

## Salvation by Works Rejects the Love of God; Removal of the Barrier; the Example of Abraham, Gen 15:6; Abraham & Isaac at Moriah, Gen 22:1-14

- 32) There is no opportunity to do any boasting. The guilty are incapable of making themselves innocent.
- 33) Therefore, salvation by works is man's rejection of the love of God expressed by the provision of Christ and is in competition with the work of Christ on the cross.
- 34) Reconciliation is the removal of the barrier between God and man, replacing enmity with peace. The work of Christ makes peace with God available to anyone who believes in Him.
- 35) Peace with God is not acquired by human effort but by the effort of divine integrity on behalf of the saving work of Christ and the individual's free-will response to it.
- 36) Salvation by works is therefore total rejection of the love of God, maladjustment to the justice of God, and insulting to the righteousness of God.
- 37) When works are appropriated for salvation then the righteousness of God must demand that justice reject it.
- 38) This leaves the person in status quo unbelief where he remains condemned with his only recourse being a change of mind regarding Christ at some point before he dies.

**John 3:18** - "The one who believes in Him is not condemned. The one who does not believe has been condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the one and only Son of God."

**v. 36** - "The one who believes in the Son has eternal life. The one who rejects the Son will not see life, but God's wrath remains on him."

**Romans 4:2** - For assuming that Abraham has been justified by means of works, then he has a basis for boasting, but not before God.

19. Paul next gives a biblical example of the hypothetical supposition:

**Romans 4:3** - For what does the Scripture say? **[Genesis 15:6]** "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness."

1. After taking the position of the Judaizers – that Abraham had been justified by his works – Paul adds the caveat that, even so, he could not boast about it before God.
2. Scripture presents more than one justification for us to consider: (1) justification by faith for salvation in Romans 4:1-5 and (2) justification by works for the believer in the context of experiential sanctification in James 2:21-26.
3. The Judaizers took the position of justification by works for salvation, a legalism still suffered today in Judaism.

4. There is a place for justification by works but this is only applicable to the believer in the context of his spiritual growth.
5. The concept contends that if you are a believer but you do not apply what you know, then your post-salvation spiritual life is neutralized and James refers to this as “faith without works is dead” (2:26).
6. James gives Abraham as an example, referencing his willingness to sacrifice Isaac on Mount Moriah. Abraham so submitted to the mandates of God that he was willing to sacrifice his son without pause.
7. Abraham knew that the promise to him of a great nation and an innumerable progeny would be fulfilled and if God wanted him to sacrifice Isaac then it meant that God would in turn resurrect him.

**Hebrews 11:17** - By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was offering up his only begotten son;

**v. 18** - it was he to whom it was said, “In Isaac your descendants shall be called.”

**v. 19** - He considered that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead, from which he also received him back [ from the sacrificial altar ] as a type [ of Christ ].

8. God intervened since Abraham demonstrated that he was willing to apply what he knew to experience because of doctrine in his soul. This is justification by works.

**Romans 4:3** - For what does the Scripture say? [Genesis 15:6] “Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.”

9. This is justification by faith which demonstrates that salvation is by faith alone in Christ alone in every dispensation.
10. Abraham was a Semite at the time of his salvation which occurred in his hometown of Ur, a city in ancient Chaldea.
11. He rejected the worship of the moon god, Nannar \nan'-är\, opting for God's revelation of Jesus Christ.
12. The means by which Abraham came into knowledge of the gospel is not known, but we have the results of his understanding of the message in Genesis 15:6 and Romans 4:3.
13. In these passages we learn of Abraham being justified by faith due to the fact that God imputed to him His divine righteousness.
14. Genesis 15:6 becomes the pattern of justification in the Old Testament and it continues to be the pattern for every dispensation. This is made clear by Paul in Romans, James in his epistle, and the human author of Hebrews.
15. Genesis 15:6 reads this way in the NASB:

**Genesis 15:6** - Then he believed in the Lord; and He reckoned it to him as righteousness.

16. The verb “believed” – אָמַן *'aman* – is in the Hiphil stem which, with the active voice, is used to express causative action. The perfect tense indicates an action that has already been completed. Abram believed in the Lord when he was a citizen of Ur of the Chaldeans.
17. Genesis 11:31 informs us that Abram left Ur headed for Canaan by way of Haran. He was a believer in the Lord before leaving his homeland.
18. None of the popular translations give this impression but instead leave the reader with the impression that Abram was not saved until after he settled in Canaan:
  - 1) King James Version:

**Genesis 15:6** - And he believed in the Lord; and He counted it to him for righteousness.

- 2) New International Version:

**Genesis 15:6** - Abram believed the Lord, and He credited it to him as righteousness.

- 3) And again, the New American Standard Bible:

**Genesis 15:6** - Then he believed in the Lord; and He reckoned it to him as righteousness.

19. The Hiphil perfect tense of *'aman* gives us the translation, “And Abram had believed” but the causative active voice expands it even further, “And Abram already had been caused to believe.”