

Justified by God's Power, Not Our Effort

Romans 4:18-25

We've seen in Romans and in Genesis that it says, *Abraham believed God and it was credited to him as righteousness*. Today, we look at some of the qualities of that faith which was approved by God.

1) Based on Abraham's faith...

To believe God is to allow room for what you cannot see, feel and control.

We prefer to trust in things that we can see, feel and control.

We almost limit ourselves to taking a step of faith only into those times when we have it all figured out.

When we can see from where the resources will come...

When we can meet the people who will help make it happen...

When we resolve all the unanswered questions...

When we think the experience will be positive...

That's a sign that we're good to go. Why do we live that way?

If you wait until you have all your questions answered and you have all your concerns met and all negative scenarios are accounted for, then you need to understand this...

You have a greater belief in yourself than you do in God.

2) Based on Abraham's faith...

To believe God is to focus more on God than on your circumstances.

Romans says that Abraham was fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised.

The power to keep the promise belonged to the One who made the promise.

Abraham compared two realities: Circumstances and God.

He reasoned, he evaluated, he prayed, he believed and trusted.

This reasoning with God, trusting God, evaluating the impossibility of the promise leads Abraham to give glory to God.

Another aspect of Christianity that seems to be unique is giving glory to God.

Pastor Karl suggests that cults and other religions that depart from historical, Biblical Christianity tend to give glory to a leader or a group but not to God.

Faith in God gives glory to God.

3) Based on Abraham's faith...

The object of your faith is more important than the amount of your faith.

What you and Abraham have in common is justified by faith. Abraham's faith was in the promise of God. Your faith is in the finished work of Christ. Your faith is not in a dead Savior but a living Lord and King. Jesus was crucified and resurrected.

This is why all beliefs are not the same. A vague, general belief in God is not the same as a very specific belief that Jesus Christ was crucified and rose from the dead.

If you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. Romans 10:9

Home Group Discussion Questions

1. If God were to ask you: "Why should I let you into my heaven," what would you say?
2. How would you define faith? Has that definition changed through your reading Romans 4?
3. How do you experience the blessing of forgiveness? Are there things which cause you to forget or under-appreciate it?
4. Has this section in Romans on justification, changed how you see God? Has it changed how you think God sees you?