

Expositional Preaching from the Authorized Version of the Holy Bible
Current Book: Romans – Message 12

2017 VISION: *Prioritizing God*

Scriptures for Today: Romans 4:1-25 – Justification by faith; the faith of Abraham.

Title of Today's Message: Blessed faith – trusting God even when things appear hopeless.

INTRODUCTION

Last week, we finished Romans 3 with the most glorious news that ever-reached planet earth from heaven. As the sinner stands in God's courtroom in despair, and at the darkest moment when the Law has done its work of **DEATH**, when there is nothing to look forward to but the suffering of eternal damnation, there comes a **most unexpected offer**. God lays open to the public for full inspection an offer of a full and complete **PARDON** and acquittal of crimes against Him and the deserved punishment of an eternal hell. The **price** is **FREE!** The **requirement** is that the sinner **BELIEVE** on Christ and **TRUST** His blood for the remission of sins – by **FAITH!** In this, the righteousness of God is revealed as beautiful and glorious! Today, we will see a most blessed truth in Romans 4. God will use Abraham as the example for all as to what kind of **FAITH** God is looking for to save your soul and bring eternal life. We will also see what the old preachers used to call, "*The Great EXCHANGE.*" The moment we trust Christ by faith, God credits His righteousness to our eternal account. According to David, a person is greatly blessed if God credits (imputes) righteousness to you without works! We are truly blessed! As we look at the practical application today, we will be challenged to **TRUST** God **BY FAITH** for all things in life.

PREACHING NOTES

1. Abraham was justified **by FAITH** – not works. We are justified **by faith in Christ** alone. Vs. 1-15

- ✓ *For WHAT SAITH THE SCRIPTURE? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.*

Genesis 15:6 "*And he believed in the LORD; and HE COUNTED IT TO HIM for righteousness.*"

NOTE The Bible says that we are to have the faith of Abraham. Abraham was not righteous in all his deeds. God, in His grace, seeing the simple faith of Abraham, drew from His own righteousness and **counted** it to be Abraham's. Abraham was **counted** to be a sinless man; and yet more, he was **counted** as a righteous man. Based on Abraham's faith in God and His promises, God was calling him something that he was not. The faith did not provoke God to appreciate some spark of moral beginnings and thereby award him a full portion for a little.

- ✓ *Now TO HIM THAT WORKETH is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt.*
- ✓ *But TO HIM THAT WORKETH NOT, but believeth on him the justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.*

Romans 11:6 "*And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then it is no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.*"

NOTE Think of it this way. If a man works to get gain, when he is rewarded for his labor it is a simple matter of a debt paid, not grace given. It would be an insult to a workman to tell him that his pay was grace. If one were justified by performing good works, the justification would not be justification at all – it would be earned recognition. Not only are good works unnecessary, they would actually prevent one from being justified by faith. What a thought!

- ✓ *Even as David also describeth the BLESSEDNESS of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness WITHOUT WORKS, Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.*

Psalm 32:1,2 *“BLESSED is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile.”*

NOTE Are you blessed this morning by that definition? Praise the Lord for the blood of Jesus Christ which cleanseth us from all sin. (1 Jo 1:7) Amen. Consider that wondrous truth! Has guilt been plaguing you over your sin? Blessed is the man whose transgression is forgiven. Are you struggling with failures or past sin? Blessed is the man whose sin is covered and unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity! God’s pardon is forever.

2. Abraham is **our example** of what saving faith looks like in ***practical daily LIFE***. Vs. 16-22

- ✓ *Who AGAINST HOPE **believed in hope**, that he might become the father of many nations...*

Acts 27:21-26 *“Wherefore, sirs, **be of good cheer: for I believe God, that is shall be even as it was told me.** Howbeit WE MUST BE CAST UPON a certain island.”*

NOTE What is it in your life that seems impossible to overcome? Our church? Abraham believed God’s words and hoped in His promises even when there was no possible way in his mind.

- ✓ *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 Sarah’s womb:*

- ✓ *He STAGGERED NOT at the promises of God through unbelief: **but was strong in faith giving glory to God**;*

Matthew 6:25-34 *“Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?”*

NOTE Is your trouble or problem in life more impossible than Abraham and Sarah’s? God gets GLORY **when our faith is strong** IN HIM! It is time to give God more glory than – Amen?!

- ✓ *And BEING FULLY PERSUADED that, **what he had promised**, he was able also to perform.*
- ✓ *And THEREFORE it was **imputed to him for righteousness**.*

Hebrews 11:13 *“THESE ALL DIED IN FAITH, **not having received the promises**, but HAVING SEEN THEM AFAR OFF, and **were persuaded of them**, and **embraced them**, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.”*

NOTE That is the kind of faith in Jesus Christ that will save a soul from perishing in an eternal hell! That is the kind of faith that is our example. God will do what He promised. Trust Him.

3. Abraham is **our example** of how God imputes righteousness to the repentant sinner. Vs. 23-25

- ✓ *If we BELIEVE ON HIM that **raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead**, God credits (imputes) righteousness to us.*

- ✓ *Who was **delivered FOR OUR OFFENSES**, and was **raised FOR OUR JUSTIFICATION**.*

NOTE This is what the old preachers called, “*The Great Exchange*.” The moment we trust Christ as Lord and personal Saviour, we get what we do not deserve – Christ’s righteousness! Yet the other side of that legal transaction is what Jesus got out of the deal. For us to be legally pardoned and made free of sin and our deserved punishment, Jesus had to pay for our crimes. The focal point and grounds for our justification is his execution which silenced the demands of God’s justice – paying the price for our sins. We are justified because the death of Jesus Christ paid for our offences, and the resurrection of Christ secured it. God receives sons and daughters as they come out of the tomb. His resurrection is our justification! Because He lives, we too can live forever with Him. Is there any promise bigger than that?