

Studies In Romans

(Romans 4:1-25)

1. What was Abraham counted unto righteousness for?

Faith: *“(1) What shall we say then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found? (2) For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God. (3) For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness” (Romans 4:1-3).*

- We should start this chapter by being clear that we are NOT saved by faith alone (**James 2:14-26**). The point Paul is having to make, because of the disconnect between the Jews and Gentiles in Rome, is that works alone will not save someone.
- In regard to the flesh, Abraham is the father of Jews (**Acts 13:23-26**). Yet, that alone means nothing for the salvation of the Jews (**Luke 3:8**).
- Abraham is a spiritual father of all Christians (**Galatians 3:26-29**).
- If Abraham were justified through his own works, then he would glory in himself not in God. That is why we must all remember that without grace, no one could be saved (**Ephesians 2:1-10**). No flesh should glory in the presence of God (**I Corinthians 1:29**).
- The Scriptures say Abraham believed and it counted to him for righteousness (**Genesis 15:1-6**; cf. **Galatians 3:6** and **James 2:23**).

2. If works alone could save us, what would that mean about grace?

It would mean we paid our own debts and grace had no place in our salvation: *“Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt” (Romans 4:4).*

- You or I cannot save ourselves. All of humanity needs the grace of God through Jesus Christ to be saved (**John 1:17**, **Acts 15:11**, **Ephesians 2:11-12**, and **II Timothy 1:9**).
- The Law of Moses didn't offer salvation, which comes through Christ (**Acts 13:33-39**).
- To be clear, that doesn't mean we have no part in our own salvation (**Acts 2:40** and **Philippians 2:12**).
- If we could pay the debt, grace would not be grace (**Romans 11:6**).

3. Are you blessed when you try to work your way to Heaven or when you believe in God's forgiveness?

When you believe in Him that justifies the ungodly: *“(5) But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. (6) Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, (7) Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. (8) Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin [*quoted from Psalms 32:1-2]” (Romans 4:5-8).*

- **Romans 1:17**, **Romans 3:22**, **Galatians 2:16-17**, and **I Timothy 1:13-15**.

4. Was the promise to Abraham made to him before or after circumcision?

BEFORE: *“(9) Cometh this blessedness then upon the circumcision only, or upon the uncircumcision also? for we say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness. (10) How was it then reckoned? when he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision. (11) And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also: (12) And the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had being yet uncircumcised” (Romans 4:9-12).*

- Not just on the circumcision (**Romans 3:1-30, Galatians 3:14, Colossians 3:10-11, and Titus 2:11-14**).
- The promise was made BEFORE Abraham was circumcised and before circumcision was practiced (**Genesis 17:9-14**).
- Our part is to follow in his steps of faith and obedience (cf. **Hebrews 11:6; 8-19**).

5. Was the promise to Abraham made through the law or through the righteousness of faith?

The righteousness of faith: *“(13) For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. (14) For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect: (15) Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there is no transgression. (16) Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all” (Romans 4:13-16).*

- Not of the law (**Galatians 3:16-18**).
- The promise was for all nations to be blessed (**Genesis 22:18**). If the Law of Moses, which was for the Jews, fulfilled that promise the promise was false for only the Jews would have been blessed.
- Sin is transgression of the law (**I John 3:4**).
- Now, we are under the Law of Liberty (**James 1:25 and James 2:10-12**).
- Of faith (**Romans 3:24-26**) by grace (**Titus 3:7**).

6. Even when a promise was made to Abraham, against all hope, did he stagger at the promise of God?

No, he was fully persuaded that God could perform what He promised: *“(17) (As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were. (18) Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations; according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be. (19) And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sara's womb: (20) He staggered not at the promise*

of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; (21) And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform” (Romans 4:17-21).

- Father of many nations (**Genesis 17:4-5**).
- Abraham was old when he was told he’d have a child and bring about the promises God made. It was laughable (**Genesis 17:17** and **Genesis 18:11-14**). At some point though, they had faith enough to have God’s promise come true (**Hebrews 11:11**).
- We should all have enough faith in what God says not to stagger (**Psalms 115:3**, **Jeremiah 32:26-27**, and **Titus 1:2**), but to stand strong (**Isaiah 35:4** and **I Corinthians 16:13**).

7. Was the fact that it was imputed to Abraham for righteousness written for his sake alone? No, for ours as well: *“(22) And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness. (23) Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; (24) But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead” (Romans 4:22-24).*

- These things are recorded for our sakes (**Romans 15:4**, **I Corinthians 10:1-12**, and **II Timothy 3:15-17**).
- For those promises to be counted to us our faith must be in God who raised up our Savior from the dead (**Ephesians 1:18-20**).

8. For whom was Jesus delivered to death and why was He raised again?

He was delivered for our offences and raised for our justification: *“(24) But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; (25) Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification” (Romans 4:24-25).*

- **Matthew 20:28**, **I Corinthians 15:3-4**, **Galatians 1:4**, **Galatians 3:13**, **Ephesians 5:2**, **I Peter 1:18-19**, **I Peter 3:18**, and **I John 4:9-10**.