

ABRAHAM: FATHER OF THE FAITHFUL

Introduction – Whether we had knowledge of the Bible (Law) or not, we have all rebelled against God's will for us and are without excuse. Abraham is the model of how God as our judge declares us not guilty (justified) by faith in God's promises of undeserved favor (grace).

A. The Bible is primarily the story of God and not rules from God.

Romans 4:1-5

1. Genesis 12-14 – The promises and call of God and the response of the Gentile Abraham.
2. *Abram believed the Lord and he credited it to him as righteousness.... On that day the Lord made a covenant with Abram...* (Genesis 15:6, 18a).

B. Before and after circumcision people were justified by faith in God's gracious promises.

Romans 4:6-12

1. The king of the covenant people, David, needed his sins not counted against him and righteousness credited by faith just like Gentile Abraham.
2. Genesis 16 – Abraham and Sarah try by human effort alone (works) to have a promised child through Hagar.
3. Genesis 17 – Abraham was given circumcision as a sign of the covenant. *...walking in the footsteps of the faith that our father Abraham had before he was circumcised* (Romans 4:12).

C. We all have One Creator Father and one human spiritual father.

Romans 4:13-17

1. The Bible cannot save us, but it can point us to the God that can.
2. Our faith is not in a higher power or some superior being. It is in the Creator God revealed in the Bible who gives life to the dead and creates things out of nothing by his Word.

D. Our hope and trust are in the God who does the humanly impossible against all odds.

Romans 4:18-25

Conclusion – We are not under the rule of Law which causes fear or foolish pride. We are people of faith in the God who calls us to obedient worship. *Therefore I urge you brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God ,which is your spiritual act of worship* (Romans 12:1).

Discussion Questions

1. What does Abraham's example tell us about human failure and faith?
2. What kind of faith does Abraham model?
3. Romans makes the point clear that we are not saved by human effort or the works of the Law. How do you reconcile this with what is taught in James 2:20-24?