

Introduction: Overview of chapter four.

- In verses 1-8, Paul shows that “Abrahams faith for righteousness” is such that by its very nature is excluding of any appeal to works.
- Next in verses 9-12, Paul contrasts circumcision versus uncircumcision regarding “Abrahams faith for righteousness” as something that occurred before he was circumcised, thereby enabling him to become the ‘father’ of both Jewish and Gentile believers.
- In 13-22, Paul takes the same concern as in 8-12 only this time he uses it stress that Abraham would be the father of ‘many nations’ or ‘all the seed.’
- At the end of verse 22 Paul returns to Romans 4:3/ Gen 15:6/Ro 4:6, he does this to apply the lessons learned that he has drawn from in chapter four.
- Again, in chapter four Paul expounds on the theme he introduces in 3:27-30.

I. What Abraham Has To Say vss 1-8 – Paul’s argument has four stages.

- A. Stage one: in verse 1-2 Paul establishes that it was no different for Abraham. He appeals to the Father of the Jewish faith in order to make a point: Abraham had nothing to boast about considering his works. His righteousness came by faith alone too!
1. In typical Paul fashion, he uses a rhetorical question to introduce his subject.
 2. “The flow of thought may be paraphrased: *“What shall we say about Abraham? For if we say he was justified by works, he has reason to boast, and my claim in 3:27-28 that all boasting is excluded is called into question.”* Moo, D. J. (1996). NICNT Romans (p. 260). Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.
 3. Jewish interpretation said, Abraham was justified by his works of obedience. Paul corrects that understanding by quoting Gen. 15:6
- B. Stage Two: in verse three, Paul cites the scriptural evidence for Abrahams justification by faith. *“And Abram believed the Lord, and the Lord counted him as righteous because of his faith.”* (Genesis 15:6, NLT)
1. It is the first time that believe is used in the scripture.
 2. And it is done so in connection with righteousness!
- C. Stage three: Verses 4-5 shows this to be a gracious act of God that cannot be based on works or performance.
1. Paul draws out two theological consequences from what he has just shared. One, works have no part in justification. Two, this is so because God’s justifying work is not earned but freely given.
 2. The faith that gained Abraham righteousness excluded works. This is the practical application of these verses.
- D. Stage four: Verses 6-8 confirm God’s reckoning of our sin through forgiveness whereby we are made clean.
1. Paul again is exclude works from justification by faith.

2. David is quoted from Ps 32:1-2, he speaks both of forgiveness and of cleansing.
3. The reason is obvious that Paul connects Ps 32:1-2 with Gen 15:6: Forgiveness, cleansing, righteousness!
 - a) Forgiveness of sin is a basic component of justification by faith.
 - b) It changes a persons relationship with God. They are acquitted and not condemned!
 - c) Paul concludes this thought or answer to the question: What did Abraham discover that made him right with God?...justification by faith alone.

II. Is This Just For the Jews? 9-12

A. Faith *alone*–

1. apart from works (4:3-8),
2. apart from circumcision (4:9-12)–
3. is sufficient to gain entrance into Abraham’s spiritual “family.” The circumstance allows Paul to claim Abraham the father of all believers since he become father of many nations before he is circumcised.

B. Abraham’s faith “is reckoned for righteousness” when God promised him a son (Gen. 15); but it is not until much later—twenty-nine years, according to the rabbis—that he is circumcised (Gen. 17) Moo, D. J. (1996). NICNT Romans (p. 268). Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.

1. Circumcision thus becomes the sign of righteousness by faith
2. And it becomes the sign of the covenant.
3. Everything in Abrahams experience with God come from Gen 15:6 Justification by faith.
4. vs 12 Paul once again emphasizes the faith that the Jew imitate in Abraham was there before circumcision therefore do not put your faith in the work but in God who justifies!

III. Faith, Promise and The Law 13-22

A. The theme of the promise run throughout this section with the emphasis remaining on Abrahams faith. Paul binds these two thought together.

1. The promise shows up for the first time in this letter.
2. It is used 4 times as a noun and two times as a verb. Thus giving significance to its usage in this section.
3. Paul also, once again, claims the gentiles right to the promise by faith.
4. The promise also comes hundreds of years before the law. Therefore inclusive of all people.

B. In vs 14-15 Paul looks at the negative side of the law. In 16 and following Paul focuses on the positive once again, “The Just shall live by faith.”

1. The relationship of faith and grace stands out again in this verse. Promise is given as a free gift through faith. NLT.

2. And it to all a free gift. You do not need to be Jew or under the law. Mans part is faith, and Gods part is grace.
 3. vs. 17 God calls those things that are not...nation...as though they were.
 4. vs 18 against the hope of man, Abraham in hope believed God. GOT HOPE!
- C. It is Abraham's conviction that God is fully able to do whatever he promised that enabled his faith to overcome the obstacle of the tangible and visible "facts." Moo, D. J. (1996). NICNT Romans (p. 286). Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.
1. Vs. 22 "Wherefore", brings Paul's argument of this section to a conclusion.
 2. We are now directed back to Romans 4:3
- D. All of the discussion of chapter four was for our benefit.
1. We as Christians share the same as Abraham a righteousness that is by faith.
 2. A faith in Christ whom God raised from the dead.
 3. A faith that gives us access to grace.

Conclusion:

- The Summary: "*He was handed over to die because of our sins, and he was raised to life to make us right with God.*" (Romans 4:25, NLT) He died for us. Was raised. To make us right with God.