Lesson 9 – Romans 4:1-15 Abraham was Justified by Faith
English Standard Version (ESV) Bethel Bible Resources

(1) What then shall we say was gained by Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh? For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about --- but not before God! For what does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness." (Genesis 15:6) Now to the one who works, his wages are not counted as a gift but his due.

(5) And to the one who does not work but *believes in Him who justifies the ungodly*, his faith is counted as righteousness, just as David also speaks of the one whom God counts righteousness apart from works:

(7) "Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, and whose sins are covered;
Blessed is the man against whom the Lord will not count his sin." (Psalm 32:1-2)

(9) Is this blessing then only for the circumcised, or also for the uncircumcised? For we say that faith was counted to Abraham as righteousness. How, then, was it counted to him? Was it before or after he had been circumcised? It was not after, but before he was circumcised. He received the sign of circumcision as a seal of the righteousness that he had *by faith* while he was still uncircumcised.

(11b) The purpose was to make him the father of ALL who believe without being circumcised, so that righteousness would be counted to them as well, and to make him the father of the circumcised *who are not merely circumcised but who also walk in the footsteps of the faith* that our father Abraham had before he was circumcised.

(13) For the promise to Abraham and his offspring that he would be heir of the world did not come through the Law but through the righteousness of faith. For if it is the adherents of the Law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. For the Law brings wrath, but where there is no law there is no transgression.

Think on These Things

1) What do you know about Abraham? See Genesis 11:31-12:5; 15:1-18 (esp. v.6); and 17:1-14. You can skim chapter headings from Genesis chapters 12-25 to see a bigger picture of his life.

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2) We learn an important truth from Romans 4:3. What is it?

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3) How can a person experience God's grace and kindness if it's not available to those who work hard to gain God's approval?

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4) In vs. 6-8, David uses the word "blessed" several times, which can also be translated as happy. What things in our relationship with the Lord can lead to our happiness and blessing?

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5) The intent of v.9 is to say, "Is this blessing only for the Jews (the circumcision)?" Paul answers this by pointing to Abraham. What came first, Abraham's circumcision or his faith? Review Genesis 15:6 and 17:9-12. What does this point prove?

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6) Therefore, Paul presents a new conclusion about Abraham being a father. Who is Abraham the father of? Review Genesis 17:3-5 and Romans 4:11.

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7) Have you noticed from today's scripture that righteousness comes only one way? Two paths for humanity are discussed. What are the two paths, and which one is shown as the correct way? Is Christianity unique in declaring this as God's truth?

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8) What does God's law bring to humanity? What do we not have if we do not have God's law?

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People and situations I want to pray for this week: