

Discussion Guide | Romans 4:1-17| How Faith Works: Credited as Righteousness

Gathering Question:

What is one way you've seen God at work in your life this week?

Gathering Prayer

Father, by Your Spirit, would you guide us into all truth. Help us to hear and be attentive to Your voice as we work through this study. In the name of Jesus, Your Son, we pray. Amen.

Opening Questions

- What stood out to you in the sermon?
- What insights did you gain?
- What questions did it raise?

Read Romans 4:1-17

What is Faith?

- Reflect on the three common temptations we tend to fall into when we make faith ourselves:
our heads (how much we understand God),
our hearts (how much we feel God),
our hands (how much we do for God).

Which of these do you find to be a temptation for you, and what does that temptation look like in your life?

- How does making faith dependent on our understanding, emotions, or actions affect our relationship with God? What happens when we can't understand something, don't feel God's presence, or aren't doing as much as we'd like?
- Read Gen 15:1-6. Abraham's story reminds us that God's promise doesn't depend on Abraham's ability to make it happen. Are you tempted to rely on your own ability to control outcomes, rather than live in trust of what God has promised?
- Andrew Root writes, "Abraham has faith because he encounters the new reality of the Word of God as it comes to him through impossibility. He trusts that though he is impossibly old, and his wife impossibly barren, the Word takes what is dead to make it alive. Abraham is righteous because he is absurd; he is willing to enter a new reality where what cannot be is made possible by the act of God's gift. Abraham has faith because he suffers barrenness, facing the depths of weakness so that the act of God might come to him..." ([*Faith Formation in a Secular Age*](#))

How does Abraham's example challenge our tendency to measure faith by our own abilities or experiences, rather than by God's promise?

Who is Faith For?

- God “justifies the ungodly” (Romans 4:5). Why is this such a surprising statement? What does it reveal about the kind of people God welcomes and the way we receive his grace?
- Some people feel they need to fix their lives before they can come to God, while others assume their religious commitment or good behavior makes them right with him. Which tendency do you find easier to fall into, and why?
- We struggle to receive God's grace when we insist on trusting ourselves. What are some ways self-reliance, pride, or the desire for control show up in your life?
- What would this week look like if you stopped trying to prove yourself to God and, instead, lived as someone who receives righteousness as a gift? Is there a particular area of your life where you need to shift your focus from yourself to God's promise?

Closing Prayer