

Introduction

The subject that Paul began to introduce to us in Chapter three, especially verses 21-22, he now is giving us a full blown study in chapter four; that is, " Man is made righteous by faith alone." The intent of God, I believe, is to bring redemption to the human race completely on His own with only the consent of man involved. This is called grace, totally unmerited by man, thus expressing God's love for us. There is much more to be said on this subject, which we hope to do in the study of each verse of this chapter.

Abraham Justified by Faith

Verse 1 *What shall we say then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found?*

- **Genesis 15:5** states: "And He brought Abram forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them; and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be. And he (Abram) believed in the Lord; and He counted it to him for righteousness."

All of this was before the act of circumcision put into place and action.

Verse 2 *For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God.*

When Abraham believed God, He did the one thing a man can do without doing anything to merit justification. God made the promise and God fulfilled it. Abraham simply believed God told him the truth. It was an attitude, not an act of merit.

Verse 3 *For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.*

The Jews believed the scriptures that said Abraham was justified by faith, and He did not glory in it because God did it all. Faith was neither a meritorious act or a change of character or nature in Abraham. He simply believed God.

Verse 4 *Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt.*

The word "counted" in Verse 3 and the word "reckoned" in verse 4, plus the word "impute" in verses 6 & 8 are all the same Greek word. It's meaning: Righteousness is put to our account so that we are seen as righteous in the eye of God. Therefore, it is not of works.

Verse 5 *But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness..*

Righteousness is imputed of Grace. What a man works for is a payment of debt. Grace is to him that works not, but trusts in the God that justifies the ungodly. This is saying that all men are sinners. God regards them as such when they are justified. God reckons the benefit of Christ's death when he(the sinner) is ungodly. Not because he works for it, for his works would have no value.

Verse 6-8 Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works,

Verse 7)Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. For David to be able to say “Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven”, shows some of the depth and breadth of God’s forgiveness. Our sins are covered and put away never to be remembered against us any more forever.

Verse 8) Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin. This blessed man is anyone who is born again. Sin will not be imputed to the believer. This includes all past sins, and present sins as well as future sins. Why? Because Jesus put away sin by His death on the cross.

Verse 9 -11Cometh this blessedness then upon the circumcision only, or upon the uncircumcision also? for we say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness.

Verse 10 How was it then reckoned? when he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision.

Verse 11 And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also:

Abraham was reckoned righteous some fifteen years before he was circumcised. Therefore:

- **Galatians 5:6** For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.

We must not put faith in any works for salvation. Neither baptism, church sacraments, infant baptism, christening, confirmation, the Lord’s supper, nor mass, will make righteous. Remember, God justifies the ungodly. His faith is counted for righteousness.

Much of the religious world does not understand that we are counted righteous the moment we believe. We have reason to be happy and content because we have been forgiven of our sins, placed in the family of God, called the friend of God; all because we trusted that what God had promised, He was able to perform. No power on earth or in heaven can remove us from the Hand of our Heavenly Father. He loves us!!

Verse 12 And the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had being yet uncircumcised.

Those who are circumcised and those who are the uncircumcised can come to the family of God and walk in the same faith and blessing that Abraham walked in. For both groups to be able to claim connection to Abraham shows a spiritual unity of the Family of God.

Verse 13 For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.

The Promise that Abraham should be heir of the world extends much further than Israel only. An heir is one who follows in the line of succession. This promise began in:

- **Genesis 12:3:** *I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee; In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed. “*

Showing that the promise of Genesis 12 was much larger than the nation Israel. Therefore this promise should not be considered a land promise.

- **Galatians 3:16:** *Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.*

This identifies the seed here as Christ. This makes us to understand that the promise in Romans 4:13 is spiritual and not a land- promise; and Abraham is the Father of all these, Jew and Gentile alike. Where Adam failed, Abraham has succeeded though it is not finished yet. This makes Abraham the Father of the faithful, a very great and eternal place in God's kingdom.

Verse 14 *For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect:* The obvious information here is that this promise did not come into force through the law, but through faith. The promise was given at least 400 years before the Law. The covenant of Law could not annul the promise.

Verse 15 *Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there is no transgression.*

The reason the Law is said to work wrath is because when one fails to keep the Law, there is a penalty.

Verse 16 *Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all,*

The purpose in saying that it is of faith is that it might be by grace. If the promise were by law then God would not be the giver. God will not accept the works of any man for salvation. So we realize that salvation is by grace through faith and that brings all the glory to God.

Verse 17 *(As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before Him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were.*

This gives us more information as to Abraham's exalted position in God's great program of redemption of mankind. Genesis 17:5 tells us that God changed his name from Abram to Abraham, "The father of many nations." This was done in the presence of God who makes alive and calls things which are not as though they were. This is the nature of our salvation.

Verse 18-19 *Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be.*

(Verse 19) *And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about a hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb:*

Abraham hoped with a complete disregard for the natural facts before him. He stood against natural reasoning; he was 100 years old, he hoped against feeling, against opinions....all of this that he might become the father of many nations. He believed what God had promised. This kind of trust from us pleases God. Abraham was learning to walk in a faith unknown to the world. To the world around him, he was a strange man. Putting his trust in a God he could not see. But there he went, step by step, walking with

God in peace and security. Man does not understand this kind of faith, but this walking by faith has greater reward. It contradicts sight on every side. This is what wins the race.

Verse 20 *He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God;*

The only way to walk so that we do not stagger at God's promise is to keep our eyes on the goal. Abraham wavered not, that is, he did not dispute with God, or disagree with Him. To doubt is being double minded. James says that man is unstable in all his ways.

Verse 21 *And being fully persuaded that, what He had promised, He was able also to perform.*

Being fully persuaded is the real essence of faith. Faith is the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen. Faith is an act of a person who is willing to look away from self, whether approved or disapproved by others, and seek only God's approval.

Verse 22 *And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness.*

God imputed righteousness to Abraham because of his faith. This faith is pure and is eternal; Satan cannot violate it, though he tries. This faith made him the Father of many nations. This is how we touch the hem of Jesus' garment.

Verse 23 *Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him;*

Note verse 12 "who walk in the steps of that faith of our Father Abraham. We, like Abraham, have righteousness reckoned to us. That great story in Genesis was written for us. Our faith will be tried. Peter says the trial of our faith is more precious than gold, that it may be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus.

Verse 24 *But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on Him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead;*

This great promise was made for us also. The same God who made promise to Abraham also made this promise to us if we believe on Jesus Christ as the scripture says. Remember when God raised Christ from the dead; it proved that He had put away our sins. The resurrection is the proof that our sins are gone and we are completely justified. Without Christ's resurrection, all the claims of scripture would have been worthless.

Verse 25 *Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.*

Jesus was delivered to death for our sins. The scripture says:

- **Romans 8:32** *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?*

He was bruised for our iniquities. In justification, we have a new standing in Christ. We are accepted in the Beloved.