

Edgemont Bible Church

Romans 4:18-25

February 27, 2022

Intro:

XV. Salvation by Divine Power, Not Human Effort

A. An Analysis of Abraham's Faith - vs 18-21

1. An Astounding Faith

- a. Came from an idolatrous family - Josh 24:2
- b. his initial call - Gen 12:1-4
 - i. name meant father of many, though Childless, God promised descendants as numerous as the stars - Ge 12:2; 15:5
 - ii. When he arrived in Canaan, faced many trials
 - Famine - Ge 12:10 - a potentially hostile pharaoh - 12:14-20
 - conflict w/ nephew - 13:5-9 - struggle w/ fear - 15:1
- c. remained faithful
 - i. waited 40 years for the promised son
 - ii. Between his name and his effort to have a son with Hagar, everyone knew the problem
 - iii. More embarrassment when God changes his name to Abraham - father of many nations and says Sarah at 90 will have a son - Ge 17:5-8
- d. simple lessons for us
 - i. God's promises can only be fulfilled by God's power - Ga 4:21-23
 - ii. Legalistic human effort leads to bondage, freedom comes through Faith in a gracious God - Ga 4:24-28

2. Seven Key Characteristics of Abraham's faith

- a. who, contrary to hope, in hope believed, - vs 18
 - i. hope - *elpis* - expectation or confidence:--faith, hope. Believing in what God has said will happen in the future, when there is no human reason to think it could happen
 - ii. His hope was in God's word - according to what was spoken, "So shall your descendants be." - Ge 15:5
 - iii. His Hope - so that he (Abraham) became the father of many nations,
- b. not being weak in faith, - vs 19
 - i. weak - *astheneo* - to be feeble (in any sense):--be diseased, impotent folk (man), (be) sick, (be, be made) weak.
 - ii. to be weak in faith is to allow doubt to cloud and undermine belief
- c. Didn't get discouraged by understood truth or natural weakness
 - i. he did not consider his own body, already dead (since he was about a hundred years old), - he no longer had the capacity to procreate
 - ii. Believed truth - God, who gives life to the dead and calls those things which do not exist as though they did; Ro 4:17b
 - iii. Noah had similar faith - Heb 11:7; 2 Pe 2:5
- d. When God says it will happen, things that make it impossible, are non-factors
 - i. and the deadness of Sarah's womb.
 - ii. God repeated the promise twice - Ge 18:10-14
 - iii. God foretold that His covenant would be with Isaac - Ge 17:21
- e. He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief,
 - i. wavering between faith and doubt, being unstable - Jas 1:6-8
 - ii. From human perspective,

- Sarah waivered when she laughed - Ge 18:12
- Abraham was fearful - Ge 15:1-3
- iii. Struggling faith is not the same as doubt
 - Sarah - Heb 11:11
 - Abraham - Ge 15:4-6
 - when tested, both were “strengthened in faith” - ***endunamoo*** - to empower:--enable, (increase in) strength(-en), be (make) strong.
- f. The character of real faith - “giving glory to God”
 - i. b/c of what happens in salvation - new heart, new spirit, The Spirit of God living in this new person, faith will show itself! - 1 jo 5:10
 - ii. A contrast t the natural man that doesn’t - Ro 1:21
- g. being fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform.
 - i. Abraham’s faith was complete and unqualified - Gen 22; Heb 11:19
 - ii. Fully persuaded - ***plerophoreo*** - to carry out fully (in evidence), completely assure (or convince), entirely accomplish:--most surely believe, fully know (persuade), make full proof of.

B. The Result of Abraham’s Faith - vs 22

1. And therefore "it was accounted to him for righteousness."
2. The Gospel of God - Ro 1:1; 2 Cor 5:21
 - a. God takes the faith that He enables a person to possess
 - b. God counts that faith as divine righteousness on the sinner’s behalf

C. An Application of Abraham’s Faith - vs 23-25

1. it was not written for his sake alone that it was imputed to him, but also for us. - Ro 15:4; 1Co 10:6,11
 - a. no scripture is just for the time that it was written - Ps 78:5-7; Ro 15:4
 - b. when one honestly looks at Abraham’s life, perfect divine righteousness was not earned - he lied, he acted from distrust,
2. It shall be imputed to us who believe in Him
 - a. faith has always been God channel through which He has saved people - Heb 11:6
 - b. imputed - ***logizomai*** - to take an inventory, estimate, conclude, (ac-)count (of), esteem, impute, lay, number, reason, reckon, suppose, think (on).
3. Notice in Who/ what you are to have faith
 - a. Him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, - Ac 2:24; 13:30; Ro 10:9
 - b. the death was necessary - Ro 6:23; but w/o the resurrection,
 - i. faith is vain - 1Co 15:14, 17
 - ii. There is no power to live righteously - Ro 8:2,13
 - c. what the death and resurrection cover
 - i. who was delivered up because of our offenses, - Isa 53:5-6; Ro 8:32;
 - ii. and was raised because of our justification. - 2Co 5:21;
4. The result in our lives
 - a. faith and hope in God - 1Pe 1:21
 - b. might live for righteousness - 1 Pe 2:24
 - c. that He might bring us to God—1 Pe 3:18