

Timeless Truth

ROMANS: CHAPTER FOUR

WEEK FOUR | CASEY SHEFFIELD



TIMELESS TEACHING |

As we have been studying Timeless Truth: The Fundamentals of Faith found in the Book of Romans we have seen key principles of the Gospel where in which our faith lies. Today, we are going to take a look into the life of Abraham and the fundamental belief that his righteousness, and ours too, is a result of faith not works.

The word *righteousness* means *living in right relationship with God, reflecting God's own perfect character.*

Romans 4:1-5

I. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF ABRAHAM'S FAITH. (Romans 4:1-3; Genesis 12:1-9)

A. The Lord told Abraham: IT'S TIME TO LEAVE. (Genesis 12:1)

Abraham had to leave—

- His belief system
- His old way of living

To fully follow the Lord Abraham had to leave everything he had ever known behind.

B. God called him and for Abraham, IT WAS TIME TO TRUST. (Genesis 12:1b)

- The Lord didn't give Abraham explicit instructions on where he was going. All the Lord told Abraham was "Go, and I will show."
- Abraham had to completely step out in faith trusting God every step of the way.

C. God called Abraham and *IT WAS TIME TO OBEY*. (Genesis 12:4; Romans 4:3-5; 11; 13; 16)

- Abraham did what the Lord had told him to do. It's as simple as that. Why do we make it so complicated?
- We aren't the only ones who try and make things more complicated than they should be. In fact this very thing has been a stumbling block to many since the creation and fall of man.
- Paul is telling his readers in these verses that: being in a right relationship with God is not a result of them being circumcised. Nor is it a result of them keeping the law.
- The Jews were notorious for adding to what the Lord had already set out as the means, the ONLY means, whereby one is made right with God. But we do the same thing today. Romans 4:16 clearly tells us that the promise of salvation is received by faith.

II. THE ENDURANCE OF ABRAHAM'S FAITH. (Romans 4:16-21)

A. His faith goes against human reasoning (v. 17-18)

- If Abraham based his faith on human reasoning he would have absolutely no reason at all to trust, believe, or put his faith in the Lord. If anything, Abraham had every reason NOT to believe the promise the Lord had given to him.
- But Abraham KNEW and believed in "*the God who brings the dead back to life and who creates new things out of nothing.*"

- Sarah's body's ability to create new life was dead BUT Abraham believed in the Giver of all Life. Her womb was barren BUT Abraham believed in the Creator who "calls into existence the things that do not exist"! (Romans 4:17, ESV)
- Being lost in sin left to our own depravity is the most hopeless state of all. But God offers those who are lost new life in Christ. What is amazing though is he didn't stop there. For those of us who are in Christ He is our hope in every situation that feels hopeless.

B. His faith grows stronger (v.19-20)

- It is such a paradox that Abraham's faith grew stronger. After all Abraham wasn't getting any younger!
- Day by day, month by month, year by year, DECADE by DECADE....NOTHING, no promise fulfilled in fact, it was quite the opposite. He was growing older, his body was getting weaker, his time on earth was getting shorter...Abraham had every reason to doubt, distrust, and disregard the promise of God and yet he didn't.
- Abraham wasn't perfect. He tried to take matters into his own hands and help God out with his promise, but that doesn't mean he didn't have faith in God's promise.

C. His faith glorifies God (v. 20-21)

- Abraham wasn't shaken (v. 20a- "He never wavered in believing")
- Abraham was strengthened (v. 20b- "His faith grew stronger")
- Abraham was sure (v.21- He was fully convinced that God is able...")

III. THE ETERNALITY OF ABRAHAM'S FAITH (Romans 4:22-25; Galatians 3:6-9; 29)

- Abraham believed God. He believed God *was going to send a Savior* who would make a way for Abraham to be in a right relationship with Him. And because of Abraham's faith God counted him as righteous.

- We too can believe God. We can believe God *sent a Savior*-Jesus who made a way for us to be in a right relationship with Him. And because of our faith in Jesus God counts us as righteous.

WEEK FOUR

ROMANS: CHAPTER FOUR

ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD, AND GOD
COUNTED HIM AS RIGHTEOUS
BECAUSE OF HIS FAITH.

ROMANS 4:3 NLT

DAY ONE

ROMANS 4 | OVERVIEW



TIMELESS TRUTH |

ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD, AND GOD COUNTED HIM AS
RIGHTEOUS BECAUSE OF HIS FAITH.

ROMANS 4:3 NLT

Today we are going to read Chapter 4 in Romans so we can get familiar with the text, but we will spend most of our time in Genesis studying Abraham.

Read Romans 4:1-25

As we study Chapter 4 and the life of Abraham think about your own journey of faith.

What's your story? How did you come to faith in Christ? Briefly write out your testimony below:

Now turn to Genesis 12. Read verses 1-9.

In these nine verses we see the call of Abraham (once called Abram).

When the Lord called Abraham, what about his life changed?

Abraham left EVERYTHING to follow the Lord. His prior belief system (he was a pagan), his country, his home, his family—he left it ALL. Putting our faith in Jesus requires us to do the same.

The question is—have you?

Take a moment and ask the Lord to search your heart and show you if there is anything in your life that is hindering you from following Him fully. Then, honestly answer this question: Have you truly left it ALL to follow Jesus? _____

If He revealed to you something He is calling you to leave behind

What is it?

Why have you not surrendered it to Him left it behind?

Maybe the Lord revealed to you that you couldn't write out your testimony above because you've never left your own belief system, way of thinking or living and trusted in Jesus as your Savior. Or maybe you are a Christian and God is calling you to step out of your comfort zone to follow Him into the unknown. If there is something you need to forsake to truly follow the Lord confess it to Him. Repent of it, leave it behind, and walk away in victory knowing your sins are forgiven and you are in a right relationship with Him.

Re-read Genesis 12:1-9 again. Underline the words “I will” each time they appear.

How many times does the phrase “I will” appear in these 9 verses? _____

What does the Lord promise Abraham He will do?

- 1.) _____
- 2.) _____
- 3.) _____
- 4.) _____

5.) _____

Lastly, let's take a brief look at Genesis 15:1-6.

Abraham experienced some of God's most amazing blessings because of his faith in the Lord. God kept, and is still keeping, the promises He made to Abraham over thousands of years ago. If you are in Christ, you are a part of that promise, and not just a part but a partaker of it!

PRAYER MOMENT |

In your prayer time today thank the Lord for His call of salvation on your life. Praise Him for the gift and blessing of faith in Him and the change it has made in your life.

DAILY REMINDER |

As you go about your day remember all that God has done: He called you out, transformed you from the inside out, and set you apart for His specific purposes. Look for opportunities to share your story of faith with someone!

FURTHER READING |

God's promises to Abraham-
Genesis 12, 15, 17, and 22

*So all who put their faith in Christ
share the same blessing Abraham
received because of his faith.*

Galatians 3:9

DAY TWO

ROMANS 4:1-5



TIMELESS TRUTH |

ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD, AND GOD COUNTED HIM AS RIGHTEOUS BECAUSE OF HIS FAITH.

ROMANS 4:3 NLT

Yesterday we took a brief look into the life and faith of Abraham. Our key verse above tells us that Abraham simply believed God and because of his faith God credited it to him as righteousness. That word *righteousness* means *living in right relationship with God, reflecting God's own perfect character*. As we study our text today we are going to examine what that means for us.

Read Romans 4:1-5

In verse 1, Paul asks the reader, “*What did [Abraham] discover about being made right with God?*” For us to fully understand and be able to answer that question we need to go back to Genesis.

Let's revisit Genesis 15 again today. Read verses 1-8

What did the Lord tell Abraham about his descendants?

What did the Lord do because of Abraham's faith?

Did Abraham do anything in and of himself to receive the righteousness of God? _____

The answer is a resounding NO. Abraham simply believed in God and God counted (or regarded) him as righteousness.

Now read Genesis 15:9-21

In this passage the Lord makes a covenant with Abraham. In biblical times, when covenants were made the two parties entering into the covenant would pass between the halves of certain types of animal carcasses signifying if one of the parties did not keep their part of the covenant they would become like the dead animals. However, it was different when the Lord made a covenant with Abraham.

Re-read verse 12 & 17

What happened to Abraham as the sun was going down?

What did Abraham see in verse 17?

The smoking firepot and flaming torch symbolize the presence of God. You see these two symbols (cloud & fire) used throughout scripture to signify the presence of God.

The two verses above are extremely significant. When the Lord made the covenant with Abraham, the Lord put Abraham in a deep sleep rendering Abraham incapable of doing anything and as such signifying the Lord Himself was responsible for keeping the covenant. This pattern of God working on Abraham's behalf is continued throughout Abraham's entire life. It is the Lord who keeps His promise and fulfills the covenant. Abraham couldn't do it in and of himself, and when he tried (***read Genesis 16:1-16***) he failed miserably.

Again, why is Genesis 15:12 significant? What did it show Abraham (and us) about being made right with God?

Turn back to Romans 4. Read Romans 4:4-5 again.

Using the example of Abraham, Paul is writing to believers to help them understand why and how they have been made righteous. In verses 4-5, what does Paul tell the believers that he is writing to?

Our salvation, our righteousness is not based on what we have done but rather what Jesus has done. Last week, we discussed Romans 3:23 which tells us that our righteousness is like filthy (bloody, menstrual) rags. But there is good news, 2 Corinthians 5:21 tells us that the good news is: *“He made [Jesus] the one who did not know sin to be sin for us, so that in [Jesus] we might become the righteousness of God.”* I love the way this quote states it: *“On the cross, Jesus was treated as if He were a sinner, though He was perfectly holy and pure, and we are treated as if we were righteous, though we are defiled and depraved.”* (GotQuestions.org)

As Romans 3:10 states it, the truth is “No one is righteous, not even one.” The ONLY way any of us can stand before a holy God as completely and wholly righteous is because of what Jesus did on the cross. He took our place, He paid our debt, He died our death so that we could become just as He is—righteous and blameless.

PRAYER MOMENT |

Spend time in prayer today thanking the Lord for His righteousness and that He made a way for us to receive it through the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus.

DAILY REMINDER |

Salvation in Jesus is not earned or deserved. It is a free gift available to anyone who will accept it. If you have accepted His gift of salvation, share it with others. And if you haven't accepted His free gift of salvation why not do it today?

FURTHER READING |

The Fall of Man- Genesis 2:15-3

The Sacrifice of Jesus- Matthew 27, Mark 15, Luke 23, John 19

On the cross, Jesus was treated as if He were a sinner, though He was perfectly holy and pure, and we are treated as if we were righteous, though we are defiled and depraved.

GotQuestions.org

DAY THREE

ROMANS 4:6-8



TIMELESS TRUTH |

WHAT JOY FOR THOSE WHOSE RECORD THE LORD HAS
CLEARED OF SIN.

ROMANS 4:8 NLT

Have you experienced the indescribable joy that comes from your record being cleared of sin? I pray you have. David sure had.

Read Romans 4:6-8

David experienced first-hand what it was like to be forgiven of sin even though *he did nothing to earn or deserve forgiveness*.

Read the account of David's sin in 2 Samuel 11

According to the text you just read, what sins had David committed?

Lust, adultery, murder... and the list goes on. It is possibly easy for you to point your finger at David and compare his grievous sin to your own and think to yourself, "Well, I'm not that 'bad'." Or maybe, admittedly you feel your sin is just as grievous or even worse than David's.

Do you ever find yourself comparing yourself, and in particular your sin, to others? If so, how?:

Do you judge others and think your sin isn't as bad as other's OR do you judge yourself and feel like you are the worst of sinners?

If you fall into the category of judging others, take a moment right now and confess it to the Lord. Specifically call that judgmental and self-righteous spirit what it is and admit that it is—SIN.

If you fall into the category of judging yourself, take a moment right now and confess it to the Lord.

Stop dwelling in your past sin and trust in Jesus to forgive your sin and cleanse you from ALL unrighteousness.

No matter where you see yourself, the truth is *we all have sinned and fallen short of God's standard of perfection (see Romans 3:23)*. David experienced major and lasting consequences because of his sin against a holy God. David intimately knew the heartbreak, devastation, guilt, and condemnation that sin causes. But he also experienced the joy, restoration, peace and forgiveness that can only be found in the Lord. We must take heed, we too can know the heartbreak, devastation, guilt, and condemnation that sin causes. But also, like David, we too can experience the joy, restoration, peace and forgiveness that can only be found in the Lord. All we have to do is place our faith, our trust, in Him.

Read Psalm 51

David wrote this psalm after Nathan the prophet had confronted him because of his sin with Bathsheba. It is a beautiful expression of a truly repentant heart.

For the rest of our time today I want to challenge you to take some time and really reflect on your own life and struggle with sin. If the Lord reveals any particular sin, write out your own prayer of confession asking the Lord for forgiveness and restoration. If the Lord doesn't bring any particular sin to mind write out a heartfelt prayer of praise to the Lord for the forgiveness you have been given in Him.

The Lord described David as a man after God's own heart. But how could the Lord forgive a man who sinned so grievously against Him and describe that same man that way?? The answer is simple, yet so profound...Forgiveness of sins and being made right with God has NOTHING to do with how good or bad we are (or sin). Instead, it has EVERYTHING to do with who God is. He is a loving merciful God who freely offers forgiveness to all who believe. Ephesians 2:8-9 says it this way: "For you are saved by grace through faith, and this is not from yourselves; it is God's gift—not from works, so that no one can boast."

Be reminded again, David was a man who deeply understood the consequences and guilt of sin but who also experienced the joy that comes when sin is forgiven by the Lord. We too can experience that same joy!

PRAYER MOMENT |

Pray Romans 4:7-8 back to God. If you are unsure how to, pray something like this: *"Heavenly Father, thank you that I can have joy because my disobedience has been forgiven, and my sins have been put out of sight. Lord, I praise you because my record of sin has been cleared and because of that I have true joy."*

DAILY REMINDER |

Walk in true joy today—you have reason to even when it may seem that you don't! Dear sister in Christ your sins have been forgiven and that alone should fill your heart with joy!

Though you have not seen Him, you love Him; though not seeing Him now, you believe in Him, and you rejoice with inexpressible and glorious joy, because you are receiving the goal of your faith, the salvation of your souls. 1 Peter 1:8-9

FURTHER READING |

2 Samuel 12

Psalm 32

*Jesus became what we are so we could
become what He is.*

The Bible Project

DAY FOUR

ROMANS 4:9-15



TIMELESS TRUTH |

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.

ROMANS 4:13 NLT

Read Romans 4:9-13

Re-read verse 9.

What blessing is Paul referring to?

Paul is writing to both Jews (who are God's chosen people) and Gentiles (basically, everyone else). The Jews were steeped in tradition and law. One of those being circumcision.

In our text today, what does Paul ask his readers concerning Abraham in verse 10?

What was Paul's answer to that question? _____

For the Jew, circumcision was meant to be a sign of the covenant God made with Abraham (and, later, the Jews). It was an outward sign that the circumcised were God's people.

Paul is explaining to both the Jew and the Gentile (but especially the Jew who is steeped in tradition) that being in a right relationship with God is not a result of them being circumcised. Nor is it a result of them keeping the law (which we will look at in just a moment).

In modern Christianity, we can easily get caught up in the same trap of traditionalism. What are some church or even cultural traditions of today that can be stumbling blocks in our relationship with Christ/how we view salvation or how we approach Him (specifically pertaining to salvation)?

Now read Romans 4:13-15

What does Paul tell his readers the promise is NOT based on? _____

What does Paul then tell his readers the promise IS based on? _____

How do we enter into a right relationship with God? _____

Verse 14 says: Faith is _____ and the promise is _____

if God's promise is only for those who obey the law.

What does verse 15 say the law always brings? _____

Why is that the case? _____

The law was meant only to be used to make us conscious of our sin. It was NOT intended to be a means through which we could be saved. Even Abraham could not have been saved by keeping the Law, because he lived over 400 years before the Law was given! (Gotquestions.org)

In what ways have you tried in the past, or are you trying now, to be in a right relationship with God? List them below:

Maybe you are legalistic, or a rule follower, or perfectionist, or even a really good person. Maybe you serve the Lord so you can check a box rather than serving Him from a heart of gratitude for what He has done for you. Maybe you sing His praise because it looks good and it's the "right thing to do" rather than worshipping the Creator of the entire universe, the King of kings and the Lord of lords! Maybe you attend church out of duty rather than delight. Or read your Bible because of a guilty conscience rather than to get to know the very God who loves you and gave Himself for you.

Sweet friend, if you are depending on anything other than Jesus and His sacrificial death for all mankind to put you in a right relationship with God then to put it bluntly, you are not saved. Faith in Jesus is the ONLY way to have peace with God and eternal life. And sweet sister in Christ if you have trusted in Jesus as your Savior but you are loving Him, serving Him, worshipping Him, etc. to check the Christian Good Girl box instead of out of a heart of pure love and devotion to Him, then you are missing out on the abundant life He is wanting you to experience.

PRAYER MOMENT |

Ask the Lord to examine your heart to see if you are trusting in anything other than Jesus for eternal life.
-If you are, repent of (turn from) it and trust Jesus as your Lord and Savior today (Read Romans 10:9-10).
-If not, thank Him and praise Him for the reality that your salvation doesn't depend on you but the sacrificial death of His son Jesus which made a way for us to be forgiven and enter into a personal relationship with Him.

DAILY REMINDER |

Jesus did for us what the law (or our good works) could not do. He saved us from a life of sin and placed us in a right relationship with God the Father. Live your life as a love letter of gratitude instead of a checklist of rules for the salvation that has been made available to you through the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus.

EXTRA TIME |

Sign of Circumcision- Genesis 17

Romans 2:25-29

Romans 10:1-13

When our faith becomes nothing more than a series of rules and regulations, joy flees and our love for Christ grows cold.

Billy Graham

DAY FIVE

ROMANS 4:16-25



TIMELESS TRUTH |

EVEN WHEN THERE WAS NO REASON FOR HOPE,
ABRAHAM KEPT HOPING—BELIEVING THAT HE WOULD
BECOME THE FATHER OF MANY NATIONS.

ROMANS 4:18 NLT

Have you ever been in a hopeless situation? And by hopeless situation I mean you feel like your back is against the wall, there is no good way out (or no way out for that matter). You are totally hopeless and helpless. Our verse for today says that *although Abraham had absolutely no reason for hope he still kept hoping*. Abraham kept his hope alive by believing the Lord would do what He promised He would do! In the world's view that would be what you call faith against all odds. But Abraham knew and believed the Lord was (& HE STILL IS) able—period. *Abraham didn't let his circumstances keep him from trusting and believing the Lord's promise.*

The text we have been studying over this past week is specifically referring to the Lord's promise of salvation. And let's face it, being lost in sin left to our own depravity is the most hopeless state of all. Apart from Jesus we are absolutely hopeless.

Read Romans 4:16-25

Look at how verse 17 describes God: "Abraham believed in the God who _____
_____ and who _____."

We serve a great God! One who is absolutely worthy of all our trust. Abraham knew and believed this. And if you are a Christian, faith in Jesus is the VERY essence of your salvation. If we can trust Christ for our salvation, why then, is it so hard sometimes for us to fully trust and put our faith in Him concerning other things He requires of us or calls us to? Write you thoughts below:

There are many possibilities and reasons why we struggle so much to trust in the Lord. It could be because—

Our past mistakes or past relationships. Or maybe we don't believe God really is who He says He is. Whatever the reason, we should strive to be more like Abraham in the midst of our depravity, doubt and desperation.

According to verse 18, did Abraham have any reason for hope? _____

Now Read verse 19. (For a more detailed account you can read Genesis 18)

Why did Abraham have no reason (well at least no earthly reason) for hope? _____

What about you? Are you currently in a situation in your own life that feels hopeless? Maybe you are lost in your own sin and in need of a Savior OR maybe there is just something in your life that makes you feel hopeless? If so, write what it is below.

Maybe you are like Abraham and you feel that circumstance, situation...that thing you listed above is "as good as dead". And there is no hope of life being breathed back into it. Precious child of God don't lose heart. God is working ALL things together for your good and HIS glory! Abraham believed that.

Read verses 20-22.

Abraham was 75 years old when God initially promised he would have a son and become the father of many nations. Abraham was 100 years old when that promise came to fruition through the birth of his son Isaac. Abraham waited 25 years for God to fulfill His promise!

Even though Abraham had to wait a seemingly long time, with the odds stacking up against him as each day passed, **verse 20** tells us that: *“Abraham never wavered in believing God’s promise. In fact, his faith grew stronger...”*

Can the same thing be said about you? Do you trust God THAT much, even when the odds are seemingly stacked against you? If not, repent and ask the Lord to give you the same kind of faith in Him that Abraham had.

Take a few moments to read what God’s word says about trusting the Lord. Let it penetrate to the deep recesses of your heart. If there is a verse or two that the Lord particularly speaks to you through write it out on a notecard and place it somewhere you will be reminded of this truth throughout the week.

Psalm 37:3-5, Psalm 9:10, Jeremiah 17:7-8, Proverbs 3:5-6, Isaiah 26:3

Re-read verse 20-21.

What was a result of Abraham’s faith? _____

What was Abraham fully convinced of? _____

The reminder of Romans 4 tells us that because of Abraham’s faith, God counted him as righteous and this was recorded for our benefit. So that we too, could know and be assured that if we put our faith and trust in Jesus and believe in his sacrificial death on the cross we would be made *“the righteousness of God in Him.” (2 Corinthians 5:21)*

Hallelujah! What a Savior! I pray you have personally experienced the saving power of Jesus in your own life. I also pray that you “trust in [The Lord] at all times, and pour out your heart before him” in every situation and circumstance of life. *(Psalm 62 :8)*

PRAYER MOMENT |

Ask the Lord to help you see past the circumstances in your life and instead look to Him. Ask Him to help you to fully trust in Him and His plans for you no matter how difficult, uncertain, scary life may get.

DAILY REMINDER |

Today may you be encouraged that no matter how dire, destitute, and dead your circumstances may be you serve the One that brings dead things back to life! Believe in Him, believe He is able, believe HE WILL do that which He has promised.

EXTRA TIME |

Sermon: Sarah, The Doubter God Used -Tony Evans

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PO80UicFJN4>

Maybe part of the reason we feel hopeless, and our faith wanes is because we don't fully believe or even know the promises of God that are available to us who are in Christ. In her book *Prayer Portions*, Sylvia Gunter writes: "With an open Bible, praise the praises and plead the promises. God is a covenant-keeping God. He is absolutely faithful to His promises." She goes on to say, "For every problem, burden, need, and circumstance, there is a promise." Spend some extra time studying the promises of God. For easier reference, below is a list of some of the MANY promises of God.

Promises of God

God guides us- Psalm 32:8

God meets our needs- Philippians 4:19

God gives perfect peace- Isaiah 26:3

God will not forsake you- Deuteronomy 31:8

God will give you rest- Matthew 11:28-29

God promised salvation to all who believe in His Son- John 3:16

God will forgive us and cleanse us- 1 John 1:9

God will complete His work in us- Philippians 1:6

God provides a way out of temptation- 1 Corinthians 10:13

God has good plans for you- Jeremiah 29:11

God works all things for good- Romans 8:28

God's Word will endure- Isaiah 40:29