

ROMANS 15 – 4:1-8

Faith Without Works

1. 4:1-3

- a. The failure to rightly divide makes this chapter a battle ground (also James, Gal)
- b. Abraham and David represent the covenant heritage of God's people – Mat 1:1
- c. Paul uses scripture to remove this advantage - Mat 3:9, John 8:39, Rom 9:7
- d. *"to the flesh"* which was esteemed by Israel and dealt with in Rom 2:28, 3:20
- e. *"if ...by works"* – James says this very thing in James 2:17, 21-24
 - i. Paul is making the case that he was not – a clear difference
 - ii. Both are true in their context; the faith offered for obedience had changed
- f. The passages are different; do not try to change the verses as most do
 - i. Things changed in Abraham's own life Gen 12:3, 15:6, 17:14, see Gal 4:24
 - ii. The works here are his willing sacrifice of his son: Gen 22:1-19, Heb 11:19
 - iii. James didn't know how Gen 15 was fulfilled, for him it was a covenant
 - iv. God required works under the covenant – Lev 18:5, Deu 32:47, Mat 21:43
- g. *"whereof to glory"* – but Rom 3:23 has before proven all come short of glory
- h. *"what saith the scripture?"* = Abraham was justified by faith only - Gen 15:6

2. 4:4-5

- a. *"him that worketh"* – which could be those of whom works were required
- b. *"but of debt"* – something owed to God, or else God owes the worker – Exo 19:5
- c. BUT, God does not owe sinners anything, and we're all sinners – Gal 3:6-13, 5:3
- d. *"to him that worketh not"* – either no commandment, or that is guilty of it
- e. *"worketh not, but believes"* – Faith is not a work, not faith in itself, but an object
- f. *"him that justifies the ungodly"* – We are not righteous even when we believe
 - i. This would be an unrighteous God, if it were not for Rom 3:22-27
- g. *"counted for righteousness"* – this is imputation, a reckoning, a positional truth

3. 4:6-8

- a. David was under the law, whereas Abraham was not
- b. God forgave David, but how, on what basis? We know what he didn't Rom 3:25
- c. There is a blessing when righteousness is imputed *without works*
- d. Paul taught about Abraham and David in the synagogues – Acts 13:32-39
- e. Paul quotes the sure mercies of David to show God not imputing sin – 2 Cor 5:19
- f. Israel had promises they boasted in – 2 Samuel 7:12-16, Psa 89:1-4, 20, 27-36
- g. David broke the law for which there was no sacrifice, God had mercy - Psa 51:16
- h. David saw grace, but could not see why; it is now revealed – Psalm 32:1-2
- i. Paul is showing that Abraham and David are justified by faith without works
- j. They both needed the cross that Paul preaches – 2 Tim 2:18, Rom 2:16