to visit the youngest and they were getting to see Jesus hold their family together through this hard time.

She was worried because she blows it at times, and wonders if it is a bad example. Like she blows it for God.

I got to share with her, kind of what we are being taught this morning. God uses imperfect examples of his perfect love, and faithfulness.

Look at the examples of Faith used here in Romans, Abraham was a liar, and even got impatient with God, and acted presumptuously, and had a child with a woman outside of his marriage.

Look at David, God anointed him king of Israel, David waited patiently for many years, probably questioning his calling as he was running for his life from Saul all those years.

He was far from sinless, he murdered, didn't rule his own children, he got another man's wife pregnant, he was a warrior, hands were covered with blood, so much so he could not build a temple for the Lord.

But God has given us these two examples here in His Word as examples of faith:

And look what it says next

**22** And therefore *"it was accounted to him for righteousness."*

They were righteous not by their deeds, because they came up way short, as we all do, but they believed the Word of God, and that made them righteous.

That is mind-blowing, Abraham is the father of all those who believe by faith in God's Word.

And we see it is our belief in what Jesus did on that cross, was for our sin, that saves us,

We believe when we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us.

The world says that ludicrous, it is a license to sin, and we will just ask again for forgiveness.

But truth is, when you put your faith in Christ, and you understand completely the enormity of your sins, and that He died a painful death for those sins, well you simply sin less and less.

Our faith in turn gives God opportunity to change our hearts, and minds, He gives us the strength to change, and then He gets the glory for it all.

**23** Now it was not written for his sake alone that it was imputed to him, **24** but also for us. It shall be imputed to us who believe in Him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, **25** who was delivered up because of our offenses, and was raised because of our justification.

Paul wants the reader to understand if we, like Abraham believe, righteousness will be imputed to us, we will be saved by our belief.

When we put our faith in Christ, that He died and rose again for our sins,

Not only are our sins blotted out, but we also gain justification before Almighty God.

He not only erases our mistakes, but imputes righteousness to us.

What is Righteousness- the quality or state of being righteous or right.

Are you right, or righteous on your own?

No, it is amazing that God would view us this way.

**Justification definition** -a forensic term, opposed to condemnation.

As regards its nature, it is the judicial act of God, by which he pardons all the sins of those who believe in Christ, and accounts, accepts, and treats them as righteous in the eye of the law, as conformed to all its demands.

In addition to the pardon of sin, justification declares that all the claims of the law are satisfied in respect of the justified.

It is the act of a judge and not of a sovereign.

The law is not relaxed or set aside, but is declared to be fulfilled in the strictest sense; and so the person justified is declared to be entitled to all the advantages and rewards arising from perfect obedience to the law

It proceeds on the imputing or crediting to the believer by God himself of the perfect righteousness

So in short God sees us as though we have never sinned.

**Just if I'd never sinned.** Amazing Grace  
How sweet the Sound.....

And like these two heroes of the bible are imperfect examples of faith, we now grab a hold of that faith, and Jesus will use our imperfect example to lead others to Christ.

I learned this on the job-site; the guys would come against me at first, when I resolved in my heart to claim Jesus as my Savior.

They would mock, cut me down, point out all my faults. They would tear me to pieces.

But over time something interesting happened as trials and conflicts came in our lives, they would see my faith as something sturdy, in uncertain times, and before long they would be drawn to it.

And they would want to know about this God who held me and Jess together through the tough times.

I remember a time, when work really started to die out; we had to start travelling out of city to work.

My boss got a contract to build a tract of homes, really small slam'em ups.

At first we were paid fuel on out of town jobs, it wasn't long before that was taken; the boss had to drop the prices on these projects considerably to keep us working, we were grateful we were working.

My foreman was a hard man and always singled me out, and now that times were tough his threats were more frequent, he had more to hold over my head, everyone in the company would ask why I took the punishment from him.

It was hard but the Lord kept me in that job for a long time after me pleading with him to move me on.

We were moving up and down the streets with these houses, we were busting them out in about 7.5 days, with a crew of 4. No slower or faster than any other crew.

Well one particular day my foreman came to me and pulled me aside, he said you need to fire one of your guys and the owner of the company needs these jobs done in 6.5 days, for him to make the profit he needs on the jobs.

So one guy short, and a quicker deadline, any time we worked over this deadline would be on our own dollar.

It was a hard task; it did not seem fair he singled out our crew once again.

But the guys looked to me, they always watched for me to react when this guy came down on me.

I hated firing guys; it seemed he always had me do it.

So I fired a high school kid who had no bills or family to care for, it was easier than some of the guys I let go.

But it left me with a 150 lb over weight guy, who didn't move fast, but knew how to frame well, and a guy who struggled with shooting up speed, so every other day he was chumming down.

Passing out on me in the truck. It's difficult enough for me to be that close to guys, so this was hard to say the least.

The other crews had 20 plus year veterans and skill. The other crews despised the way I ran my crew, they hated that I prayed every morning with my guys, they hated the Christian music and teaching I played, they cursed at me, they laughed at me, it was tough, but I never denied Jesus through it all, I was not perfect or even close to it, but I glorified God every time I had opportunity.

There were days I wanted to show someone the Old Gary, and take the Sampson approach, with a jaw bone of a donkey, and take them all out in the name of God...

But the Lord would remind me of those who mocked Him.

Well this day, I gathered my remaining crew of misfits, and I said we are going to pray, and trust God will help us through this time, whatever happens we will trust God, with this what seemed impossible task ahead of us

Well something very funny happened, as the other crews mocked us, laughed at us, we worked diligently, it just seemed we had a peace on every slab we walked on to, to build on.

Every cut and measurement seemed to be accurate, little mistakes if any; we had joy in our work, as we would step back day after day, and be over joyed with the work accomplished....

the other crews were in complete chaos, cussing screaming, yelling, arguing, it was a night and day difference. It caused the anger towards us to intensify.

Especially when we started getting our houses done a day before our deadline, it was awesome, we worked with worship music blaring, and our hearts working as unto the Lord, and he blessed our work.

My boss was furious as he now had to pay us for the extra day of work that we didn't work because we were done early. It was the gas money we lost.

God showed me something in this time. That he will use our faith to lead people to him.

It wasn't long before guys from the other crews were praying with us in the morning and evening.

Other journeymen were soon taken off the track of homes, I think because of our boss's embarrassment, and we took over the track, the work ran out eventually, but the lesson is something I will take with me into eternity.

Here's the deal, people need your imperfect example of faith, don't think because you don't measure up, you shouldn't speak up at work or at school.

God will clean up your messes and mistakes, you just believe, and lead others to believe, we are justified by our faith, not by our deeds, or level of perfection.

Besides when you make it known you are a Christian, you will have a new level of accountability; they will keep you in check.

Me and Jess saw many of those guys come to Jesus, who are still walking with the Lord today at our church in Havasu and other places, I was the best man in one of their weddings, and got to officiate another.

We were imperfect examples, and those guys were drawn to Jesus, because we held our ground, we didn't back down even when we messed up, we just kept relying on His grace to cover our mess ups.

I would have these tatted up guys, hugging me- Matt Pulliam, every time, with his shirt off would bury his head in my chest-Jess would remind me in my uncomfot, they are clinging to your God, your Jesus, embrace them for Him.

In fact last year I guest spoke in Havasu, and this same guy came to church that day, when he saw me, he hugged me the same way, he is a construction worker, and just hugs me like a little kid.

But they didn't come around for me, but for the God I believed in.

Many late night visits when their lives were in chaos, they would call to us, for the God we believed in.

They knew we had struggles, they knew we were imperfect, but they also knew we had a God, who was very real, and they were drawn to Him, because they saw our faith never changed when things got hard.

Even when we were in the youth we let them know our hardships, we still struggle, we still question things at times, and we try to be real with them, we don't want to just teach them doctrine, but they have to see how it applies to life.

I remember going through one of the toughest trials we have ever been through,

Jess and I tried to have children for years, and we just got to the point where we were content without them.....

Explain pregnancy – Miscarriage

But the Lord was so faithful to strengthen us in our weakness, and the kids saw their imperfect youth pastor hurting just like they hurt, going through hardships too.

But like me and Jess have said since we started this journey of faith, the Lord gives the Lord takes away blessed be the Name of our God.

And you know those wonderful kids never really looked to us, but the God who held us together.

Don't think you have to be fake about God in this world, the people in your life want a true witness, they want to see God holding you together, even when it is hard, even when your child has cancer, or you are losing your job, your house, or your dealing with a rebellious teenager, stand on the Rock, and watch the people be drawn to Him, your God.

And if you haven't noticed our world is crumbling, and people are starting to worry. And they will be looking to you, and watching your representation of faith.

And as they watch you stand, justified not by your wonderful life, and your own religious deeds, but your imperfect life fully believing God to save you through His Son, God will use you to draw them in.

There is still time for revival in our nation, there is still time for us to see thousands ushered into the Kingdom, and God will use you, who believe Him at his Word to reach them.

So as we watch earthquakes shake, tsunami's hit, economies collapse, people starving, disease and sickness spread like never before, may we not be moved, but stand firm on the Rock, Jesus Christ, our King!

Give Him opportunities to use you for His Glory.

I asked my grandfather a while back, if He has ever seen the world in this state, he said no, not even during WW2 were things this bad.

It reminds me of this passage in Romans 8, and we will end with this:

### Rom 8:18-25

18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. 19 For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God. 20 For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope; 21 because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. 22 For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now. 23 Not only that, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body. 24 For we were saved in this hope, but hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one still hope for what he sees? 25 But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for it with perseverance.

And this body is corrupt, but we and all creation await the promises from His Word.

And as the World crumbles, let's point the lost to our God, the only, the One True God.

Aren't you glad Abraham and David were are examples of faith? Aren't you glad this bible is filled real stories of real men, who force us to look to our very real God.

You now are the imperfect example pointing others to a perfect God.

Let's Go out this week with this mindset, and watch God work, amen?