

Romans 4:1-25, In the Footsteps of Faith.

Romans reading tips:

- a) 'Justification' and 'Righteousness' sound complicated, but they're the same idea: being made 'just' or counted 'right', as before a judge.
- b) Grace and the 'gift' here are the same idea; in 4:4 and 4:16 we see the same Greek idea in “as a gift” and “by grace”.
- c) Circumcision is the sign of God's promise to Abraham: a mark upon the instrument that would fulfill the promise and therefore a constant reminder. As an inherited sign it separated 'Jew' from 'Gentile'.

How do you think people 'in culture' judge between 'good' and 'bad' people?

(What does it take to go from 'bad' to 'good'?)

Read Romans 4:1-3.

1. Paul introduces the idea of justification by works. Is that the right way to understand Abraham's righteousness?

Read Romans 4:4-8.

2. The David-quote comes from Psalm 32. Abraham trusted God's promise before the law was given. How was King David's situation the same / different to Abraham's?

3. In Psalm 32:10 the wicked are “surrounded by many woes”; who are the people that God shows favor to?

Read Romans 4:9-15.

4. Circumcision and the Sinai Law are the defining marks of Judaism. And Abraham is obviously the ultimate Jew, so of course he'd be “righteous”, right? Well ... is that how Paul views Abraham?

Read Romans 4:16-17.

5. It's easy to see how Abraham is *literally* the “father” of Israel. He was the grandfather of Jacob (a.k.a. 'Israel'), and Jacob was the father of the 12 patriarchs. But how is Abraham a “father of many nations”?

Read Romans 4:17-22.

6. v. 17 reminds us that Abraham trusted God who can raise the dead. How does that benefit Abraham & Sarah in v. 19-20?

Read Romans 4:23-25.

7. Abraham “trusted God”; what has God done so that those who trust him can be “counted righteous”?

8. How do those who follow in Abraham's footsteps relate to “good works”?

9. How does God view those who trust in Him? What does this mean for how we view ourselves and other Christians?

10. In 3:19-20 we see that the Law divides 'the righteous' from 'the unrighteous'. How does the example of Abraham divide 'the righteous' from 'the unrighteous'?