

THE NATURE OF SAVING FAITH

(Romans 4:17-25)

Introduction:

- We live in a religious world with confusing messages on faith
 1. Some view faith as having no d_____
 2. Some view faith as following religious r_____
 3. Some view faith as believing certain f_____
- We must let the Bible define saving faith and hold that message out, so that people will come to truly trust the Lord.
- Rom 4:17-25 lists three characteristics of saving faith

Trusts in God's Person (17a, 23-25)

- The Greek text is awkward as seen in the various translations:
 - in the presence of Him whom he believed, even God* (NASB)
 - before Him whom he believed, even God* (KJV)
 - in the sight of God, in whom he believed* (NIV)
- 1. The Greek text is pointing to the specific God in which Abraham placed his trust.
 - a. Abraham came out of a p_____ background and believed in many gods.
 - b. Abraham viewed Yahweh (the LORD) as just one of m_____ gods
 - c. It was not until _____ years after Yahweh told him to leave his country and family that he came to believe in Him as the one and only God and his God (Gen 15:6,7)
- 2. The Greek text could be translated, *before which God he placed his faith.*
- Saving faith places trust in God as He has revealed Himself
 1. God revealed Himself more fully over t_____
 - a. Abraham had one revelation
 - b. More revelation was given through the p_____ (rejecting this revelation would mean rejecting God)
 - c. The ultimate revelation of God's person was made in Jesus Christ, who is the e_____ representation of His being (Heb 1:2,3; Col 1:15) – to reject this revelation is to reject God.
 2. Jews who reject Jesus, reject the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Consider these scriptures:
 - a. Jn 8:28 – Jesus said, *unless you believe that I AM, you will die in your sins.*
 - b. Jn 8:58 – Jesus said, *before Abraham was born, I AM.*
 - c. Ex 3:6,14 – God said to Moses, *I am... the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob...thus you shall say to the sons of Israel "I AM has sent me to you"*
 3. Jehovah's Witness emphasize Jehovah (a German pronunciation of Yahweh) as the personal name of God
 - a. But they d_____ that Jesus is Jehovah and so reject the very God they are proclaiming.
 - b. They reason that Jesus is not THE God but _____ god (ask them if they have Jesus as their Savior; then point out that they are not to have any other gods except Jehovah).
- Verses 23-35 shows that faith is put on our record book as r_____ if and only if we believe in the God who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead.
 1. Saving faith requires Jesus to be our L_____ (trust in who He is – Yahweh – and make Him our God)
 2. Jesus' resurrection was necessary for our j_____ (literally, *to be declared righteous*) – v. 25
- Hold out the full revelation of God in Jesus Christ
 1. God is Father, S_____ and Holy Spirit
 2. We must trust in Jesus as our L_____, the God of our life.

Trusts in God's Power (17b, 19,21,22)

- Abraham eventually trusted in God's power
 1. God's power to give life to the d_____ (v. 17b)
 - a. Sarah's w_____ was dead (v. 19)
 - 1) She was _____ when Isaac was born (Gen 17:17: 21:5)

- 2) Abraham believed God was a _____ to produce offspring from a dead womb (Rom 4:21), which was counted as righteousness (v. 22)
2. Isaac, literally means he l_____
- Abraham laughed at God's p_____, but not in unbelief, only because it would be easier to fulfill His promise in Ishmael (Gen 17:15-19)
 - The name Isaac was a reminder of God's power.
- How powerful is our God?
- He is the A_____ (Rev 1:8; 58 times) – no one, nothing, no combination of people or things has more power.
 - Nothing is i_____ with God (Lk 1:37)
 - This does not apply to the impractical (*God cannot create a rock so big that He could not lift*)
 - This does not apply to that which contradicts His character (*God cannot lie; cannot sin*)
 - Do you trust that God can do anything but fail? Saving faith does!

Trusts in God's Promises (17c, 18,20)

- Verse 17c - God calls into existence the non-existent
- Verse 17a – *a father of many nations have I made you*
 - Abraham had _____ descendants yet.
 - God considered His promise as if it were already done.
 - Verse 18 – Abraham not only trusted that God was able to do this, but that God would f_____ His promise.
 - Abraham did not see the promised fulfilled in his life
 - It is ultimately fulfilled in one of his offspring - _____
 - All are sons of Abraham through f_____ in Christ (Gal 3:7)
 - This is how Abraham has become the father of many nations and will eventually be the father of people of e_____ tribe, tongue, nation, and class (Rev 5:9; Matt 24:14)
- Saving faith trusts that God will fulfill His promises
- The ultimate promise for believers - that Jesus will erase sin and all its effects not just from our spirits, but from our b_____ and s_____ (mind) as well! (Lk 24:39; I Thess 5:23,24; I Cor 15:26; Phil 1:6)
 - All the other promises are “easier” to fulfill (humanly speaking), so hold on to them - The resurrection of Christ settles everything

Conclusion – hold out the truth of saving faith

- I trust you to be MY Lord, the God and Savior of MY life.*
- I trust that You are ABLE to do all that You say You will do.*
- I trust that You WILL do everything You promise.*