



[Understanding the Christ](#)

## **Episode 20 - Raised to Righteousness: Understanding the Cross and Resurrection**

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Scott Stanley explores Romans 4 and the meaning of the cross, showing how Abraham's faith foreshadows our call to believe that God the Father raised Jesus from the dead and imputes righteousness to those who trust Him.

The episode explains salvation as a present way of living—dying to self, committing one's spirit to God, and being transformed into the image of Christ through faith, understanding, and the work of the Holy Spirit.

Modified Transcript:

Scriptures are transcribed directly with notations. Refer to KJV for verbatim wording.

Hi, I'm Scott Stanley with DTG Ministries, continuing the videocast concerning understanding the Christ. Today, we're going to get into some deeper things. There are so many things about Jesus, without spiritual understanding, without understanding who He is, and 'why did He die'? ... all of those things need to be grasped by those who believe.

You need to understand that. I'm not saying you need to know every verse in the Bible that explains it, but you need to understand the concepts because the concepts concerning Jesus and what happened at the cross all deal with our salvation.

See, when I consider our salvation, I've said before, it isn't where you're going to spend eternity, it's how you're living your life right now. So God has given us the tools we need to live our lives now free from sin. But all of my church life, being raised a Baptist, it was just "Bow your head, pray the prayer, get baptized, and you're saved." That was what they would say. "You're saved."

And really, if you don't understand salvation, if that's what you think... because Peter states in 1 Peter 1:9, *"The aim of your faith, the completion of your faith is the salvation of your soul."* How do we complete our faith except we learn the truth because *"faith comes by hearing, hearing by the word of God"* (Rom 10:17). We are told the truth, and then we act on it, we live it.

Now, there is something about Christ that comes out in Romans 4. Romans 4 is about Abraham, and it speaks volumes concerning our salvation, but there's also a statement made about Christ that I want to touch on today. So let's turn in our Bibles to Romans chapter 4, and I want to start reading at verse 13.

Rom 4:13 For the promise that he should be the heir of the world (speaking of Abraham) was not to Abraham, or to his seed through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.

Faith is what he was told. The law didn't come for another four hundred years. Verse 14,

Rom 4:14 For if they which are of the law are heirs (of God's salvation), then faith is made void (what you've been taught is made void), and the promise that God gave is made of none effect:

Rom 4:15 Because the law works wrath, and where you don't have law, there's no transgression.

Rom 4:16 Therefore, it is of faith, that it might be by grace....

Grace is God being long-suffering with you, going the extra mile, turning the other cheek, teaching you despite your actions and your attitude, wanting to help you.

Rom 4:16 Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that which is of the faith of Abraham. Abraham is the father of us all (of the believers).

Rom 4:17 (As it is written, I have made you a father of many nations,) before him whom he believed, God, who quickens the dead, and calls those things which be not as though they were.

Now, just follow this for a minute. Abraham was given the promise, "*You will be a father of many nations,*" verse 18,

Rom 4:18 Who against hope believed that promise... who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, so shall thy seed be. (So he believed what God told him.)

Rom 4:19 And being not weak in his faith (really strongly believing what God had said to him), he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about a hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb.

So here they were, too old to have children, yet God had given him that promise. So, despite his own body and Sarah's body, he remained faithful to that promise.

Rom 4:20 He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but he was strong in his faith, he was giving glory to God;

Rom 4:21 And being fully persuaded that, what God had promised, he was able to perform.

Rom 4:22 Therefore it was imputed unto him for righteousness.

Now what did we just read? God gave Abraham a promise, and Abraham believed it to the point of acting on it. He didn't just simply have mental assent that, "Okay, I'm going to be the father of many nations." It said he staggered not when he looked at the impossibility of that. He's a hundred years old, and his wife's womb is dried up. Yet God said, "*You're going to have a child. You're going to be the father of many nations.*" So

Abraham believed that, despite the way things looked. Why is that key? Let's go back to Romans 4:23.

Rom 4:23 Now, it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him;

Rom 4:24 But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead.

Now, let's stop right there just a minute. Abraham was a type of us at the end of the world, being given a promise, and in this promise, it didn't just simply happen because God told him. This was something Abraham dealt with throughout his life and believed it, and refused to be moved from that promise.

Now God has given you and me promises too, and it's by means of these promises, as we believe and understand them, we become partakers of divine nature (2Pe 1:4). But I'm going to tell you the promise that He has given us, that we are to be made in the image of His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ (Rom 8:29).

Why is that so significant? Because Jesus is the image of the invisible God (Col 1:15). Jesus is the fullness of divinity in the body (Col 2:9). Jesus has the faith of God. You're to be made in His image. Just like Abraham, he was given a promise, but he would not stop until that promise was fulfilled. He continued to live in that promise because the land is your mind. He never left the promise of the land, the promised land. He stayed in that mindset. It didn't matter where he was geographically. He was in the promised land in his understanding.

Now Paul says, *"Now these things are written for us."* It wasn't just for him. See, Genesis 15:6, *"he believed God, and God imputed that to him for righteousness."* But then you keep reading as Paul builds on that. Abraham lived it every day of his life. Therefore, it was imputed unto him. This is so much like James 2:22, that *we believe and our works will perfect our faith*, and *"The perfection of your faith, the completion of your faith is the salvation of your soul"* (1Pe 1:9). So God is teaching us to overcome sin and be made in the image of Jesus. As we learn that truth and stay in that truth, our lives will perfect what we've been taught. Our lives will perfect the faith.

There's no contradiction between righteousness by faith and James saying righteousness is by works. There's no contradiction there because you have to believe it. It has to be in your mind before you can say it or do it. So, God puts it in your mind that He's going to make you like His Son. Now that it's there, you act on it using the tools He's given you, and that action will complete the process. You will be made in the image of Jesus Christ. You start by believing the truth, and you act on that. That's something coming out strongly in Romans 4. So now let's get back to where we left off. I'm going to go ahead and read verse 24 again.

Rom 4:24 But for us also, to whom it shall be (shall be, future) shall be imputed (what? righteousness), if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead.

Question. I know back in the 1980s, there was a big thing going on in my church as to who raised Jesus from the dead. Now, maybe that seems silly. It does to me now, but back then, people were wondering, "Well, did Jesus raise himself?" Because he said in John 2, "*Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.*" So, people were totally confused. Did Jesus raise himself from the dead?

Well, if you turn back to Acts chapter 2, and I believe it's verse 32 in my Bible, they will give a list of verses in the margin, all stating that God the Father raised Jesus from the dead. But if you want to just skip all that and get right to the crux of it, just turn to Galatians chapter 1.

Gal 1:1 Paul, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead.)

That's pretty blunt; that's pretty straightforward. You can read all the verses that say that, but what does it mean that Jesus destroyed this temple in three days? "*I will raise it up,*" because he says in John 10, he was given authority to lay down his life and given authority to receive it again. He received it again (Jhn 10:18).

So if you figure he's lying there dead and God the Father raises him from the dead and he stands up and he's alive... "*Destroy this temple, in three days I'll raise it up*" (Jhn 2:19). God moved on that man and raised him from the dead. God, his Father, did. Now that's significant as we finish Romans 4, again, verse 24.

Rom 4:24 But for us also, to whom it shall be (future) imputed, if we believe on the Father, him that raised Jesus from the dead, (if you believe on the Father);

Rom 4:25 Who (speaking of Jesus), was delivered (that word "delivered" is "surrendered") ... Jesus was surrendered because of our offences...

That word "offense" is your iniquity. Now, I could go through the chain of verses to show you that. Right now, I want you to understand the offenses mentioned in Romans, especially 5, he's talking about your iniquity.

Rom 4:14 Jesus was delivered (or surrendered) because of our iniquity...

Without the iniquity, you'll never have the offense. And remember Titus 2:14, *he gave himself to redeem us from all iniquity. The first iniquity you're delivered from is the angry God.* God doesn't need this sacrifice to be appeased. God wants this sacrifice because we need it.

Rom 4:25 He was surrendered because of our offenses (our iniquity), but he was raised again (by the Father) for our justification (that word "justification" is "an act of declaring you justified").

Now, let me ask a simple question. Let's think about this. God the Father surrendered His Son to you, for God so loved the world, He gave you His only begotten Son. He surrendered His Son to redeem us from iniquity. Again, the first iniquity he redeems you from is the angry God.

When somebody tells you the truth about the cross, I know in my Christian life, being raised a Baptist, I was taught about the cross. I was taught about the cross all my life. But one day, I began to realize that it is pagan to think God needs a human sacrifice before he can forgive us, and God began to make that clear to me that that's paganism. Something else is going on at the cross.

So he surrendered his Son to redeem us from iniquity. Let me just put it like that. But he raised his Son to declare us righteous. Now think about it. God surrenders his son, he dies, so that we can see iniquity, the result of iniquity, and that's what the cross portrays.

The crown of thorns, the stripes on the back, nakedness, darkness... that is all caused by iniquity. And Jesus said, *"Just like he raised the serpent on the pole,"* that's Satan (Jhn 3:14). So Jesus was portraying the author of iniquity and the result of iniquity.

But then he said what he said on the cross. After the sun went down, He was no longer the Son of God. He was portraying humanity, and as a man, He said, *"I feel forsaken. Why have you forsaken me?"* When you look at the guilt, the anger, what is portrayed on that cross, that's how it makes you feel. Your guilt makes you feel like that. The things that you've done in your life make you feel forsaken of God.

But nevertheless, I thirst. I feel forsaken, but oh God, I know you possess the truth. I thirst. I want your truth, and I am finished doing this myself. I've tried everything under the sun to serve you. I got baptized, I spoke in tongues, I did everything I'm supposed to do, according to the way I read the Bible, but I'm finished doing that. Here's what I'm going to do. "Into your hands, I commit my spirit."

That is death to self, folks. Your spirit is your emotional side. Your emotional side is how you see a thing. How do you see it? That's why the first iniquity that he takes care of is that you don't see God as the angry God... he needs a human sacrifice. No, you don't see God like that anymore. You give him your spirit, and you will see God differently. You see yourself differently. You now see the guilt, the bitterness, the anger you've been carrying. You now see these things; you see the darkness you've been in.

You give him your spirit. He will reveal yourself to you so that you can see through your emotional side. "I'm giving you my spirit. I want you to teach me. I'm giving up how I see it. I want to know how you see it." So every subject in the Bible, every subject, keeping the law, anything... You go to the Lord and you say, "Well, how do you see this? Yeah, I've got all these verses. I've read them all my life, and it hasn't helped me. I'm still sinning. I'm still struggling." I heard one guy say, "I've still got demons."

Well, Jesus Christ, the truth will deliver you from that. So, not to get too far out, but realize too, at this point, the cross, what I'm talking about, is made for someone who believes already, and their understanding they're getting from the Universal Church, or from whoever it may be, is not working. Yeah, maybe you quit smoking, maybe you quit drinking, maybe you're a little nicer at home. But that isn't what he's talking about.

The whole thing God wants from us is how are you living your life now toward the people around you? He's not looking at you if you're eating meat or drinking alcohol or going to dances, or watching movies. What are you doing in responding to other people? Are you walking in love? Because he wants you to love him and love your neighbor as yourself. If I love my neighbor, I'm loving God. That's all he's asking of me.

I'm not saying go out and get drunk. I don't mean that at all. There are things we do in our lives, such as with alcohol, that may cause us not to act in love toward other people. Therefore, you don't want to drink it. You don't want to get drunk. But the key is not to stop getting drunk. The key is how you're treating people, and we know he wants us to walk in love.

God would have us walk in love at all times. So, he wants us to believe in him who raised Jesus from the dead, and he that raised Jesus from the dead raised his Son to tell you you're acquitted. You've been acquitted. To tell who? Well, on the cross, when you see the serpent on the pole, that serpent is a depiction of us and our adversity. He's depicting us.

So on the cross, it is me I'm looking at. But if I could look at the cross, as if looking at a mirror, and if I could see myself, if I could see, this is what iniquity has done to me. This is how iniquity has made me feel, and also understand this makes me feel forsaken, but I still thirst for God. What you're seeing on the cross is a believer who hasn't come to an understanding of the cross, but he's seeking God. I mean, if you could just sense this, get this, that what is being portrayed on the cross is the spirit of God and the spirit of man.

Like I said before, the wind blows; you don't know where it comes from or where it goes. Well, that's the way this is. The spirit of God is being portrayed on the cross. This is the Holy Spirit. Where does it come from? Jesus says, *"Well, you see the effect of the wind, but you don't know where it has come from or where it's going"* (Jhn 3:8). Well, so is this. You're seeing the Spirit of God portrayed. Where is it coming from? Where is that wind coming from?"

It's coming from a loving Father, because there is no such thing as the Trinity. It is the love of God for His Son that is creating the scene on the cross to help His children be saved from iniquity. That's how Jesus gives you the authority to be a child of God. So what about man? What about all that iniquity? Where's that coming from? That's coming from the adversary that all of us have in our hearts. That's why the serpent on the pole.

So we see it's coming from a loving Father, and the serpent on the pole is humanity, and just simply put this together. Two things are happening there. Two things are going on. One is the spirit of man, and the other is the spirit of God, and you could see it in a cross. That bar going across that Jesus's hands were nailed to, see, it's parallel to the earth. That represents the spirit of man, but the other going up and down, that's God reaching into the heavens.

But his feet were nailed to that. Your feet are the direction of your mind. Your feet show the direction of your mind. When somebody's walking, look at their feet. You see what direction they're going. You have to go in the direction of your feet. Well, they nailed his feet to the wood, going up and down, vertical... the direction of his mind. He's focused on God, but his hands, his works, are nailed to the horizontal board- humanity's spirit, Satan.

"Deliver me. My mind is set on you. Look, I feel forsaken, but I'm thirsting. See, I know you've got the answers. I know you do, and I'm going to quit trying to do this myself. Father, into your hands I commit my emotional side. I'm asking you to teach me, to show me what direction to walk and live. I'm asking you, take my spirit and teach me." And in so doing, you find death to self.

Now, why did God raise Jesus? Because it shows that you are acquitted, the guy who can come to the Lord and find death on that cross. Somebody has to explain it to you. I know when I first came to the Lord, I cried out for God to forgive me, and I could go read about the cross and read all of those things, but no one explained it to me. I can remember asking a stupid question, you know, why did he have to die on the cross? Why couldn't they just drown him? Why do they have to go through all this? Just stab him to death or something. Why are you doing this to him?

Because it portrayed the Holy Spirit. It's the Holy Spirit that gives you the tools to overcome, and that's what I'm trying to give you now. I want you to see God's understanding of humanity as portrayed on the cross and how you find death to overcome it. Jesus on the cross was you. If you see the iniquity, if you find death, giving him your spirit... "I want to see it the way you see it." That's the guy who finds death, that God will raise from the dead.

How do I know? Because he raised his Son from the dead, for my acquittal. When he raised his Son, what he is saying is any of you guys who come to the cross and see yourself like that, and pray that prayer, "I feel forsaken, I feel so bad, I feel forsaken, but I know you have the truth, and I'm finished. I'm finished doing this myself. I commit my spirit to you" ... that's the guy that's being portrayed when the Father raises his Son from the dead.

It was a complete picture of the salvation of humanity. This is the life; this is the purpose of Jesus Christ, that we might see this truth and live it. Soak it all in. Let it become your life and find yourself being made in the image of the only-begotten Son who is the fullness of the Godhead bodily.