

## The Difference Justification makes

Romans 4:1-25

Introduction:

### 1. **Romans 4:1-5** Commentary

- **Abraham** – The earthly father of the Jews. The most revered person for the audience in which Paul was writing to. The nation of Israel began when God promised Abraham that He would make his ancestors a great nation. **Illus:** Father Abraham song. Genesis 12:1-3, God comes to Abraham and tells him to leave. He was 75 years old when he was called. The promise was a bit extreme: 1) Leave your homeland and go to a land that God would eventually reveal to him 2) He will have a great nation, and up to this point, he had no children yet 3) He and his family would receive blessing and protection. **Sometimes it is best to go when it is easier to stay.**
- **Abraham was not justified by works** (V. 2) – Paul is saying that if works saved you, then Abraham would have something great to boast in, his obedience. In other words, Paul is saying that Abraham was a “big deal” and “obeyed” God so much that he could flaunt/boast about how obedient he was. Paul says in verse 2, if it was Abraham’s work of obedience, then yes, he could boast in himself, but it wasn’t. It was his belief/faith in God so therefore, he could only boast in God, not himself.

- **Abraham believed God and it was counted unto him for righteousness** (V. 3) – The word **count** comes from the Greek word, **logizomai**. This word is important for the entire chapter. This is a mathematical term to count, or to credit. When you count, you add up the numbers to get your final result. Two plus two equals four. The point of this and why it is important for us is that when God looks at those who have placed their faith in Him, He sees the righteousness of Jesus, not the sinfulness of our flesh. He looks at us and through the flaws, sins, shortcomings, He comes to the conclusion that we are righteous, not because of us or a work we have done, but the work that He has done in our lives. In verse 3, Paul is quoting **Genesis 15:6** – “And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness.” Paul is saying that it was Abraham’s faith/belief in God that credited the righteousness of God on him. Abraham’s righteousness did not come from good works, they came from belief in God.
  - **Works salvation would make Salvation a wage, but Salvation by grace through faith is a gift** (V. 4-5) Grace is unmerited favor. It is receiving what you do not deserve. Grace is a gift to us, not a wage. **A system of works seems to put God in debt to us. His free gift of grace that bought our salvation puts us in debt to Him.**
2. What Salvation is:
- Salvation is not by works – This doesn’t mean that we disregard the law, it just means that we stop

trusting in the law (our good works) to Salvation. Christians do not work to be saved; we work because we are saved.

- Salvation trusts in God as the one who justifies – Salvation is a trust transfer. It is more than just saying that there is a God, it is trusting that He is your only hope and It is taking the trust off of you and on to Him.

3. **Romans 4:6-8** Commentary

- **David** – David would have been right behind Abraham as a Jewish hero. David had many reasons to boast. He was the greatest king of Israel, he was a warrior, he established Jerusalem as the capital, and he was a man after God's own heart. He had reasons to boast in himself, but he also had reasons to be crushed by his sinfulness. He was an adulterer and conspired to murder.
- Romans 4:7-8, Paul quotes David's words in **Psalm 32**. David acknowledges his sinfulness and recognizes that in the midst of his sin, God has still counted him righteous. He knew that at the end of his life, his sin was not going to count against him or decide on him being accepted into Heaven. The righteousness of God would decide that. In other words, Paul is saying that David's sin would not affect his standing before God. That is credited righteousness.
- David knew that the only way for him to be forgiven is for someone to be charged for his sin. Jesus would become that and pay for his sin so that he could be forgiven and righteous. **Because of**

**this, David was not charged for his sin, but instead credited Jesus' righteousness.**

4. **Romans 4:9-25**

- God declared Abraham righteous in Genesis 15:6
- Circumcision was given as law in Genesis 17, and would serve as a symbol for all of the laws.
- The point is that Abraham was declared righteous long before the law was given. So his point to his audience was that you can't say the law was given to save, because Abraham was saved long before the law was given. Circumcision served as a sign or a symbol that he was already justified.

Justification does...

- I. **Justification makes us boast in God, not us** – You and I have nothing to boast in Him. If you boast in anything apart from Him, you are saying that you do not fully understand the Gospel.
- II. **Justification eliminates fear regarding our sin** – Look, Salvation is not a free pass to sin whenever you want. It is just the promise that we aren't going to be judged according to our sin. He doesn't hang it over our head. When you get to Heaven, the only thing that will matter is if you trusted in Him as your way of salvation.
- III. **Justification gifts you a new family** (V. 12-17) – Abraham now became the father of Gentiles and Jews because of the Salvation that was revealed. Now, we all are included into this family. In other words, Abraham is now our father and the we have a new name, a new identity.

- IV. **Justification gives us assurance** (V. 16) – You can be sure in Him.
- V. **Justification gives you hope when there seems to be no hope** (V. 18) – Abraham and Sarah had no hope except for the promise of God, and that was enough. Listen, the promise of God is the only hope that you and I need. We can face anything and still have hope, because our hope is in something greater.