

NOT ASHAMED OF THE GOSPEL

— A Study of Romans —

Lesson Eight


Romans 4:13-25

*No unbelief made him waver concerning the promise of God,
but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God,
fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised.*

Romans 4:20-21

Day 1

Pray:



Father, help me by your Holy Spirit to understand what your word is saying. Give me insight into these truths that will affect my thinking and my heart.

Read: Romans 4:13-25. Read it again in another translation such as NLT.

Observe:

- Write key words and themes, repeated words, or phrases. Circle on your Scripture pages any transition words (therefore, but, because, if/then etc.)
- Are there any commands to be obeyed, or truths to be trusted?
- What questions do you have about the text?

Day 2- Romans 4:13-15

1. What was the promise God made to Abraham according to verse 13?
 - a. Look back to verse 11. Who are the offspring of Abraham that the promise includes?
 - b. In the first section of chapter 4 we saw that justification did not come through works, or through circumcision. How did the promise come to Abraham and his offspring according to verse 13?

Digging Deeper

Genesis 12 records the promise that God made to Abraham (aprx.10-14 years before God gave him the sign of circumcision). How do the passages below help us understand what it means that Abraham and his offspring will inherit the world?

Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed." Genesis 12:1-3

[Jesus speaking] *Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.* Matthew 5:5

²¹ So don't boast about following a particular human leader. For everything belongs to you— ²² whether Paul or Apollos or Peter, or the world, or life and death, or the present and the future. Everything belongs to you, ²³ and you belong to Christ, and Christ belongs to God. 1 Corinthians 3:21-23 (NLT)

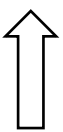
Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, ¹⁰ nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. ¹¹ And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God. 1 Corinthians 6:9-11

2. What would make faith useless and the promise invalid according to verse 14?

Picture and Ponder

"Law and promise belong to different categories of thought, which are incompatible. Law-language ('you shall') demands our obedience, but promise-language ('I will') demands our faith. What God said to Abraham was not 'Obey this law and I will bless you', but 'I will bless you; believe my promise!'"¹

3. What is the only thing the law can bring us according to verse 15? (Read this verse in the NLT)
 - a. What would happen to us if the promise depended on obeying the law?



Thank you God that I don't have to earn your promise—something I could never do!

Day 3- Romans 4:16-17

For Discussion

Verse 16 tells us that God's promise to Abraham and to us is based on grace (the undeserved favor of God for those who deserve wrath) and depends on faith. Why does grace have to be received by faith?

1. In verse 17 we see that God promised to make Abraham the father of many nations—not just the Jewish nation. How did God fulfill that promise according to the end of verse 16?
 - a. Why is this important?

2. In the second part of verse 17 we find what Abraham's faith was based on. *God... who gives life to the dead, and calls into existence the things that do not exist.* What examples do you know of: (List Bible references if you can.)
 - a. God giving life to the dead-

 - b. God calling into existence things that do not exist-

Digging Deeper

Read the verses below to help you see what attribute of God is revealed in the truths of Romans 4:17 (God giving life to the dead and God calling into existence things that do not exist.) How does this attribute relate to promise keeping?

'Ah, Lord GOD! It is you who have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and by your outstretched arm! Nothing is too hard for you. Jeremiah 32:17

*I also pray that you will understand the incredible greatness of God's power for us who believe him. This is the same mighty power that raised Christ from the dead and seated him in the place of honor at God's right hand in the heavenly realms...
Ephesians 1:19-20 (NLT)*



The author of Hebrews also points us to our powerful, promise-keeping God:

So when God desired to show more convincingly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeable character of his purpose, he guaranteed it with an oath, so that by two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement to hold fast to the hope set before us. We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters into the inner place behind the curtain, where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf... Hebrews 6:17-20a

◆ What do you learn about God from these verses in Hebrews?

◆ What encouragement do you find here?

Day 4- Romans 4:18-21

1. What were the obstacles standing in the way of God's promise (v.18) according to verse 19?

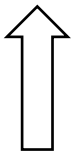
For Discussion

Verse 20 tells us that Abraham's faith grew strong as he gave glory to God. What does it mean to give glory to God? Why does that strengthen faith?



One way we can strengthen our faith in cooperation with the Holy Spirit is to ask yourself in every situation: how can I glorify God in this?

◆ How can you glorify God in a situation you are facing this week?



Lord, giving you glory is good for my heart! Help me in every situation to turn to you in trust, shining a light on who you are and what you have done.

Picture and Ponder

"God-glorifying faith is a future-oriented confidence in God's integrity and power and wisdom to follow through on all his promises."²

2. What reality was more pertinent to Abraham than the physical realities he faced, according to verse 21?
3. What are all the ways Abraham's faith is described in verses 18, 19, 20 and 21?



Thankfully we know more of the story of Abraham's life, and we know that his faith was not always strong. Like us, Abraham didn't always trust God perfectly. But our faith is not a work that earns us God's promise. When we fail to trust God completely, it is he who keeps us from stumbling (Jude 24-25). Paul characterizes Abraham's faith as not wavering, because even when Abraham was perplexed or putting his own plan to work in place of God's, he kept turning back to God in trust for answers and help.

- ◆ What promises of God do you struggle to believe right now?

- ◆ What earthly obstacles to this promise are taking up your thoughts and consuming your vision?

- ◆ *For all of God's promises have been fulfilled in Christ with a resounding "Yes!" And through Christ, our "Amen" (which means "Yes") ascends to God for his glory. 2 Corinthians 1:20 (NLT) Meditate on this verse and thank Jesus for making you an heir of God's promises.*

Picture and Ponder

"The life of faith is not the perfect life; it is the life which clings on to what God has said he will do, and which sees struggles, joys and failures as means of increasing our attachment to the God who makes and keeps his promises."³

Day 5- Romans 4:22-25

1. Look back to verse 21. Why was Abraham's faith counted to him as righteousness?

2. Abraham was counted righteous because his faith was in the promise of a descendant through whom the world would be blessed. We are heirs of that promise. How is righteousness counted to us according to verse 24 and 25?

3. Write out verse 25.

Jesus our Lord _____

b. According to verse 25, why did Jesus die?

c. What did his resurrection accomplish?



Abraham's faith was counted to him as righteousness because his faith was wholly in God. It wasn't that Abraham's faith was so big and beautiful and steadfast. It was that his faith was in God—who is so big and beautiful and steadfast. He believed what God told him when it looked impossible—when humanly speaking it was impossible. The faith that is counted as righteousness depends on God's saving promise and nothing else.

◆ Why does this kind of faith not depend on feelings? How does this help you?

◆ What do we do when our feelings are overwhelming our faith?

Picture and Ponder

"Any link to Christ in trust is sufficient; the power of faith is in its object."⁴

One Thing:

What is one thing from this week's study that God has impressed on your heart, or convicted you about; is there something new that you learned or is there a verse you want to ponder and meditate on?

Praise God for this and thank him for the work he is doing in your life. Ask him to help you remember this and live it out for his glory.

¹ Stott, John R.W. The Message of Romans. P.131. Intervarsity Press USA

² Piper, John. Article: Faith for the Impossible. June 3, 2023 <https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/faith-for-the-impossible>

³ Keller, Timothy. Romans 1-7 For You: For reading, for feeding, for leading (God's Word For You - Romans Series) (p. 113). The Good Book Company. Kindle Edition.

⁴ Kruger, Michael. <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/course/study-romans-kruger/#romans-5>

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