Justified by Faith Alone

Romans 3:21-4:25, 9/14/25, David Geldart, Tru Community Church

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Welcome & Connect Cards
- Giving
- WM Hike (Next Sun 4pm at Konza Prairie)
- Baptisms Oct 5, class 28th, rsvp to James in person or info@tru.church

1. [1] As most of you know, we've been studying Romans the last month or so.

- 2. Today we're completing the first Section of Romans.
 - 3. [2] Part 1 is Chs 1-4, THE GOSPEL WE STAND ON --- all about the foundational truth of who we are, our need for salvation, and the great gift of the Gospel for us. --- WHAT THE GOSPEL IS --- WHAT WE'RE STANDING ON
- 4. Next week we'll jump into Part 2, the prime focus of this series: Chs 5-8, THE GOSPEL WE WALK IN how the Gospel plays itself out in our day to day lives to enable us to walk in Victory!
- 5. [3] Today we're going to be in Romans 3:21-4:25. We'll be looking at
 - a. The Problem
 - b. The Provision
 - c. The Proof
 - d. The Practice

6. [4] THE PROBLEM:

- 7. Last week was a heavy one the Bad News that all humans since Adam are fallen and sinful. Unable to save ourselves. Both infected with an inherited spiritual condition of sin that is 100% fatal, and also personally guilty of sinful rebellion against God that caries the punishment of death.
 - a. [5] Romans 3:11 "There is no one righteous, not even one;
 - b. **Rom 3:20** Therefore no one will be declared righteous in God's sight by the works of the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of our sin.

8. BAD NEWS!

- a. But shared with love because it's true
- b. Bad News First.... then the Good News!
- 9. PRAY

10.[5] THE PROVISION

- 11. Next verse:
- 12.[7] ²¹ BUT NOW apart from the law the righteousness of God has been made known,

- a. That part in the movie when all seems lost.... AND THEN EVERYTHING CHANGED!
- b. **[8] Avengers: Endgame** Captain America is alone against Thanos' army, beaten and outnumbered. BUT NOW portals open one by one, and a great army of heroes return. The tide turns from hopeless defeat to overwhelming victory.
- c. **[9] Star Wars: A New Hope** Luke is seconds away from being destroyed in the Death Star trench run. Vader has his Xwing in his scope and is about to fire. BUT NOW -- Suddenly, Han Solo swoops in with the Millennium Falcon, blasting Darth Vader off his tail. Salvation comes in the nick of time. The proton torpedoes hit the tiny opening, and against overwhelming odds, the Death Star is destroyed!

13.[10] to which the Law and the Prophets testify.

- a. Should have seen it coming!
- b. Had you forgotten that Dr Strange had the time stone, and had said before: THIS IS THE ONLY WAY (to defeat Thanos!)
- c. And you knew, deep down, that Han wasn't a COMPLETE scoundrel.
 - i. Should have seen the millennium falcon coming!

14.[11] 22 This righteousness is given through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe.

- a. That's where we're going to camp today.
- b. Some of us who have grown up in church may need to zoom out a second and remember just how insane this is!

15. Lets keep reading a bit

- 16. [12] There is no difference between Jew and Gentile, ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, [BAD NEWS]
- 17.²⁴ and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. [GOOD NEWS!]
 - [13] ²⁵ God presented Christ as a sacrifice of atonement, through the shedding of his blood—to be received by faith. He did this to demonstrate his righteousness, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished— ²⁶ he did it to demonstrate his righteousness at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus.
 - a. Why couldn't God have just kept overlooking ppls sins? Letting them go unpunished/forgiven/overlooked, because he's so loving and nice!?
 - i. Yes God is loving. At his core.
 - ii. But another part of God's essential character is being just.
 - 1. All right and wrong are measured by him.
 - iii. Remember, humans aren't the only ones watching what's going down on Earth.
 - iv. Angels and demons, of various kinds and authorities, are in the mix as well.
 - v. There's lots of biblical evidence for a council of divine beings, with God the Father as its head.

- vi. And there's a cosmic scale to sin.
- vii. God loves humans, made in his image.
 - 1. God is perfectly loving and good. Just and right.
- viii. Humans sin, after having been told it would bring death.
- ix. Everyone is staring. What's God going to do?????
 - 1. Is he going to sacrifice his justice in favor of his love?
 - 2. Or his love in favor of his justice??
- x. It's a cosmic checkmate from Satan.
 - 1. Or so he thought.
- b. But God did what no one saw coming.
 - i. When all seemed lost: He became a human. Lived a perfect life. And willingly paid the price of our sin took our death upon himself.
- c. And in dying on the cross and rising again, he proved forever to all watching humans and angelic beings alike, that he is indeed both Loving and Just.
 - i. And forever laying to rest Satan's ancient lie that God's not good, cant be trusted, doesn't have our best interest at heart.
 - ii. Saving us without sacrificing his love or justice
 - 1. Perfectly loving. Perfectly just.
 - 2. Just and Justifier.
 - iii. INCREDIBLE!
- 18. Lets look a little closer at that term **justified**:
 - a. [14] ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.
 - b. ²⁸ For we maintain that a person is justified by faith apart from the works of the law.
 - c. [15] JUSTIFIED: Greek verb: dikaioo It's a legal term. A courtroom word.
 - i. to declare righteous. To acquit.
 - 1. Comes from the same root word as righteous (dikaios)
 - ii. Does NOT mean to MAKE someone righteous (to change their moral character in the moment).
 - iii. But means to declare them to be examined by the judge and found to BE RIGHTEOUS
 - 1. Judge = God
 - d. Simmer on that a bit -- Paul is saying something literally incredible.
 - i. Through Jesus Christ's atoning work on the cross, God declares sinners to be acquitted – EXAMINED AND FOUND TO ACTUALLY BE RIGHTEOUS – not by their works, actions, behaviors, adherence to the law, but based solely on their FAITH IN HIM, who takes our punishment and gives us his righteousness.
 - We're DECLARED TO ACTUALLY BE RIGHTEOUS

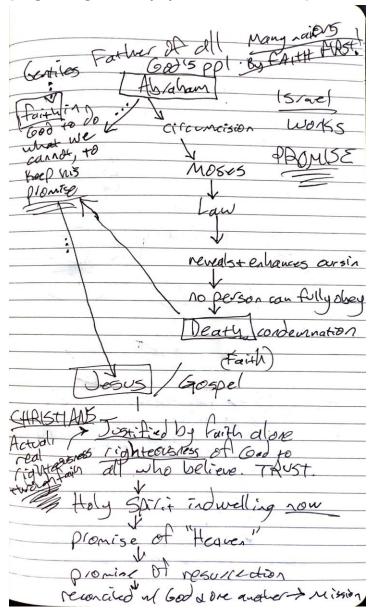
- a. Not guiltless, the sin is well established!
- 2. But Examined apart from our works
 - a. Righteous apart from our lawbreaking
- 3. Righteous because of our trust in Jesus to do for us what we could never do for ourselves: Save and Raise us.
 - a. And give us HIS righteousness, by faith
 - b. We have actual real righteousness that's been GIVEN TO US BY JESUS
- e. This is so different from how everyone else in the world thinks about this
 - i. All religions at root are systems of works, rules to follow, rituals to perform, right things to believe, THINGS YOU MUST DO OR NOT DO to be good enough
 - ii. Before God
 - iii. Before the gods
 - iv. Before People
- f. But the Gospel is completely different
 - i. Because at its root, Christianity isn't a religion, it's a rescue.
- g. ITS NOT ABOUT BEING GOOD ENOUGH.
 - i. Following the rules
 - ii. Working it to make God happy with you
 - iii. Or avoiding doing bad things in order to avoid his wrath
- h. It's all about faith trust in Him alone.
 - i. to be able to do what he's promised.
 - ii. TO rescue us not according to our good works, but according to HIS, gifted to us!
 - iii. Our only good work, is to believe. To trust that it's true.
 - iv. To place our FAITH in him.
- i. In fact, it's always been that way.

19.[16] THE PROOF:

- 20. [17] ²¹ But now apart from the law the righteousness of God has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify.
 - a. THE OLD TESTAMENT
- 21. Chapter 4 is Paul's proof of this by looking back at the founder and father of the People of God, the Nation of the Israelites, Abraham:
 - a. Who God chose to follow him.
 - b. Who, though he and his wife were really old folks far beyond biological ability to have a child were told that he and Sarah would have a son, through whom God would accomplish his promise.
 - c. And that he would become the father of MANY NATIONS.

d. And all peoples on the earth would be blessed through him!

22. [Begin diagram on paper or whiteboard]



23.ABRAHAM

- a. **The Promise** = God will make you into the father of many nations, starting with a son from he and Sarah's bodies!
- b. **Sign of the covenant** = Circumcision
- c. **Descendant:** Moses
- d. Covenant: The Law 10 Commandments, and all associated law of God
 - i. Reveals and enhances our sin
 - ii. No person can fully obey
- e. **Effect:** Condemnation & Death!
 - i. DEAD END
- 24. But wait, let's look back:

- a. [18] 4:3 What does Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness."
- b. ¹⁰ Under what circumstances was it credited? Was it after he was circumcised, or before? It was not after, but before! ¹¹ And he received circumcision as a sign, a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised. So then, he is the father of all who believe but have not been circumcised, in order that righteousness might be credited to them.

25.So actually,

- a. Other line \rightarrow Abraham had **FAITH** in God to do what he could not, and keep his promise.
 - i. And God credited that faith to him as righteousness!
- b. Even before circumcision or the law

26. Other line → **Descendant: JESUS** & His Gospel

- a. Justified by faith alone
 - i. Righteousness of God to all who believe/trust.

b. A BRAND NEW COVENANT: GRACE

- 1. One FAR STRONGER than the first
- 2. Based on the efforts of GOD
 - a. Not weak and fallible human efforts

c. Sign = Holy Spirit who indwells us now

- i. Promise of Heaven (now and later)
- ii. Promise of Resurrection
- d. Effect: Reconciled with God and one another
- e. Leads us to MISSION to share this Good News invitation to everyone
 - i. From any nation
 - 1. Any culture
 - ii. Jewish folks who had been given the law (and failed to keep it)
 - 1. Non-Jewish "Gentile" folks
 - iii. Grew up in Church
 - 1. Folks who've never been to church
 - iv. Grew up in the mosque
 - 1. Westerners who Converted to Buddhism
 - v. Murderer in jail
 - 1. workaholic in who serves in the nursery
 - vi. EVERYONE IS INVITED TO this new way, this long-foretold path to ACTUAL REAL righteousness before our Creator God through Faith, not works

27.THE PROMISE of old fulfilled - FOR US

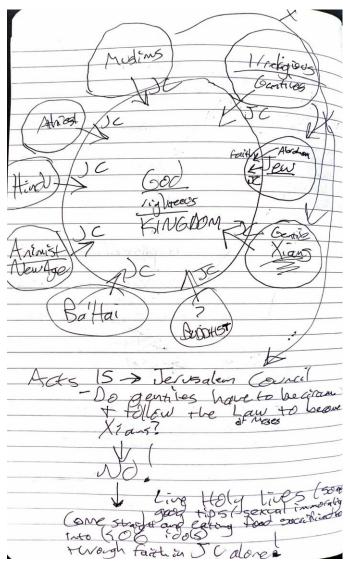
a. Abraham truly the father of MANY NATIONS, not only Israel.

28. [19] 4:18 Against all hope, Abraham in hope believed and so became the father of many nations, just as it had been said to him, "So shall your offspring be. 19 Without weakening in his faith, he faced the fact that his body was as good as dead—since he was about a hundred years old—and that Sarah's womb was also dead. 20 Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God, 21 being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had [20] promised. 22 This is why "it was credited to him as righteousness." 23 The words "it was

[20] promised. ²² This is why "it was credited to him as righteousness." ²³ The words "it was credited to him" were written not for him alone, ²⁴ but also for us, to whom God will credit righteousness—for us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead. ²⁵ He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification.

29. These words from God to Abraham were spoken more than 4 thousand years ago with YOU AND I IN MIND.

- Seeing in and through Abraham, as it were, the generations of Israelite and Gentile –
 KANSANS who would be invited to be justified righteous through faith in God –
 through the finished work of Jesus.
- b. Why do YOU need to hear that this morning?
- 30. Because the mission from the beginning wasn't just for God to get a special deal going with Abraham so only the Jews would benefit, but so that through them, God's Great Love and Invitation to reconciliation would be offered to EVERYONE EVERYWHERE WHOLE WORLD!
 - a. Regardless of their background or culture.
 - b. Rev 7 shows a vision into heaven in the future, of a great multitude with God, before the Lamb of God, Jesus, from EVERY TRIBE TONGUE AND NATION!
 - c. Not only Jews, but everyone
 - d. Even Midwest Kansans who wear K-State and Chiefs garb!
 - i. Still retaining some essential aspects of their unique cultural identities
- 31. Kingdom Circles WHO GETS IN AND HOW???



32. (Acts 15 – Jerusalem Council)

- a. Do non-Jews/Gentiles have to be circumcised and follow the Jewish Law to become Christians? To become Children of God in the Kingdom of God?
- b. NO!
 - i. [21] Acts 15: ²⁸ It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us not to burden you [gentile believers in Antioch] with anything beyond the following requirements: ²⁹ You are to abstain from food sacrificed to idols, from blood, from the meat of strangled animals and from sexual immorality. You will do well to avoid these things.
 - 1. Live Holy lives: not participating in idol worship or sexual immorality
- c. Not by works or behaviors, but by faith in JC alone
- 33. So how do Jews come into the KOG?
- 34. How about Gentiles?
 - a. Irreligious sinful ppl?
 - b. What about Religious PPL?
 - c. Hindus?, Muslims?, Buddhists?, Animists?, Atheists?

35. ALL CAN FOLLOW JESUS STRAIGHT INTO THE KoG

- a. By faith alone in the God who justifies sinners by his Son
- 36. What burdens do Christians tend to lay on others (explicitly or implicitly) beyond justification by faith alone for ppl to become Xians/come into KoG?
 - a. Look and act like us?
 - b. Be put together?
 - c. Stop doing drugs/alcohol?
 - d. Don't go to bars?
 - e. Get their view of sexuality right?
 - f. Give up your old friends?
 - i. Old hobbies?
 - ii. Change their Ways of speaking?
 - 37.NO --- FAITH ALONE in Jesus who Justifies sinners!
- 38. What about us??? Let's beware of laying on extra burdens to ppl even by accident.
 - a. Let our cry be the same as Martin Luther 500 yrs ago: Grace Alone! By Faith Alone!

39.[22] THE PRACTICE:

- 40. The Gym Sept 11 workout. Put on backpack with lots of weight in it. Step up on 20" box 110
 - x... (one for each floor of WTC Firefighters climbed)...
 - a. Supposed to do as fast as you can.
 - b. Rx was 45-70lbs. I did 45!
 - c. That was quite heavy enough for me!
 - d. But it illustrates our first application practice today:

41.[23] Practice putting down the heavy backpack of guilt and works-based religion.

- a. The sin weight there is far more than anything you could lift!
- b. So lay it down.
 - c. And rest in Christ's declaration that you're RIGHTEOUS—Justified—through your faith in Him alone ---- Let him carry you!
- d. Invitation to place your trust in God for your salvation for the first time
 - i. Not by your goodness or badness
 - ii. But by God's grace, through faith in Jesus to do for you what you could not do for yourself: MAKE YOU RIGHT WITH HIM
 - iii. Pray and tell him you believe he died on the Cross for you and that you're ready to trust him with your whole life.

42. [24] Practice getting out of your comfort zone.

- a. Into cultures/types of ppl you're not normally with
- b. To practice giving ppl the love and grace of God NAKED
- c. Stop grading others on their behavior or culture.

- i. Don't add burdens to someone coming into the KoG through Faith Alone in Jesus.
- ii. Treat others with the same extravagant grace God's given you.
- d. Nothing else attached, burdened, covered
 - i. Grace alone by Faith Alone

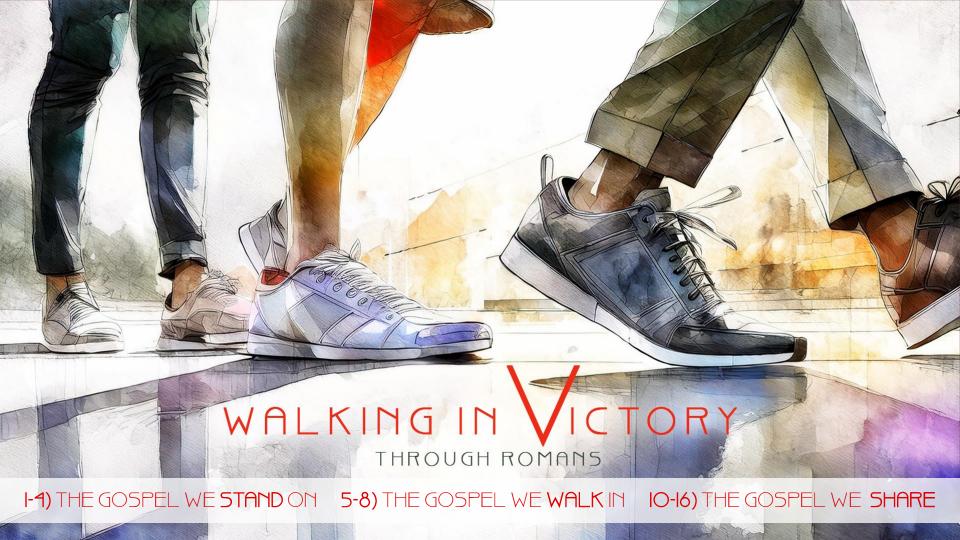
43.[25] And practice being unoffendable

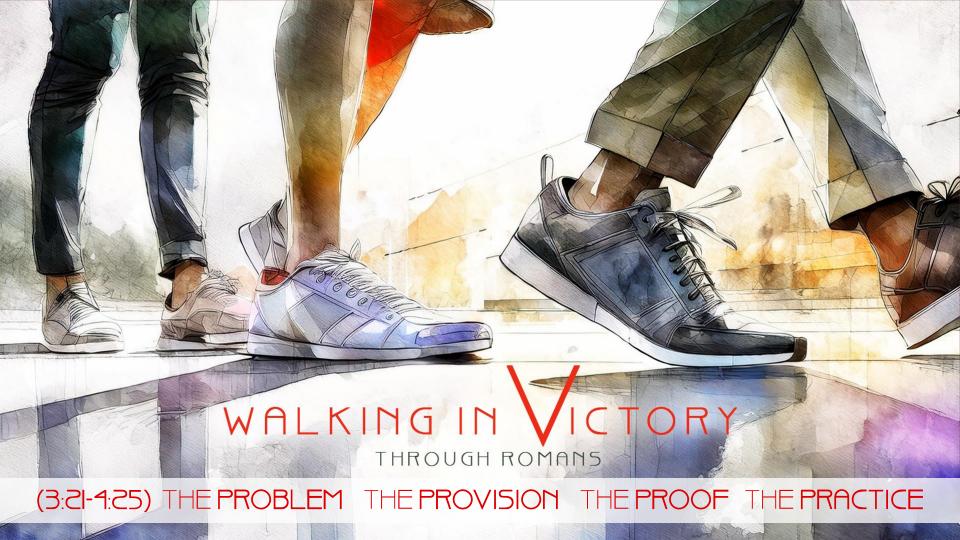
- a. Nothing to defend
 - i. Not your religion
 - ii. Not your sensibilities, cultural preferences
 - iii. Your politics.
 - iv. Your perspective on theology
 - v. Preferred Type of language, hobbies
 - vi. Perspectives on sexuality
 - vii. Their liberalness or conservativeness
 - viii. Beliefs about God or other religions
 - ix. WHICH SPORTS TEAM THEY LIKE
- b. God is calling ALL KINDS OF PEOPLE to:
 - i. Faith alone in JC as the just and justifier
 - c. So get in there with people who are different from you.
 - i. Love them like Jesus did.
 - ii. Secure in your identity and the hope of the Gospel
 - iii. And share this Good News with any who will listen

44. [26] Practice Gratitude as a reasonable lifestyle

- a. You've been given the greatest gift in the universe
- b. Unlooked for, Undeserved.
- c. Unparalleled in all of history. Unmatched in cosmic worth.
- d. So be grateful to Him for it.
 - i. Let that worldview color everything you see and do and say.
 - e. It's only right that Good News people would be the most grateful and joyous people on earth. --- Even in the midst of great hardship.
- f. Because we know that ultimately, we're beloved and accepted by God Himself
 - i. Apart from our behavior and actions
 - ii. And even if we die, he'll raise us back to eternal life
 - 1. Forever freed from sin and death and sorrow and pain.
 - 2. Along with all those who've trusted him.
- g. Good News people practice Gratitude [Gratitude challenge, journaling]







THE PROBLEM



THE PROBLEM

Romans 3:11 There is no one righteous, not even one

Romans 3:20 Therefore no one will be declared righteous in God's sight by the works of the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of our sin.





Romans 3: ²¹ But now apart from the law the righteousness of God has been made known,



Romans 3: ²¹ But now apart from the law the righteousness of God has been made known,





Romans 3: ²¹ But now apart from the law the righteousness of God has been made known,



Romans 3: ²¹ But now apart from the law the righteousness of God has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify.



Romans 3: ²¹ But now apart from the law the righteousness of God has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. ²² This righteousness is given through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe.



Romans 3: 21 But now apart from the law the righteousness of God has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. 22 This righteousness is given through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference between Jew and Gentile, ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.



3:25 God presented Christ as a sacrifice of atonement, through the shedding of his blood—to be received by faith. He did this to demonstrate his righteousness, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished— ²⁶ he did it to demonstrate his righteousness at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus.



^{3:23} for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ and all are **justified** freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.

^{3:28} For we maintain that a person is **justified** by faith apart from the works of the law.



^{3:23} for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ and all are **justified** freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.

^{3:28} For we maintain that a person is **justified** by faith apart from the works of the law.

JUSTIFIED: dikaioō - To declare righteous. To acquit.





^{3:21} But now apart from the law the righteousness of God has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify.



4:3 What does Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness."

4:10 Under what circumstances was it credited? Was it after he was circumcised, or before? It was not after, but before! ¹¹ And he received circumcision as a sign, a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised. So then, he is the father of all who believe but have not been circumcised, in order that righteousness might be credited to them.

4:18 Against all hope, Abraham in hope believed and so became the father of many nations, just as it had been said to him, "So shall your offspring be. 19 Without weakening in his faith, he faced the fact that his body was as good as dead—since he was about a hundred years old—and that Sarah's womb was also dead. 20 Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God, 21 being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had



promised. 22 This is why "it was credited to him as righteousness." 23 The words "it was credited to him" were written not for him alone, 24 but also for us, to whom God will credit righteousness—for us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead. 25 He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification.



Acts 15: ²⁸ It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us not to burden you with anything beyond the following requirements: ²⁹ You are to abstain from food sacrificed to idols, from blood, from the meat of strangled animals and from sexual immorality. You will do well to avoid these things.





1) Practice putting down the heavy backpack of guilt and works-based religion.



- 1) Practice putting down the heavy backpack of guilt and works-based religion.
- 2) Practice getting out of your comfort zone.



- 1) Practice putting down the heavy backpack of guilt and works-based religion.
- 2) Practice getting out of your comfort zone.
- 3) Practice being unoffendable.



- 1) Practice putting down the heavy backpack of guilt and works-based religion.
- 2) Practice getting out of your comfort zone.
- 3) Practice being unoffendable.
- 4) Practice gratitude as a lifestyle.



