

**Title:** Faith Alone

**Passage:** Romans 4: 9-25

---

Summary:

Passage: Romans 4:9-25

Key Truths:

*Abraham's faith - key characteristics:*

1. Believed against hope
2. Did not weaken or waver
3. Gave glory to God.
4. Able to believe God is able to do what is promised.
  - Circumcision: Was meant to be an external sign of what already happened internally, which is where one trusts God and chooses to pursue God with one's life.
  - In Christ, you have the same pedigree as Abraham: a child of God through faith. Never feel "less than" when compared to others.
  - Our God is a big God ("*who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist*"). Biblical faith is not about the quality or strength of your faith but in the Person/Whom you have faith in.

Possible Discussion Questions:

- What point(s) in the sermon did the Lord most impress upon you?
  - What have you counted on to give you a sense of security and peace? If not sure, on the flip side, what causes a sense of loss of security or disruption in your life?
  - What is your faith in? How would believing and acting on the truth that our God is a big God change your perceptions when difficulties or trials arise?
  - What character or promise of God do you need to trust in or lean more into this week?
  - James 1:22 admonishes us to be "doers of the Word." What next steps will you take in response to the truths you have been exposed to?
- 

## **Introduction**

Struggle for identity - seeking approval, significance, security, and approval

- This is the center of our heart's desire
  - But sin has separated us from God and distorted our search.

Romans 10:3

For, being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and seeking to establish their own, they did not submit to God's righteousness.

What do you count to give you a sense of good standing, righteousness, and find one's ultimate peace in?

- Some options of "righteousness" (where one places their security and identity):
  - in their jobs (their accomplishments)
  - In their family (being best parent in their minds)
  - In their theology (God prefers me over others)
  - In their intellect (able to think and consider things of this world)
  - Mercy righteousness (care about the poor and oppressed)
  - Works righteousness (clean behavior void of drugs and bad behavior)
  - Tolerance righteousness (accept others regardless of opinions)
- How know have placed righteousness apart from Christ?
  - What causes you to feel loss of security?
    - Ex: when kids misbehave, or loss of business or etc.?
- Our nature inclines towards things of this world rather than Jesus.

The Gospel of Jesus Christ:

- Truth: The only identity that is eternal and counts is Christ and in Him alone.
  - There is no "better than" in the church.
    - Whether Jew or Gentile, moral or immoral, etc.
      - Without Christ, you are lost as anyone else.

### **Context of Passage**

- Look at example of Abraham (Romans 4:1-8) who was justified by faith.

### **EXPOSITION**

#### **I. Abraham was counted as righteous before the law/circumcision**

***Romans 4:9–12***

***“Therefore, is this blessing on the circumcised, or on the uncircumcised also? For we say, “FAITH WAS COUNTED TO ABRAHAM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS.” How then was it counted? While he was circumcised, or uncircumcised? Not while circumcised, but while uncircumcised; and he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while uncircumcised, so that he might be the father of all who believe without being circumcised, that righteousness might be counted to them, and the father of circumcision to those who not only are of the circumcision, but who also follow in the steps of the faith of our father Abraham which he had while uncircumcised.”***

Abraham

- *“he might be the father of all who believe without being circumcised”*

Circumcision

- Was meant to be an external sign of what already happened internally
- What happened internally?
  - One trusts God and chooses to pursue God with one’s life.

Genesis 15:6

And he believed the LORD, and he counted it to him as righteousness.

- Abraham’s righteousness occurred out of his faith, not out of his works or behavior.

**Romans 4:11**

***he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while uncircumcised***

“Seal of righteousness”

- Seal: provides a proof of identity.
  - Ex: seals were often used that accompanied every signature to show proof of identity with one’s signature. (Similar to a notarized signature)
- Equivalent sign today: Baptism
  - External symbol of what someone is experiencing in their own life.
- Misperception: emphasis of the sign where equate baptism with salvation where act gives grace from God.
  - Misplaced focus of the sign. Salvation actually precedes baptism. Baptism doesn’t result in any salvation. Salvation is by faith alone, not by any work or action by man.

**Romans 4:13-15**

***“For the promise to Abraham or to his seed that he would be heir of the world was not through the Law, but through the righteousness of faith. For if those who are of the Law are heirs, faith has been made empty and the promise has been abolished; for the Law brings about wrath, but where there is no law, there also is no trespass.”***

Under the law, you are doubly-guilty

- With knowledge of God’s law, we are additionally guilty if we know good but instead ignore and intentionally do what is wrong.
- The law does not provide an excuse but additional responsibility.

**Romans 4:16**

***That is why it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his offspring—not only to the adherent of the law but also to the one who shares the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all,***

Through faith, we have the same pedigree as Abraham.

- Never feel you are “less than” compared to others
- In Christ, you have the same pedigree as others: a child of God through faith.

**Romans 4:17**

***as it is written, “I have made you the father of many nations”—in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist.***

Abraham believed God in two ways:

1. Gives life to the dead

- Abraham believed God could do anything.
  - How? God believed Abraham could resurrect Isaac even if killed.

Hebrews 11:19

He considered that God was able even to raise him from the dead, from which, figuratively speaking, he did receive him back.

- How? Abraham was old and close to death yet believed God could still use him wonderfully.

2. Calls into existence the things that do not exist

- What pointing to? Isaac.
  - God had promised Abraham a son at a time beyond human ability with Abraham and Sarah in their old age.
- Question: What is your faith in?
  - Do you believe in God who can do all things at any time? Is he a big God to you?

**Romans 4:18-22**

***In hope he believed against hope, that he should become the father of many nations, as he had been told, "So shall your offspring be." He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was as good as dead (since he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah's womb. No unbelief made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. That is why his faith was "counted to him as righteousness."***

*Abraham's faith - key characteristics:*

*1. Believed against hope*

- even when things seem impossible, Abraham believed.
  - Even where there seems to be no way, there is always hope!
- when we are totally without hope, look to God.

*2. Did not weaken or waver*

- the fulfillment of the promise of a son did not occur until 25 years later after it had been given.
  - Yet Abraham continued to put his faith in God.

*3. Gave glory to God.*

- *"he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, "*
- Abraham praised God even in moments of weakness.

- When we are reminded of who God is (He is all powerful and holds all of the universe in His hands) and His promises, your faith will grow stronger.
  - Direct correlation exists between walking with God and fellowship with others. We walk by faith together in the body of Christ.

*4. Able to believe God is able to do what is promised.*

- *"fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised"*
  - See Abraham's story in Genesis 12-22 through repeated tests.
- God takes you where you are and leads you in growth of faith over the course of your relationship with Him.
- The more you trust God and allow Him to work in your life, the more God will prove trustworthy.
  - Note: it's not much of the quantity of your faith but the quality of Whom you put your faith in.

***Romans 4:23-25***

***But the words "it was counted to him" were not written for his sake alone, but for ours also. It will be counted to us who believe in him who raised from the dead Jesus our Lord, who was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification.***

*who believe in him who raised from the dead Jesus our Lord*

- The death and resurrection of Jesus is the bedrock of our faith.
- Was Jesus a liar, a lunatic, or Lord of all?
  - Faith in Jesus is the most reasonable faith of all.
    - You place faith everyday (ex: faith in quality of car, faith in other drivers following the rules, faith in restaurants making safe food, etc.)
  - When tell someone "Trust in Jesus Christ" is the most reasonable thing to do!
    - Why not believe? Sin distorts perceptions and reasoning.
- If a Christian, marvel everyday that our standing before God has been fully paid through Christ's work on the cross.
  - It is not based upon praying more or reading the Bible more.

- Appreciate and meditate the fullness of what Jesus has done.

Philippians 1:6

And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.

1 Peter 1:3-5

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.