

02/06/22 Message

Part of Romansthe Life of Faith - the Power of Grace

February 5, 2022

Message: Faithful Now

Series: Romans

This is our fourth message in the series Romans: the Life of Faith – the Power of Grace.

As one of Paul's epistles (or letters), Romans is considered the greatest of all his letters. It's been called one of the most foundational documents of Christianity.

Introduction

Lyrics from "Faithful Now"

(verse)

I am holding on to faith, cause I know you'll make a way.
And I don't always understand, and I don't always get to see
But I will believe it, I will believe it.

(verse)

I am standing on your word, and calling heaven down to earth.
And you will fight my enemies, and this will end in victory.
And I will believe it, I will believe it.

(chorus)

Cause you make mountains move, you make giants fall.
And you use songs of praise to shake prison walls.
And I will speak to my fear, I will preach to my doubt.
That you were faithful then, you'll be faithful now!

See, I think that's where we screw up. We doubt God. We doubt what God can do. We don't claim God's promises or expect His faithfulness – we wallow in our misery. Paul says – listen to what I'm writing to the Roman church, it's by faith through the power of grace. And if you don't have faith, you for sure don't have the power of grace! It all hinges on your faith!

Romans 4:1-25 (NLT)

1 Abraham was, humanly speaking, the founder of our Jewish nation. What did he discover about being made right with God?

2 If his good deeds had made him acceptable to God, he would have had something to boast about. But that was not God's way.

3 For the Scriptures tell us, "Abraham believed God, and God counted him as righteous because of his faith."

4 When people work, their wages are not a gift, but something they have earned.

5 But people are counted as righteous, not because of their work, but because of their faith in God who forgives sinners.

6 David also spoke of this when he described the happiness of those who are declared righteous without working for it:

7 "Oh, what joy for those whose disobedience is forgiven, whose sins are put out of sight.

8 Yes, what joy for those whose record the LORD has cleared of sin."

9 Now, is this blessing only for the Jews, or is it also for uncircumcised Gentiles? Well, we have been saying that Abraham was counted as righteous by God because of his faith.

10 But how did this happen? Was he counted as righteous only after he was circumcised, or was it before he was circumcised? Clearly, God accepted Abraham before he was circumcised!

11 Circumcision was a sign that Abraham already had faith and that God had already accepted him and declared him to be righteous—even before he was circumcised. So Abraham is the spiritual father of those who have faith but have not been circumcised. They are counted as righteous because of their faith.

12 And Abraham is also the spiritual father of those who have been circumcised, but only if they have the same kind of faith Abraham had before he was circumcised.

13 Clearly, God's promise to give the whole earth to Abraham and his descendants was based not on his obedience to God's law, but on a right relationship with God that comes by faith.

14 If God's promise is only for those who obey the law, then faith is not necessary and the promise is pointless.

15 For the law always brings punishment on those who try to obey it. (The only way to avoid breaking the law is to have no law to break!)

16 So the promise is received by faith. It is given as a free gift. And we

are all certain to receive it, whether or not we live according to the law of Moses, if we have faith like Abraham's. 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." This happened because Abraham believed in the God who brings the dead back to life and who creates new things out of nothing.

18 Even when there was no reason for hope, Abraham kept hoping—believing that he would become the father of many nations. For God had said to him, "That's how many descendants you will have!"

19 And Abraham's faith did not weaken, even though, at about 100 years of age, he figured his body was as good as dead—and so was Sarah's womb.

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

21 He was fully convinced that God is able to do whatever he promises.

22 And because of Abraham's faith, God counted him as righteous.

23 And when God counted him as righteous, it wasn't just for Abraham's benefit. It was recorded

24 for our benefit, too, assuring us that God will also count us as righteous if we believe in him, the one who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead.

25 He was handed over to die because of our sins, and he was raised to life to make us right with God.

What is Righteousness

Righteousness is being "right" with God, but it's deeper than that.

When God looks at us, He either sees us as "right" or "wrong."

Through God's eyes, are you right with Him, or are you not? Are you righteous?

- You become right with God by FAITH ALONE

Courtroom Battle

This passage is a letter from Paul to the Roman church, but really – this part could be viewed as a court battle. The plaintiff is arguing to be "right" with God, it's about your good deeds or your works. The

defense (Paul) is arguing to be “right” with God, it’s by faith alone. Paul uses two of the greatest influencers the church would trust – Moses (speaking about Abraham) and David.

- Abraham discovered that GOOD DEEDS do not make you right with God

He quotes Moses (v2)

Genesis 15:6 (NLT)

And Abram believed the LORD, and the LORD counted him as righteous because of his faith.

He quotes David (v6)

Psalms 32:1-2 (NLT)

1 Oh, what joy for those whose disobedience is forgiven, whose sin is put out of sight.

2 Yes, what joy for those whose record the LORD has cleared of guilt, whose lives are lived in complete honesty!

David committed a sin with Bathsheba (cf. 2 Samuel 11-12 and 1 Kings 1-2). But David repented and changed his life. He knows what it was to be forgiven.

Then Paul shifts from talking about David and Abraham – to talking about you:

He asks – Abraham and David were counted as righteous because of their faith. Do you have that kind of faith? (v11)

- It’s all about the RELATIONSHIP (v13) – Having a real relationship with God

God’s Promise

God made a promise to Abraham, but His promise was far greater than land and descendants. It was a promise of a coming Messiah, a Savior... Jesus. It was a promise of the gospel or good news. It was a promise of heaven.

Paul says the promises of God are all based on a relationship that only comes by faith (v13).

The promise is pointless without faith... it's pointless if it's based on tradition, the law, or good deeds (works) (v14).

Why? Because you will never be good enough. But even though you aren't good enough – God is! And He offers the free gift – all hinging on faith (v16).

Paul's Encouragement

- When you lose hope, KEEP HOPING (v18)
- When life isn't going your way, STRENGTHEN YOUR FAITH (v19)
- When you feel all alone, never WALK AWAY (v20)
- Be FULLY CONVINCED God will do what He's promised to do (v21)
- Be RIGHTEOUS because of your faith (v22)

Know that whatever life throws at you – no matter how hard Satan and his demons come at you – God was faithful to Abraham and David – and God is faithful now! I said the hinge to you having a real relationship with God is faith – and God's faithfulness to you has never been stronger than it is at this very moment – God is faithful now... Are you? Are you faithful now?

—Pastor Chad