

"It is of Faith"

Romans 4:13-25

- Today, we'll be considering salvation by faith
- Abraham will be our example
- He is our example, because we find these "faith" principles within part of his story in Romans 4
- That is our destination today, specifically verses 13-25

- Was law-keeping considered righteousness for Abraham?
- We find the answer to be "NO" almost immediately in this passage
- The promises of God to him and to his seed were not based on law-keeping
- Let's begin exploring these thoughts in verse 13

Romans 4:13

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.

- What promise are we referencing?
- Matthew Henry comments on this verse...

"The promise was made to Abraham long before the law. It points at Christ, and it refers to the promise, Ge 12:3. In Thee shall all families of the earth be blessed."

- This makes perfect sense
- The blessing to all the earth is the Messiah - Christ
- It is our relationship with Him that brings reconciliation with God
- The blessing is eternal salvation - and it is through Him (Him alone)

Romans 4:14-15

14 For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect:
15 Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there is no transgression.

- The law is successful only at revealing to us how sinful we are or we can be
- We are never successful in keeping it
- Therefore it is impossible for law-keeping to provide salvation
- And it was never God's purpose for law-keeping to provide salvation
- It was never possible, Abraham being our first (and most vivid) example
- This does not minimize the law's importance
- Without some law, God's law particularly, we understand not our sinfulness
- Then what?
- What is the key word in understanding forgiveness of sin and access to God?

Romans 4:16

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,

- Salvation (access to God and forgiveness of sin, among other things)
- Is by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone
- Never by good works or rule-keeping, or by membership in religious institution
- All nations of the earth (not just those of Israel) have access
- His salvation is a free gift
- Without Him there is only judgement, eternal judgement

Romans 4:17

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.

- God can (and does) make dead men alive
- All men are dead in trespasses and in sins
- These are the violations of God's law - missing the mark
- And it is belief in God - the kind of belief Abraham had - that provides a way back to God
- What was his belief like?

Romans 4:18-20

18 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.

19 And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sara's womb:

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

- This was a belief that went against common thinking
- It didn't make sense in the world
- Though his old age and his wife's old age would prevent this promise
- He did not believe in simple logic alone
- God promise was beyond logic
- And what God says is true - always true
- He did not "stagger at the promise" of God
- Barnes notes say about this verse...

"He was not moved, or agitated; he steadily and firmly believed the promise."

- The Cambridge paraphrase says...

"He looked away from his own physical state, only at the Promise, and did not doubt its terms—just because they were the Promise."

- How could a man like Abraham, how can a person like us believe in this way?

Romans 4:21

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

- It was about the character of God
- He counted Him trustworthy
- He knew, because of who God is, that He could do it
- So it wasn't about what he saw or understood about the world
- But what He understood about the Promise-Maker
- He was "able" to do it
- He is always able to do everything He promises

Romans 4:22

22 And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness.

- Now we see that Abraham is counted righteous because of faith
- An that's what we need to have a relationship with God, right?
- Righteousness.
- And it is Christ's righteousness that is imputed.
- He was in all points tempted, like us, but without sin
- We call Him the perfect, sinless sacrifice
- Dying in our place and for our sin
- Abraham was looking forward, we look back

Romans 4:23-25

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

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;

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

- These three verses spell it out
- We have access to a relationship with God through Christ alone
- He proved who He was through resurrection
- And we are delivered through Him
- But we must have faith
- The kind of faith Abraham had...

Christopher Harper, Take Note 2021