

Abraham: the Man of Faith

Romans 4

- Paul has not been to R when he writes, in Acts 20:2-3. He makes it there ~4yrs later
- Church comprised of Jewish Christians & Gentile Christians – clash of cultures now one in Christ
- Ch. 3 discusses how sin affects the whole world
- Ch. 4 illustrates faith through Abraham

[key: A=Abraham; P=Paul]

1. Abraham's Faith Credited as Righteousness – Romans 4:1-8

- 1: why A? If P could prove that "Father A" was justified on the basis of faith it would help establish his cause
- 2: if anyone could boast it would be A
- 3: present tense 'what does?' Not 'what did?' written 1500 yrs. before, still speaking today
- Genesis 15:6 – not the 1st time A believed
 - 1st time states he believed (1st in Gen.)
 - 1st time in Gen. 'righteousness' refers to A
 - Specifically states justified by his faith [best reason for quoting]
 - Chronologically 14ish yrs. Before A was circumcised
- 4: contrasts law/works and grace/faith
- 5: contrasts with grace/faith
- 6-8: 2nd example: King David; Ps. 32:1-2 – expressing thankfulness for God forgiving him

2. Righteousness Not Dependent on Circumcision – Romans 4:9-12

- 9: can only Jews be forgiven or Gentiles also?
- 10: what circumstances was A in Gen. 15:6? Most Jews probably never considered circumcision was in Ch. 17
- 11: why did God command? A sign, Gen. 17:11
- 12: if you were really A's children then you would do the things A did!

3. The Promise Made Through Faith, Not the Law – Romans 4:13-15

- 13: promise: key word [13, 14, 16, 20]; heir of the world: couldn't be the Law, given at least 430 yrs. later
- 14: faith made empty

- 15: since no one could keep perfectly, in the end all it could bring was wrath

4. Abraham, the Father of All True Believers – Romans 4:16-25

- 16-17: law/works nullify the Promise; grace/faith guarantees it
- 18: 1st use of hope in Romans; most NT book
- 19: considered his body not dead because he believed in God
- 20: A not perfect; grew strong – *dunamis*
- 21: fully assured – complete + carry
- 22: quotes Gen. 15:6 again
- 23,24: written for our benefit today also
- 25: delivered over: *alongside* + *give*; used also in connection with Jesus' enemies

Lessons:

1. We should live our lives to be like A. He believed and obeyed God even when he didn't have all the details – and he was called the "friend of God." [James 2:24]
2. It does not matter today if we are circumcised or uncircumcised, Jew or Greek today when it comes to obedience to God. If we want to be righteous today, it comes through baptism.
Romans 6:3-4
3. We can never work enough to merit our own salvation. Thanks be to God, however, we can be forgiven of our sins! Take advantage of this today!

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