

Living Connections Bible Study



Justifying the Ungodly

Prayer

Text: Romans 4:1-12

Prayer:

Icebreaker: Make a list of the ways people try to earn God’s favor to be forgiven and justified in order to gain entrance to Heaven someday?

1. What is the only way for sinners to be justified before God? Romans 3:22, 24, 26, 28, 30

2. What two Jewish patriarchs does Paul use to illustrate to legalistic Jews that justification has always been on the basis of faith? Romans 4:3, 6

The Jewish mindset was this: *Didn't the fact that Abraham obeyed and followed God, and was circumcised as a sign of the covenant God made with Him count towards his justification before God?*

3. What is the inferred answer to Paul's question in Romans 4:1, *What then shall we say that Abraham our father [the father of Jewish people] has found according to the flesh [his human effort]? Or we could ask *What advantage did Abraham gain before God through his own merit?**

4. What would be the human response if we could be justified by our works? Romans 4:2; Ephesians 2:8-9; Titus 3:5

Abraham had many good works, but his works sprang out of his faith and not out of an obligation to the law in a quest for justification. His works earned him nothing as far as justification is concerned

5. What authority does Paul use to prove that Abraham was justified by faith? And what authority should we use to defend the doctrine of justification by faith? Romans 4:3

6. What is the difference between saying, *Abraham believed in the Lord* [Genesis 15:6], and *Abraham believed God and it was accounted to him for righteousness?* Romans 4:3

When Abraham believed God, he did the one thing that a man can do without doing anything! God made the statement, the promise; and God undertook to fulfill it. Abraham believed in his heart that God told the truth. There was no effort here. Abraham's faith was not an act, but an attitude. His heart was turned completely away from himself to God and His promise. This left God free to fulfill that promise. Faith was neither a meritorious act by Abraham, nor a change of character or nature, in Abraham: he simply believed God would accomplish what He had promised. ~ William Newell

7. How are grace and works diametrically opposed to the other? Romans 4:4

8. For those who insist on earning God's favor through works what debt are we then obligated to pay? Romans 6:23

9. What is the condition and requirement of those who would receive the gift of God's righteousness applied to their account before God? Romans 4:5

10. How is justification by faith illustrated in the life of David? Romans 4:6-8; Psalm 32:1-5; Hebrews 9:26

11. Does the blessedness of forgiveness and justification that David rejoiced in belong only to the Jew who has taken the sign of circumcision? Or is it a gift to all who exercise faith in the promises of God? Romans 4:9

12. Did Abraham receive justification and the gift of righteousness before or after he was circumcised? Romans 4:10; Genesis 15:1-6; 17:1-14

13. **How was circumcision, the sign or symbol of Abraham's faith, similar to believers baptism today?
Romans 4:11**

Think about it this week:

What does it mean to walk in the steps of the faith which our father Abraham had before he was circumcised? Romans 4:12