



PROOF OF JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH ALONE: ABRAHAM (PT 2)

Romans 4:13-25

Introduction: Review of Paul's Argument

I. Abraham's Life Shows We Are Not Saved by Law-Keeping (v.13-15)

- A. The Jews Had Begun to Rely on their Law-Keeping to Save Them
 - o This is the law given to Moses on Mt. Sinai
 - o After returning from the exile, some Jews had become very serious about the law
- B. But the Blessings to Abraham "did not come through the law but through the righteousness [that comes through] faith"
 - o Paul's point is that Abraham could not have received these blessings by lawkeeping because the law was not given until 430 years later!
 - o Besides the law cannot save anyway: "For the law brings wrath" (v.15)

****Key Point:** Trying to earn God's blessing through law-keeping actually nullifies God's blessing!

II. Abraham's Life Shows that We are Saved by Grace (v.16-17)

- A. Abraham was saved by faith "in order that the promise may rest on grace" (v.16)
 - o What's the definition of "grace"? Unmerited favor vs. demerited favor
 - o Because God's salvation depends on grace (and not works), then the instrument of salvation must be faith. You can't *earn* a gift!
- B. Because salvation is by grace, this allows God to save the nations
 - o Grace means the promises to Abraham are "guaranteed to *all* his offspring" (v.16), not just Jews who keep the laws of Moses.
 - o Who are the offspring of Abraham? Gal 3:23: "If you are Christ's then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to the promise."

****Key Point:** If you are in Christ, you today are the fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham to give him the nations. You are a "descendant" of Abraham!



III. Abraham's Life Shows Us What True Faith Looks Like (v.18-25)

- A. Faith is trusting
 - o Faith is not mere intellectual assent or knowledge
 - o Abraham "grew strong" in faith, and was "fully convinced" (v.20-21)
 - B. Faith is trusting God's Word
 - o Abraham believed God's promise "So shall your offspring be" (v.18)
 - o Faith's power resides in its *object*, not in a subjective feeling
 - C. Faith is trusting God's word in the midst of adversity
 - o Abraham was faced with serious reasons *not* to believe (v.19)
 - o But we are told "In hope he believed against hope" (v.18)
- **Abraham's example is for us today as we believe in Jesus (v.23-25)



Discussion Groups

1. Which definition of “grace” have you been operating under? How does it change your perspective to think of grace as “demerited favor”?

2. How does understanding Abraham as the father of all nations (not just Israel) change your understanding of the relationship between the OT and the NT? How does it affect your understanding of missions?

3. How does it change your perspective to think of the object of your faith, instead of just the experience of it? What current adversity do you face that you have to believe in the midst of?

