

## **Indelible Grace**

(Rom 4:13-17)

- Paul is still proving the doctrine of justification by faith
  - He has in this section we are in already answered 2 objections: works and circumcision, and now moves to the 3<sup>rd</sup>, the “giving of the law”
- I. Rom 4:13-17- This is the final point which Paul addresses here concerning his subject, and bring the argument which he began in Rom 1:18 to an end here, the remainder of ch 4 being an example of true faith using Abraham
- A) The “promise”- salvation, adoption, inheritance, all that is ours in and including especially Christ
    - 1. He has already proven that the Seed is Christ and not simply Abraham’s progeny (Gal 3:16)
  - B) The promise was not by law but by the righteousness of faith (the righteousness he had by means of faith)
    - 1. In other words God’s reckoning him righteous was the thing that made the promise possible
      - i. Moses Law played no part in the promise, being given 430 after
- II. Division of section
- A) V.13- The history of Abraham and the Law (negative)
  - B) V.14-15- Not of law because of the nature of law itself (negative)
    - 1. V14-Divided into 2 parts:
      - i. Faith would be made void
        - a) Rom 11:6- Law and faith directly opposing terms, can’t be mixed
        - b) John 1:16- Law by Moses, grace and truth by the Lord Jesus Christ
          - 1) There is no faith in law, its performance, do it or else
      - ii. Promise would be made void
        - a) The promise of God, if it were by law, would be a pipe dream, because the apostle has already proven in this great section that no one can nor ever has kept the law
        - b) There is no promise in law, again, there is not reward, but condemnation and repercussions to law breaker
    - 2. V15- Divided into 2 parts:
      - i. Law worketh wrath (the very opposite of the promise which is glory)
        - a) Law offers consequences, not rewards
        - b) Law brings out the character of sin fully and thus magnifies condemnation and wrath
          - 1) Law excites sinful man to rebel (Rom 7:7-8)

- (a) Tell a sinner not to do a thing and he then begins to think about that thing which he had no prior thoughts
    - (b) Example of sex education
  - ii. There is no transgression without a law to prohibit
    - a) Law makes guilt more evident and tangible, by defining sin (Rom 3:19-20)
    - b) What the conscience condemns becomes “transgression” when there is law concerning it
- C) V.16-17- Conclusions- “Therefore”(positive)
  - 1. V.16- “It is of faith!”
    - i. This therefore really goes back to Rom 1:16 and concludes all that the apostle has proven
    - ii. Everything that awaits the child of God is by faith and so it is of promise
    - iii. Why must it be by faith?
      - a) That it might be of grace and to the glory of God (Rom 3:24)
        - 1) Grace is God’s most glorious attribute (Ex 32)
        - 2) Faith/grace always go together, just as Law/works do
          - (a) Again, these cannot be mixed (wool and cotton in O/T)
          - (b) Under law, you perform and then produce your bill to your glory; under grace you freely receive of God to His glory
            - (1) The chief end of man is to glorify God, therefore the plan of redemption must be to that end
            - (2) Man cannot even boast of “his faith”, otherwise we have turned faith into a merit and rob God of the glory
      - b) That it might guarantee the promise to all nations as God spoke to Abraham
        - 1) “To the end”= “for this purpose” or “w/ this objective in mind”
          - (a) God spoke this exact thing to Abraham and only faith ensures that this be fulfilled
            - (1) If justification be of works, circumcision or the receiving of the law, then the gentiles are cut off and God’s promise broken
        - 2) “Not to that only which is of the law”= the believing Jews (v.12)
          - (a) Else the argument of v.9-11 is contradicted
          - (b) This fact solidifies the command of the great commission
            - (1) The promise being by faith eliminates all prerequisites or qualifying merits/moralities
            - (2) Same gospel is preached to the religious man as to the cannibal
        - 3) “sure to all the Seed”= God’s elect everywhere

- (a) If salvation was not by faith/promise, then not a single soul would ever arrive in glory
  - (1) Perfect Adam is the proof of this
    - I. It also proves the eternal plan of God, and that even a perfect human without the divine nature could not perform righteousness, nor be perfect enough in his sinlessness to merit God's heavenly reward
- 2. V.17- "As it is written"- as God promised Abraham ("Father of many nations")
  - i. "Before God"- In the presence of God, before the eyes of God
    - a) God called out Abram ("high father") to look at the stars and count them if possible and said "you are Abraham" and Abraham believed Him
      - 1) Called "calls" (reckons/names) him Abraham when he was the father of none and dead to reproduction
      - 2) Yet in the sight of God he is the father of all the faithful
    - b) How is this possible? Abraham was old and Sarah barren
      - 1) God can "quicken the dead"
        - (a) He proves this to Abraham already in faith later by 2 means:
          - (1) He quickens Abraham and Sarah to conceive Isaac
          - (2) He raised Isaac from the dead in a type
        - 2) He calleth those things which be not as though they were
          - (a) Call= "summon"- God is God, and speaks things into existence out of nothing
            - (1) "Let there be light"
          - (b) Call = "name"- as God "called" the stars by name
            - (1) God gives names to all before they ever were, as he had now done with Abraham
              - I. 7 examples of this in scripture:
                - A) Ishmael
                - B) Isaac
                - C) Solomon
                - D) Josiah
                - E) Cyrus
                - F) John
                - G) Jesus

### III. Doctrine- Grace is omnipotent

- A) Omnipotent/omniscient grace is the foundation of all God's promises
  - 1. If God were not omnipotent/omniscient, then he might make a promise that either would not come true or that man might thwart

2. If merit and works of man were the basis and not grace, then the promise is uncertain and will be unfulfilled
  - i. Rom 8:29-30- Omnipotent/omniscient grace in action
    - a) God omnipotent grace is the same in the salvation/sanctification of anyone as it was in the salvation/sanctification of Abraham
  - ii. Rom 8:31ff- Nothing can stop nor prevent the grace of God
    - a) Rom 11:26- “all Israel shall be saved”
    - b) John 10:28-29- “No man might pluck them out” of God’s hand
    - c) Isa 49:16- “I have engraven thee on the palms of My hands”
3. God has ensured His plan to/for His Seed (Christ/church) by making it totally dependent upon the Godhead and not upon man, and then speaking it into existence
  - i. Tit 1:1-2- God Who cannot lie has promised
  - ii. 2 Cor 1:20- “All the promises of God in Him are yea and amen!”