

## Romans Chapter 4

Paul has introduced the theme of justification through faith in Jesus. As he continues to deal with the uniqueness of the relationship between the Jews and the Gentiles, he addresses the faith exhibited by those in the Old Testament. And of course, he uses Abraham, the father of the Hebrew nation, as the example. Abraham is selected because he not only exhibited faith in God but did so before both circumcision and the Law. His belief was “credited” to him as righteousness. This serves as a bridge in our understanding the ministry of justification both prior to the fulfillment of the promise in Jesus and justification through Christ following the resurrection.

**Date: Monday, February 4**

**Scripture: Romans 4:1-8**

**Theme: The Righteousness of Faith**

- Abraham’s trust in God was before the fulfillment of the promise of Jesus:
  - Yet, it is said his faith was credited (reckoned) as righteousness.
  - We now live in the era of fulfillment through Christ therefore He is our righteousness
  - The righteousness credited in the Old Testament through their faith in God led to the experience of righteousness through Jesus in the era of fulfillment.
  - The righteousness of Old Testament faith is not the same as the righteousness through Christ fulfilled following the resurrection.
  - Consider John 14:6—no one comes to the Father except through the Son.
  - Read Ephesians 4:8-10—the fulfillment of righteousness for all through Jesus.
- Since Abraham lived 100’s of years before the Law, the Law could not have been the basis for being considered righteous.
  - Also, his initial faith response to God came 14 years prior to the institution of circumcision.

**Date: Tuesday, February 5**

**Scripture: Romans 4:9-12**

**Theme: Faith Before All**

- Simply put, Abraham had faith in what there was to have faith in—God alone.
- For the Jews, the rite of circumcision divided humanity into two distinct groups—the circumcised Jew and the uncircumcised world.
- Paul is attempting to remove this rite as the basis upon which the Jews claimed righteousness for themselves and Abraham.
  - This excludes the fact that Abraham’s initial call from God and his faith response to that call happened 14 years before the sign of circumcision was given.
  - Therefore, Abraham is established as the father of all uncircumcised as well which is in direct contradiction to the fact he was viewed as the father of Jews only.
- The true descendent of Abraham is one who follows God in faith.
  - Paul continues to establish the basis of justification as faith in Jesus rather than any rite or Law.

**Date: Wednesday, February 6**

**Scripture: Romans 4:13-15**

**Theme: Faith Not Law**

- Promise—that which is given out of goodness without conditions—consider this is light of grace
- Abraham’s righteousness could not have been based in the Law—Abraham was counted as righteous centuries before the Law was given
- “The righteousness of faith” cannot be based on something that voids the need for faith.

**Date: Thursday, February 7**

**Scripture: Romans 4:16-18**

**Theme: Faith and Hope**

- Faith and grace are related to promise where Law is related to sin and wrath.
- “In accordance with grace” given to all because of the promise—the fulfillment of faith through Christ.
- The promise is guaranteed to all—those under the Law (Jews) and those of the faith of Abraham (Gentiles).
  - Consider the impact this revelation had on the Jews when the Gentiles were considered to be of the faith of Abraham.
- “God who gives life to the dead”
  - Not only the resurrection but relate it to Abraham and Sarah given their ages and the birth of Isaac.
- “Hope against hope”
  - “who against hope believed in hope”
  - “For Abraham, human reason for hope being gone, hoped on in faith...” (Amplified Bible)
  - The first hope can be related to the possibilities in God.
  - The second can be related to the impossibilities of man.

**Date: Friday, February 8**

**Scripture: Romans 4:19-25**

**Theme: Faith and Assurance**

- Consider the birth of Isaac given the ages of Abraham and Sarah.
  - This must seem as impossible as the resurrection from the dead.
  - Faith will always strengthen the promises of God in our lives and give us the courage to walk in them.
  - Abraham had faith that credited him with righteousness.
- Our righteousness is found in the fulfillment of the promise of God through Jesus.

- The resurrection was the completion and the proof of our justification—our debt paid in full.
- Remember, we cannot separate the crucifixion and the resurrection.