**Abraham: Righteous by Faith**

**Romans Ch 4.** The theme of Romans is that Salvation is by faith “from first to last” Literally, from faith to faith. (Rom 1:(16-)17)

The supreme example of salvation by faith, not works: Abraham.

Romans 4:1-3

What did Abraham discover, our forefather in the flesh (Here, Paul is talking to Jewish Christians, but we can listen in if we like) “in this matter”? The “matter” is justification.

This the mystery of the gospel: That God could be just, and at the same time the one who justifies those who have faith in Christ Jesus. Romans 3:25-26. This IS the gospel of Christ.

Romans 4:3 Abraham believed God and it was credited to him as righteousness.

Abraham, here, is a type of all who are saved by faith (4:16 he is the father of us all), so we better pay careful attention.

Q: What did Abraham believe? (therefore what ought I to believe)

Answer: He believed that God would do what he said he would do.

Genesis 15:1-6 makes this clear.

 He believed that if he totally put his trust for his life in God rather than in himself, God would meet all his needs.

If only we could have the faith of Abraham!!!

Question for all of us: **What do you believe?** If you believe the right thing, it will be credited to you as righteousness.

Romans 4:4-8 This means that one who trusts in God does not work, right?

Wrong!!!!!!!! It means that the work is not producing the justification. It is the faith (and the kind of faith that produces MUCH work!!!) that produces the justification.

Q: Which is harder, working for God or trusting in God?

Answer: It depends on the person.

4:4-8 work = obligation. What do we gain by works? Not much.

 What do we gain by trusting God? Righteousness. (Note that he equates faith with trust)

Aside: Faith (pistos) have a range of meaning in the Bible. It can mean something close to belief (Hebrews 11:1,6). It can mean something closer to trust (Romans 4). It can be used as equivalent to obedience (Hebrews 3:18-19) In the Medieval Church “faith” meant a system of beliefs.

4:9-12 Paul seems to make too big of a deal out of the relative timing of Abraham’s circumcision. Why? His faith (and therefore his righteousness) preceded his circumcision. Conclusion: Righteousness is not gained by works of the law.

4:12 Who will be saved? Answer: Those who walk in the footsteps of Abraham.

Q: Where will walking in the footsteps of Abram take you?

a. Out of Ur. Genesis 12:1-5 (give up all you brought with you)

 Q: What do you need to walk away from? Luke 14:33, 9:61-62)

 An encouraging verse Genesis12:6-7 If, like Abraham, we leave Ur, like him, we will receive the promised land (heaven)!

b. To Mount Moriah. Genesis 22:10-15 (give up even the things God gave you)

 Q: What do you need to bring to Moriah?

4:13-15 Which do you live by? Law or faith?

Law: Doing things so that you will live.

Faith: Trusting in God so that you will live.

4:15 Q: What does it mean when Paul says “where there is no law there is no transgression”? (It means that if you have faith, you are not subject to law)

4:16 Who are Abraham’s offspring? (Who did the Jews think were his offspring?)

Is Abraham your father? Have you left Ur and have you gone to Moriah?

4:17 If we walk by faith—if we walk in the footsteps of Abraham, God will give life to the dead, and call things that are not as if they are. What a great passage!!!

Things that were not:

Your righteousness!!!!

Hope

Life with purpose

For Abraham: having a son.

Q: What will call into being in your life? Get the picture right now!

4:18-23 The standard:

1. believe “**against hope**.” (v. 18)

 v. 20 He did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise.

 Q: Do you waver through unbelief?

2. v. 21 Abraham was “**fully persuaded**” that God could do what he said he would do.

Q: Are you fully persuaded? How can you know if you are, in fact, fully persuaded?

4:23 “It” was credited to him. Q: What was credited to him? His belief (v. 24) Do you REALLY believe that God raised Jesus from the dead? Do you believe he can do the same for you?