

Reconciling Biblical Faith

by Robert B. Thompson

The sermon explores the relationship between faith, righteousness, and works through biblical examples, emphasizing the importance of seeking God earnestly.

Duration: 1:18:00

Scripture: Genesis 15:5, Romans 4:3-5, Romans 4:7, Hebrews 11:6

Topics: "Faith And Family", "Obedience To God"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of having strong family relationships for children. They mention a study that showed how children who had less contact with other children were less aggressive and anti-social. The speaker also discusses the temptation to evaluate the success of one's Christian efforts based on external factors, such as the number of people reached. They caution against getting caught up in worldly values and highlight the need to focus on obedience to God, using the example of Abraham who obeyed God's call to go to a new land. The sermon concludes with a reminder of God's promise to Abraham that he would have many descendants.

Transcript

I come to you tonight, Lord, with praise and thanksgiving. Lord, you are so good to us, and we just give praise to you, Lord. So good to us, so good to us, Lord.

We pray for each family represented here, Lord. You know the problems, you know where the stress and pressures are. God, we need wisdom, we need help, we need safety, and we need help, Lord.

Just be with us, and bring us through all these dangers, toils, and snares, Lord. We know that's the normal Christian life, and just hold us steady, Lord. Hold us steady, hold us steady.

We thank you, Lord. And tonight, Lord, you know where the needs are in each person, and we pray the Holy Spirit will add Jesus where the need is, and you'll be with us, Lord, and we give you thanks. In Jesus' name, amen.

Okay, we're in Hebrews, the 11th chapter. I want to just hit one note in verse 6 that I passed over jumping from Enoch to Noah, but I think it's real important. Hebrews 11, 6, and it's this.

Anyone who comes to God must believe that he exists, all right. But the second part to me is the important thing, that he rewards those who earnestly seek him. He rewards those who earnestly, the adverb,

earnestly seek him.

God is a rewarder of those who seek him. Sometimes it doesn't happen right off, but we know that's an important part of faith, that God will reward us if we keep at it. We seek him diligently.

Any questions about that? All right. Now we come to Abe in verse 8. Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went. Now, what's important about that reflects back to Romans, the 4th chapter, and the thing that Abraham obeyed God and went is important because in Romans 4, Paul says, What then shall we say that Abraham, our forefather, discovered in this matter? If in fact Abraham was justified by works, he had something to boast about, but not before God.

What does the scripture say? Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness. Now, I forget what chapter of Genesis that's in. Is that 12 or 15 or wherever it is? Genesis 15, maybe.

No, I think that's where he says, walk before me and be thou perfect. But anyway, Abraham had no child. God took him outside, he looked up, he saw the stars, and God said, so you're going to have seed, so shall your seed be.

Okay? And then it says in Genesis, and it was imputed to him for righteousness, or God assigned righteousness to him on the basis of this. Say, maybe we better look at that. Let's take a look at Genesis 12.

Well, that sounds right, but maybe it's not. I'm looking for where it says, so shall thy seed be. And it's around 12, 15, something like that.

And then we're going to go back to 4. Is it 12? Then try 15. 15. Alright, Genesis 15.

Verse 5 of 15. Somebody read it once. There it is up there, it's on the board now.

There we are. Alright. Here it is.

Verse 6. He credited it to him as righteousness. Now that word credit, that's the same as impute. It's just about an exact synonym of impute.

The New Testament King James calls it impute. He imputed righteousness to him because he believed the Lord. Now, in Romans 4, Paul makes a big point of this.

And he said, and he goes on. He says in verse 4 of Romans 4. Romans 4. Now when a man works, his wages are not credited to him as a gift, but as an obligation. However, to the man who does not work, but trusts God, who justifies the wicked, his faith is credited as righteousness.

David says the same thing when he speaks of the blessedness of the man to whom God credits righteousness apart from works. Blessed are they whose transgression... This is interesting in that in both instances, Paul is appealing to the Old Testament to talk about righteousness by faith. You know something? Away with dispensationalism.

It's a destroyer of understanding. It really is. Because God doesn't change.

What Paul is pointing out is that Abraham was justified by faith. And David said, blessed are they whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord will never

count against him.

Now, on that passage, evangelical theology is based on that. And the teaching is that it doesn't matter, it isn't that important what we do, it's the fact that we believe, and that's how we obtain righteousness, is on the basis of faith. And they connect that with the just shall live by faith.

Abraham believed and it was credited to him as faith. Any questions about that? That is the fundamental of evangelical theology. That is the fulcrum, it's the basis.

Now, we go over... Of course, you all know James 2, I'm sure, when James, who was protesting because people were quoting Paul and saying, see, there you don't have to do anything. And Abraham says, yeah, but God counted him right just when he did what? In James 2. When he did what? Well, I thought you'd know that, I wasn't going to go to it. When he offered Isaac.

In fact, I see some of you are looking kind of bewildered. Maybe we'd better go to James 2. I guess this is going to be back to the Bible hour. And the reason this is in here is because people were saying, as Paul said, let us do evil that good may come.

I mean, it went way out of whack. Partly because of the prevailing philosophy of Gnosticism. But anyway, in James 2, verse 20, You foolish man, do you want evidence that faith without deeds is useless? Was not our ancestor Abraham considered righteous for what he did when he offered his son Isaac? Now, of course, here you can see that James is coming against Paul's teaching.

Apparently. Apparently. So we're coming up here to an intellectual exercise in just a minute.

Now, I want to show you another thing. In Hebrews chapter 11, verse 7, Do you realize that in here that the writer of Hebrews says that Noah building the ark is an example and this is in Hebrews 11.7 Noah building the ark is an example of righteousness that comes by faith. Now, just think about that.

And you can see the tremendous damage that dispensational thinking has created by giving the impression that righteousness by faith belongs exclusively to the new covenant. And also, it shows that the faith was the faith of building the ark. It was a faith that worked through action.

How many see that? You see that in Hebrews 11.7? And also, as we saw in James 2.20, I think it was, that his faith was revealed in his offering of Isaac. So that faith lives in works. Okay, any problems so far? Okay, now here's the question that I'm asking you.

How do you reconcile the fourth chapter of Romans with James 2.20 in Hebrews 11.7? How do you reconcile the two? It's not a superficial question. It runs very deep. Very deep.

Well, let me ask you this. Was Paul somewhat to the left of center here and the others were to the right of center? Is that it or is there something missing here? Yes, Larry. Does it have to do with our understanding of what the word belief means? Yes, I think that's part of it.

Definitely. The problem is we don't read Romans 3-5 thoroughly and interpret Romans 4 in that light. We're not picturing where Paul was coming from.

Paul's whole thing in Romans was proving that God gave Abraham righteousness apart from the law. The Jew could not understand that there could be righteousness apart from the law of Moses. That's what he's talking about as you can see from several verses in Romans 3, 4, and 5. He keeps referring to the law.

You see the law. You see the law this and the law that. Now, if you put yourself in Paul's place and think of his background.

Now, he's talking to people who believe that it was impossible to be righteous by just faith in Jesus Christ without observing circumcision, the Sabbath, and the kosher and the other statutes of the law. That was their position. In fact, the first church consisted of 5,000 Orthodox Jews all keeping the law of Moses.

The first Christian church comprised 5,000 Jews with a Jewish pastor, James, all keeping the law of Moses. That was the first Christian church. But you remember when Paul went down there in the book of Acts, James said you better watch it.

You better not let them think that you don't believe in the law. So what did Paul do? Change his head and took a vow to show that he was observant because they would have killed him. And they pretty near did.

A little bit after that. They pretty near did on the temple steps there. In fact, the Romans had to rescue him.

They were saying, away with this man. It's not fit that he should live. And see, these Christians hadn't changed in that respect.

They accepted Jesus as the Messiah. They accepted the Holy Spirit and talking in tongues. They accepted all these things, but they could not conceive of righteousness, which merely means, righteousness only means right standing in the sight of God.

That's not an arbitrary standard. Righteousness is not an arbitrary standard. It's whatever is accepted of God at any given moment.

That's why you see God saying righteous. Noah was the only righteous man on earth. As soon as the ark comes down to rest after the flood, he gets drunk.

But see, God wasn't holding up that standard to him. God, whatever he was doing, God says, you I have found righteous in the earth. And Noah's faith resulted in obedience to God, and he became an heir of the righteousness which is by faith.

Now that righteousness was not based on the fact that Noah was observing righteousness as we do, which is to cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfect holiness in the sight of God, or to offer our body a living sacrifice, or to take up our cross and follow Jesus. That was not on Noah. But God said, you're the righteous man on the earth.

You're the one that I have found righteous on the earth. But he wasn't righteous by our standards. He was righteous only by his standards.

So righteousness is not a standard that you arrive at. Righteousness is that which God accepts at any given moment. If God is pleased with you, then you are righteous.

Now, people in the church may not think you are righteous. You know, someone may come in who has got 17 body piercings. Some young person.

Their tongue, their face, and whatever else they pierce. And we would look at that and we'd say, oh God, that person's in the pit. But you see, if they have not been taught otherwise, they don't know the difference, God has not made it real to them, and they're doing whatever God has required of them, they

are righteous.

Because that's what righteousness is. It's right standing. Sometimes in churches, we develop our own mores, our own cultural standards.

And they vary from church to church. Ours are not the same as the Quakers. I played the organ professionally in a Missouri-Lyndon-Synod, a Lutheran-Synod church one time.

Our standards are different than their standards. And they would judge us when we get doing our flags and everything as probably being of the devil, I don't know. And we would go in there and listen to the intro and gradual and figure they were, you know, many are cold but few are frozen.

That would be the way we'd look at that situation. But a lot of that is cultural. And if we're ever going to be joined together with all the members of the body of Christ, we've got to recognize that standards vary from person to person.

It's whatever God has made real to you and is requiring of you. Because we get on our high horse. They're not righteous.

What we mean is they're not meeting our standard of righteousness. Maybe we need to ask God. If God's accepting them, now that may be hard for you to believe, but if you can't get a hold of that, you'll never get a hold of Romans 4. Because what Paul is saying there to the Jews is, Look, for you, circumcision, a man that's not circumcised, is not of God, is not of the covenant, period.

And don't tell me anything else because that's righteousness. That's from Moshe who saw God face to face, gave us the law, God wrote it in stone, his Shekhinah was there, God was there, he opened up the Red Sea and he said, Be circumcised to our father Abraham, and don't tell me that you can be righteous without being circumcised if you don't want to get stoned. Do you see that? That's what Paul was up against.

And Peter was shaking in his boots, and James was a Jewish pastor over a Jewish church, and it was assigned to one man, evidently he went into Arabia, where they're saying now, some scholars are saying now, he went there because that's where the original mountain of God is, and not where we think it is, that it was in Arabia, and they have identified this, and some people have been writing about that, and they make a very strong case for that, that what we call Sinai now is not Sinai at all, it's in Arabia. And Paul probably went there to the mountain where Moses received the revelation, and however long he was there, when he came back, he knew about the body of Christ, he knew about Messiah in you, and he understood that we were moving from Moses to Christ, and that circumcision had nothing to do with it. Well, that's a mighty big responsibility to lay on one dude.

And he suffered because of it. He suffered at the hands of the Jews. He was beaten several times.

He was hauled out of a city, they stoned him to death, and he was out there and God raised him up. He suffered because he came against circumcision and the feast days and the rest of the Jewish law. They could not believe that you could be righteous and not be observing the law.

Do you see that? Well, now God had given Paul an understanding, and he used Abraham as an example. Now we miss it by a country mile because as Gentiles, we have no such predisposition concerning circumcision, the Sabbath, and kosher, and the rest of it. We don't have that.

So we look at it, and to us, what Paul is saying, the only thing that Christianity consists of is belief. But that isn't what Paul was saying. That's the only thing that Christianity consists of is belief.

Because a couple of chapters later, chapter 17, God said to him, I am the Almighty God, walk before me and be perfect. See? But Paul didn't use that here because what he was doing was saying, look people, you Jews, will you ever get it through your head that God can call someone righteous without the law? Without doing anything? He can just say he's righteous because he believes something that God said. Can you understand that? Well, it's in the Bible.

Read it in Genesis 15. This is what he's saying to the Jews. He was justified by the fact that he believed that God said that.

And therefore, Paul is saying, God can call someone righteous that is not circumcised, that doesn't keep Shabbat, that doesn't do the kosher, that he may live on pork. And you see what Paul is saying? You can't add that to Christ. You can't add a few things.

But you'll find that the New Testament is not that rigid on it. And Paul said, if someone in his faith, he won't let him eat meat, then don't eat meat. He doesn't say, you've got to do it this way.

We've got to understand that. The New Testament is not an etching. It's pastel.

It blends, it moves, it swims with human beings. Now, this problem with the law, with the feast days, we've got a lot of Christians today that are getting back and believing it's obligatory on them to keep the Passover. It's a very difficult concept for people to believe that we can just let go and put our faith in Jesus and interact with Him and live in perfect righteousness apart from any religious action.

Very difficult and very dangerous. Because that is not a license to the flesh. See, you have to take the whole New Testament to get the picture.

Because most of the New Testament, by far most, is talking about what we would call righteous behavior, godly behavior. And the penalties that accrue if we don't. See? So it seems like there's two different messages.

But there isn't. The thing is that the rest of God, in the rest of God, all of our dead works are gone, including our religious works. Now, we don't realize we have religious works, but most of us have some little things that we do that we equate with being religious.

And it may be a while before God can get at that without, on the other hand, turning us into what happened with the charismatic move. Now, in the charismatic move, they rebelled against old-time Pentecostal holiness of dress. And it was particularly on the women, as far as makeup and dress, that was about 80% of it.

But it also included clean speech, and it also included trusting God for healing. Alright, now, in the charismatic move, they said, well, we're free from all that. But they didn't know, they didn't read the rest of the Bible, so they go to X-rated movies and wear skirts well above their knees.

The women do and everything. Well, I'm free. I'm not under that old holiness.

My holiness was of the heart. Well, that's not biblical because it says something about dress in the Bible. It slips me just... Now, I know there's one about not with braided hair and costly ornaments, but I think

there's another one.

But in any case, we know that if you're a Christian, you ought to talk like a Christian, act like a Christian, and look like a Christian. You can't go around dressed in an unbecoming way that leads to lust. So, you do things decently and in order.

Well, that's the problem that we have as humans. Either we're comfortable with a rigid set of religious observances that we do, which really, although they're not the Jewish law, they are our own law and our conscience is involved in them. That's why Paul says, whatever you do, do of faith, because if it's not of faith, it's sin.

He said, I know that all things are clean to me. And there's a verse that's been abused. I know all things are clean to me, but if you esteem it in your mind to be unclean, it's unclean to you.

That's in the New Testament. So, he said, whatever's not of faith is sin. Whatever you do, eat or drink, do it with thanksgiving unto God.

Now, that's a hard line for Christians to follow. They can follow a set of rules. And in many Pentecostal and Evangelical churches, they do have very strict rules that the people follow.

Certain things they can do, certain things they can't do. Alright? And then we have a kind of a freewheeling thing in which anybody, anything goes, you know? And the verse they use is, if a man esteems it to be unclean, his heart is unclean. So, you can go to X-rated movies, you can do anything that you want to, and just think clean thoughts, and you're alright.

Well, that don't work. Alright. So, on the one hand, to have no law leads to destruction.

On the other hand, to have a lot of religious observances can serve to take our mind off Christ, keep us from growing, and give us a spirit by which we can't accept anybody in the body that doesn't follow our rules. Do you see what I'm saying? But there's a third way. There's a third way.

And it brings together Paul and James and the writer of Hebrews. And what that is, is you do all the Christian things, you know, that's expected of you in your church. You serve, you give, you attend the fellowship with the brothers, you meditate in the Bible, you all do these things until the day star rises in your heart, which is Christ being born in you.

Now, as this happens, then you begin to be able to follow the Spirit of God. And the Spirit of God will never lead you into the bondages of sin. Never.

And little by little, the Lord helps you let go of the things that you're clinging to. And so that's the model. It's Jesus that you're living in the eternal Sabbath of God.

And because you're following the Lord and obeying Him, you're perfectly righteous at all times, apart from any arbitrary standard. That's where James, Hebrews, and Romans all comes together. It doesn't go against what Paul said.

Paul said, we can receive righteousness apart from any works on our part. Absolutely. Absolutely.

But, we have to be following the Spirit of God because in Romans 8.4, Paul says that the righteousness of the law is imputed to us provided what? We live according to the law of the Spirit of life. So it all comes

together and there is no inconsistency whatever. It's not a case that we don't do anything and God keeps calling us righteous.

That's not true. But that's how we Gentiles understand Paul, but we ignore James and we ignore Hebrews. Make sense? Do you want to go through that again or have you got it pretty good? Do you see where the rest of God is a third way? It's not religious observance and it's not the freedom of the flesh.

Yes? The two ways are almost saying to God you have to accept us the way we are. It's a very self-centered thing and there's no change involved. It's only that other way that you just mentioned where we have to be pleasing to God walking in the Spirit when the change takes place.

It's continually, continually because that's the purpose of the covenant is to write the law in our mind and in our heart. That's the purpose of it. So, evangelical theology is destructive because and then when you add dispensationalism to that and say that justification by faith belongs exclusively to the new covenant ignoring, you know, the fact that God called Noah righteous you really have dynamite there.

Moral destruction. And that's where we are today. And you can't tell people differently than that.

Boy, only the Spirit of God can do that. So, that's what our site is all about and is going forth on the site. We're hoping someday to get it in other languages to all members of the body everywhere that they can understand that God is not buying that we have a generation that has been destroyed with the lawless grace heaven rapture teaching.

We've got a generation that does not know the Lord. Of course, there are wonderful exceptions to this. And two, there are many people and teachers and evangelists whose doctrine is cockeyed but they lead people into righteousness.

They present it in different ways like this will make you happy or this will bring God closer to you or something. They keep it strictly on an experiential way but the bottom line is the same. And as far as God is concerned there's no prophet to God whether you have the doctrine straight or you don't.

What God is after is the bottom line of walking with Jesus. That's where everything is is walking with Jesus. I delight to do thy will, O God and thy way is not grievous to me.

That's the bottom line whether your doctrine is cockeyed or right. But I am somewhat I believe somewhat it would help if the doctrine got straightened out. It might help somebody.

Alright, now so you see when Hebrews begins to talk about Abraham it talks about action. See? By faith Abraham when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance obeyed and went. See his faith this is describing Abraham's faith it wasn't his belief it was a belief that worked in action.

All of these illustrations of faith are people that did something. So it's a faith it's really obedience to the revealed will of God. It is not as we're saying today aggressive faith trying to do big things for God going out and doing something getting God to pay for it believing God to do whatever you want.

That's not faith. It's presumption. Faith is obedience.

Abraham wasn't sitting around an urn one day and said I've got an idea I think I'll leave here and believe God to take care of me in the desert. That's not what he did. God spoke to him.

You can't have faith until God speaks to you. You know until God tells you what to do. He tells us in the Bible we have the general pattern in the Bible we have the general pattern in the Bible which keeps us from unclean spirits.

But the Christian life should be in whatever way God communicates it should be a daily communication with God. Which takes experience to keep from getting fooled on it. Alright.

And notice what I said that's a part of faith which is obedience. He went to a place which he would later receive as his inheritance so many times there's a delay. So he would later receive it as inheritance there's a delay.

We have to get used to that. And another part of faith is he did not know where he was going. So sometimes I know when Audrey and I came down here we didn't know what we were doing.

We did not know what we were doing. All we knew was God wanted us to do it and we did it but we didn't know what would happen down here or have any idea of it. No plans, nothing.

We just knew God wanted us here that was it. That's where it stopped. So that's part of faith too.

You can't get it all figured out. Some people have to have everything analyzed and all laid out in front of them and that is not always possible with God. Sometimes you just have to if you're sure it's God just do it and you go on and that was part of it.

Alright. Here's another part. By faith he made his home in the promised land.

Now again see it's action he made his home. He didn't just believe sin and err and believe all this was going to happen. He was in motion.

Well faith is obedience to God and a belief that God will that he is and that he will reward you if you do what he says and seek him. That's what faith is. Alright now like a stranger in a foreign country.

Now that's important for us. It's especially important for us in America because we do not have much governmental persecution and as a result we get the feeling that somehow America and Christianity are one and the same. And it's not.

It's anything but the same. America is morally decadent but we don't understand that in America and you tell from the things that people say like Americans act like they have a right to exert Christian influence in politics and govern the politics in some way and I'm not against if someone is called to a political action then I say God bless them. Again that would be righteousness.

If God calls them to political action then that's righteousness. But what I've seen and I know there's an outstanding Christian that is very instrumental in California politics. And he came and spoke to us pastors one time and ladies forgive me for this but this is what he said we're going to kick butt.

And I said now listen to that. He was I don't know what he was talking about homosexuality or what but he was going to let them know that Christians can knock things around in Sacramento and they better those dudes better watch out there. And I thought I can't imagine Jesus saying that.

Or taking that attitude. I mean that's not our place. America is not the kingdom of God.

It's a very worldly maybe the most worldly nation on the face of the earth. And we ought not to be so involved with it that we mistake America for the kingdom. It isn't.

It is not a Christian nation. I'm sorry but it is not. There's only one Christian nation and that's the kingdom of God.

And Jesus wasn't exhorting his followers to go to Rome and start moving things around in the empire. There were Jews who did. They were called zealots and they were trying to force things but not Jesus.

He said my kingdom is not of this world. And I know we hear all this thing the only thing that needs for evil men to prevail is good men to do nothing and all this stuff. I'm well aware of that.

I'm well aware of the accusation that just pew warmers and they won't get out. I'm well aware of all of that and I've thought about it. And as I say I have nothing against any person that feels politically activated.

You do it but make sure you're hearing from God because you don't have much Bible behind you. We're supposed to be witnesses witnesses of God and we don't resolve things by political action. The weapons of our warfare are not carnal.

They consist of prayer the blood of the Lamb living a godly life growing in Christ. That's the witness that the world is waiting to see. And we need to get it clear in our mind that America and Christianity are two altogether different things.

Because the Christians in America are altogether too involved. You see now this woman that was on the television show that married the millionaire and then they got an annulment you know what I'm talking about? I was not aware of this. She's a Christian.

This woman's a Christian. She came on the Today Show or something and talked about how bad that she felt about it and she'd repented of it but how in the world did a Christian ever get sucked into a thing like that to marry a millionaire on television that she just met on the television and here the guy was a womanizer I guess the marriage was never consummated because he wasn't interested in her. He said I'll take care of you I'll take care of your parents and all this and she never talked to me.

And then she found out he was a womanizer and then she went for an annulment and they granted her an annulment but this woman was a Christian and it comes about because in our country we assume that all the stuff that's going on the professional athletics and the media and one magazine I read gave a write-up on this film that won the Academy Award I can't remember the name of it but it was the big one every award I guess that they offered and I can't remember the name of it does anyone remember what it was?

American Beauty my suggestion is you don't got to watch that that thing is debased debased debased beyond belief it's intent is to make homosexuality acceptable that's the message the man who wrote the screenplay the only normal people on there were two homosexuals the rest of them were all nuts they were repressed homosexuals or something else they were violent and everything that is America wake up wake up and it was a film debased beyond belief won all these awards so somebody is voting for it who?

Americans you think they love your Jesus? or know anything at all about him? we're in a fool's paradise here no when Abraham went out he was a stranger now in those days Abraham knew about Egypt Egypt was one of the great civilizations of the world they had marvelous temples and architecture they had a rich class of people who knew what it was to live in splendor and wealth and Abraham chose to live in a tent he

was different he did not he was vastly wealthy and another thing while I'm on it one of the great American values is that children should be socialized by being with other children that is not a Bible value what usually happens is that children are harmed because it is a fact of group dynamics that the group will always particularly with young people will always go to the most sophisticated the most worldly of the members of the group now I'm not counting Christian young people or something which is organized with the church I'm talking about the neighborhood and the school there is no Bible value in exposing your child to other children their best now that may shock you I've had some experience in dealing with children I've had some experience teaching for years in a very liberal professional neighborhood who believe that and taught that their children should be out on the street corner at night so they could be exposed to every evil thing and thus learn about what was wrong that's a devil's practice they don't learn what's right from that they learn what's wrong and how to do it you can put a rotten apple in a barrel of perfect apples and it will not add one decent thing to that rotten apple what? no, I'm saying those good apples will not add anything good at all to that rotten apple but the rotten apple will affect the other apples now in the Bible it says butter and honey shall he eat that he may know to choose the good and reject the evil you don't learn to be good by associating with the bad and you don't make the bad good barring unusual things your child is better off if most of his relationships are within his family then you won't see anything in the Bible to the contrary all that you get in the Bible is the group of young men following the prophet and what were they doing? mocking him Lloyd? talking about the children is yesterday Dr.

Laura she talked about a study that was recently done with butter and honey how do you learn to choose the good and reject the evil? butter and honey in other words you take what is good you keep feeding the child you don't take him out into the evil to learn good but that was the philosophy in the liberal community that I taught in for several years it doesn't work I've looked at it it doesn't work children will always that's why if your administrator is arranging a public school he's having a lot of discipline problems he's got a maybe he's got a K6 and then he's got a 7 through 12 in a high school district you want to cool off the situation change the pattern and make it a K5 and then you can have a 6 through 9 and then a 10 through 12 because those 6th graders who are hitting puberty

and begin to go ballistic will affect all the kids in the school that's you know when a worldly culture hits a culture not as worldly for example Japan didn't affect us during World War II and the Japanese were singing pistol packing mama because our culture is more worldly more vibrant that way that appeals to the flesh the samurai wouldn't be interested in singing pistol packing mama and so wherever we went we brought drugs and prostitution and everything you can think of and that's a long story I don't want to get into it but what I'm talking about Abraham is an excellent example he didn't bring Isaac down into Egypt to learn to socialize Isaac was kept close to his dad of course he had a lot of servants and everything and kids to play with but Abraham he was within Abraham's influence

all the time you want to read a wonderful story that's germane to that is in this month's Reader's Digest about Cassie the girl that was killed in Columbine they've got an excerpt from the book I Said Yes is the autobiography of that girl written by her parents but there's an excerpt in this month's Reader's Digest and it's wonderful and it tells basically how this girl was being almost demonized by another girl and I mean demonized I mean it was bad they were trying to get her trying to get Cassie into a satanic cult that the initiation was drinking kitten's blood and and oh it's worse than that in fact this other girl was kept telling her while her mother ran her mother ran across Cassie's the letters that were coming from this other girl that the story calls Mona and there's pictures

of her mother of Cassie's mother and father hanging strung up by their intestines with knives in them that were written by this Mona so her mother got a hold of it and contacted the police and contacted this Mona's parents well her parents said it's alright it's just kids stuff but the police this is in this month's digest the police said the detective said it was the worst thing he'd ever seen so what they did now this girl was a high school girl and her parents put her under house arrest I mean they wouldn't let her socialize with anybody of course the girl was yelling you know my rights and everything they said no way you're not going to have anything to do with that and so this went on I guess for a couple of years fighting with this girl I mean how many of us would be willing to

fight with a teenage teenage girl that long but they did and they took her out of public school put her in a Christian school got her going to church and everything so after a couple of years went by she wanted to go out on a church outing with some young people and so the parents let her go when she came back she said I'm okay I got right with God and after that she was an exemplary Christian but you see what they did they earned the undying hatred of Mona's parents because they felt what she was doing was okay so that's what we're in in the world see that's the difference Cassie's family was Christian and you can see that Cassie did not influence Mona in the right way Mona was influencing Cassie in the right way in the wrong way and so the American value of having children socialized is

not a Bible value it's a worldly value in fact what Antichrist is working at is to get all people together the idea is to get all people together it's a togetherness thing and that works only for Satan it does not work for God God works with individuals and he draws them to himself and the same way with children we just assume the psychologists say it's good for the child to be socially oriented there's nothing in the Bible that implies anything of the kind just something to pray about and think about so you see the American values are not Christian values we assume they are but our our Declaration of Independence talks about life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness not the pursuit of righteousness the pursuit of happiness and it's not the same so Abraham always remained a stranger he

would interact with the tribes they respected him he bought a burial place for Sarah from one of the desert tribes but he was never part of them and you remember when he got his own servants and they went and rescued Lot you remember they were going to give Abraham the spoils he said I will not take a shoelace from you he said the men that went with me let them take whatever they wanted I'm not taking anything from you he kept himself which was an insulting thing to do what he did to the king of Sodom and the other kings that were aligned there that were captured along with Lot but when they wanted to give Abraham all the spoils he said I will not take a shoelace from you and then Melchizedek met him so we don't realize we're we in America we Christians are much too involved in the world

in America assuming that it's Christian it is not Christian okay it is as much the world as if we were living in communist China just now although it isn't Satan's wisdom to persecute us it's Satan's wisdom to give us the impression that the world loves us and America loves us but you can see if you can see the signs of the times you can see in the letters to the editor they've got their stereotype and we'll be dancing to that tune someday and we'll be a lot stronger for it yeah instead of thinking everybody loves us alright so he lived in tents as did Isaac and Jacob he brought up his children do you know that in one place God said to Abraham that he was going to bless him because he said I know that you will bring up your children after my loss and that's why he blessed him because he

said I know that you will bring up your children in my way isn't that something and that's why he blessed Abraham and so Isaac was so influenced by that that he kept that separation and Jacob was so influenced

by that that he kept that separation and they just wandered from place to place any question about that at all that is faith right that's faith it was faith in God that God loved him and would reward him and he didn't need a shoelace from the world makes you as independent as a hog on ice I've always admired Elisha because he was so independent I mean here comes the commander of the whole Aramean army comes with camelloads of the wealth of Aram and Elisha said I don't know he wouldn't even go out and meet the guy he'd go dip in the Jordan see that's a prophetic nature that's not a

hatred of people that's not an unkindness of people it's an awareness of who you are Jesus was in the world but he was never of the world he never tried to influence anybody he knew who he was and we're supposed to be the same that's faith that's faith the opposite people is antichrist yes sir antichrist is the spirit of the world it's power is in money and America is far more antichrist than it is Christian and I'm just as patriotic as anybody in the house I enlisted in the Marine Corps once and I'd do it again I'm not talking about patriotism I'm talking about Hebrews 11 and what faith is we're people of another country a kingdom that's coming amens are awful weak am I saying something that's surprising is that surprising to you at all?

I'm glad I got on it if it is we are a separate people a priesthood unto God well I don't see any dissent so we must be alright alright for he was looking toward the city with foundations isn't that interesting? with foundations Abraham came out of a brilliant culture Ur of the Chaldees was a very outstanding culture of its day and why was he looking for a city with foundations is that such an unusual expression evidently he felt that the cities in this world including Egypt were not founded on anything isn't that an interesting thing? remember Psalms 24 what does it say about the world he has established it on the seas and on the floods I was preaching one time in Wisconsin and I said you know just try to pour concrete in a river and get a foundation I'll be if there wasn't a guy there

who could do it so I dropped that analogy there's a way of doing it but by and large something that's established on the floods and the seas we don't think it's being well but you remember the first Psalm the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof the world and they who dwell therein for he's founded upon the seas and established upon the floods see there's no foundation there so it's interesting that he was looking for a city that has foundations and it's because of this passage about his eye we know that city is what city? sure, remember how it goes into the twelve foundations of the wall and that's the city that has foundations and so we think yeah what he's talking about is going to heaven this is one small problem it's found in Hebrews 12 where is that verse? it's in Hebrews 13

I know oh yeah, 13-14 somebody find that and read it Hebrews 13-14 very interesting because it's the only place in the New Testament where you could make a case for going to heaven as our eternal home is on this Abraham looking for this city somebody read it do we have Hebrews 13-16 up there? that's not 13-16 oh, 14, I'm sorry for here we do not have an enduring city see the city with foundations but we do have one in heaven thank God aren't you happy about that? what does it say? yeah, it's a city that's coming he was looking for a city that's coming isn't that interesting? see, it's because of the long history of heaven that you read that and you automatically think heaven no, it's not he wasn't looking for heaven he was looking for a city and that city is coming we don't go to it

comes to us huh? yeah, it comes to us that's the city right there is the city where you're reading Revelation 21 alright, now who's architect and builder is God in other words, he didn't want Egypt he didn't want a city made by people Egypt was a splendor you know, we're still we're still it's a still Egypt is still very much in the news you know, with its artifacts and the history of the different pharaohs and the queens and all it's

very appealing to people I know the archaeology magazines are heavy into this they're all the time digging up some new thing you've probably read about Nefertiti and all those and Ammon and all that it's a fascinating thing but it's built by man and he was looking for a city that was built by God he knew all about Egypt he was looking for a city built by God

that's something about faith faith how often is it today in America that we're trying to make Christianity a way of living happily in the present world how many books in the bookstore are written to show us how we can be happy in the present world Christianity is a hope for the future now in America we have enough food and usually medical attention, shelter clothes and so on most of the world doesn't and so it's hard for us to appreciate it but Christianity is not for this present world it's a hope for a kingdom that's coming repent, the kingdom of God is at hand and of course to people who are destitute that's a wonderful message see we changed it around as we're getting out of here but the true gospel is that a better world is on the way and we wait for it and we put our treasures in

heaven and that's why even though God calls us into places of pain and being deprived of things that we want intensely and sometimes in persecution actual torture and murder and so on but that has nothing to do with anything our salvation is not something that we're supposed to be happy now, it's a hope for the future and that will help when God brings into a hard time to not shirk, not shrink back but go forward and recognize okay, I've had my good times this time right now is difficult no problem, the kingdom's coming the kingdom's coming when Messiah comes how many times have the Jews said that for 2000 years because of their persecution when Messiah comes it'll be okay when Messiah comes when the kingdom comes that's the true Christian perspective it's not supposed to be making us the

most happy people in the world if we are, praise the Lord I'm not morbid at all, very optimistic but I've been through enough to know life can be tough by faith all of this is not just believing something he saw in the stars there's a lot of action here even though he was past age and he was past age did you ever think Abraham, in one more year I'll be as old as Abraham was when God promised Isaac to him one more year I'll be that age five years younger than Moses was when he started through the wilderness and God gave him that vision and I'm sure he thought it was going to happen in a couple of years he had no way of knowing it was going to be a quarter of a century now at 75 he wasn't exactly a kid I mean he was along in years okay, God, you can do a miracle fine you know, a lot of

dudes around at 75 have kids maybe you don't find too many of them in genealogies after you get past the early chapters of Genesis people live somewhat like we can understand and for a man in that time to get married when he was 60 was significant so alright but and Sarah was barren and of course she didn't have much hope of anything by that time they'd been married a long time and but he believed and that belief had power in it because way up just before Isaac was born he had to lie again about his wife so that they wouldn't take her because she was beautiful so she evidently underwent biological change he was believing he was believing and boy if that isn't a part of faith I'll eat the Thompson Chain reference Bible that is one of the big things of faith is God giving you a promise and

then having it delayed for a long time boy that's where the saints are made I'll tell you that's where the saints are made I've been reading Job very slowly and trying to in the NIV trying to absorb boy there's marvelous things in there about human nature these guys that were, his comforters were rats they were rats oh in one place Job is crying out to me he says his arrows have pierced me my gall has poured out on the ground I couldn't figure out what that meant his gallbladder was leaking or what so I read the Amplify, that was on how gall I went to NIV and the new record said gall, gall so I went to Jamison, Fawcett and

Brown no help at all the thought seems to be he was just poured out he wasn't leaking or anything he was just poured out so he's telling them my face is red from the

suffering and everything and this guy Zophar this creep I'm sorry you know what he says to him for in so speaking you offend me I've heard that somewhere I can't lay my finger on it but that is about the kind of sympathy you may get from some people in so saying you offend me and then Job you know wiped out completely and then he goes on this long discourse and then the next guy accuses Job right out of being a sinner I mean he just accused him right out can you imagine that and that went on and on and on and on and on and the reason that's all in there is because God brings some of his saints through Job type experiences and when you're there you can that is meat to your bones to realize that somebody felt the same way wished he'd never been born yep and don't expect help from people

because they don't understand they've never been there and they can't understand but that was too rich for my blood Zophar coming out with that in so saying you offend me he got his feelings hurt by Job and his time Job at that time was sewing on himself a garment a sack cloth that fit around his body and this dude says stop saying you offend me I've ran across that somewhere but I can't remember who it was just as well probably was enabled to be a father because he considered him faithful who had made the promise do you know how old Abraham was when Isaac was born I gave you a hint 75 plus a quarter of a century I think he was it was when 99 God appeared to him and told him that when the time of life came again the son would be born he was about 100 years old when Isaac was born and you

know that was obviously their age wasn't too much different than ours because it says his body was as good as dead you know verse 12 and so this one man he as good as dead so it wasn't too much from today at 100 you'd be considered as good as dead but isn't it interesting that after Sarah died some 30 years later 20 years later I guess it was and he got married again and had a whole school of kids I mean when God does something I mean he does it in spades and so this was more than just looking at the stars and saying I believe and so from this one man and he as good as dead came descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as countless as the sand on the seashore now I know it says in the bible Israel was as the stars well they weren't they were a finite number but when you

consider that everyone that believes is a descendant of Abraham and this is going to go on into the unforeseeable future I guess he will end up with seed in number as great as the grains of sand on the seashore because it was God that said it and he knows how many grains of sand there are on the seashore and according to Job he calls all the stars by name so he knows what he's talking about but what does that tell us? there is such a lesson in that because in the Christian religion and Stan has been active as assistant pastor for many years and he can appreciate this and any of the others, Emily has been in a jail ministry and others have been active in ministerial things, there is such a temptation to evaluate the good that we're doing in terms of some efforts that we're making and I get

caught up in that on the internet and it's amazing how it grows when we had 75 a day, whoa, that was a time to go out and celebrate and now if we don't get 300 in a day, what are we doing wrong? so you kind of measure your progress in terms of the movements that you're making at that time but if God can find people who will serve him and obey him with no compromise, not limit God in any way, whatever you say God, you got it, give me the grace to do it and it's done tell God that and you mean it you mean it, which takes a certain amount of faith because well at Colleen's age, she figured whoa, what's going to happen to me for the rest of my life, you know but when you get real old and antiquated, you know it's quite so so strong a decision but if you can make that decision, if you can make

that decision and not limit God you know, to 300 a day or whatever, forget that and just be faithful whatever he's called you to do be absolutely faithful and obedient without limiting God in terms of what you think is possible, I'm a firm believer you can have fruit on a parallel with Abraham I'm a firm believer in that I'm a firm believer in that but it happens as God brings you into a place where it becomes impossible, see you could figure, well if he was young and healthy and everything and God could say to him, you're going to have a great many kids we could see that was somewhere within the realm of possibility so by making him wait until he was 100 Sarah had already been barren when this thing started another 25 years, no wonder Sarah left this is ridiculous you know, I mean, great

but it isn't going to happen Charlie you know, women tend to be very practical you know so she left and God heard that and remarked on it, scared her to death poor soul, women always suffer like Job's wife and some of them you never even hear the names of their wives, a lot of them you don't even hear, they're married obviously I was thinking of one the other day the name of his wife isn't even in the Bible somebody that God used greatly had children but the name of his wife isn't even in the Bible so anyway, that's fairer sex sometimes got short shrift there but here he waits until the thing is absolutely impossible there's no way this is going to happen and what happens?

God's word is fulfilled not in some reasonable way but how could Abraham, if you figure it was 2000 years before the birth of Christ, and you're pretty close to the days of Abraham around that time around 2000 years or so before the birth of Christ give or take 100 years or so could he at that time have imagined that what do we know we're starting the third millennium, we're starting the fifth millennium from Abraham that there would be people there who would be calling themselves Gentiles, who would be saying they're of the seed of Abraham I mean when God answers he answers in a way that you couldn't have begun to imagine you couldn't have begun to imagine and it's wildest notions he never could have pictured that the bible one day a descendant of his by the name of Paul would say that Abraham's seed would come after the law was given and then the promise of God, which was the promise of the Holy Spirit, that the promise would come to all the world beginning with the church through Abraham's seed when he was monkeying around with Eliezer of Damascus thinking, you know he'll be my heir Eliezer, he'll be my heir what's wrong with him?

Well nothing except God had something so greatly beyond anything this man could imagine and of course his obedience to God in the matter of Isaac, it stands as a mountain peak, I mean that's a Mount Everest in the record of mankind that this man waiting that long for his boy would then be willing to go up and offer him as a burnt offering and it took them three days to get up there to the mountain and he had all that time to think about it and think about Sarah and happened to face her when he came home without the boy where's Isaac?

Oh I offered him up for a burnt offering he must have just gotten up in that position going home and meeting Sarah you got a Sarah too I mean he had this, he must have just just died inside and said God said I want to do it no matter what so that was a Mount Everest in human experience but I maintain what I said, if God can find a person who will commit themselves to God verbally and then live it and say father I'm yours to do with as you will he doesn't have that many people who do that you know just give me the grace I trust you for no fruit or marvelous fruit whatever you want that God will take up his option on you at some point along the line and do things that never entered into your heart or mind to imagine but so many Christians limit themselves to the little thing they can do in their church and it's good that they do and they're good people and decent people I don't mean in any way to down such people, they're good people the soul of the earth, they make it go but every once in a while if somebody comes along and God

challenges them to believe him I'll do it if it kills me I'll do it what can be done with such a person let me tell you something they make things possible that would otherwise never be possible and all it is is faith

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/11/SID11161.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/robert-b-thompson/reconciling-biblical-faith/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net