

Dear Friends and Family,

At the end of Romans 4, Paul writes this of Abraham:

“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

,(emphasis mine)

He who was delivered over because of our transgressions,
and was raised because of our justification.”

Colton Corter, a 9Marks team member, penned a recent article regarding the content of Sunday morning services. He listened to 18 hours of sermons from 9 of the country’s largest churches and then identified 4 trends he found in the content of their preaching.

- 1) The Gospel is, at best, assumed. However, most of the time, it’s entirely absent.
- 2) Repentance is rarely portrayed as something urgent and necessary. Instead, it’s either optional or not worth mentioning at all.
- 3) While the prosperity gospel is absent, its shadow lurks in the background.
- 4) The use of the Bible generally fell into two categories: misuse or abuse.

Corter concludes his article by stating:

“The point of this project is to provide a snapshot of what a large percentage of American church-goers might hear when they darken the doors of a church building on Sunday morning.

We assume that because such preaching is popular in large churches, it’s often aspirational in smaller churches. My main take away, I believe, is to soberly reflect on the sermons we give and the sermons we listen to week in and week out.”

This news is heartbreaking and alarming. To miss the Gospel, to miss repentance, and to miss the sanctity of Scripture is missing it all! This study is sobering and should give you pause when listening to a sermon. It is essential that Scripture be the main source of all preaching, for it is the only source of truth.

I pray earnestly that my sermons are filled with the proper use of scripture, the necessity of repentance, and the truth of the Gospel. Scripture clearly states that we are all sinners in need of a savior. Jesus Christ, God’s only begotten Son, came to this Earth and lived a perfect sinless life. He took our place on the cross to pay a debt we could never pay. To be saved, you must repent, ask for forgiveness for sin, and accept the sacrifice of Christ on the cross. When you confess with your mouth and believe in your heart that Jesus Christ is Lord, you will be saved.

Then, like Abraham, you will be credited with righteousness. In this week's Pastor's Point of View we will soberly reflect on our passage from Romans and the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Pastor's Point of View

The big idea: **Why the Resurrection?**

Day 1 - READ Romans 4:1-8

For all my Revelation fans, we will dive into this book a little bit today. If you've never read the Revelation, I challenge you to take some time to study this book of prophecy. While many things are difficult to understand, when studied in context with other Scripture, we can get a better grasp on its meaning.

1. Think about Paul's comment about not boasting before God on the basis of our works.
READ Revelation 20:11-15
 - a. On what basis will ALL people be judged?
 - b. Will anyone be able to boast in their works before God?
 - c. What is the ONLY test for entrance into heaven?
2. In Revelation 21:27, the Book of Life is given ownership. Who owns it?
3. Why is it important that the Book of Life belongs to Him?
4. Look back at the text in Romans 4. If our deeds are recorded in the other books, and we will be judged by those deeds, but none of them will grant us entrance into heaven, what are we "due" because of our works?
5. How does Paul contrast our works with faith in this passage?
6. Look again at Revelation 21:27, note how nothing unclean can enter. Contrast that with Romans 4:5. What are we credited with by God?

Day 2 - READ Romans 4:9-12

1. Paul reinforces the idea of works not saving us by specifically singling out circumcision.
2. What facts does Paul present about Abraham's faith and his circumcision?
3. Paul also refers to David in his argument here. These two characters represent the beginning of the nation of Israel (Father Abraham) and the beginning of the royal bloodline (King David). Why were these two references relevant to Jews?
4. Read and meditate on Psalm 32.

Day 3 - READ Romans 4:13-18

1. Paul makes a vital and dramatic point here. What does he say in verses 14-15?
2. In verse 16, Paul links faith with grace. Where else in scripture does he make this same assertion? (Ephesians 2:8-9) - I challenge you to memorize this passage.
3. How is it that these guarantee the promise to all descendants?

4. Does this mean that everyone will be saved? Who is Paul calling the true descendants of Abraham here?

Day 4 - READ Romans 4:19-25

1. In his own humanity, Abraham contemplated his own body and Sarah's, yet did not lose faith. How often do life's circumstances influence your faith? Why is this?
2. Memorize verse 20 "do not waver in unbelief, but grow strong in your faith, giving glory to God."
3. Verses 21-25 are what I quoted at the beginning of this study. It is here that we see the true implication of the resurrection.
4. Paul has clearly made the theological case for faith over works. The question now is *faith in what?*
5. With absolute authority, Paul declares that our faith is in a resurrected and fully living savior.
6. We are those who believe in Him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead. We have known the fullness of God's plan of salvation. He was delivered over for our transgressions AND was raised because of our justification.

Why the Resurrection?

Romans 6:4-5

Therefore we have been **buried** with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was **raised** from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in **newness of life**. For if we have become united with *Him* in the likeness of His **death**, certainly we shall also be *in the likeness* of His **resurrection**.

As you observe Easter this Sunday, keep in mind these passages.
Christ knew the pain he would face at the cross but he went willingly.
He knew the betrayal, but he went willingly.
He knew the suffering, but he went willingly.

Do we do the same?

Do we stand for God and his holy word, knowing it may cause us pain, suffering, or betrayal?

Or do we shy away from speaking the truth of Christ for fear that it may bring us shame?

We know the future we have with Christ!

God has given us a promise.

Yet there are millions who are without the same hope we have!

The resurrection gives us hope.

It is the future we know that awaits us.

One day, we, like Him, will be resurrected into everlasting life!

May you share that hope with someone this week!

Walking in Faith,

Pastor Matt

To read an archive of past Pastor's Point of View devotionals please visit
<https://mplong.wordpress.com/pastors-point-of-view/>

The Pastor's Point of View© is a weekly, subscription based, email devotional. It is a unique creation and ministry of First Baptist Church of Havelock, written by Senior Pastor Dr. Matthew Long. Therefore, The Pastor's Point of View© is a copyright publication of First Baptist Church of Havelock. You are free to copy, share, forward, and otherwise use this information as you see fit so long as credit is given to the author and ministry. You may unsubscribe to this devotional at any time by simply replying to the weekly email with the word 'STOP' in the body of the message. "May the LORD bless you and keep, may He make His face shine upon you." Numbers 6:24-25

Dr. Matthew Long

Senior Pastor

[FBC of Havelock](#)

*Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us **RUN** with endurance the race that is set before us -- Hebrews 12:1*