

Faith is Foundational # 14

Romans 4: 18-25

As we have moved through the fourth chapter of Romans, Paul establishes the foundational truth of salvation by faith. Many sought acceptance through works and keeping the law. They looked to Abraham as the father of their faith as one great example.

Paul uses Abraham to soundly establish the truth of salvation by faith in Christ alone. Certainly Abraham was a man of works, but his works and obedience followed faith. This is clearly seen by the example we read in the life of Abraham in our text today. Faith is foundational; it is totally essential to salvation and a right relationship with the Lord. Abraham was prepared to offer Isaac, the promised son whom he had waited 25 years to receive. The willingness to offer Isaac as a sacrifice unto the Lord could not have been approached apart from faith.

The great example of Abraham's faith supports the doctrine of salvation by faith alone. His great faith stands as a testimony and motivation for faith in others. I want to examine the **certainties** Paul discloses in the life of Abraham as we consider: [Faith is Foundational](#).

I. The Measure of Abraham's Faith (18-22) – Here Paul discusses the great measure of faith possessed by Abraham. Notice:

A. The Challenge (18a) – [Who against hope believed in hope](#). This reveals a simple truth that is easily expressed, but difficult to manage. Even when it seemed all hope was lost, Abraham maintained hope and faith in the Lord. His life faced many challenges. There were times when it seemed he would never see the promises of God fulfilled. The wait for Isaac was long and difficult. Sarah had moments of doubt that must've weighed heavy on Abraham. Then, once Isaac was born and they had worked to raise him, God asked Abraham to take him to the mountain and offer him as a sacrifice unto the Lord. Even then, Abraham maintained faith.

- Biblical passages like these are in stark contradiction to the prosperity gospel many preach today. There will be times in the life of every believer when faith will be tried. There will be seasons when we reach the point of desperation, but we must never abandon hope and faith in the Lord. When it seems hope is gone, believe in hope and continue the faith!

B. The Commitment (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](#). Abraham chose to rise above the challenges and circumstances of life to remain committed to God. The Lord had promised a son. He had promised a great nation through Isaac. There were many times when it seemed the

promises would fail, but Abraham refused to give up. He chose to believe God more than the circumstances he faced.

- The world would have us believe there is no sense in following the Lord. Circumstances of life often challenge our faith. It seems as times we are wandering aimlessly through, searching and waiting on the Lord to move in our midst. Our walk with the Lord and eternal existence is not governed by the circumstances we face. It was purchased by Christ on the cross. He fully satisfied the Father as He purchased our redemption. We must continue by faith. Circumstances didn't provide our salvation and they will never remove it! Even in the valley, we must press on by faith.

C. The Confidence (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:* As Abraham considered the circumstances of life, their ages would certainly have been considered. *Gen.17:17 – Then Abraham fell upon his face, and laughed, and said in his heart, Shall a child be born unto him that is an hundred years old? and shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear?* Child bearing at these ages was beyond human possibility, but Abraham chose to trust God and believe by faith rather than doubt because of circumstances or human reality. He was confident that God would fulfill His promises, even though it was humanly impossible. God isn't bound by our limitations!

- This type of confidence can only be obtained through faith. Outward circumstances and human abilities often reveal impossibility, but with God all things are possible. If God can allow those near 100 years of age to bear a child, surely He can supply our needs. We must trust God by faith to deliver, even though it seems impossible. We must continue to follow Him regardless of circumstances, fully trusting in His power!

D. The Consecration (20) – *He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God;* Imagine waiting for 25 years for Isaac to be born. Then imagine getting to know him for a number of years, anticipating what God will do through Isaac, and then being asked to offer him as a sacrifice unto the Lord. This would have been a difficult life to live. Doubt and fear would have been evident at times. However Abraham did not waver. That is not to say he never wondered, that he never doubted, but he refused to allow his doubt and fear to overcome his faith. Abraham chose to believe God even when it seemed the promise would never be fulfilled. He lived a life of faith that honored God and glorified Him. The only way this was possible was through obedience to the Lord by faith. Abraham trusted God more on Mount Moriah as he prepared to offer Isaac than he did when he left the land of Ur. God had promised a son and a great nation, and Abraham refused to let go of that promise!

- Storms and trials are never enjoyable, but they are beneficial. Through the difficulties of life we learn to fully trust in the Lord. God uses times of testing for our benefit. They create dependence on Him and remove the hindrances in our lives. Those who are faithful to God through the storms of life will be closer to Him and reflect His image greater than those who have never faced difficulties or those who abandon their faith in the midst of trials. We must learn to view our struggles as an opportunity to grow in the Lord through faith.

E. The Comfort (21) – [And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform.](#) For years it seemed Isaac would never come. When he finally did, Abraham was asked to offer him unto the Lord. The world would say it was hopeless, that there would never be a mighty people through Abraham. However, Abraham was fully confident in the Lord. He had learned to trust God regardless of circumstances. He knew God was able to provide according to His divine will. God had provided the promised son, and even if he died upon the altar at Mount Moriah, Abraham knew God was able to raise him from the dead. [Heb.11:17-19 – By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son,](#) ^[18] [Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called:](#) ^[19] [Accounting that God *was* able to raise *him* up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.](#) As Abraham ascended the mountain, knowing the work he must do, he was comforted greatly by faith.

- Circumstances of life do not have to determine our existence. The children of God have a source of strength, comfort, and hope that exceeds anything we could face. We are assured eternal life through Christ, and nothing in this world can prevent that! [Philip.1:6 – Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform *it* until the day of Jesus Christ:](#)

F. The Consummation (22) – [And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness.](#) Paul sums up the benefit and outcome of Abraham's faith. God imputed, *gave*, righteousness to Abraham through faith. His works would never have achieved being considered righteous in the eyes of God, but his faith in the Lord secured righteousness. Walking by faith provided great benefit in his life that would last throughout eternity.

- The world says work, stay busy, do something to obtain God's favor. God says trust the finished work of Christ by faith. Our salvation is not based on our works or merit, but in believing in the sacrificial atonement of Christ by faith. Walking by faith at times seems lonely without immediate benefit, but it is the only way to please God and obtain His favor in salvation!

II. The Motivation of Abraham's Faith (23-25) – The faith Abraham displayed in life was not buried with him. His faith continues to motivate others. Consider:

A. The Testimony (23) – *Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him;* The righteousness of Abraham, obtained through faith, was not recorded in Scripture for his benefit alone. It was recorded to bear witness of the saving faith of Christ. It was given to challenge and encourage others to follow the example of Abraham in trusting the Lord by faith. It has been thousands of years since Abraham lived upon this earth and his testimony of faith remains.

B. The Opportunity (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;* Imputed righteousness through faith was not reserved for Abraham alone. His faith secured righteousness. Abraham believed in the resurrecting power of God. Just as Abraham was counted righteous by faith, so shall all be who believe as he did. We must trust the Lord by faith to secure our salvation and righteousness before God.

C. The Consistency (25) – *Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.* Paul concludes his thoughts with an affirmation of salvation by faith in Christ alone. He bore our sin on the cross of Calvary, suffering the righteous judgment of God for our sin. He willingly gave His life for the sin of the world. He was placed in a borrowed tomb, but death and the grave couldn't hold Him. He came forth triumphant in life.

- That is the Gospel in a nutshell. Salvation is never obtained through works or the keeping of certain rituals or ordinances. It is obtained through faith in the finished work of Christ. If you can believe by faith that Christ died for your sin and rose from the dead, then you can be saved. This is the only way. There is no other means of salvation and eternal life. If you refuse to come to Christ by faith, you remain accountable for sin and condemned of God. Faith is essential, and it is all that is necessary for salvation!

Conclusion: The life of Abraham stands as a challenge for all to live by faith. We must trust the Lord regardless of circumstances. Faith in Christ secures righteousness. There is no other way.

Have you trusted in Christ by faith for salvation, or are you depending on works? Christian is your life being lived by faith in the Lord or are you seeking to resolve trials and burdens on your own. Faith is the only way of salvation and it is the only way to enjoy victory in life. If there are needs, seek the Lord by faith.