Promises Made to Abraham:

## 1-While in Haran

### **Genesis 12**

 <sup>1</sup>Now the LORD had said to Abram: "Get out of your country, From your family And from your father's house, To a land that I will show you.
<sup>2</sup> I will make you a great nation; I will bless you

And make your name great; And you shall be a blessing.

<sup>3</sup> I will bless those who bless you,
And I will curse him who curses you;
And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

<sup>4</sup>So Abram departed as the LORD had spoken to him, and Lot went with him. And Abram *was* seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran.

## 2- When Abraham arrived at the border of Canaan-

Genesis 12:<sup>7</sup>Then the Lord appeared to Abram and said, "To your descendants I will give this land." And there he built an altar to the LORD, who had appeared to him.

## **3-After Lot separated from Abraham-**

Genesis 13: 14And the LORD said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him: "Lift your eyes now and look from the place where you are—northward, southward, eastward, and westward; <sup>15</sup>for all the land which you see I give to you and your descendants forever. <sup>16</sup>And I will make your descendants as the dust of the earth; so that if a man could number the dust of the earth, *then* your descendants also could be numbered. <sup>17</sup>Arise, walk in the land through its length and its width, for I give it to you."

### 4-After Lot's rescue from the war of the 4 kings

### Genesis 15

<sup>1</sup>After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision, saying, "Do not be afraid, Abram. I *am* your shield, your exceedingly great reward."

<sup>2</sup>But Abram said, "Lord GOD, what will You give me, seeing I go childless, and the heir of my house *is* Eliezer of Damascus?" <sup>3</sup>Then Abram said, "Look, You have given me no offspring; indeed one born in my house is my heir!"

<sup>4</sup>And behold, the word of the LORD *came* to him, saying, "This one shall not be your heir, but one who will come from your own body shall be your heir." <sup>5</sup>Then He brought him outside and said, "Look now toward heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them." And He said to him, "So shall your descendants be."

<sup>6</sup>And he believed in the LORD, and <u>He accounted it to him for</u> righteousness.

<sup>7</sup>Then He said to him, "I am the LORD, who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to inherit it."

<sup>8</sup>And he said, "Lord GOD, how shall I know that I will inherit it?"

<sup>9</sup>So He said to him, "Bring Me a three-year-old heifer, a threeyear-old female goat, a three-year-old ram, a turtledove, and a young pigeon." <sup>10</sup>Then he brought all these to Him and cut them in two, down the middle, and placed each piece opposite the other; but he did not cut the birds in two. <sup>11</sup>And when the vultures came down on the carcasses, Abram drove them away.

<sup>12</sup>Now when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and behold, horror *and* great darkness fell upon him. <sup>13</sup>Then He said to Abram: "Know certainly that your descendants will be strangers in a land *that is* not theirs, and will serve them, and they will afflict them four hundred years. <sup>14</sup>And also the nation whom they serve I will judge; afterward they shall come out with great possessions. <sup>15</sup>Now as for you, you shall go to your fathers in peace; you shall be buried at a good old age. <sup>16</sup>But in the fourth generation they shall return here, for the iniquity of the Amorites *is* not yet complete."

<sup>17</sup>And it came to pass, when the sun went down and it was dark, that behold, there appeared a smoking oven and a burning torch that passed between those pieces. <sup>18</sup>On the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying:

"To your descendants I have given this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the River Euphrates—<sup>19</sup>the Kenites, the Kenezzites, the Kadmonites, <sup>20</sup>the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Rephaim, <sup>21</sup>the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Girgashites, and the Jebusites."

#### 5-When Abraham was 99-

#### Genesis 17

<sup>1</sup>When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram and said to him, "I *am* Almighty God; walk before Me and be blameless. <sup>2</sup>And I will make My covenant between Me and you, and will multiply you exceedingly." <sup>3</sup>Then Abram fell on his face, and God talked with him, saying: <sup>4</sup>"As for Me, behold, My covenant is with you, and you shall be a father of many nations. <sup>5</sup>No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you a father of many nations. <sup>6</sup>I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you. <sup>7</sup>And I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and your descendants after you. <sup>8</sup>Also I give to you and your descendants after you the land in which you are a stranger, all the land of Canaan, as an everlasting possession; and I will be their God."

<sup>9</sup>And God said to Abraham: "As for you, you shall keep My covenant, you and your descendants after you throughout their generations. <sup>10</sup>This *is* My covenant which you shall keep, between Me and you and your descendants after you: Every male child among you shall be circumcised; <sup>11</sup>and you shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskins, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between Me and you. <sup>12</sup>He who is eight days old among you shall be circumcised, every male child in your generations, he who is born in your house or bought with money from any foreigner who is not your descendant. <sup>13</sup>He who is born in your house and he who is bought with your money must be circumcised, and My covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant. <sup>14</sup>And the uncircumcised male child, who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin, that person shall be cut off from his people; he has broken My covenant."

<sup>15</sup>Then God said to Abraham, "As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her name Sarai, but Sarah *shall be* her name. <sup>16</sup>And I will bless her and also give you a son by her; then I will bless her, and she shall be *a <u>mother of</u> nations*; kings of peoples shall be from her."

<sup>17</sup>Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed, and said in his heart, "Shall *a child* be born to a man who is one hundred years old? And shall Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear *a child?*" <sup>18</sup>And Abraham said to God, "Oh, that Ishmael might live before You!"

<sup>19</sup>Then God said: "No, Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac; <u>I will establish My covenant</u> with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his descendants after him. <sup>20</sup>And as for Ishmael, I have heard you. Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly. He shall beget twelve princes, and I will make him a great nation. <sup>21</sup>But My covenant I will establish with Isaac, whom Sarah shall bear to you at this set time next year." <sup>22</sup>Then He finished talking with him, and God went up from Abraham.

### 6-After Abraham had attempted to sacrifice Isaac

Genesis 17:15Then the Angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time out of heaven, <sup>16</sup>and said: "By Myself I have sworn, says the LORD, because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only *son*—<sup>17</sup>blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the

heaven and as the sand which *is* on the seashore; and your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies. <sup>18</sup>In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice." <sup>19</sup>So Abraham returned to his young men, and they rose and went together to Beersheba; and Abraham dwelt at Beersheba. Romans 4:13-25

### <sup>13</sup>For the promise that he would be the heir of the world *was* not to Abraham or to his seed through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.

Abraham was given a promise by God 4 times that he would have a multitude of descendents. 2 more times he was told that he was given the promised land. The first promise was given prior to Abraham leaving Haran. So the promise had nothing to do with the law. It wasn't even based on Abraham's performance. The promise was given before he did anything. So the promise that Abraham would be heir of a multitude didn't come through the law. It was prior to the law, made directly to Abraham.

The promise that Abraham would be "heir of the world?" This is probably referring to things that Abraham may not have fully understood. Genesis 12 says <u>And in you all the</u> <u>families of the earth shall be blessed."</u>

In Genesis 17 . <sup>18</sup>In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice."

It looks to me like Paul is talking about the fact that Abraham would be the father of all believers. And as such, the children of God will inherit the earth.

Matt 5: <sup>5</sup> Blessed *are* the meek,

For they shall inherit the earth.

- If this is true we need to understand that this passage is talking about Abraham being the father of all who believe. And all who believe are his offspring and his heirs.
- Now **how** did this promise come to Abraham? It came through the righteousness of faith. Abraham didn't do anything to earn this reward. But once he heard the promise he believed it. And when he believed it was credited to Him as righteousness. Also when he believed it he **lived** according to that belief. That cannot be left out.

Now, the next thing that Paul says will show that there can be no mixture. It cannot be half of grace and faith (with works of faith that naturally follow) and half of works of the law. It is an either/or alternative. The Jewish crowd would probably like to create some kind of mix where their star performer, Abraham, could get some merit by works. But Paul will have none of it.

# <sup>14</sup>For if those who are of the law *are* heirs, faith is made void and the promise made of no effect,

This is the situation. On the left hand you have the law. The person who perfectly carries out the law with no sin and no sin nature merits reward by their perfect performance. No grace is necessary. A reward is earned and must be paid by a just God.

On the right hand you have a promise made by God from God's infinite Grace. Remember that grace is unmerited favor. The components to this side of the equation are Grace, a promise to believe, a faith to exercise in believing that promise, and righteousness that is imputed due to belief in the promise. Merit cannot have anything to do with this transaction. Grace is what? Unmerited favor. You simply cannot have unmerited favor that is merited. You can't have un-grace grace. You can't earn grace or you violate the nature of what Grace is.

So if the heirs are heirs because of conformity to the law, if the heirs have <u>earned</u> their status, we have completely undone salvation by faith in the promises of God. The words here are very strong. I read that the words for void and no effect in the text are in the perfect tense. Phillips in his paraphrase says For if, after all, they who pin their faith to keeping the law were to inherit God's world, it would make nonsense of faith in God Himself and would destroy the whole point of the promise.

Paul is serving notice that if any of this is won by performance to the law's standard, the whole idea of grace faith and promise are destroyed. At that point the burden of our salvation lies on our ability to perfectly conform to God's law 100% of the time. And we are going to have a problem with that as seen in the next verse.

<sup>15</sup>because the law brings about wrath; for where there is no law *there is* no transgression.

Why did God give the law? Gal 3:19What purpose then does the law serve? It was added because of transgressions, till the Seed should come to whom the promise was made;

We have the law because we have sinners. Law was given because we are Unrighteous. The law isn't the solution. It is meant to display the problem.

The nature of the law is that it brings about God's wrath upon sinful man. It is inconceivable that the law would bring about both salvation and wrath to mankind. While the law was great at displaying **Christ** as the perfect man, (the standard that the law provides is perfect,) the law did not save Him. The law did not make him perfect. It did not change Him at all. It only displayed Him as being righteous. But for everyone else all it can reveal is wrath to the man that has sinned, since all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.

If there was no law, there would be no clarity of man's wickedness. There would still be **sin**, but there would be no transgression. There would be no "God says I should do A and I have done B. Therefore I have transgressed". There would, however, be undefined wickedness still creating its natural fruit. It just wouldn't be as educated in how to defy God.

# <sup>16</sup>Therefore *it is* of faith that *it might be* according to grace, so that the promise might be sure to all the seed, not only to those who are of the law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all

Since receiving the inheritance cannot be by the law because the effect of the law on sinful man is to reveal wrath, there must be another way. And the other way is of faith according to grace. The only way a man can have God's righteousness is by believing a promise regarding God's provision of the same. And if that is how it is received, it is unmerited. It is by Grace. And the grace is accessed through believing... through faith. And that faith produces appropriate works of faith.

This is the only way that the promise can be sure. If the promise were based on a standard of performance, no believer

would be safe. There would always be the question as to whether a future failure could cause us to lose that which we have, by great effort, gained. There would be no certainty, no confidence, no security. If it rests on our performance, we are always in danger. But if our security rests upon a promise, then all we need to know is "Who made the promise?" Does He intend to deliver? Does he have the ability to deliver? And has he delivered it to us?

In Abraham we have the example of a man who believed and the fruit of his life **displayed** that he believed. His imputed righteousness was accompanied with works of faith. Do any of us really think that we would be reading about Abraham if he believed God **but** remained in Haran, or that he believed God **but** refused to sacrifice his son, or that he believed God, **but** refused to try to have more children with Sarah? No. That kind of belief is worthless and does nothing to assure us that we have received this great salvation we are learning about. If we were counseling Abraham in a time of doubt we could assure him of his salvation because **his works display the fruit of the imputed righteousness, the fruit of a changed life, the fruit of a life that believes God**. His belief was not Gnostic belief. His belief was true faith that only comes from God.

How about us? What does what we call faith look like? If it is like Abraham's we have great reason for assurance because that can only happen as a miracle of God. If we have the **works** that **come from faith**, we have the **faith** that is received by all those who have been given imputed righteousness.

In our text we see, the promise is there as a hope to every person who has turned to Christ in faith. It is sure to all seed. Because Christ made a promise we can be sure of this salvation. It does not rely upon our ability but on Christ's ability. Even our fruit comes from Christ's ability, not our ability. We can rest our hope securely on Christ's ability to deliver us.

And Paul here defines who the seed are that he has been referring to. These are not Jews only, those who were given God's law. Abraham's seed extends to everyone who has the faith of Abraham, everyone who shares the salvation by faith of Abraham. He, in that sense is the father of all those who have been saved by faith.

# <sup>17</sup>(as it is written, "*I have made you a father of many nations"*) in the presence of Him whom he believed—God, who gives life to the dead and calls those things which do not exist as though they did;

Paul reveals here that the "father of many nations" promise went farther than national boundaries. He is saying that Abraham's spiritual fatherhood extends over all those who believe like Abraham believed. And that takes in all nations and people groups. This was all promised to Abraham whether he understood the promise or not.

So Abraham received the promise in the presence of the one He believed- God. If we must pick only one to believe in this world, Abraham picked the right one. Will we take up Mike's challenge given last week and have God be the one we believe?

And what is this God like?

## who gives life to the dead

Abraham had seen this about God first hand in his own life. Both Abraham and Sarah were both in one sense dead. They did not have the ability to produce life. It was an impossibility that life would spring from their union. Yet God brought life to the dead.

Then when Isaac was about to be sacrificed he was as good as dead. Yet God provided his lamb to take Isaacs place and give him life.

But even more so is the fact that we were all dead in our trespasses and sins. And Christ gives life to everyone who by faith believes on Him. Abraham **knew** this God and God gave life to Him who was dead spiritually. An idolater from Ur became the father of all believers. That is a good example of life to the dead.

## and calls those things which do not exist as though they did

The promises God gave to Abraham were these kinds of promises. And it wasn't always a pleasure to Abraham. Consider yourself in Abraham's situation. His name is first Abram- father of many. Mr Barnhouse makes the point that Abram likely lived on a caravan route and exchanged food to the caravans for goods. He paints the picture of Abram, day after day doing business with these merchants. They go through the traditional greetings and the Caravan leader asks Abram what his name is. It's Abram. Oh, the caravan leader says, Father of many. You must be very proud. How many children do you have? None.

None? Then that is a very odd name that you have. Year after year Abram went through this. Till finally God gave Abraham a son. So now at least when people ask he can say, 1 son. I have 1 son. So what does God do? God changes his name to Abraham- father of many nations. Think of what Abraham must have thought when he broke this news to all his clan.

Well everybody, God gave me a new name today. Instead of Father of Many I am now Father of Multitudes.

But Abraham accepted that new identity that God gave to him. He did not accept the identity the current facts would have told him to accept. He believed God. And this is the God who calls things which do not exist as if they do. And what eventually happened? Abraham became a man whose name is third in frequency in the New Testament. Every believer is Abraham's heir. He is in one sense the father of Christianity. Doesn't it pay to believe God. He became the father of a multitude even though there was very little evidence that such a thing would be true.

How about us? Will we believe God when all we have is His word? How about when our insides rebel against the truth of God's word or a command that we read that we know applies to us? Did God make a mistake to command us in such a manner? Could he not see what would happen to us? Or is it us who do not see? God can see our lives from a prospective we are not privileged to share. We must trust that His view sees the truth and our view sees the shadow. He calls those things that do not exist yet as if they are completed. He calls believers "righteous"

before they ever do one act of faith. And when God says it, it is as good as done. All those who are imputed righteous will display righteous behavior by faith and in the end will, as scripture puts it, justify God. They will prove with their lives that God was right in proclaiming them righteous. And it won't be by a record in flesh of perfect righteousness but it will be by faithful living and faithful acts

He knows all those who will ever believe in Him, even though there is no evidence whatsoever of this truth. God speaks as if the past, present and future are all the same to Him. And yet we still have trouble letting go of our own puny perspectives. Abraham had learned about God that He could be trusted. We would do well to follow his example.

### <sup>18</sup>who, contrary to hope, in hope believed, so that he became the father of many nations, according to what was spoken, "So shall your descendants be."

All of Abraham's facts were contrary to hope. The Greek word for hope here means enthusiastically looking forward to that which is sure to happen. It is not like how we use the word. We would say I hope it won't rain. This would not be the Greek word to describe that kind of wishful thinking. Hope believes and fully expects the good thing to happen.

In this verse Abraham is in a setting that was contrary to hope. All the facts said that nothing good was going to happen. All of the writing was on the wall and it was all bad. For Abraham to hope would be absolutely foolish to the world. They would think he was off his rocker to believe that he and his wife could have a child. But scripture tells us that Abraham believed God and enthusiastically looked forward to what God said he would do.

The English Standard version says this: <sup>18</sup>In hope he believed against hope, that he should become the father of many nations, as he had been told, In this version it looks like the object of his hope is that he would become the father of many nations which is exactly what God has promised Him. The NKJV says he believed so that he became. It makes it appear that as a result of something Abraham did God fulfilled His promise. I don't think that is accurate. Young's literal says that 18Who, against hope in hope did believe, for his becoming father of many nations according to that spoken. KJV says Who against hope believed in hope , that he might become the father of many nations. It looks to me like what Abraham was hoping for was exactly what God had promised and that is what this verse is saying. It is not saying that Abraham's faith had any cause and effect relationship to the promise being fulfilled. Check that out for yourself.

### <sup>19</sup>And not being weak in faith, he did not consider his own body, already dead (since he was about a hundred years old), and the deadness of Sarah's womb.

- Here we see that Abraham had faith and it was not a weak, sickly feeble faith. His body may have been weak and impotent, but his faith was not. Notice the word consider. It means 1) to perceive, remark, observe, understand 2) to consider attentively, fix one's eyes or mind upon. This is the only time this word is used in Romans.
- Abraham did not fix his mind on the fact of his impotent body. He did not allow that so called fact to interfere with his belief in God. How many times we could be enthusiastically looking forward to what God has promised us but we get caught up in the so called evidence, in the so called facts that stand in opposition to the promises of God. And we learn here a secret that really isn't a secret. Our focus determines whether our hopes grow or are crushed. What we chose to consider determines whether we live a glum existence or one of enthusiastically looking forward to that which God has promised to us.
- I doubt that we have ever faced a more impossible situation. It is absolutely physically impossible for Abraham and Sarah to have children. If they had gone to 1000 doctors in the US, 1000 doctors would have told them to face the facts.... They will not have any children. And Abraham is an example for

us. If he can believe God in his situation, and then act in faith by attempting to do what was necessary for him to do, what in our life is more difficult to believe than what he went through? What impossibility do we face greater than this? The question for us this morning is "what are we considering?" Is our focus on what God **can't do** or on what God said He WILL do? Do you want hope in your life. Focus on what God said He **will** do.

### <sup>20</sup>He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God,

Abraham did not waiver. The word for waiver means to be at variance with one's self, hesitate, doubt. I like this because it adds commentary on other things told about Abraham. For instance, after Abraham was told that Sarah would conceive this is what we are told about Abraham-<sup>17</sup>Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed, and said in his heart, "Shall *a child* be born to a man who is one hundred years old? And shall Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear *a child?*" <sup>18</sup>And Abraham said to God, "Oh, that Ishmael might live before You!"

Abraham was allowed the chance to think, to process what God was telling him. His first reaction is to notice the impossibility and to seek an alternative solution. But Abraham was still in conversation with God. The conversation was not yet over. And God was patient with this man in flesh. So he confirmed what He intended a little further. And at the end of the conversation Abraham chose to believe God. Wavering is not about our first impulses. It is about the path we chose, it is about what we chose to focus on. It is about the loyalties we have. It is about who we are committed to. And Abraham never wavered in this. After giving it thought, He believed God... even when God was promising something He seemed to be intentionally delaying doing. Abraham never allowed the facts to undermine the character of the one who had given the promise. He never chose the path of disbelieving God. He never said I would be stupid to believe God. I will not allow God to make

even more of a fool out of me. I am already laughed at by everyone who hears my name. I have had enough. Abraham never chose that path.

Instead he was strengthened in Faith. Abraham was exercising his faith and his faith was growing stronger. The impossible facts grew larger and larger. And as they grew Abraham's faith grew stronger and stronger. It is much like a weight lifter who the more he lifts the stronger he gets.

And as he did this He glorified God. The word for glory- doxameans among other things a good opinion. When we take God at His word, when we believe him simply because we know Him and Trust Him, when we show more loyalty toward God than any other person or thing, when we do what he says and believes what he tells us, we show a good opinion of God, we glorify God. God receives recognition for who He really is, for what He really deserves. And that pleases Him. Some say that is our sole purpose for being here... to give a good opinion of God's name by our lives. To glorify God.

### <sup>21</sup>and being fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform.

Abraham was growing in faith as he was becoming more and more fully convinced that God can do and will do what He said He will do.

- Fully convinced- to fill one with any thought, conviction, or inclination
  - 1c1) to make one certain, to persuade, convince one
  - 1c2) to be persuaded, persuaded, fully convinced or assured
  - 1c3) to render inclined or bent on

Abrahams focus was not on the opposing facts. It was on who God is, what He has already done, and what He said He will do. Read the psalms and you will see symphonies of this same music. Anyone who is growing in faith will have the same focus. And as Abraham grew stronger in faith he was being fully convinced, not just partially, not some of the time, but fully and all of the time sure that what God said He would do He not only could do but would do. If God said Sarah will have a child, let there be no debate, no question, no doubt. If God said it it will happen.

How many great and precious promises we have and how much they would set us free if we, like Abraham would be fully convinced that what God promises He will do. There are no promises intended for us that God will not fulfill. Oh that we would show a good opinion of God by believing them like Abraham did.

# <sup>22</sup>And therefore "*it was accounted to him for righteousness.*"

And here again we see that it was because his actions were inspired by the faith that God had given him at regeneration that Abrahams faith was credited to Abraham as righteousness. Abraham received Christ's righteousness in Abraham's checkbook.

# <sup>23</sup>Now it was not written for his sake alone that it was imputed to him,

How wonderful this verse is. What good news it is. This should add joy to our song. The story of Abraham is a type of what happens to all believers everywhere. God wasn't only telling us about Abraham. He was telling us about salvation by Grace through Faith. Imputed righteousness is the only source of righteousness that we will ever have. And we will be no different in that than Abraham was.

### <sup>24</sup>but also for us. It shall be imputed to us who believe in Him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead,

For us. For us. Maybe we should underline that verse. Imputed righteousness for us. Romans is a book about righteousness revealed. And we see here that it is revealed to us and for us.

And who of us will receive it? Is there any standard of moral performance to qualify? No there is none of that. It is before any

true morality that we may experience by God's grace. No, it is to all of us who will simply believe God. We believe in the one who raised Christ from the dead. Abraham was believing in something that was impossible and had not happened yet. We are believing in God who has already done the impossible. Our God has raised Christ from the dead. And we believe his promises that Christ death burial and resurrection can count for us. We believe with an enthusiastically expectant hope that He will raise us from the dead too. How bold a confidence that is. But how certain it is too if we are His child. It cannot help but happen, no matter how impossible it is. Because God has spoken.

# <sup>25</sup>who was delivered up because of our offenses, and was raised because of our justification.

And this Christ was delivered up- given into the hands and power of another- because of our offenses, our intentional or unintentional transgression. If we were to ever have the credit of righteousness to our account, Christ had to impute our sin to himself. So in reality it truly was us who put Christ on the cross. We were far more guilty of Christ's death than the Roman military machine or the Jewish political strategies.

And Christ was raised for our justification. Had Christ not raised from the dead we would have had no way of knowing if anything at all had been accomplished. In fact we could be pretty sure that it had not. If God is to receive Christ's sacrifice, Christ had to be raised from the dead. If we are to live in newness of life along with having imputed righteousness we needed a resurrected Christ.

We could not be justified by a dead Christ. It is possible we could have been atoned. It is possible our record could have been placed on Christ's account. But we could not have lived in newness of life. We would, in this case, have a powerless justification. And that is an impossibility. Those Christ's imputes righteous must be given the power to live by faith. A dead Christ would not provide that power. There is no such thing as an impotent justification. We needed a Christ who was shown the Father's favor and blessing after taking upon Himself all of our sin. We could not have a Savior that is separated from His Father by death. So Christ was raised and He was raised to pronounce and fully accomplish our justification.

Oh what a wonderful salvation we have. Every way you look at it, it is perfect. It fulfills the laws demands. It provides the power to say no to sin and yes to Christ. It proves true everything it proclaims true. And with all this said, we can't help trace that back to what a wonderful Savior we have.

Let us live this week like Abraham who showed a good opinion of God by believing Him and living that way.