

Simple Trusting Faith

2003023

Topic # 0279 (grace)

Introduction:

- A. Review of lessons thus far...
 - 1. Can there be any hope for me? What does God want from me? God has Spoken; Under Grace or Law?
 - B. What is faith?
 - 1. First there must be a **fact**. Something has to happen.
 - 2. Next...there must be a **witness**.
 - 3. Then...there has to be a **testimony**.
 - 4. Then...there comes faith.
 - C. A person believes the fact – but it is because one accepts the testimony.
 - 1. Rom. 10:17; Heb. 11:1; 6
 - 2. Faith is something you do. You believe.
 - 3. One accepts the testimony and on the basis of testimony one agrees to a fact he has not witnessed.
 - 4. example: One does not know – but there are capable and qualified witnesses who have testified that heaven exists.
 - a) we accept testimony which was confirmed w/signs following.
 - D. So faith = based on testimony of credible witnesses to a fact we do not know but accept as true.
 - E. Just how important is faith?
- I. We are saved by faith. Romans 4**
- A. Rom 1-3 – Paul indicts all men as having **sinned** and thus worthy of **condemnation**. Jew/Gentile!
 - B. Rom 4 – Paul explodes the myth that salvation can be obtained on basis of **works** alone.
 - 1. 4:1-4 – context demands “justification by works” means one is free of guilt on basis of one's own deeds.
 - a) remember “justified” means to be *declared free of guilt*.
 - b) If justified by works alone – means one has not **sinned**.
 - 2. impossible! 1 John 1:5-10; Rom. 3:9-18; 23; 6:23-24
 - 3. since all have sinned – how can one be made free of guilt?
 - a) forgiveness through Jesus! **This is grace!**
 - C. 4:3 – faith credited to Abraham as **righteousness**.
 - 1. Greek: *logizomai*. This = accounting term. Means “to **record** or **count**.” (Thayer)
 - a) to take into account; to make account of.
 - 2. what is counted here? **Faith!** 4:3.
 - D. 4:4-5 – if accounted free of sin by works – then a person never sinned.

1. salvation would be **earned**; the reward would be given because God owes it.
2. 4:5 – “one who does not work.”
 - a) nullify **obedience**? Not hardly! This never implied **in any** passage!
 - b) Remember..subject here = justification. Not by law/works but by faith!
3. 4:5 – **God** is the one who justifies. (counts free of guilt.)
 - a) God can count someone who has been ungodly as “not guilty” of sin.
 - b) 4:5 – what’s being credited here? Faith!
4. 4:6-8 – These verses explain how God could count as free from sin someone who had been ungodly.
 - a) Abraham did not earn his salvation – he was not sin free.
 - b) He sinned – but there was something credited to him as righteousness – His faith!
 - c) His salvation was based on the fact of his faith in God’s ability to forgive him of sin.

II. Why did God forgive **Abraham** of his sins?

- A. Gen. 12:4 – Abraham = **75**. Leaves Haran – goes to land of promise.
 1. 16:16 – **86** when Ishmael born.
 2. Between 75 & 86 his **faith** first counted for righteousness. (Gen. 15:6)
- B. Next occasion where he told faith accounted for righteousness Rom 4:16-22.
 1. not the same occasion as in Gen. 15. Rom. 4:16-22 refers to Gen. 17:1-19 & the promise of a son through Sarah.
 - a) fulfilled in 21:1-8.
 2. Gen. 17:1 – Abraham = 99 years old. Rom. 4:22 says his **faith** accounted to him as righteousness.
- C. Next...righteousness is seen in Gen. 22 w/offering of **Isaac** on altar.
 1. bound his son – intended to take his life as sacrifice for God.
 2. Compare to Js. 2:21-23. These were **works** of **faith**.
 - a) how old Abraham at this occasion? Isaac prob. 15-16 years old.
 - b) So Abraham probably 115-120 years old.
- D. What the point?

III. Faith is not a **one-time** event.

- A. Rom. 4:1-4 – is not an “**experience** of faith.” Not a 1 time thing.
 1. Faith of Romans 4:1-4 started many years earlier. How? Heb. 11:8-10.
 2. Abraham believed God in Gen. 12 or else he would have never left Haran. Each time **Abraham believed God**. We’re not just talking about faith at one particular pt in his life.

3. It was a **life of faith** that was imputed to Him for righteousness.
 4. Abraham's **entire** life was based on obedience through faith.
- B. So when Paul teaches we are justified by faith – he does not speak of “faith only.”
- C. Justification only possible through a **life of faithfulness** to Jesus Christ!

IV. This involves simple, **trusting** faith.

- A. We must have a “saving faith” as Abraham did.
1. We believe in Jesus as the Savior of mankind.
 2. We recognize we are sinners in need of forgiveness.
 3. We are justified (made free of guilt) on the basis of **blood** of Christ – Rom. 5:6-10
 4. Jesus – **as our substitute** – died for our sins.
- B. Think about this principle as expressed by Robert Turner:
1. When we forgive someone – we have to take the punishment.
 - a) someone does you wrong. If you take ideal that you must be paid for whatever lost before the record is settled – this is not forgiveness.
 - b) True forgiveness is when one willing to “bear the cost” and say “I will just take the hurt.”
 - c) “You have hurt me – but I will take it; I forgive you.”
 2. Isn't this what God has done for us? We have sinned against **heaven!**
 3. Lk. 15:18, 21; Psa. 51:4; Gen. 39:9
 - a) final analysis: ALL sin is against **God** – our Creator!
- C. Sin is against God but God takes the beating in that He sent Jesus to die to pay the price for OUR **sin**.
1. When we begin to put our trust in Him – and submissively serve Him as best we can – we can begin to appreciate what it means to be saved by grace!
- D. Think! Saved by Grace!
1. God in His **mercy** gave Jesus to die on our behalf – through Him we receive forgiveness of sin.
 2. Now read Rom. 4:6-8 again.

Conclusion:

- A. If we want to understand justification look to the scriptures telling us what we must do for remission of sin.
1. When we find out God's plan – then can one see God's grace.
- B. God calls upon you to submit (truly give yourself) to Him.
1. starts w/repentance.
 2. Continues w/confession
 3. God calls upon you to humbly & penitently come to be buried w/Him in Baptism for remission of sin.
 4. righteousness becomes ours when sin is removed.

5. After baptism our former sins have been removed.
- C. What about after this – never sin again? Certainly not!
 1. approach God; acknowledge sin; plead for mercy
 2. ask sins to be forgiven in Jesus' name.
- D. What about you? Wished to be saved by grace of God? Obey the gospel!
- E. If you once trusted in Christ – but have allowed love to grow cold – repent & pray & ask God to help you.
- F. INVITATION