The Book of Romans

 Part Two: God’s righteousness is revealed in His gracious provision of the Gospel. (3:21–4:25)

***RSVP: Receiving The Greatest Gift***

***Romans 4:1-25***

After explaining that Jesus’ death is the way God grants His righteousness in saving us (3:21-31), Paul shows us how we receive that gift. He turns, by way of example, to Abraham, the father of all believers. Because God’s covenant promises are first formally given to him, his reception of them becomes a test case in how the promise/ faith trans-action works. Where Adam failed to believe in God’s goodness, and later, Moses missed the Promised Land by failing to give God glory, Abraham believes God for the seeming impossible. That is what each of us is called to do in trusting Christ for the forgiveness of our sins.

***(Given that God has provided a way for us to be saved through the death of Jesus [3:21-31] . . .)***

***Let’s consider the example of Abraham.*** vv. 1-9

God imputed His righteousness to Abraham (that is, credited it to his spiritual/moral account), not because of any working that he did, but only in response to his believing God’s promises (of a land, descendants and blessing). This is not the language of earning, but the language of gifting. Not only that, earning righteousness was out of the question, since Abraham, like all of us, was “ungodly.” David under-scores this blessing from the other side, namely condemnation which God does NOT impute to sinners. Abraham and David were not perfect, but they were forgiven, not by their works but by faith. They saw that faith is our reception of God’s Greatest Gift.

***He was made right with God (by faith) even before receiving the covenant sign.*** vv. 10-12

 The sign of covenant “Jewishness” was circumcision, but Abraham was made right before that sign was given. That is why he can be father of all who believe, both Jews and Gentiles. Galatians 5:1-6

***And, he was made right with God (by faith) long before the Law was given to Israel.*** vv. 13-15

Salvation by works is impossibly anyway, since the Law brought only condemnation (since no one kept it perfectly). Galatians 3:16-22

***How did it work? Abraham believed God could and would keep His promises, in spite of conditions that were considered impossible.*** vv. 16-22

Ninety-nine year old men just don’t father children with their ninety year old wives. Abraham believed that God gives life to the dead and speaks things into existence. Faith justifies because it gives glory to God, makes room for grace, and eliminates human boasting, guaranteeing salvation in a way our law-keeping efforts could not. James 4:6

***Abraham’s faith is a pattern for our own.*** vv.23-25

Paul’s words are not mere history, but rather are assurance that anyone who believes God to fulfill His promises likewise has righteous-ness placed to his account and his sins forgiven. 1 Corinthians 1:30, 31

**Applying God’s Truth to Life: How does faith bring salvation?**

Faith is not works, or even a work. It earns us nothing.

Faith is not righteousness, but the conduit for righteousness; it is our heart opened to Him and saying “Yes” to Him

Faith brings forgiveness when we believe God’s Jesus-promises.

Faith allows God to gift Christ’s righteousness to our account.

Faith views Christ as our life, our righteousness, and holiness.

 Faith saves us because it places us beneath the stream of God’s grace with an empty cup, knowing God

 lovingly has promised to fill it for His glory and our good. Eph. 2:1-10