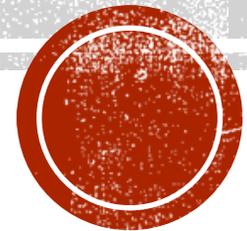


A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF ROMANS

Lessons 11



Pastor Norman Rush, Jr.

Lesson 11:

This lesson continues Paul's discussion and presentation of Abraham as the example of Justification by Faith.

In verses 9-25, Paul presents the thoughts and facts that Abraham's salvation was apart from circumcision, the law, and was by Faith.

Paul uses Abraham's own life in vv. 9-12 to demonstrate that the free gift of salvation is not restricted to those who have received the physical sign of being included among God's people under the Old Covenant, that is, circumcision – or being a Jew.



The same argument could be used to show that a person can be forgiven before receiving baptism, because baptism, in the New Covenant, is the outward physical sign of becoming a Christian.

v. 9 - “Blessing” here refers to vv. 7-8, where David says the man whose sin is forgiven is “blessed”.

Paul then asks if this blessing is only for those that are circumcised (Jews) , or is it also for the uncircumcised (Gentiles)?



What about Abraham?

He was declared righteous by God because of his faith.

v. 10 - So, how did his faith help him?

Was he declared righteous only after he had been circumcised, or was it before he was circumcised?

Paul answers his own question.

God accepted Abraham first and then he was circumcised later.



v. 11 - Paul declares that Abraham was righteous before his circumcision ceremony, it is a sign that he already had faith and that God had accepted him to be righteous.

That means that Abraham is the spiritual father of those who have faith but have not been circumcised. They are made right by faith.

Who does that mean?

Much to the surprise of first-century Jews, Paul argues that Abraham is also the father of the uncircumcised Gentiles who believe.



v. 12 Paul states that Abraham is also the father of the circumcised but only if they have the same kind of faith as Abraham had before he was circumcised.

Paul is arguing that Abraham's story shows that for both Jew and Gentile there is only one way of justification (Salvation)

– the way of God's grace by faith through Jesus Christ.



In verses 13-15, Paul argues that Abraham's salvation was apart from the law.

Paul states that it is then clear that God's promise to give the whole earth to Abraham and his descendants was not based on obedience to the law, but based on the new relationship with God, through faith.

Works (obedience to law)
does not merit or produce
the promise of God,
in Abraham or in us!



In the King James version, in verse 13, you find the word “world”.

Paul refers to the whole creation, just as he does in 1:20.

No exact mention of this heirship is made in the Genesis account of Abraham. He is promised:

1. “Offspring like the dust of the earth”,
Genesis 13:16:

“And I will give you so many descendants that, like dust of the earth, they cannot be counted.”

NLT



2. Possession of the land of Canaan, Genesis 12:7;13:14-15; 15:7, 18-21; 17:8.

“Then the Lord appeared to Abram and said, “I will give this land to your descendants. And Abram built an altar there and dedicated it to the Lord, who had appeared to him.”

Genesis 12:7 NLT

3. That all the peoples of the earth will be blessed through him, Genesis 12:3; 18:18, or his offspring, Genesis 22:18.

“I will bless those who bless you and curse those who treat you with contempt. All the families on earth will be blessed through you.”

Genesis 12:3 NLT



As Genesis makes it clear, God purposed through Abraham and his offspring to work out the destiny of the whole world, it was implicit in the promises to Abraham that he and his offspring would “inherit the earth”, Psalms 37:9, 11, 22, 29, 34; Matthew 5:5.

Psalms 37:9 – “For the wicked will be destroyed, but those who trust in the Lord will possess the land.”

NLT

Matthew 5:5 – “God blesses those who are humble, for they will inherit the whole earth.” NLT



The full realization of this awaits the consummation of the Messianic Kingdom at Christ's return.

v. 14 – 15 – Paul continues, on the claim, of the Jews, who say God's promise is for those who obey God's law and think they are "good enough" in God's sight, are actually saying that faith is useless.

If that is true then the promise is useless too.

Paul states that the law brings punishment on those who try to obey it, so the only way to avoid breaking the law is to have no law to break!



Why does the law bring punishment?

It reveals sin and even stimulates it and produces wrath, not the promise. Romans 7:7-11

What does it mean when it says, “where there is no law there is no transgression”?

The Greek word for transgression - “parabasis”, which means a violation or breaking, comes from the Greek word “parabaino”, which means to violate a command.

Paul is saying that a transgression is overstepping a clearly defined line.

Where there is no law there is still sin, but it does not have the character of transgression.



In verses 16-25, Paul declares that Abraham's salvation was by Faith.

v. 16 – Notice the “therefore”, Paul now summarizes the thought of vv. 11-12.

Many human attitudes, such as love, joy, patience, courage, and mercy, can be somewhat worked up by our own effort.

Faith occurs when we cease trying to do something by our own efforts, and trust someone else to do it for us.



Faith is the one attitude that is exactly the opposite of trusting ourselves.

This is why God decided that faith would be the attitude of our heart by which we could obtain salvation,

that it might be according to grace, in other words,

that it might be an entirely free gift of God, not dependent on any merit (words, deeds or obedience) of our own.



v. 17 – Abraham’s faith that God would fulfill His promise (Isaac) was based on God’s power as demonstrated in resurrection and in creation, v. 21.

God considers Abraham the father of the Jews and believing Gentiles, no matter how others, especially the Jews, may see him.

The phrase “**the God who gives life to the dead**” (KJV) or “**the God who brings the dead back to life**” (NLT) primarily, refers to the birth of Isaac through Abraham and Sarah, both of whom were well past the age of childbearing.

Paul alludes also to the resurrection of Jesus, see vv.24 & 25.



The phrase “**calls things that are not**”, means that God has the ability to create out of nothing, as He demonstrated in the birth of Isaac.

The creation of Genesis is where God spoke into existence something that did not exist before.

v. 18 - Abraham believed God, when all hope as a human possibility failed, Abraham placed his hope in God.

This is contrary to human expectation.

We see that Abraham believed (hoped) in the expectation that God would fulfill His promises.

v. 19 – Abraham’s faith did not weaken, even against the knowledge that he was too old to father a child and that Sarah had never been able to have children.



Did Abraham have some anxious moments?

Yes, in Genesis 17:17-18, “Then Abraham bowed down to the ground, but he laughed to himself in disbelief. “How could I become a father at the age of 100? He thought. “And how can Sarah have a baby when she is ninety years old?” So Abraham said to God, “May Ishmael live under your special blessing.” NLT



We see that Abraham was anxious but God did not count this against him.

Abraham faced the fact that he and Sarah could not have children and still believed God would keep His promise.

This tells us that Faith does not refuse to face reality but looks beyond all difficulties to God and His promises.

v. 20 – Abraham never waivered in believing God's promise. His faith grew stronger and in doing so brought Glory to God.

Through nearly 10 years of waiting for fulfillment of a seemingly impossible promise, Abraham's faith did not grow weak but grew stronger while he continued to give glory to God.



1. What lessons can we draw from this?
2. Doesn't this mean that faith and worship go hand in hand?
3. Maybe we do not have a stronger faith because we do not give God the glory for His promises to us?

REFLECT ON OUR CURRENT SITUATION IN AMERICA RIGHT NOW? ARE YOU ANXIOUS? ARE YOU FEARFUL? HAVE YOU QUESTIONED GOD OR HIS WORD?



Devotional #1:

Hebrews 10:23

Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful.

In John Bunyan's best-selling book, *Pilgrim's Progress*, the central character, Christian, begins his journey leaving the city of Destruction and ventures on his way toward the Celestial city.

Early on his journey, Christian decides to depart from the narrow path onto an easier one which leads him to the territory of Despair and its stronghold, Doubting Castle.



There, Christian is captured, overwhelmed, and locked in a dungeon until his faithful companion, Hope, arrives to remind him of previous victories.

As the saint prays throughout the night, he remembers a key in his possession called "Promise", which will open any lock!



At this moment, a contested election in the United States may be seriously tempting believers off of the narrow path, and onto an easier one characterized by political hopes and expectations.

Doubts about election results could lead to capture in the dungeon of Despair.

But we also are in possession of the same key of "Promise", which opens the dungeon gate at Doubting Castle to a Kingdom which cannot be determined by elections or voter fraud.



Devotional #2:

Philippians 4:7

And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

One of the sacrifices mentioned in the Tenach (Old Testament) is mentioned as a Peace sacrifice or sometimes translated as the Thanksgiving sacrifice.

It is known as the 'shalem' sacrifice.

The root behind this word is the word 'shalom' whereby we get the word, peace.



This sacrifice foreshadows the perfect peace and restoration that a believer has with God through a perfect sacrifice of peace, the Lord Yeshua, who offered himself 2000 years ago.

The root of "shalem" is the word "shalom", which means peace, completeness, prosperity, safety, contentment, health, blessing, and rest.

Since we are complete in Him and have peace with God, we need not entertain spirits of discontent, desperation, unhappiness, self-ambition, regret, etc ... but can rest in His 'peace sacrifice'.



The world is awaiting the results of the United States election, and many who are intently focused on the outcome or on what may be an extended season of uncertainty could be inspired to feel anything but peace.

The Lord, who is called Sar Shalom, who dwells within us, is our PEACE... He is our Prince of Peace!

It's truly a matter of focus. And though it may take some internal discipline these days, the reality of our identity, our completeness in Yeshua, is a totally valid and real foundation for resting in His peace, a peace, in the midst of real threats and serious turmoil, that passes all understanding!



Romans Chapter 4 Continued:

v. 22-25 Because Abraham never waived in his belief in God's promise, God declared him to be righteous.

But this was not only for Abraham's benefit but for us too!

This assures us that God will declare us to be righteous if we believe in God, who brought Jesus our Lord back to life from the dead.

Jesus was handed over to die because of our sins and He was raised from the dead to make us right with God.



Though the New Testament describes additional benefits that Christ's resurrection brings to us, here in verse 25, Paul states that Christ's Resurrection specifically obtains our justification – our being declared righteous in God's sight.

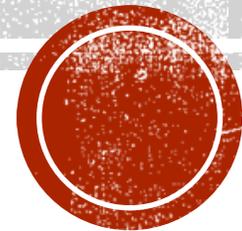
By raising Jesus from the dead God declared both His approval of Christ's completed work or redemption and His approval of all who believe in Christ and are united with Christ in His resurrection.

Justification does not exist without
the life, presence, and grace
of Jesus Christ
operating in our lives!!



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