

W325-AN_INTRODUCTION_TO_ROMANS_3.mp3

[00:00:02] This is a tape recording made in the Chapel of the Open Book. Under the covering title, short Studies for Young Believers. And it's picking up where we left off last time with the emphasis on justification or righteousness in the Epistle to the Romans. Now, in our last recording, we were dealing with chapters one, two and three. I will remind you that chapter one we can sum up under two capital R's righteousness revealed. You remember the passage? For therein is the righteousness of God revealed. And then chapter one on to the 20th verse of Chapter three. We have righteousness required, and it means that the whole world is brought in guilty before God, Jew and gentile. Well, now what we have to do is to consider the relationship of righteousness and redemption. That is the closing part of Romans three, where it commences verse 23, for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. But as time is limited and space, I refer those who are listening to this series, to one belonging to this self-same series which is given under the very words redemption and atonement. Not that we do not wish to repeat ourselves, but in this case it's not necessary. So because time presses and space, you refer back if you wish to righteousness as it's associated with redemption and will pick up our story in chapter four.

[00:01:48] Well, now, before we go any further, I would like you to realize adjusting the large. The disposition of subject matter in this epistle to the Romans. Although we are limiting ourselves to the first five chapters. Roughly speaking, this is not a literary structure. It would demand a good deal more subdivision than I've given it. But this may help you. Romans one, two. Chapter five, verse 11, constitutes the first great member, and it ends up with the words in verse 11. And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement. We'll come to that presently. Then when you come to verse 12, we have the introduction of one man and his name in verse 14 is Adam. Now, that's the difference. The outside section of Romans 1 to 5. Abraham is dominant, but Abraham is never mentioned. In chapter 512, six, 7 or 8. That's an inner teaching. But instead of Abraham, we have Adam. We've gone back. Now, the law which is mentioned in Romans 3 or 4 or part of five, that's the law at Mount Sinai. But when you have the law mentioned in chapter six, seven and eight, it refers to the law of sin and death in the outside section of Romans. It

sins with an S on the end. The inside section of Romans is sin, the root down beneath. So you see there's a need to watch your step as you come along this mighty epistle.

[00:03:26] Then we swing back again after the end of the eighth chapter nine 1011 deals with the dispensation or place of Israel as the olive tree, followed by emphasis upon practice. And then the little piece that comes at the end of Romans 16, where he speaks about a secret or a mystery that has been hushed up or hidden, that is to say, verse 25. Now, to him, that is of power to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began but is now made manifest. We are back again at the secret that is particularly pointing to the introduction of Adam. Adam comes in Genesis. Adam is mentioned once or twice in the Old Testament, but there is no doctrine of the association of anyone with Adam as we get it in. Romans Did you get it in? Romans Five, six, seven and eight? That was a secret. Hushed up until the moment came to be revealed. Well, so far, that's just helped you. I hope I helped you to see the reason why we stop at certain sections. Now, then, for the next few minutes, Chapter four. This I would like you to make as you're heading with two capitals righteousness reckoned and direct your attention immediately because of time to the various ways in which this word reckoned is translated in Romans four, verse three For what? Saith the Scripture.

[00:04:56] Abraham believed God and it was counted unto him for righteousness. That's the word. Verse four. Now, to him, that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. That's the same word. And if you care to underline these or tick them in your Bible so that you can verify them, do so. Verse five. But to him, that work is not that believeth on him that justifies the ungodly. His faith is counted for righteousness. Verse six Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputed righteousness without works, saying Blessed. Are they whose iniquities are forgiven and whose sins are covered? Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin. And then verse ten or verse nine, we say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness. How was it then reckoned at the end of verse 11 that righteousness might be imputed unto them also, and then it picks it up again as we draw to the end and says verse 22, and therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness. And in verse 23, it was imputed to him. And in verse 24, it shall be imputed to us. There is no doubt, is there, that that is the key note It struck over and over and over again. And while it's

quite, quite right to translate it counted or reckoned or imputed, there's yet another way in which it could be translated, and that is numbered.

[00:06:29] Will you first of all turn with me to the Gospel? According to Luke 22:37. The gospel, according to Luke 22:37. Oh. Verse 37. But I say unto you that this that is written must yet be accomplished in me. And he was reckoned among the transgressors for the things concerning me have an end. Now there's our saviour quoting from the prophecy of Isaiah. But I dare say, you know the prophecy of Isaiah intimately enough to know that there we have the word numbered. I'll read it first. 12. Therefore, will I divide the portion with the great and he shall divide the spoil with the strong because he hath poured out his soul unto death. And he was numbered with the transgressors, and he bare the sin of many and made intercession for the transgressors. He was numbered in the New Testament. He was reckoned he was counted. And so we have this principle. Now let this will be a help to us. Our savior is set forth in the Scriptures as sinless. Righteous. Holy acceptable. The beloved of the Father. He knew no sin. He did no sin. And yet he was wounded. He was bruised. He died. He was crucified. Why? How could that be possible? How could it be written? It pleased the Lord to bruise him. It's all wrapped up in that word, reckoned He, who did no sin.

[00:08:17] Was reckoned among the transgressors. That we who have done many sins, should be reckoned among the righteous. It cuts both ways. If God's reckoning is such that he could treat his son like that, who was spotless, then we could have no hesitation in saying it was done on our account, that we, who are far from being spotless, can be treated as righteous. Now, this principle of reckoning is perhaps one that we can illustrate by up to date. Well, not quite up to date. When I first thought of this illustration, it was some years back when you could get a golden sovereign. There are some people you meet who've never had one. But supposing. Supposing I didn't know enough about finance to know whether in the Bank of England they've got any gold at all. But the idea is that you handle paper money. It's convenient. But there is the equivalent in gold somewhere or another under the care of the Bank of England. I hope so, anyhow. Anyhow, you do know that some people prefer paper money because they say you double it when you put it in your pocket. And when you find it out, it increases. But I'm afraid that's a play on words. Don't trust to that too far. But now here is a pound. Note that it definitely warns you it is not a pound. It is not a pound.

[00:09:48] It reads Bank of England. I promise to pay on demand. If you say, well, it is a pound. All right, friends, supposing we had and I've seen this done a golden sovereign dropped into a furnace. Thanks. All right. It'll come out the other end. A blob of gold, and you've got it. Drop that into a furnace and it's valueless. It's gone. You see, this is of no value itself. The golden sovereign is. So my faith that makes me righteous is of no value itself. The only thing about it is that it links me on to the real thing. And while the real thing is there, I can get my money's worth. But if that's not there, I could have stacks of it. You know what happened when the war finished in Germany? You could get millions of marks for that are valueless. So never think that your faith has earned salvation. Your faith is only reckoned for the real thing in the mercy of God, for he was reckoned for her in the mercy of God for us. Now let's see for a few minutes we have left on this first recording how the subject is dealt with in this chapter. For what shall we say then that Abraham, our father, as pertaining to the flesh hath found in the implied answer, is nothing. For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory, and the implied intervention is that he hasn't.

[00:11:21] Not before God. But what? Saith the scripture? That's a good idea, isn't it? You see, we start arguing with one another and we get nowhere. We say what? Saith the scripture. And we are on solid ground. But what? Saith the Scripture. Abraham believed God and it was counted unto him for righteousness. Now, if you go through this chapter, you'll discover two expressions. One is to be counted and one is to be counted for. And they differ. God hasn't to count me for a sinner because I am. But he kept my faith for righteousness. But it isn't. You see the difference? His faith was counted for righteousness because he was resting in the work of another. So, he says, blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin. That's the real thing, because he could if he were still unsaved. And Abraham. Is set before us, as the example says now to him, that worketh. Is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. Paul is very strong on this. Let's get it all over again in Chapter 11. Verse six. In case anyone should doubt the difference between grace and works. Verse six. And if by grace, then is it no more of works? Otherwise, grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace? Otherwise, work is no more work. I don't think you can get it any other way than that.

[00:13:00] It's one or the other. The wages, the things you earn. The wages of sin is death. The gift which you do not earn. The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ

our Lord. So he says. Jeff, Chapter four again. Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not but believeth on him that justify thee. Who? Don't minimize this means don't alter it. Justify the ungodly. It's already prepared in chapter. No, not prepared. We're waiting for it to come again in chapter five. Christ died for the ungodly. There is a need of a place for repentance and for confession. But we mustn't slip those in as sort of part payments. The emphasis in the next chapter is while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. The repentance, the confession, the faith. They all have a place. But that was done for us. So it says here. He says that. In the justifieth the ungodly his faith is counted for righteousness. Then he gives you the example of David, even as David is both of them, Abraham and David, both of them in the line of Christ, even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works. Now, do notice the argument. It's to show us that God imputes righteousness without works, but he puts it the other way round in the proof saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven and whose sins are covered.

[00:14:56] Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin. He proves the one by the negative of the other. He says this is a proof that God imputes righteousness without works because he does not impute sin. So if he does not impute sin, he never leaves you blank. You see a person who has no sin and has no righteousness, is not a fish fouled or good red herring. He doesn't come into the story at all. It's one or the other. So God never takes away your sin without giving you a righteous standing instead. Blessed be God. So now we've had stressed in this opening section the principle upon which God works. We'll pick it up again presently, but we'll bring this to a conclusion in the last few verses of Chapter four. The way it is applied to us. Abraham believed God and it was counted unto him for righteousness. You remember in the Old Testament, and it now applies to you and to me. Verse 22. And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness. Now, it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him. That is a blessed thought in the Scriptures, isn't it? You get the biographies of these Old Testament and New Testament saints. You get their lives set before you. But it's not only for their own sakes, but for ours.

[00:16:21] It was not written for his sake, only that it was imputed to him, but for us also to whom it shall be imputed if we believe on him. Is he? Faith was the link. Faith didn't make the righteousness. It was counted for. It was of no value in itself. But it says if we

believe on him that raised up Jesus, our Lord from the dead. So the resurrection is a part of the finished work of Christ. And to stop short at the cross is to stop, short to soon the cross and the resurrection go together. Now a little revision in verse 25. I'll read it as it stands first. Who was delivered for our offenses and was raised again for our justification, could lead the mind in the English to think that he was raised again in order to obtain our justification. But the strict rendering is this. Who was delivered because of our offenses and was raised again because of our justification. The very fact that our justification was a complete thing in the sight of God by the finished work of his son, he was raised from the dead. Well, that's brought us through our first 20 minutes. A rather a rush, a bit of a cram, but I trust enough has been put into it to stimulate the young believer who will then make these wonderful stories and passages and doctrines his own.