

7/11/10

### Romans 4

Often we refer to chapter five of Romans for the justification of the believer while in reality it is chapter four and the conclusion of our justification is linked to our sanctification in Christ and for Christ.

Paul has thoroughly presented every man guilty before God and left with no recourse, but to trust God by faith.

So he moves on to confirm this very principle in the Patriarch Abraham to remove the last stronghold of the Jewish mind.

#### **4:1-8 The justification of Abraham by faith.**

**4:1-3** The justification of Abraham was apart from works.

**4:1** Paul asked if Abraham is the exception to the rule of faith.

- 1) The pronouns “we” and “our”, refer to the Christian believer be he Jew or Gentile.
- 2) The implication of “according to the flesh”, being in his own ability through works.

3) The rhetorical question has an obvious answer, as all other Paul has made, NO!

**4:2** Paul stated, Abraham is not the exception to the rule of faith.

- 1) The topic of boasting is picked up from the previous chapter which is excluded. Rom. 3:27
- 2) The life of Abraham was not perfect, in fact he had many failings and could never boast in his work for justification.
  - a) He did not obey God in his first call, until the second call, when he was 75 years of age. Gen. 11:31-12:1-4
  - b) He passed his wife Sarah off, as his sister to save his own neck, twice, in Egypt and Gerar, being rebuked by the pagans. Gen. 12, 20
  - c) He attempted to figure God out and took Sarah’s counsel to take Hagar  
\* The word by “ek”, means out of not through.

**4:3** The promise of God was believed by Abraham.

- 1) The quotation is of Abraham's response to the promise of God of giving him a child from his own body. Gen. 15:6
  - a) God promised to multiply him as the stars in the heavens.

- b) The law was subsequent to faith, about 430 years. Gal. 3:17
- 2) Abraham simply believed God, for what He said.
  - \* Believed “pisteuo” the words of God’s promise, vs. 3, 5, 11, 17, 18, 24
- 3) God accounted his faith in the provision of righteousness God would provide to be justified before God.
  - a) God accounted “logizomai”, which means to deposit to his account, found 11 times in this chapter, 19 times in the book and 41 times in the New Testament.
  - b) Faith is not righteousness.
  - c) “Faith is born only where and when personal claims are exhausted and God’s word is expected, where personal claims and doubts give way in humble submission.” N.I.B.
  - d) Faith was counted as righteousness it didn’t produce faith.
  - e) Faith in the promise of God, in the work of Christ is deposited as righteousness.
    - \* Mary said, “Be it according to Your will”.

**4:4-5** The distinction between works and faith.

- 1) Work results in wages being paid. vs. 4
  - a) Grace is a gift, unmerited favor

- b) Often people like to begin in the Spirit and attempt to be perfected in the flesh. Gal. 3:3
  - 2) Believing on Him, the Father, who justifies the ungodly, is accounted as righteous. vs. 5
    - a) Believing in the provision of righteousness, Jesus Christ. Rom. 1:16-17
    - b) Abraham is identified with the ungodly of the first three chapters as he came out of a pagan culture. Josh. 24:2
    - c) Abraham came on the same basis as all others must come.
- 4: 6-8** The justification of David to stand before God was like the faith of Abraham.
- 1) David is called to the witness stand to affirm the principle of faith. vs. 6
    - 1) The Penitential Psalm is quoted. Ps. 32:1-2
    - 2) David describes the happiness of the man who God imputes apart from works, also.
      - a) The law said David was to be stoned.
      - b) God forgave David by His grace and mercy.
      - c) The word imputes “logizomai”, is the same as “accounted”, puts to his account the righteousness for justification,

- d) The basis was blood of animals, in faith of the true payment to come, Jesus Christ, the righteous provision of God. Ps. 103:12; Mic. 7:19; 1Pet. 1:19; 1Jn. 1:9; 2:1.
- 2) The blessing of forgiveness are stated. vs. 7
- a) The word blessed “makaios”, means happy and translated “happy”.
- 1)) The word appears nine times in the Beatitudes. Matt. 5:3-11
- 2)) The plural is used “those” to include anyone, excluding no one.
- b) The lawless deeds “anomia”, are the rebellions of David, marking attitude.
- \* They were forgiven “aphiemi”, meaning to abandon or send away, found 146 times in the New Testament.
- c) The sins “harmatia”, means to miss the mark, indicating deeds.
- \* They were covered “epikalupto”. to conceal or veil from the eyes of God, being confessed in faith of the true payment to come, Jesus. Rom. 3:25

**4:9-12 The justification of Abraham was before circumcision.**

- 4:9** The imputed righteousness is available to all Jew and Gentile.
- 4:10** Abraham was in a state of uncircumcision at the promise. Gen. 15:6
- 1) Abraham was uncircumcised till the rite and covenant. Gen. 17
- 2) 14 years prior, Ishmael was 13 years old.
- 4:11-12** The covenant did two things, it was a sign and a seal.
- 1) Abraham received the sign of circumcision as a seal of the righteousness of faith which he had while still uncircumcised. vs. 11a-b
- a) A sign communicates, points or indicates guidance, much like the sign of Jonah by Jesus to the Pharisees.
- 1) It pointed back to the promise and the belief in the promise by faith. Gen. 15:6
- 2) It pointed back to the failure of Abraham to attempt to accomplish the promises of God which he was not responsible to fulfill by taking Hagar and conceiving Ishmael, thirteen years earlier, a product of the flesh!
- 3) It pointed forward to a new life in the Spirit, cutting off the flesh life,

- represented by the foreskin in circumcision.
- 4) It pointed forward to the badge of identifying mark of the Jews.
- b) A seal ratifies, affirms and identified their genuineness and ownership by God, a seal affirming the original covenant, much like a seal on a document and the seals of the book of Revelation.
- 1) It ratified the promise to Abraham. Gen. 15:6
  - 2) It affirmed the accounting of Abraham's faith for righteousness.
  - 3) It identified them as authentic Jews who belonged to God, His peculiar possession.
    - \* The Christian is sealed with the Holy Spirit. 2Cor. 1:22, Eph. 1:13, 4:30
- 2) Abraham was a prototype of the uncircumcised Gentiles who would believe by faith as he, as well as their spiritual father. vs. 11c-e
- \* Deut. 30:6; Jer. 31:33; Ezk. 36:26; Rom. 2:25-28; 9:6; Phil. 3:3; Col. 2:11
- 3) Abraham was the model of faith and father to the circumcision, who walk in the steps of Abraham while being uncircumcised. vs. 12

- a) This is confirmed throughout the New Testament. Acts 15; Phil. 3:3; Col. 2:11
- b) It was at the age of 99 that Abraham was circumcised and Ishmael at 13 years of age. Gen. 17

#### **4:13-17a The justification of Abraham was apart from law.**

- 4:13** The promise was through faith not law.
- 1) The promise to be the heir of the world was made 430 years before the law by faith. Gen. 12:1-3; 18:18; 22:18; Heb. 11:8-10
  - 2) The law was only a school master to lead us to Christ. Gal. 3:17b; 34-34
- 4:14** To revert to law for inheritance results in two things.
- 1) Faith is made void.
  - 2) The promise is made ineffective!
- 4:15** The nature of the law.
- 1) Law punishes.
  - 2) Law has no power where it doesn't exist.
- 4:16** The conclusion of the matter.
- 1) Faith is the medium to the unmerited grace of God.

- 2) Grace and faith, alone, can guarantee the promise to all Jews and Gentiles.

**4:17a** This is written, as the doing of God, alone,

- 1) It is recorded in the Scriptures, as the revelation of God.
- 2) It was and is a true fact in the presence of God, who Abraham believed.

**4:17b-22 The justification of Abraham was by faith.**

**4:17b-22** The promise illustrated.

**4:17** The Scriptures are again the authority.  
Gen. 17:5

- 1) Abraham's faith was on God who gives life to the dead and calls those things which do not exist as though they did.  
\* Abraham believed the first chapter of Genesis and had no problem with the ability of God to perform such a promise.
- 2) Every person who trusts God, is dead in trespasses and sins, till God imparts life in Christ. Eph. 2:1-2

**4:18** The character of Abraham's hope.

- 1) He contrary to hope believed in hope what God had promised. Gen. 15:5

- 2) He became the father of many nations as God promised. Heb. 11:12

**4:19** The character of Abraham's faith.

- 1) He did not take into account or considered any impossibility even though his own body, at 100 years old.  
\* The word to consider "katanoco", means to consider attentive, to fix one's eye or mind upon.
- 2) He didn't limit God by the deadness of Sarah's womb. Heb. 11:11-12

**4:20-22** The abiding perseverance of Abraham's faith in the promise.

- 1) He did not waver referring to mental struggle at the promise of God through unbelief, to judge between two, to vacillate between two opinions. vs. 20a
- 2) He was strengthen in faith, trusting and depending on God. vs. 20b  
\* Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God. Rom. 10:17
- 3) He gave glory to God by believing He was able to perform the promise. vs. 20c-21
- 4) His faith was credited to him for righteousness. vs. 22  
\* The promise to Abraham before circumcision and the law. Gen. 15:6

**4:23-25** The faith of Abraham is to be followed by all sinners to be justified before God.

**4:23** The application of the faith of Abraham for justification.

- 1) Abraham's record was preserved, not for his sake alone but for us, the Christians who would be comprise of Jew and Gentile. vs. 23
- 2) God will impute to us as Abraham, if we believe in Him who raised Jesus Christ from the dead, the Father. vs. 24
  - \* As God brought forth a child from a dead womb, god brought forth his /son from a dead tomb!
- 3) Christ was delivered up for our offenses and raised for our justification. vs. 25
  - \* Is. 53. 2Cor. 5:21
  - a) Christ became the propitiation for our sins. Rom. 3:25
  - b) Christ was raised for our justification on the first day of the week, which is the eight day, new beginnings.
  - b) God told Abraham to circumcise every male and the new-born on the eight day.