

Romans 4:17–25

¹⁷ (as it is written, “I have made you a father of many nations”) in the presence of Him whom he believed—God, who gives life to the dead and calls those things which do not exist as though they did;

¹⁸ who, contrary to hope, in hope believed, so that he became the father of many nations, according to what was spoken, “So shall your descendants be.”

¹⁹ And not being weak in faith, he did not consider his own body, already dead (since he was about a hundred years old), and the deadness of Sarah’s womb.

²⁰ He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God,

²¹ and being fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform.

²² And therefore “it was accounted to him for righteousness.”

²³ Now it was not written for his sake alone that it was imputed to him,

²⁴ but also for us. It shall be imputed to us who believe in Him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead,

²⁵ who was delivered up because of our offenses, and was raised because of our justification.

Abraham’s Faith Romans 4:17-25

INTRO:

What is faith? A simple question but difficult to answer. The writer of Hebrews gave us a functional definition that focused on the promises of God. ***“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen”*** (Hebrews 11:1). From this we understand faith lays hold of the promise of God and allows us to see the unseen reality.

In our study in **Hebrews 11**, we skipped the reference to Sarah’s faith in **verses 11-12**. The faith in focus in these verses is the faith Paul described in **Romans 4**. Paul wrote in our text in **Romans 4**, Paul showed us Abraham’s faith in action. Abraham’s faith made him trust in God, and in His promise in the face of contrary evidence he could see.

I. The Person Whom Abraham Trusted (v. 17)

II. What This Trust Looked Like (v. 18-22)

III. What This Teaches Us about Saving Faith (v. 23-25)

I. The Person Whom Abraham Trusted (v. 17)

Romans 4:17 *“(As it is written, ‘I have made you a father of many nations’) in the presence of Him whom he believed—God, who gives life to the dead and calls those things which do not exist as though they did”*

A. Faith always has an object. Faith never exists on its own. Faith must have an object. The Greek word translated faith means *“to trust and to be faithful.”* If you are going to trust or be faithful it has to be to someone or something. Abraham’s faith was in God, Himself. Without an object faith cannot exist.

B. Our text says Abraham believed in the promise. God promised He would make Abraham the father of many nations before he had any children at all. So, he trusted that God would keep His promise specifically because Abraham trusted the God Who made the promise.

B. He trusted God because Abraham knew two realities about our God.

v.17 *“God, who gives life to the dead and calls those things which do not exist as though they did.”*

God give life to the dead. God calls things into existence things that do not yet exist.

II. What This Trust Looked Like (v. 18-22)

Romans 4:18-22 *“[Abraham] who, contrary to hope, in hope believed, so that he became the father of many nations, according to what was spoken, “So shall your descendants be.” And not being weak in faith, he did not consider his own body, already dead (since he was about a hundred years old), and the deadness of Sarah’s womb. He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God, and being fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform. And therefore ‘it was accounted to him for righteousness.’”*

A. Abraham’s belief and trust in God was not weakened by the circumstances. Paul wrote Abraham’s faith was not weakened by the circumstances of his age and Sarah’s bareness because he knew God called life from the dead, and that God called into existence things that did not exist into existence. Because of who God is he did not waver in his commitment to God.

B. The result of Abraham’s faith was strengthened. As he walked with God and obeyed God and experienced God’s working in his life, his faith was strengthened and he glorified God. Here is the definition of Abraham’s trust in the faithfulness of God.

v.21 *“[Abraham was] fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform.”*

C. Second, Abraham's faith was accounted to him for righteousness. This is why Paul explored the example of Abraham's faith. The point is justification, God declaring us as righteous is all of faith and not of works.

D. Does this imply that salvation faith makes no difference in our lives? No. The writer to the Hebrews documented this in **Hebrews 11**, this is a chapter of the testimonies of folks who acted because of their faith in God. One more text to show this. In **1 Peter 1:8-9** it says, ***"Whom (the Lord Jesus) having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, receiving the end of your faith—the salvation of your souls."***

Our saving trust in the Lord Jesus includes the aspect of growing love and commitment to Him.

III. What This Teaches Us about Saving Faith (v. 23-25)

Romans 4:23-25 ***"Now it was not written for his sake alone that it was imputed to him, but also for us. It (righteousness) shall be imputed to us who believe in Him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, Who was delivered up because of our offenses, and was raised because of our justification."***

A. The Apostle Paul himself wrote the application. Saving faith is like Abraham's faith. It is a trust in the promise of God for salvation. Because it is a trust in God Himself. We also believe that God can bring life from the dead because He raised the Lord Jesus Christ from the dead. If we trust God, we believe He raised Jesus from the dead, He will impute righteousness to our account.

B. Our faith includes the knowledge of the fact that Jesus died because of our sins and He arose for our justification.

C. What about our trust?

1. We sometimes worry we do not have enough faith as if faith were flour or milk. We may think, *"We need a cup of faith to be saved and I can only wring 7/8 cups of faith out of my soul."* While faith can grow and increase the important thing is that we believe and are saved. Paul did not write in **Romans 10:9** ***"That if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe (with one cup of faith) in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved."*** He wrote ***"believe in your heart."*** In other words, trust in God, who called the dead to life, that He has raised Christ from the dead. This implies strongly a committing ourselves to the truth of salvation. Christ alone can save us and we must trust Christ alone.

2. Keep in mind the Scriptures also warn us to make sure we believe

2 Corinthians 13:5 *“Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you are disqualified.”*

It is good to do a check of our faith.

Hymn #210 Jesus Paid It All