

**Rex Romeiser led this session of the IHOP Bible Study in my absence. The following is a report using his notes along with my comments. Pastor Bill**  
**TRINITY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

**IHOP BIBLE STUDY**

**# 5 Romans 4: 1 – 23, “Abraham justified by Faith” – with comments.**

**The purpose of the Letter to the Romans is to develop a “Model for Living the Awakened/Transformed Life.” Today’s study is the 5th of 27 lessons.**

**According to our Study Chart** we are studying the 2<sup>nd</sup> section of our chart called “Awaken to The Work of God.” Next week will move into a new area of the Roman’s Chart concerning the Law of Judgment and Grace.

**Contextual Statement**

Paul demonstrates his theological mastery by taking the topics of “faith” and “righteousness” and grounding them in a master illustration of the historical giant of Abraham. Also, he throws in a little of David. The deeper we get into Romans, the more impressive is Paul’s argument. Our task is to ground Abraham’s experience into our own experience. When we are finished, we’ll have a solid grasp on Paul’s first or a two-part exposition on the human situation: First, our need to “Awaken to the Work of God,” and second, to “Know The Relationship of Sin and the Law.”

Have fun with this session.

**Read the assignment in one reading.**

**1. Vss. 2, 3: Follow Abraham’s boast**

What did Abraham believe in? Of course this is a trick question. The assignment is to speculate on how Abraham experienced God. Name this experience!

**Rex:** Abraham believed in God. By faith he left home and went to Canaan. He believed that God would provide an heir - initially, he tried on his own with his servant.

**WS:** The conflict here is between justification by work or by faith. Paul’s point is that Abraham was justified by works, he had the credentials. Paul’s conclusion is that Abraham did not have room for “glory.” **In Gut Trip Analysis, this means that his Spiritual Awakening did not come by good works.**

**2. Vss. 4 – 6: The neatest little example is give here.** Talk about its significance and its importance to Paul’s line of thought.

**Rex:** When a man works, his employer is obligated to pay wages, but God isn’t like a human employer and doesn’t owe anyone anything. It is because of his mercy and grace in response to our faith that God rewards us.

**WS:** Paul makes the point that God’s grace (awakening) is not like an earned wage that is a debt to be paid. Then, he give two illustrations. The first is Abraham whose piety is understood by both the Jews and Gentiles. He was obedient in

leaving his home although he did not understand the purpose of his journey, nor its goal. Second, he uses King David who was the apple of God's eye, yet was both a murderer and an adulterer. Both receive the entire gift of God's awakening (grace).

John Wesley observes, "Hence we see plainly how groundless that opinion is, that holiness [**living the awakened life**] or sanctification is previous to our justification [**awakened to the fulfilled life**]. For the sinner being first convinced of his sin and danger by the Spirit of God, stands trembling before the awful tribunal of Divine justice [**The reward for the deed is found in the deed itself**]; and has nothing to plead by his own guilt and the merits of a Mediator. Christ here interposes; justice is satisfied; the sin is remitted, and pardon is applied to the soul, by a divine faith [**entire surrender**], wrought by the Holy Ghost [**The Spiritual Alarm Clock**], who then begin the great work of inward sanctification." (Wesley, John *John Wesley's Notes on Romans* Nashville: Methodist Evangelistic Materials. P. 26.)

**3. Vss. 7, 8: Read Psalm 32: 1 – 2.** Paul left off the last thought. Does this change or support Paul's purpose. (Interesting)

**Rex:** Paul left off, ". . . and in whose spirit there is no deceit." It may change Paul's purpose was to show forgiveness apart from works.

**WS:** Why is there "no deceit" in a human whose "sin the Lord will never count against him/her?" Webster defines "deceit" as "dishonesty" and "ensnaring." The Psalmist describes the person who lives in surrender to live in Perfect At-One-Ment as one who is beyond dishonesty and manipulation of others.

**Read Psalm 103: 12. Is this comforting, or what?**

**Rex:** As far as the East is from the West."

**WS:** Perhaps, this is the best description of the kind of love in the entire Bible expressed as Perfect At-One-Ment.

**4. Vs. 9: Ground in Gut Trip Analysis the word "blessedness."**

**Rex:** Enjoying the bliss o heaven. At-One with God. Peace within ourselves. Care for.

**WS:** Gut Trip Analysis translates this word as Awakening.

How is Abraham's "faith" credited to him as "righteousness?" Remember, Abraham received this as a "gift."

**Rex:** He didn't earn his "righteousness" but received it due to his faith.

**WS:** Abraham experience living At-One with self, neighbor and Perfect At-One-Ment because he surrendered himself; i.e., he gave us earthly/human pretensions and was given the reward for his choices, the reward of deep satisfaction.

**5. Vss. 10 – 15: Read this statement slowly and thoughtfully.** Be certain that you understand it before going on.

**Rex:** Abraham declared righteous before circumcision.

**WS:** Abraham becomes a powerful symbol for both the Jews and the Gentiles. Paul observes that Abraham was spiritual awakened before he was circumcised.

However, those who were circumcised also were given the gift of awakenment.

Then, Paul rushes on to add that it is not through the Law that Abraham and his offspring received the promise of awakenment, rather it is through being made right with God through his surrender. The purpose of the Law is to convict us of our living in separation from self, neighbor and God, because the Law brings wrath **[be careful of this word. Literally, it means tough love.]** Paul adds that in the absence of the Law there is nothing to break.

**6. Vss. 16, 17: Explain how Abraham is the “Father of us all.”**

**Rex:** He was the father of the Jews through the Law, but also to the Gentiles who have the same kind of faith that Abraham had. Paul is walking a tightrope between the Jews and the Gentiles.

**WS:** Abraham is the Prime Symbol for what full surrender looks like. In this way, he is the first born among those who live awakened lives.

**7. Vss. 18 – 22: Abraham’s “righteousness” is described here.** I find 4 elements. How many do you find?

**Rex:** 1) He believe he would become the father of many nations. 2) He did not weaken in faith **[surrender]** even though he was old. 3) or considering Sarah's barrenness. 4) Convinced God was able to do what God had promised.

Hope, faith, “trust” and glory (praise).

**8. Vs. 23: Here is the promise from “God,” as described in vs. 2b.** What is it? How is it significant for us as IHOPers?

**Rex:** We will also be made righteous by our faith. Word was written for all of us.

**WS:** This promise is significant for the IHOPers because we are committed to living the Awakened Life. The promise is that as we surrender our lives into the inner Presence of God, we experience a transformation of ourselves that is likened to being born again. This act of surrender is how Abraham was “credited to him as righteousness;” i.e., an awakenment that our transformation is an undeserved gift, but a gift none-the-less.

**9. Concerning the following, the push here is to identify how we experience the experience of Jesus. Push yourself to use Gut Trip Analysis.**

**Vs. 24: How do we EXPERIENCE Jesus Christ “raised from the dead?”**

**Rex:** We are forgiven our sins and freed to live life fully in spite of our shortcomings. Christ is a living example for us. We have to experience him in our

lives.

**WS:** The above is head trippy! While that statement is true, it doesn't address the question of Jesus Christ "raised from the dead." What is our experience of the resurrected Christ?

First, the word "Christ" is not Jesus' last name. This Greek word describes the essence of the sacrificial life into which Jesus was anointed; this was Jesus' assignment. It is an assignment that Jesus freely accepted in full knowledge of the consequences of intentional death. The significance of this sacrificial gift is that those who live the awakened life are awakened by a similar death; we die in order that we can really live; the entire experience of the Resurrected Christ. Christians are called to die to their human existence (living on vacation) in order that they can live the resurrected life (living at home).

**How do we EXPERIENCE Jesus Christ who defeated death "for our sins?"**

**Rex:** **Rex:** We are forgiven our sins. If we believe in Him and repent our sins will be forgiven. We sometimes hang on to our sins. Need to give our sins to Him and then move on. Need to ask for His strength.

**WS:** Two observations can be made about the IHOP conversation. The use of the term "He" to describe God can no longer be justified. Theological schools make it a point that gender equality be the standard.

The second point is the necessity constantly pushing ourselves to use our experiences as the basis of our discussion. **What is the experience of having our sins forgiven?** [Our separation overcome or set aside.] **What is the experience of "believing in God?"** [It is discovered in surrendering our lives to the internal Mystery that we experience as Perfect At-One-Ment.] **What is the experience of "repent our sins?"** [Literally, this is looking is the direction of At-One-Ment instead of the antithesis of At-One-Ment.]

**How do we EXPERIENCE Jesus Christ being "raised to life for our justification?"** (Be careful with the word "justification.")

**Rex:** We decided that Romans answered this question.

**WS:** In truth, I believe the IHOPers were worn out by the time they got to this question. It was a heavy journey to this point.

My answer: The word "justification" is the stickler in this sentence. In Gut Trip Analysis, justification is the experience of being awakened. It is a gift to which we are blind until an event happens. Paul Tillich described this experience as awakening to a new reality that we are accepted, just as we are. This event happens. That's it. It just happens to us. Then, we are left with the decision to accept our acceptance or not. When we accept it, when we embrace it, then the benefit of the gift is a transformed living.

It is for this purpose that Jesus Christ was resurrected!

**Alright folks, talk to me.**