

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

MARCH 28TH, 2021 // BOOK OF ROMANS

A NEW BEGINNING (ROMANS 4:1-8)

I AM GOING TO PROVE IT TO YOU!

In chapter 3 Paul tells us that we are saved by grace and faith because we are incapable of saving ourselves through our works. The Jewish audience may not have been convinced yet, but Paul had a secret weapon.

- Paul had said the OT proves salvation through faith, and the proof he presented was the father of the faith, Abraham.

NO ONE WAS MORE IMPORTANT THAN ABRAHAM

One of the big hang-ups the Jews had with Jesus is that Christ claimed to be greater than Father Abraham (Jn. 8:53), but to the Jews that had become Christians, the issue of faith not works was the biggest hang up.

- **Paul wanted to use Abe as an example that salvation has always been through faith and grace.**

LET'S GO BACK TO THE OLD TESTAMENT

Paul quotes Genesis 15:6, "Abraham believed (had faith in) God and it was credited to him for righteousness." Abe didn't have the 10 C's or any written instruction from God, therefore no deep knowledge of God.

- **A deep understanding of God isn't required to be saved, just faith. Understanding will come as our relationship grows.**

WORKS ARE IMPORTANT!

Though we are not saved by our works, we are judged by them. This means to "the one who works, pay is not credited as a gift, but as something owed." God saves us by grace and rewards us for what we do with salvation.

- **We're called to "do good works" (Mt. 5:15-16) because it honors God and blesses others.**

NOW LET'S TALK ABOUT GOD'S GRACE

Paul will get back to Abe, but he briefly detours to talk about another hero of the Jews, King David.

- If anyone was saved by God's grace through faith, it was David. Paul quotes Psalm 32 about **God's grace to forgive "lawless acts" and "never charge" us with sin if we repent.**

WE HAVE ALL BEEN ABRAHAMS AND DAVIDS

Though all of us have had our doubts and made mistakes, if we will put our faith in Jesus we will receive forgiveness because God is gracious and loves us!

- The non-Jews in Rome who knew little if anything about Abe and Dave would have asked if this salvation through faith applied the them as well. Paul anticipated this.

FOR US AS WELL (ROMANS 4:9-17)

CAN EVERYONE RECEIVE THIS GIFT?

We know that the Jews received the truth of God first, but what about everyone else? Paul would prove that salvation wasn't from the OT circumcision, but from a change of heart.

- The evidence Paul used was that Abraham was saved by faith long before he was circumcised.

OUTWARD WORKS FOLLOW INWARD CHANGE

The word circumcision can be replaced by outward works. The reason Abe got circumcised was because God told him to. It was an outward response to an inward change.

- Abe wasn't saved by his works, but **because he was saved by faith and grace, he responded by obeying God and working to advance His kingdom.**

CIRCUMCISION CAME MUCH LATER

Abraham wasn't circumcised until 14 years after he became a follower of God. It was at this circumcision that he "became a Jew."

- This further proves that work comes after salvation, not the other way around. **Don't we live in a culture that gauges our worth by what we do? How anti-Christ is a works based righteousness?**

ABRAHAM IS OUR FATHER

We've been grafted into this process (Rom.11), therefore making Abe our father as well. So, not only does **faith precede following the law (10 C's), but grace precedes doing good works** as well. This applies to all people.

- Abe's faith and the grace he received came 430 years before the Law was even given to humanity.

IT GOES BACK TO A GIFT WE CANNOT EARN

V14-15 tells us that if the "heirs" of salvation are only the ones that keep the law, there are no heirs because we are all incapable of holding up the 10 C's.

- **If it is up to our goodness, we will incur God's wrath, but because of grace through faith (Eph. 2:8-9) we can be saved.** This is really the overall theme of the Bible.

"THINGS INTO EXISTENCE THAT DO NOT EXIST"

Abraham demonstrated his faith when he and Sarah could not get pregnant. Because they were getting older, they assumed Sarah's womb was dead and unable to produce life.

- We are to follow the example of Abe when it comes to faith. **When we think life is impossible, we are to have faith that God can make a way.**

CREDIT (ROMANS 4:18-25)

"HOPING AGAINST HOPE"

This interesting phrase means it was impossible to become the Father of Faith without exercising hope in the face of hopelessness. Abraham and Sarah were 100 and 90 years old when God gave them the promise to have a baby and lead "many nations."

- **Faith is putting our trust on Jesus even when we don't understand.**

FAITH IS MORE THAN JUST BELIEVING

Faith is belief in, trust in, obedience to, and reliance on Jesus. In order to have faith, **we must be fully persuaded that God truly loves us and has the power and wisdom to lead us correctly.**

- When we are fully persuaded and have faith, we are "credited righteousness" even though we have all fallen short.

WE MUST ALL REACH THIS LEVEL OF FAITH

If we are to be justified (made right) before God, we must all be fully convinced that God is good and knows what is best for us.

- The clearest evidence of God's goodness is found in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. He was **"delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification."**

"IT WILL BE CREDITED TO US WHO BELIEVE IN HIM"

The faith of Abraham and the grace and salvation he received isn't just for him, it is for all people that long for truth.

- It doesn't matter how many times we have doubted in the past (Abraham) or how many sins we have committed (David). **If we will have faith and repent, God will give us grace and save us.**

4 TYPES OF PEOPLE REGARDING FAITH

- Those who believe even though they have never seen or heard (revelation).
- Those who have believed after seeing evidence of God or hearing the gospel.
- Those who have not believed after seeing evidence (Rm. 1) or hearing the gospel.
- Those that have never heard the gospel, therefore ignorant to faith.

WHERE ARE WE?

- In times of uncertainty, do we have faith that God is in control? Do we believe in, trust in, obey, and rely on Christ?
- Though our past mistakes may be lengthy, do we believe that God shows grace to those that have faith and repent?
- Do we aim to grow the family of God, knowing that it is our neighbor's only hope?