"WHAT'S IN YOUR ACCOUNT?"

Romans 4:1-8

12/8/2019

INTRODUCTION: Verse 1

God's Statement of Accounts

Name	Deposit	Final Balance
Pharisee	**Works**	**Sin (- debt)**
Judaizer	**Works**	**Sin (- debt)**
Abraham	**Faith**	**Righteousness (+ credit)**
David	**Faith**	**Righteousness (+ credit)**
[Your Name]	**?**	**?**

***You can know what is in your account with God!**

In verses 1-8, we find 3 evidences of someone whose account has been credited (with "righteousness") by God.

I. A justified person will not be:
BRAGGING ABOUT HIS SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS (v. 2)

II. A justified person will not be:
WORKING FOR HIS SALVATION (V. 3-5)

III. A justified person will not be:
BURDENED DOWN BY UNFORGIVEN SIN (v. 6-8)

A. You will know the blessing of having:
Your sin "lifted off your shoulders" (v. 7a)

B. You will know the blessing of having:
Your sin "buried out of sight" (v. 7b)

C. You will know the blessing of having:
Your sin "not held against you" (v. 8)

"WHAT'S IN YOUR ACCOUNT?"

Romans 4:1-8

6-10-2023 – HRM Bible Study

INTRODUCTION: Verse 1

God's Statement of Accounts

Name	Deposit	Final Balance
Pharisee	**Works**	**Sin (- debt)**
Judaizer	**Works**	**Sin (- debt)**
Abraham	**Faith**	**Righteousness (+ credit)**
David	**Faith**	**Righteousness (+ credit)**
[Your Name]	**?**	**?**

***You can know what is in your account with God!**

In verses 1-8, we find <u>3 evidences</u> of someone whose account has been credited (with "righteousness") by God.

I. A justified person will not be:

_____ ABOUT HIS _____ (v. 2)

II. A justified person will not be:

_____ FOR HIS _____ (V. 3-5)

III. A justified person will not be:

_____ DOWN BY _____ (v. 6-8)

A. You will know the blessing of having:
Your sin "_____ your shoulders" (v. 7a)

B. You will know the blessing of having:
Your sin "_____ out of sight" (v. 7b)

C. You will know the blessing of having:
Your sin "_____" (v. 8)

"WHAT'S IN YOUR ACCOUNT?"

Romans 4:1-8

12/8/2019

INTRODUCTION: Verse 1

Paul's declaration that all men of all time who were justified, were justified by grace through faith (apart from the Law - 3:21-31) would not be enough to convince a Jew. A Jew would object and demand some proof for such an assertion.

The proof is what Paul presents in chapter 4.

To support his point that justification is by grace through faith alone, Paul now appeals to the "big guns" of the Old Testament - Abraham and David (primarily Abraham).

To a Jew, one of the most respected, honored, looked up to, and exemplary men in the O.T. was Abraham (Jn. 8:33).

V. 1

The phrase "as pertaining to the flesh" modifies the word "father."

Abraham is the Jews' physical forefather according to the flesh (with respect to physical descent - cp. the phrase "according to the flesh" - also describes relationship in Ro. 1:3; 9:3, 5).

Abraham, being the first Jew, is the "father" of the people of Israel.

Jews were <u>natural</u> descendants of Abraham (Jn. 8:37), but because of their unbelief, <u>not</u> all were <u>spiritual</u> descendants (Jn. 8:42). Jesus said the father of all unbelievers is the devil (Jn. 8:44; cp. Eph. 2:2-3; I Jn. 3:8-10).

The Jewish rabbis in N.T. times believed that Abraham had a surplus of goodness that he passed on to each descendent. They wrongly through (like Catholics do today of the patron saints) that they received extra credit or special merits with God simply because Abraham was their forefather –

Lk. 3:8 - "Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, That God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham."

What did Abraham find to save his soul? What was his secret to acquiring righteousness with God?

ILLUS: How millions tremble with anxiety and insecurity at the thought: "Have I done enough to please God?" "Have I done enough to earn righteousness with Him?"

READ VERSE 3.

V. 3

"Counted" = Gk. logizomai. This is a key word in this context. It appears 19 times in Romans, and 11 times in this chapter alone!

(4:3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 22, 23, 24)

In this chapter, it is translated "counted," "imputed," and "reckoned." It is an accounting term that refers to something being entered into the books on one's account.

It means "to set down accounts" - "It (Abraham's belief) was set down on the credit side of the Ledger" (Robertson, p. 350).

ILLUS: The accounting books that kept my financial records at college were credited (several hundred dollars) by my grandfather.

Abraham's belief was the check he deposited in God's bank, and his statement read: "Righteousness is in your account."

God's Statement of Accounts

Name	Deposit	Final Balance
Pharisee	**Works**	**Sin (- debt)**
Judaizer	**Works**	**Sin (- debt)**
Abraham	**Faith**	**Righteousness (+ credit)**
David	**Faith**	**Righteousness (+ credit)**
[Your Name]	**?**	**?**

***You can know what is in your account with God!**

In verses 1-8, we find 3 evidences of someone whose account has been credited (with "righteousness") by God.

I. A justified person will not be:
BRAGGING ABOUT HIS SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS (v. 2)

Anyone who could be justified (saved) by works would have grounds for boasting. They would have something to brag about, something to take pride in (cp. 3:27).

However, no one will ever boast "before (in front of) God."

People may boast before other people about how righteous they have made themselves, but no one will boast before the face of God.

ILLUS: How people boast:

"I go to mass every day"

"I am a member of the Elks club, boy scouts, YMCA, and Knights of Columbus"

"I gave _____ to charity last year"

"I was baptized, confirmed, etc."

"I never did anyone wrong. I have kept the Golden Rule, and the 10 Commandments."

Not even Abraham will boast about how he got into Heaven.

No one in Heaven had it over anyone else (in regard to how they were justified).

The saints of the Bible are flesh and blood like you and me (they were depraved, sin-filled beings, no better or worse than anyone else; they too needed to have the righteousness that God gives).

I Cor. 4:7 - "For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?"

II. A justified person will not be:
WORKING FOR HIS SALVATION (V. 3-5)

V. 3

NOTE: Paul's authority is the Scripture! (the Holy Spirit-inspired writings of the O.T.)

--The Bible is a self-interpreting Book (the O.T. laid the foundation for the N.T. and the N.T. explains and fulfills the O.T.).

--As it was with Paul, the Bible is with us: our only rule of faith and practice.

When we want real truth, we must ask: "What saith the Scriptures?" - Not "What saith my denomination, my rabbi, the contemporary viewpoint of the day, Dr. Spock, Ann Landers, Phil Donahue, or Oprah Winfrey."

Paul quotes Gen. 15:6.

In that context, God tells Abraham to try to number the stars; then God promised "so shall thy seed be" (v. 5).

[Cp. Gen. 12:1-3 - God promised Abraham a land (v. 1), a seed ("a great nation" - v. 2), and a blessing (v. 2b-3)]

"Abraham believed in the LORD"

The word "believed" in Gen. 15:6 is the Hebrew word (aman) from which we get our English word "Amen."

Abraham said "Amen" to God's promises. In other words, he had confidence in God's faithfulness to His Word. He acknowledged that what God said was true and trustworthy.

V. 4

If you work, your abilities, time, and effort are the basis for your wages.

"Reward" = wage, payment, salary.

"Not . . . of grace" -

ILLUS: Suppose your employer says he will pay you $10.00 per hour, and you work 8 hours. When he gives you a check for $80.00, he does not say, "Accept this as a gracious gift from me" - does he? Rather, if you call in sick and he pays you $80.00 (when he was under no obligation to do so), this would be called grace.

You can't earn grace.

"But of debt" -

ILLUS: Someone who works a job for an agreed salary gets a pay check for what was earned. That paycheck is not a gift ("grace"), is it? No. The employer gives because he is indebted to do so. He is obligated to do so.

Will God ever be indebted to man? Will man ever say to God: "Pay up for all the works I did for you"?

Mt. 7:22-23 - "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."

A man who attempts to work his way into being right with God is vainly building an insufficient foundation.

--He is trying to work to earn something that cannot be purchased with man's means.

--All of mankind's good works combined could not earn one man one speck of God's righteousness, nor one minute in God's heaven.

V. 5
"Worketh not" - this refers to working for salvation (justification).

This does not mean that a believer should not work (indeed, he will - Eph. 2:8-10; James 2:20=26).

"Believeth on Him" - NOTE: to believe is not a mere intellectual awareness of Him, but it is a dependence upon Him. It's a reliance on Him.

"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ..." (Acts 16:31).

"Ungodly" - the impious man. A term which describes the lowest of the low. God can justify the "chief of sinners."

The only ones God cannot justify are those who think they are independently godly, when in fact they are not (3:11).

III. A justified person will not be:
BURDENED DOWN BY UNFORGIVEN SIN (v. 6-8)

V. 6
To give more support to justification apart from works, Paul cites David's testimony in Psalm 32:1-2.

If anyone could have been justified by works, it would have been Abraham - "the friend of God" - and David - "a man after God's own heart." (I Sam. 13:14; Acts 13:22).

"Blessedness" - describes the state or condition of being happy after being showered with God's goodness.

V. 7
"Blessed" - There is pleasure when you are free from your sin.

While the world has been deceived into thinking that sin is pleasurable (and it is "for a season" - Heb. 11), the genuinely happy person is the one who knows the joy of forgiveness.

Real (genuine) pleasure is experienced when you are right with God; when clean, not dirty; when declared innocent, not guilty; when free, not burdened under the weight of sin.

A. You will know the blessing of having:
Your sin "lifted off your shoulders" (v. 7a)

"Iniquities" - - lawlessness (it means rebellion; one who had refused to submit his will to God's Law).

We are all Law breakers! (James 2:10).

"Forgiven" = to send away; to release from. The Hebrew word "forgiven" (Ps. 32:1) literally means "to lift off and take away."

When God forgives, He lifts off our sin and guilt and takes it away.

Sin is a burden upon the soul; forgiveness is relief from the load.

Jn. 1:29 - "The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

Hymn - "Burdens are Lifted at Calvary"

B. You will know the blessing of having:
Your sin "<u>buried</u> out of sight" (v. 7b)

"Sins" = to miss the mark (spoken of an archer or slinger); to go astray from God's standards.

Our lack of conformity to God's perfect will is covered.

"Covered" = passive voice - It is <u>God</u> who buries ours in; we are not to (Prov. 28:13 - "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy."

As inexplainable as it is, our offensive sin becomes hidden from God sight.

Our sin is no longer seen by the Judge; it is invisible before the one who sees all; it is out of the sight of the Holy One; and it is as though it had never taken place.

Ps. 130:3-4 - "If thou, LORD, shouldst mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with Thee, that thou mayest be feared."

(V. 3 "mark" = to keep a record of; to keep in mind; to retain).

The only thing God can forget is forgiven sin (Heb. 8:12 - "For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more."

(God is able to forgive and forget.)

Ps. 103:12 - "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath He removed our transgressions from us."

C. You will know the blessing of having:
Your sin "<u>not held against you</u>" (v. 8)

"Sin" = the Hebrew word in Ps. 32:2 referred to the empty, hollow, vain, idolatrous desires of the heart.

All of the <u>nothingness</u> that we once ran after is not recorded in God's Books.

Men may hold your past sins against you, but God will not. "Not" - Gk. - a double negative.

The Lord will in "no way" or "by no means" enter the justified man's sins into His books.

CONCLUSION:

We are saved through faith, not works.

--Jesus Christ did the work for us on the cross (God is only satisfied with His work).

--We work for Christ because He gave us salvation (out of love and appreciation), not to earn it.

Works are an evidence of salvation, not the means to attain it!

1. A justified person will not be bragging about his self-righteousness

2. A justified person will not be working for his salvation

3. A justified person will not be burdened down by unforgiven sin

You will know the blessing of having:

--your sin lifted off your shoulders

--your sin buried out of sight

--your sin not held against you.