

## **Kingdom Perspective: Living out God's Grace in a Divided World**

*Justified by Faith*

Pastor Jimmy Witcher

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### **Hebrews 10:17–18 (NLT)**

Then he says, “I will never again remember their sins and lawless deeds.” And when sins have been forgiven, there is no need to offer any more sacrifices.

### **Romans 4:1–3 (NLT)**

Abraham was, humanly speaking, the founder of our Jewish nation. What did he discover about being made right with God? If his good deeds had made him acceptable to God, he would have had something to boast about. But that was not God's way. For the Scriptures tell us, “Abraham believed God, and God counted him as righteous because of his faith.”

### **Genesis 15:1–6 (NLT)**

Some time later, the Lord spoke to Abram in a vision and said to him, “Do not be afraid, Abram, for I will protect you, and your reward will be great.” But Abram replied, “O Sovereign Lord, what good are all your blessings when I don't even have a son? Since you've given me no children, Eliezer of Damascus, a servant in my household, will inherit all my wealth. You have given me no descendants of my own, so one of my servants will be my heir.” Then the Lord said to him, “No, your servant will not be your heir, for you will have a son of your own who will be your heir.” Then the Lord took Abram outside and said to him, “Look up into the sky and count the stars if you can. That's how many descendants you will have!” And Abram believed the Lord, and the Lord counted him as righteous because of his faith.

## **1. We are counted as right with God through faith in Jesus Christ alone.**

### **Romans 4:4–8 (NLT)**

When people work, their wages are not a gift, but something they have earned. But people are counted as righteous, not because of their work, but because of their faith in God who forgives sinners. David also spoke of this when he described the happiness of those who are declared righteous without working for it: “Oh, what joy for

those whose disobedience is forgiven, whose sins are put out of sight. Yes, what joy for those whose record the Lord has cleared of sin.”

*We must never forget that grace is a gift received by faith, not the reward for those who have “done good.”*

## **2. God sees everyone for who they truly are – this is the Kingdom Perspective.**

- **Blessed are the poor in spirit:** Having a Kingdom Perspective begins with a daily recognition of our dependence on God.
- **Blessed are those who mourn:** Acknowledging the pain in this world and responding with compassion is essential to a Kingdom Perspective.
- **Blessed are the humble:** Humility leads us to holy curiosity (“Why are they behaving this way?”) and heart connections with people.
- **Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for justice:** It is right to stand for what is just and resist what is wrong, we just need the right target.
- **Blessed are the merciful:** Showing mercy is vital, as we have received mercy from God.
- **Blessed are the pure in heart:** We can only discern right and wrong with a heart that is pure before God.

### **Psalm 139:23–24 (NLT)**

Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. Point out anything in me that offends you, and lead me along the path of everlasting life.

- **Blessed are the peacemakers:** We are called to promote peace through God’s truth shared in love.
- **Blessed are those persecuted for righteousness:** Standing firm for the Kingdom will lead to persecution, reminding us of our commitment to Christ.

### **Romans 4:20-5:2 (NLT)**

Abraham never wavered in believing God's promise. In fact, his faith grew stronger, and in this he brought glory to God. He was fully convinced that God is able to do whatever he promises. And because of Abraham's faith, God counted him as righteous. And when God counted him as righteous, it wasn't just for Abraham's benefit. It was recorded for our benefit, too, assuring us that God will also count us as righteous if we believe in him, the one who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead. He was handed over to die because of our sins, and he was raised to life to make us right with God.

Therefore, since we have been made right in God's sight by faith, we have peace with God because of what Jesus Christ our Lord has done for us. Because of our faith, Christ has brought us into this place of undeserved privilege where we now stand, and we confidently and joyfully look forward to sharing God's glory.

### **3. Recognizing and accepting the full gift of grace God has given us keeps us aligned with His Kingdom Perspective.**

*When we are reconciled to the God who is our father, we discover that he wants not simply to enjoy this one-to-one relationship, but to enlist us in his service in working for his **kingdom**. ... The first two verses of chapter five, then, celebrate our access into the very presence of God himself. We have 'the right to approach': this is the language of the **Temple**, where certain people get to come near to where God is. 'Grace' here is almost a shorthand for the presence and power of God himself. As a result of being justified by faith, we are, in the old phrase, 'in a state of grace', a status, a position where we are surrounded by God's love and generosity, invited to breathe it in as our native air.*

*As we do so, we realize that this is what we were made for; that this is what truly human existence ought to be like; and that it is the beginning of something so big, so massive, so unimaginably beautiful and powerful, that we almost burst as we think of it. When we stand there in God's own presence, not trembling but deeply grateful, and begin to inhale his goodness, his wisdom, his power and his joy, we sense that we are being invited to go all the way, to become the true reflections-of-God, the true image-bearers that we were made to be."* <sup>1</sup> N.T. Wright

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<sup>1</sup> Wright, T. (2004). *Paul for Everyone: Romans Part 1: Chapters 1-8* (pp. 82–83). Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.