

I) **V1-4 INTRO: What then shall we say that Abraham our father has found**

At this point Paul is developing the doctrine of justification

II) **This is something that he has already referred to**

Ro 1:17 The righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written The just shall live by faith

III) **I will some time to develop what Paul is teaching us in this verse**

First: He speaks of the righteousness of God

IV) **God's righteousness is revealed by His acting in accordance with His Nature**

By nature, He is pure and just, and His actions are consistent with His nature

V) **Because all of us have sinned, we can't attain righteousness by our works**

Our sinful nature is in rebellion and our works are tainted by sin

VI) **To save us, He gave His Son so that we could receive His righteousness**

This comes through faith in Jesus and what He accomplished on the cross

It is in this way that the believer becomes right with God and forgiven of sins

VII) **By the Spirit and the Word, He empowers the believer to become righteous**

Believers are made righteous because they are in right relationship with God

**This is a righteousness that results from faith in Jesus
Ro 3:22 this righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no distinction**

VIII) **The second word is Justification**

Justification is a term used in a judicial sense

Justification is God declaring the sinner to be totally free of sins' guilt

**IX) In the NT It is how God makes the believer in Jesus righteous
It is through justification that God completely forgives us of our sin**

Ro 3:24 being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus

**X) In justification something is removed
Our guilt because of our sin and the resulting judgment that is just**

I) Jn 5:24 Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life

Ps 103:10-12 He does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities. For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is His love for those who fear Him; as far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us.

**II) Not only is something removed, but something else is given
The one declared not guilty receives righteousness**

**III) This comes as a revelation of God's grace towards us through Jesus
We have broken God's laws, but Jesus never did**

**IV) He never committed any sin of any kind
1 Pe 2:22 (Jesus) committed no sin, nor was any deceit found in His mouth**

Heb 4:15 For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin

**V) This made Him a worthy sacrifice and able to redeem us
Gal 3:13 Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree**

Eph 1:7 In Him we have redemption through His blood, the

forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace

VI) This is what Paul is teaching in this passage

VII) V1 What then shall we say that Abraham our father has found according to the

**Paul had just said that the law is not made void through faith
The fact is the law is established because we have exercised
faith**

VIII) To build this premise Abraham is introduced because he is the father of Jews

He is regarded as the ultimate example of a man who was right with God

IX) Abraham is the father of the Jews

He lived around 2000 BC and was from Ur, in a country called Chaldea

This would make his birthplace in Southern Iraq

**I) During his day Ur was estimated to have around 300,000 inhabitants
It was located on the Euphrates River, 100 mi north of the Persian Gulf**

This means that they also were involved in commercial trade, as

II) They were educated in math, agriculture, weaving, engraving, and astronomy

III) The city was also known for its idolatry

Josh 24:2 Joshua said to all the people, Thus says the LORD God of Israel, Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood in old time, even Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nachor: and they served other gods.

IV) Abraham dwelt in a city that was idolatrous

God called him and promised to bless him, and he left his home country

He responded to God by obeying Him, motivated by faith

Heb 11:8 By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going

V) The question : Was Abraham justified by anything that he in his flesh did

**Was Abraham justified by the energy of his own good works
Is that how he became right with God, by his works?**

VI) V2 For if Abraham was justified by works he has something of which to boast

If he worked hard and became righteous, he could take the credit for it

VII) Self-made righteousness would give him cause to brag about himself

**This would run contrary to how God reacts to man's pride
Jas 4:6 God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble.**

**VIII) Many have questions about the relationship between faith and works
Do works save you? Should you work to be justified by good works?**

IX) V3 For what does Scripture say? Abraham believed God and it was accounted

Paul appeals to God's word for the answer

X) This is how one receives a righteousness: through faith like Abraham

Faith justifies the person, and works justify his faith

I) This is why he is called the Father of faith

He was justified by his faith, not by his works

Jas 2:23 The scripture was fulfilled which says, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God

Imputed: Credited; counted; reckoned

II) V4 Now to him who works the wages are not counted as grace but as

debt

Salvation is a gift and not the payment we receive by doing good works

If I work for a wage, it is not a gift when I am paid, but is what I am owed

III) V5 But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the

Him To believe in Jesus means to completely and totally trust in Him

Jn 14:1 Let not your hearts be troubled. You believe in God believe also in Me

It speaks of total commitment to Him without wavering

IV) The one who does not work for righteousness knows they need grace

Unless one recognizes they are ungodly, they cannot be saved Your faith results in righteousness but unbelief results in judgment (Ro 6:23)

Jn 3:36 Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on them.

V) V6-8 Just as David also describes the blessedness of the man to whom God

King David From Abraham, Paul now speaks of one of his descendants:

VI) David would know something of the joy of being forgiven Paul quotes Ps 32:1-2

VII) David was broken over his sin with Bathsheba, and his sin tormented him

In Ps 32:3-5 he wrote: When I kept silent, my bones grew old through my groaning all the day long. For day and night Your hand was heavy upon me; my vitality was turned into the drought of summer. I acknowledged my sin to You, and my iniquity I have not hidden. I said, I will confess my transgressions to the Lord, and You forgave the iniquity of my sin

VIII) David was guilty of terrible sin, doing no good work to become righteous

He was made righteous because God forgave him of all of his sin

This brought overwhelming relief, and joy

I) V9-12 Does this blessedness then come upon the *circumcised only* or upon

Paul now anticipates questions that would be asked

II) *Question:* If Abraham was justified *by faith* why did he have to be circumcised?

What about Gentiles: they aren't circumcised so how can they be saved

Does the joy of forgiveness come only upon the Jews?

III) Circumcision was the symbol of God's promise to Abraham and his seed

Gen 17:9-14 reveals this

Gen 17:10-11 This is My covenant which you shall keep, between Me and you and your descendants after you: Every male child among you shall be circumcised; and you shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskins, and it shall be *a sign of the covenant* between Me and you.

IV) Circumcision was never presented as the *act* that saved him

We are not saved by a religious ritual: We are saved through faith

Gal 5:6 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision has any value. The only thing that counts *is faith expressing itself through love.*

V) V10 How then was it accounted? While he was circumcised or uncircumcised?

When was Abraham regarded as righteous: *Before*, or *after* his circumcision

VI) *Answer:* Abraham was declared *righteous 14 years before* he was

circumcised

Gen 15:6 calls him *righteous*, but circumcision is *performed* in Gen 17:23-25

VII) V11-12 And he received *the sign of* circumcision a seal of the righteousness of

Circumcision was a sign of their covenant with God
It was an open demonstration of their being the people of God

VIII) It was not the physical, but the spiritual circumcision that God required

Dt 10:16 Circumcise therefore the foreskin *of your heart* and be no more stiffnecked.

IX) Gentiles could have relationship with God when their hearts were circumcised

Col 2:11 In whom also you are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ:

I) Abraham received the righteousness of faith while still uncircumcised

This made him the father of all who believe, both Jew and Gentile

II) The question would be: If there is no benefit then why circumcise at all?

It was practiced for three basic reasons

First: It was an outward sign of willingness to obey God

Second: It was evidence of faith, being a constant reminder

Third: It was a promise to those who had a similar kind of faith

in God

III) V13 For the promise that he would be *the heir of the world* was not to Abraham is the father of all who follow his steps, trusting in God

This is not limited only to those who are circumcised

IV) This promise is not fulfilled because he followed the Law of Moses

Abraham predated the law by hundreds of years

V) Abraham is heir of the world because by faith he received God's promises

Gal 3:16-17 The promises were spoken to Abraham and to his Seed. Scripture does not say "and to seeds," meaning many people, but "and to your Seed," meaning one person, who is Christ. What I mean is this: The law, introduced 430 years later, does not set aside the covenant previously established by God and thus do away with the promise.

VI) In Genesis Abraham received a promise that contained various elements

Gen 12:3 He would be a blessing to all people, through his descendants

In you all the families of the earth shall be blessed

VII) Gen 13:16 His descendants would *be numerous*

I will make your descendants as the dust of the earth, so that if a man could number the dust of the earth, then your descendants also could be numbered

VIII) Gen 15:18-21 A land stretching from the Nile to the Euphrates

Gen 17:6-8 He would be the Father of many nations

iX) Gen 22:8 from his descendants would come the Messiah

Gen 22:8 Abraham said, "My son, God will provide *Himself* the lamb for a burnt offering.

**I) V15 the law *brings about wrath* for where there is no law there is no
The law cannot save because it serves to reveal our sinfulness**

(Ro 3:20)

The more you try to keep it the more guilty you are because you can't keep it

II) V15 For where there is no law there is no transgression

When God made His promise to Abraham, the Law was still in the future

The Law was still future, so a conscious decision to break it

wasn't possible