

Rom 208 - **The Promise - Rom 4:13-25**

Paul has *already* masterfully proven
that **justification** is by **faith alone**

Summarized wonderfully in **ROM 3:28 - NKJ**

“Therefore we conclude that a man is justified [declared righteous] by faith, apart from the deeds of the law.”

The Holy Spirit has **cemented** that fact
that **Justification** is by **Faith Alone** – **Sola Fide**

& that **Justification** comes **apart** from any **works of the law**
& is **equally available** to ALL who would believe

Now, in our Text today - We get **a Glimpse** into
the **inner workings** of that "**Saving Faith**"

& **to do that** - Paul *again*
goes all the way back to - **THE PROMISE**

THE Promise - The Promise that was **FIRST Given**

The Promise that **Rests on Faith**

The Promise that is **Guaranteed** - to **ALL** who **share the faith**
of the one who **first received** **The Promise**

I'm talking about **The Promise to Abraham**

Who is **the Father** of **all** who will **put their Faith**
in **That Same Promise**

Let's Pray

Rom 4:13 - ESV

13 For the promise to Abraham and his offspring that he would be heir of the world did not come through the law but through the righteousness of faith.

The Promise from God to Abraham - & to his offspring

**DID NOT come thru the LAW
but thru the Righteousness of FAITH**

Neither works, nor merit, nor genealogy
obtained the mighty promise for Abraham

it had to be **BY** God's Grace & **THRU** Abraham's Faith alone

because when Abraham was made righteous before God
he had nothing to offer God - but his Faith

In **Gen 15** - God took a **WALK** with Abraham out under the stars

& Abraham **made a choice**,
right then & right there (under the stars)

Abraham **Believed** God - & it was **counted** to him as **Righteousness**

& that was **430 years** before the **LAW** existed
How do I know it was 430 years before the Law . . . ??

Because in **Gal CH 3** - when Paul was talking about
the **Law** Vs's the **Promise** - He says this;

in Gal 3:17-18 → →

in Gal 3:17-18 -

17 This is what I mean: the law, which came 430 years afterward, does not annul a covenant previously ratified by God, so as to make the promise void.

18 For if the inheritance comes by the law, it no longer comes by promise; but God gave it to Abraham by a promise.

The Promise - The Promise - The Promise . . .

What specifically is - **THE PROMISE** that God gave to Abraham?

Again Rom 4:13 - ESV

13 For the promise to Abraham and his offspring that he would be heir of the world . . .

Heir of the world means that **Abraham** and his "**offspring**"
(LIT **seed**) - & *in particular* Jesus Christ - **will inherit the earth**

Abraham is the *Spiritual Father* of **ALL** who believe (**Rom 4:11-12**)
He is the *Ancestral Father* of many nations (**Rom 4:17-18**)

& in its fullest sense, **Abraham's seed** - *In Singular*
refers to **Jesus Christ** reigning as *King of Kings* over this earth

THAT - is the Promise

& Abrahams **ONLY** Role - in *Receiving* That Promise - was **FAITH** !

Abraham Received the Promise - **THRU Faith Alone**
& **NOT** by *Adhering to the Law*

Rom 4:14 - ESV

14 For if it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void.

Adherents = Those who STICK BY

If those who "**Stick By**" the law - are to be the heirs
then Abraham's Faith is **NULL**, & The Promise is **VOID**

But that **CAN'T BE** - Because God is "**Unchanging**" (Immutable)

& if the Promise Came first **BY FAITH** (& it did)
then if it were to Come later by "**Sticking To**" the **Law** . . .

Then **THE PROMISE OF GOD** would be made **Null** & **Void**
& that my friends . . . is **NOT** going to happen

Because there is **NO** Promise of God
that could ever be made **NULL** & **VOID**

So - If the Law **DOES NOT** make the Promise of God **NULL** & **VOID**
What **IS** the **purpose of the law**

Rom 4:15 - ESV

15 For the law brings wrath, but where there is no law there is no transgression.

The law "Reveals to us" God's **wrath** toward sin

& it **PROVES** to us
that we Cannot Avoid **Breaking** God's Righteous Requirements

The NLT puts it very well - Rom 4:15(B) - NLT

15 . . . (The only way to avoid breaking the law is to have no law to break!)

The Law proves that man **CANNOT** be made Righteous on his own
& so our righteousness **MUST** come from outside of ourselves

& since we have **nothing** in us to earn our Righteousness
it must come **BY God's GRACE** (His unearned favor)
& **THRU Our FAITH** (because that's all we have to offer)

Rom 4:16 - ESV

16 That is why it [the promise] **depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his offspring—not only to the adherent of the law but also to the one who shares the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all,**

What a GREAT Verse !

The Promise depends on Faith - in order that it may **REST** . . .
(meaning have a strong foundation)

In order that it may **REST** on God's Grace

& because it **RESTS** on God's Grace (& not our efforts)
it is **GUARANTEED** to all of **Abraham's Offspring**

Not only to the **JEWS** (*those who adhere to the Law*)
but also to the **one** who shares the faith of Abraham
Who is the Father of **ALL** who believe

God wants **His Promise** to be **Guaranteed**
& so He makes it **REST** on HIS GRACE - **NOT our efforts**

Because **if it Rested** on our **efforts**
it certainly wouldn't be Guaranteed - **would it ?**

But our righteousness

is based solely on Faith in God's Promise

& God's Promise RESTS on the Guarantee

on the Unchangeable Nature of God Himself

& THAT - is a **VERY GOOD THING**

& again - the end of V.16 says Abraham is the father

of All believing Jews and All believing Gentiles

The NLT makes this perfectly clear

The end of Rom 4:16 - & the beginning of V.17 - NLT

16 . . . For Abraham is the father of all who believe.

17 That is what the Scriptures mean when God told him, "I have made you the father of many nations." . . .

Which is exactly what God told Abraham - in Gen 17:5

"for I have made you the father of a multitude of nations."

& Guys - By our faith - we have been grafted in

to that promise made to Abraham

We are Co-Heirs to the promise, adopted into the family of God

& then - V.17 continues by explaining WHY (or HOW)

THE PROMISE was Received by Abraham

Rom 4:17 (again) - from the NLT → →

Rom 4:17 (again) - from the NLT

17 That is what the Scriptures mean when God told him, "I have made you the father of many nations." This happened because Abraham believed in the God who brings the dead back to life and who creates new things out of nothing.

This happened because Abraham believed in the God who brings the dead back to life and who creates new things - out of nothing

I'd like you to consider **THE OBJECT** of Abraham's Faith
Abraham's **FAITH** was **NOT** in whatever
"higher power" he happened to choose

Abraham's faith was specifically;
in the God Who brings the dead back to life
& the God Who creates New Things - Out of Nothing

That's the God of Creation !!

In **1KINGS CH 18** - God's Prophet **Elijah**
had a **contest** with the Prophets of **BAAL**

To see **who's God** would bring **FIRE** down from heaven

& **altho** the Prophets of **BAAL** had very strong faith
The OBJECT of their Faith - **was a Farse**

& so they **screamed** & **danced** & **jumped up & down**
& even **cut themselves** - to get their god's attention

BUT - because they had faith in a false God
they **wore themselves out** - to no avail

& then **Elijah** - Who **shared** the *Faith of Abraham*
Stood up - *Spoke a Prayer* in absolute **FAITH**

& the **One True God** - sent **fire from heaven**
that **consumed** *both* the **sacrifice** - *AND* all the **prophets of BAAL**

Guys - You **can have** *strong faith* in very **thin ice**
but you'll **probably be sorry** when you **try** to *walk on it*

Not because your **faith** isn't strong
but **because** *The Object* of your faith is **false**

Abraham **received** *THE PROMISE*
because he **put his faith** - in the **ONE TRUE CREATING GOD**

Remember - Abraham grew up
in a **Pagan, Idol Worshipping** Home

But when it came to **CHOOSING** *THE OBJECT* of his faith . . .

As the ESV puts the end of Rom 4:17

*17 . . . [Abraham chose the God], ***who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist.****

Our God - Gives *Life to the DEAD*

Our God - *Calls into Existence - the things **that do not exist***

He calls them into Existence - Ex Nihilo - Out of Nothing !

Is it THIS GOD - Who is the Object of Your Faith ??

This God - Who gives Life to the DEAD
& Calls into Existence - the things that do not exist

THIS - is the God of Abraham's Faith

& **altho** Abraham was **far from perfect**

When it came to **His Faith** in God

Abraham **BELIEVED** the Lord - & His **FAITH** never **Wavered** !

Abraham believed - in a **VERY BIG God**

Do **you** believe - in a **VERY BIG GOD**

I mean - do you **REALLY** believe God - **IN A VERY BIG WAY ??**

See **one person** says "*sure . . . I believe God . . .*"

But they're always **questioning**, always **complaining**,
always **second guessing** their God (*like maybe they know better*)

They're **not sure** - if their god could **REALLY**
create something in their lives - **Out Of Nothing !** Ex Nihilo

This person believes in a **very "small God"**

But then **there's another person** that says

YES - I REALLY BELIEVE GOD !!

This person has a **great BIG God**

his God **speaks** and it is **DONE** - It's Finished !

The promise of his God is **Sure** - & it's **Guaranteed**
no matter what *the circumstances* are

His God **ACTUALLY** *Gives Life to the Dead*
& *calls things into existence* - **OUT OF NOTHING** (Ex Nihilo)

This person has a **Great Faith** - in a **Great God**
and *their Faith* **matches** *the Object* of their faith

Guys - There was **nothing too hard** for *Abraham's God*
How about *your* God ?

There are 2 questions that we must ask ourselves today;

- 1) Is** the God of Abraham **truly** the **Complete Object** of my faith?
 - 2) Do I** have faith - **in a really BIG God** - Who can *do anything*
Or do I have a **really LITTLE Faith** - in a *really LITTLE God*
-
-

But **you might say** - "Oh, you **Don't Understand** the *Obstacles I face*"

I may - or may not - - - but *I know* one thing;
Abraham had some *Faith Shaking Obstacles* that **he** had to face

Just look at Rom 4:18 - ESV

18 In hope he believed against hope, that he should become the father of many nations, as he had been told, "So shall your offspring be."

Abraham had *Confidence in God* - **against** *ALL human hope*
He Believed that what God had **promised** - God would *bring to pass*

& *Abrahams Faith* was "**In Spite**" of his **circumstances**

Look at Vs.19 - ESV → →

Rom 4:19 - ESV

19 He [Abraham] *did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was as good as dead (since he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah's womb.*

Here's a guy who's so old - he's "As Good As Dead**" -
with a wife just as old - ***And who's womb was "barren "*****

& He was **promised by God** - that his **descendants** would be
like the sand of the sea ??

Those are some pretty difficult circumstances !

V.19 says - Abraham "**Considered**" - meaning he "**Faced the Fact**"
That **his own body** was as good as **dead**
& his **old wife Sarah** had always been **barren**

Abraham "**Considered the facts**" - Then he **made his choice** - -
He **CHOSE** to Believe **The Promise** of God - **without Wavering**

Some people have the **wrong** impression
that **faith** **ignores** the facts – That's **Not True**

Biblical Faith **compares** the **Human Facts** – with the **Divine Promise**

Abraham weighed the **Human FACTS** of **having a son**
against the **Divine Promise** of God that he would **have a son**

& **He decided**, **That God - was really God**
& that the **Divine Promise** **was more sure** than the **Human Facts**

Do we really believe like that today?

Abraham - DID NOT WAVER - in believing God's Promise !

Rom 4:20 - ESV

20 No distrust made him [Abraham] waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God,

Abraham did not waver at the promise of God,
but he GREW STRONG in his faith . . .

The NLT says here (v.20):

20 Abraham never wavered in believing God's promise. In fact, his faith grew stronger, and in this he brought glory to God.

Altho the Bible records a couple
pretty serious "stumbles" of Abraham

He Never Wavered in Believing God's Promise
AND - as his Faith Grew - he brought Glory to God

Year after year Abraham put another candle on the Baklava
92 . . 95 . . .99 - Put another Candle on the Bak-La-Va

Abraham knew – What God had promised, God was able to perform
He was Fully Convinced
He had Great Faith - In a Great God

Look at Rom 4:21 - ESV → →

Rom 4:21 - ESV

21 [Abraham was] *fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised.*

You know - when we try to Define the word "**Faith**"
we most often go to **Heb 11:1**

Heb 11:1 - NKJ

1 Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

Faith IS our **substance** - It's the **Tangible** thing we hold onto

Faith IS our **evidence** - it's the **PROOF** of things not seen

But if that **Definition** is a little "**Complex**" for you

I'd **encourage you** Adopt **Rom 4:21** as Your **Definition** of **FAITH**

Rom 4:21 - ESV

21 [Abraham was] *fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised.*

THAT is Real Faith - - Being *fully convinced*
that God is **ABLE** to **DO** what he has Promised;

NO MATTER what we **see**

NO MATTER how we **feel**

NO MATTER what the **circumstances** say

FAITH is being *Fully Convinced*
that **THE PROMISE** God has made
He **WILL** bring to pass

NO MATTER WHAT !!!

Yeah, but what about - what I **SEE** - NO MATTER

Yeah, but what about - how I **FEEL** - NO MATTER

Yeah, but what about - my **CIRCUMSTANCES** - NO MATTER

& as **Vs. 20** just said - If we will **GROW** in that level of faith
we will Give **GLORY** to **GOD**

My we **glorify God** by actually **BELIEVING** what He says
By taking Him *fully & completely* – at **His Word**

NO MATTER WHAT !!!

& we see in our next Vs - **Rom 4:22 - ESV**

22 That is why his faith was “counted to him as righteousness.”

Abraham **CHOSE** to Believe God - in **SPITE OF** his *circumstances*

Abraham understood the **Greatness** of the *‘all-powerful’* God

Who *gives life to the dead*,
and calls things into existence - *“out of nothing”* (**v.17**)

Do **WE** "Consider" **our** Obstacles
& then **CHOOSE** to **Believe God** "In Spite" of them ?

When we "Measure up" **Our Obstacles** VS. **God's Promise**
WHICH ONE comes out on top ?

Which one is **MORE REAL**
Our Obstacles - or - **God's Promise**

Which one holds More **Weight** ?

Which one is More **Sure** ?

Which one is More **Guaranteed** ?

Which one are you **ACTING ON** today

Your Obstacles - or - **God's Promise** ??

Guys - **we Need Abraham's Faith** today

& his Faith is **FOR US** - it *wasn't just* for Abraham

look at Rom 4:23-24 - ESV

23 But the words "it was counted to him" were not written for his sake alone,

24 but for ours also. It will be counted to us who believe in him who raised from the dead Jesus our Lord,

The Holy Spirit now turns - **TO US**

to *all those* who **Share** the *Faith of Abraham*

The **same** staggering **promise** of *righteousness*

that was made to Abraham - **is made to US**

The same **Righteousness** - is "*counted*" to us the **same way** -

by **believing** in the **One** who *raised Jesus our Lord* from the **dead**

Abraham's Faith & **Our** Faith is the same Faith;

we both believe in the God Who **gives life to the dead**

& Who "**calls into existence**" - *EX NIHILO* - **Out of Nothing** !

But listen - **we must never forget** - that there was
an **incredible transaction** that *took place in heaven*

For us to even have *the opportunity*
to be **Made Righteous** by our Faith

& That transaction is what allowed
a **Holy, Righteous & Just** God - to *Make this Promise* to us

as ROM 3:26 says;

26 . . . so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

That transaction - that makes **ALL** of this *possible*
is in our **Final Vs** today

Speaking of Jesus Christ - Rom 4:25 says - ESV

25 who was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification.

Do you **see** the *Transaction* ??

Jesus Christ was delivered up - **FOR OUR** *trespasses*
& He was raised - **FOR OUR** *justification*

Jesus Christ perfectly satisfied *God's Righteous Requirement*
for the **Full Payment** - of Our Sin

& the proof - of that *perfect satisfaction* - is in His **Resurrection**
where he conquered **Sin, Death** & the **Grave** - on our behalf

& it is our faith in *that Promise of God*
that creates in us - **Righteousness** "*ex nihilo*" – **out of nothing**

In closing - allow me to make one thing clear

When **Jesus Christ** died on the cross

His death was **sufficient** to pay - for the sin of the whole world

And **for** each & every **person**
who puts their faith in Christ

The Provision was made, for their salvation - - **at the cross**

But a gift remains only "**In Provision**"
until one crucial moment

That is **the moment** the gift is received

Have **you** come to the God of all creation

Empty handed - just like **Abraham** did on that **Starry Night**

& said, like Abraham - Lord, I believe

I believe in your **promise**,

I believe in your **provision**,

I **receive** your Gift - with open hands, & an open heart

Have you Taken that Walk with God

Just like Abraham did in **Gen 15**

Where the Bible says - - looking up at the stars,

Abraham **believed** the Lord,

and He **counted** it to him as Righteousness

If you **have not** taken that walk - then **please**

consider taking that walk with God - **RIGHT NOW**

Let's Pray

EXTRA's

Gal 3:21-24 - ESV

21 Is the law then contrary to the promises of God? Certainly not! For if a law had been given that could give life, then righteousness would indeed be by the law.

22 But the Scripture imprisoned everything under sin, so that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe.

23 Now before faith came, we were held captive under the law, imprisoned until the coming faith would be revealed.

24 So then, the law was our guardian until Christ came, in order that we might be justified by faith.

For God to bring his Promise to pass for Abraham

God would have to "in essence" bring "life" back from these two "as good as dead" old folks

& He would have to in essence Create something out of Nothing if Abraham was ever going to have ANY descendants

& in fact - it was when Abraham first asked God about his circumstances in GEN 15:2 that we see Abraham's Saving Faith

Abraham said to God in **Gen 15:2 - NLT**

2 . . . "O Sovereign Lord, what good are all your blessings when I don't even have a son? . . .

& then - in V.5 God did something with Abraham - that He would like to do with you . . .

He took Abraham - For a WALK - ***Abram, let's just take a walk . . .***

Gen 15:5 - NLT

5 Then the Lord took Abram outside and said to him, "Look up into the sky and count the stars if you can. That's how many descendants you will have!"

& Abraham looked up into the sky - & he simply - BELIEVED GOD !

& IN that Act of Faith - comes the Foundation
for all who will ever truly be made Righteous by God

It comes in the very next VS - Gen 15:6
Probably the greatest Verse of Faith in the O.T.

Gen 15:6 - NLT

*In hope, against all human hope,
Self-desperate, I believe
Faith, mighty Faith, the promise alone it sees,
Faith looks to the Promise alone,
Laughs at the impossibilities,
And cries: "It shall be done!" (Charles Wesley)*

That's what I believe!

- wait a minute - I thought He was "Crucified" for our Justification?
Well, He was . . . But is that was Guaranteed the transaction was
finished? - NO

Paul says in 1Cor 15:17

17 And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. (meaning still under the judgment of your sins)

& what's the final proof - what's the final guarantee - the end of V.25 says Jesus Christ was **"raised for our justification"**

WHY? - because the resurrection is the Conquering Sequel to the Horror of the Cross - The Resurrection is the Guarantee From God - That Jesus Christ is absolutely Victorious over sin & death - & it proves (as ___ says) He is the **"first-fruits of the resurrection"** - setting the way, for us to follow

Do you know that the resurrection of Jesus Christ is one of the most "well documented" events in early history - & well documented mostly by eyewitnesses - at the time of Paul writing Romans - there were still hundreds of people living who had personally seen Jesus after the resurrection

However - above and beyond our faith (our belief) - God is still, first & foremost, holy righteous & just - & God as the perfect holy judge cannot simply overlook our sin
we must see that the perfect holy judge has dealt with our sin sufficiently - He has dealt with them in a way that satisfies his perfect righteousness & holiness