

Abraham

3-16-25

Hebrews 6:13–15 (ESV)

¹³ For when God made a promise to Abraham, since he had no one greater by whom to swear, he swore by himself, ¹⁴ saying, “Surely I will bless you and multiply you.” ¹⁵ And thus Abraham, having patiently waited, obtained the promise.

Back in Chapter 5:11, we were told that Hebrews had much to tell us that was hard to understand. Thus, we were encouraged to leave the milk and go to solid food. The rest of the book of Hebrews is presenting us solid food. Our solid food begins with Abraham, the man of faith. In this quote from Genesis 22:17, Abraham receives a promise from God and patiently waits for it. However, to help us understand Abraham’s faith, I would like to go back to Genesis 15:6 where the definition of Abraham’s saving faith is first presented.

Genesis 15:6 (ESV)

And he believed the LORD, and HE counted it to him as righteousness.

This verse is quoted 2 times in the NT to define saving faith and serves as the foundation for understanding faith in both the OT and NT.

The verb “counted” can be translated imputed. The occasion for this verse was when God told Abraham that he would have as many offspring as the stars in heaven. The Promise: Through Abraham there would be a worldwide people of God. We will see this is referring ultimately to Israel and the entire Christian church. Childless in his old age, Abraham still believed God and righteousness was given to him. Abraham is not described as doing righteousness, but having righteousness imputed to him because he believed. Belief alone brought Abraham into a proper relationship with God. This is the same faith, belief alone, that is necessary to receive Jesus as Savior. Some people erroneously teach that James 2:21 show that works were necessary for Abraham’s faith. They fail to recognize that James is only identifying the evidence of Abraham’s previously imputed righteousness. Therefore, Romans quotes Genesis 15:6 as a foundational teaching for saving faith.

Romans 4:3 (ESV)

Scripture says, “Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness.”

The faith of Abraham was declared 500 years before the Law was given to Moses. Solid Food: Faith has nothing to do with the Law.

Romans 4:14 (ESV)

For if it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void.

If our righteousness is based on keeping the Law, our faith is non-existent, or null and void.

Romans 4:15 (ESV)

For the law brings wrath, but where there is no law there is no transgression.

Solid Food:* Since the Law brings wrath, through Jesus, God has removed the Law and nailed it to the cross so it cannot be held against us. *O/H

Some may say, “Oh my goodness I need the Law, or I might go out and rob a bank.” But Jesus was not under the Law and HE wouldn’t rob a bank. Therefore, as a believer with Christ in us, indwelt by the Holy Spirit, we wouldn’t go out and rob a bank either. As a believer, hopefully, we wouldn’t even think about robbing a bank.

Without the Law we live by faith in relationship with God - as intended - just like Abraham. Thus, through faith, he becomes the father of us all. We are Abraham's offspring just as God promised.

Romans 4:16 (ESV)

That is why it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his offspring—who shares the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all.

We are Abraham's offspring adopted through faith in Jesus Christ. Promise: Only those who have a faith like Abraham experience the life of God.

Romans 4:17

This is God who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist.

Wallace: Churches under the Law spend all their time preaching rules trying to control people who don't know Jesus. Not us, we know Jesus.

Romans 4:21 (ESV)

With a faith like Abraham, we are fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised.

We hear HIM and we know HIM. The faith of Abraham is required for the church.

Romans 4:23–24 (ESV)

But the words “it was counted (imputed) to him” were not written for Abraham’s sake alone,²⁴ but for ours also. It will be “counted (imputed) to us” who believe in God who raised from the dead Jesus our Lord.

Believe God and receive righteousness. Through imputed righteousness we receive life. Salvation is more than forgiveness. It is the life of Christ in us.

Colossians 2:13 (NIV)

When you were dead, God made you alive!