

Chapter Thirty-six  
Studies in the Epistle of Paul to the Romans  
**The Unchanging God**

“<sup>23</sup> Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; <sup>24</sup> But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; <sup>25</sup> Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification” (Romans 4:23-25).

The Scriptural and historical record of Abraham’s salvation goes way beyond the life and times of Abraham. This account of Abraham’s salvation transcends time. The story really isn’t about Abraham as much as it is about God and how he saves lost people.

Abraham is just one example of millions of people that God has saved. The circumstances of their lives are different. They may have been saved at a different age and under different cultural circumstances, but the way God saved them is exactly the same. They believed God and their faith was counted for righteousness. Although circumstances change, God does not. Although man’s methods may change, God’s remain the same. Salvation will always be a gift received by faith. Righteousness will always be imputed to the believing sinner by the grace of God.

“For I *am* the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed” (Malachi 3:6).

“Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning” (James 1:17).

The gospel of Jesus Christ is a mooring line that anchors the soul of the believing sinner to our Rock (Jesus Christ) in Heaven. Believing the gospel and calling out in faith to Jesus to save us assures us that He will hear and secure us to Himself.

“<sup>13</sup> For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself, <sup>14</sup> Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee. <sup>15</sup> And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. <sup>16</sup> For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation *is* to them an end of all strife. <sup>17</sup> Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed {interposed himself by} *it* by an oath: <sup>18</sup> That by two immutable things, in which *it was* impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: <sup>19</sup> Which *hope* we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; <sup>20</sup> Whither the forerunner is for us entered, *even* Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec” (Hebrews 6:13-20).

“Within the veil” (v 19) refers to the literal Holy of Holies in Heaven where God dwells. Although we are not there in our person, we are there in the Person of Christ. He has ascended to the heavenly Holy of Holies where He sets at the right hand of the Father. He is our “forerunner.” This word refers to the small boat that was sent to the shore with an anchor from a ship out in the harbor. The anchor was fastened solidly to the shore. Jesus has anchored our soul in the heavenly Holy of Holies and remains there. He is both our “forerunner and our “anchor.”

**Imputation of God righteousness is not just for a select few. It is for whosoever will believe (Romans 4:24).** We find two equal truths in John 3:14-18.

“<sup>14</sup> And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: <sup>15</sup> That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. <sup>16</sup> For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. <sup>17</sup> For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. <sup>18</sup> He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God” (John 3:14-18).

1. God's love is universal and extends to every soul upon planet earth (v 16).
2. God's wrath is universal and extends to every soul upon planet earth (v 18).

Yet God is working to bring every lost human being to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. The means He has chosen to do that is to use saved human beings to take the gospel to lost human beings. God wants people to be saved more than we can ever know. God waits in eager anticipation for someone to take the gospel to a lost sinner so He can bring that person to understand his need of Christ and how much God loves him.

We like to think we are waiting on God to act when usually He is waiting on us to act. God patiently waits on the fallen sinner to repent, turn to Him in faith and call on Jesus to save him.

“Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance” (Romans 2:4)?

“The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance” (II Peter 3:9).

**The only thing that keeps anyone from being saved is an unwillingness to believe (“if we believe,” Romans 4:24).** To believe the gospel of Jesus Christ is to believe in a God of love and mercy. Satan has led mankind into sin and condemnation and then deceives people into blaming their predicaments of life on God. If a person believes the gospel he cannot continue to believe that God is unloving and uncaring. The very essence of the gospel lies in divine love, grace and mercy.

“<sup>44</sup> Jesus cried and said, He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me. <sup>45</sup> And he that seeth me seeth him that sent me. <sup>46</sup> I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness” (John 12:44-46).

A person cannot possibly understand Who Jesus is, understand the scope of what incarnation means, or have even the most basic understanding of what took place on the Cross of Calvary 2,000 years ago and not understand the depth and scope of God's love for mankind.

“<sup>18</sup> And all things *are* of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; <sup>19</sup> To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed {Gr. put in us} unto us the word of reconciliation” (II Corinthians 5:18-19).

**The essence of the gospel involves the substitutionary death of Christ and His resurrection (Romans 4:25).** Jesus was “delivered for our offenses.” The word “delivered” is from the Greek word *paradidomi* (par-ad-id'-o-mee) and means to be given over into the hands or power of another person. The only one that could have delivered Jesus into the hands of the Romans was the One Who had Him in the first place. It was God Who delivered Jesus to be crucified.

“<sup>31</sup> What shall we then say to these things? If God *be* for us, who *can be* against us? <sup>32</sup> He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things” (Romans 8:31-32)?

“<sup>22</sup> Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: <sup>23</sup> Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: <sup>24</sup> Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it” (Acts 2:22-24).

Jesus did not die for His sins, but was the substitute sacrifice for the judgment of God upon our sins (“death,” Romans 6:23).

“<sup>22</sup> Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: <sup>23</sup> Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed *himself* {his cause} to him that judgeth righteously: <sup>24</sup> Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed. <sup>25</sup> For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls” (I Peter 2:22-25).

“For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:” (I Peter 3:18).

“<sup>1</sup> My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: <sup>2</sup> And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for *the sins of the whole world*” (I John 2:1-2).

“<sup>13</sup> Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed *is* every one that hangeth on a tree: <sup>14</sup> That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith” (Galatians 3:13-14).

Jesus “was raised again for our justification.” The resurrection of Jesus out from among the dead is God’s testimony to His satisfaction with the substitutionary sacrifice of Christ “for our offenses.” The resurrection is also God’s testimony that Satan’s strangle hold of fear (death) is broken to whoever will believe.

“<sup>20</sup> But now is Christ risen from the dead, *and* become the firstfruits of them that slept. <sup>21</sup> For since by man *came* death, by man *came* also the resurrection of the dead. <sup>22</sup> For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. . . <sup>55</sup> O death, where *is* thy sting? O grave, where *is* thy victory? <sup>56</sup> The sting of death *is* sin; and the strength of sin *is* the law. <sup>57</sup> But thanks *be* to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ” (I Corinthians 15:20-22 and 55-56).

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**The Unchanging God**

1. Explain Romans 4:23. For whom else was the account of Abraham written and why? \_\_\_\_\_  
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2. Explain the statement, “The story really isn’t about Abraham as much as it is about God and how He saves lost people.” \_\_\_\_\_  
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3. How does knowing that God saves all lost people exactly the same way impact your understanding of your purpose in evangelism? \_\_\_\_\_  
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4. Read Hebrews 6:13-20. Discuss the meaning and significance to your salvation from the words “in the veil (v 19), “forerunner” (v 20) and “anchor of the soul” (v 19). Explain these terms thoroughly enough that a lost person could understand. \_\_\_\_\_  
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5. Read John 3:14-18. What are the two equal and universal truths from these verses. \_\_\_\_\_  
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6. God is working to bring every lost human being to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. What is the means He has chosen to accomplish this and how does that affect you? \_\_\_\_\_  
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7. We like to think we are waiting on God to act when usually He is waiting on us to act. Read Romans 2:4 and II Peter 3:9. How do these verses impact the way you see yourself as a believer in relationship to God’s working to bring lost souls to Christ. \_\_\_\_\_  
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8. Discuss why believing the gospel of Jesus Christ necessitates believing in a God of love and mercy. \_\_\_\_\_  
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9. According to Romans 4:25, the essence of the gospel involves two accomplishments of Christ. What are they? \_\_\_\_\_  
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10. Read Romans 8:31-32 and Acts 2:22-24. Who delivered Jesus “for our offenses”? \_\_\_\_\_
11. Read I Peter 2:22-25, 3:18, I John 2:1-2 and Galatians 3:13-14. Thoroughly explain what God means when He says Jesus was “delivered for our offenses.” \_\_\_\_\_  
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12. Read I Corinthians 15:20-22 and 55-56. Thoroughly explain what God means when He says Jesus “was raised again for our justification.” \_\_\_\_\_  
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