

March 8, 2020 – Romans 4:1-8; 13-17 THEME: How Am I Justified Before God?

“What then shall we say that Abraham our forefather discovered in this matter? If in fact Abraham was justified by works, he had something to boast about – but not before God. What does the Scripture say? Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness. Now when a man works, his wages are not credited to him as a gift, but as an obligation. However, to the man who does not work but trusts God Who Justifies the wicked, his faith is credited as righteousness. David says the same thing when he speaks of the blessedness of the man to whom God credits righteousness apart from works: Blessed are they whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord will never count against him. It was not through law that Abraham and his offspring received the promise that he would be heir of the world, but through the righteousness that comes by faith. For if those who live by law are heirs, faith has no value and the promise is worthless, because law brings wrath. And where there is no law there is no transgression. Therefore, the promise comes by faith, so that it may be by grace and may be guaranteed to all Abraham’s offspring – not only to those who are of the law but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham. He is the father of us all. As it is written: I have made you a father of many nations. He is our father in the sight of God, in Whom he believed – The God Who gives life to the dead and calls things that are not as though they were.”

When the words – Justified – Justification - Righteous - appear on the pages of Scripture, there are many who struggle with the meaning of these words, but a simplified meaning can be:

Just as if I never sinned. Other definitions used include: – Declared not guilty – acquitted – Justification and Righteousness come from the Greek terms - δικαιωω – δικαιος - δικαιοσυνη - The Hebrew Word = tsadeek - tsadaq,- tsedek – tsedakah – tsadayk – Righteous Just Judge.

This Declaration of Not Guilty, is as the Apostle Paul writes – NOT BY WORKS! (Vs. 1) - But by Faith – (Vs. 13) – By GRACE – (Vs. 16)

The Apostle Paul as an inspired writer of the Word of God - does a neat job of connecting the believers in Rome at the time of about 57 A.D. with US here in 2020 and with Abraham who lived about 2200 B.C. The Apostle Paul also connects us with David who lived about 1,000 B.C. as the Apostle Paul quotes Psalm 32:1-2.

The Apostle Paul also gives a commentary on What is meant by – Justified / Righteous with these words of Psalm 32:1-2

Vs. 7 -- Blessed are they whose transgressions are forgiven; **whose sins are covered.**

Vs. 8 – Blessed is the man whose sin **the Lord will never count** against him.

Covered Over – Concealed - επεκαλυφθησαν

If you have a handkerchief: take a pencil and cover the pen with the handkerchief. In the same way, when God the Holy Spirit brought you to faith in Jesus through the Gospel in Word and Sacrament, you were covered with the perfect life of Jesus. Because we are covered with the perfect holiness of Jesus Christ through faith in Him alone, our sins are covered, and we are heirs of eternal life in heaven.

The Jews at the time of the Apostle Paul were claiming that they had salvation because they were biological descendants of Abraham and because they followed the practice of Circumcision. The Apostle Paul explains that Abraham was justified by faith in God, and that faith in God came before the O.T. law of Circumcision was given by God. Abraham demonstrated His faith: Left His home and went to a place that God would show him.

Abraham patiently waited for the Promise when God told Abraham he would have a child with Sarah. That promise of God was of course fulfilled when Abraham reached the age of 100, and his wife Sarah gave birth to Isaac.

Abraham also demonstrated his faith when God told Abraham to sacrifice Isaac as a burnt offering and just as Abraham was about to kill Isaac, God stopped Abraham and provided a Ram caught by its horns in the thicket.

By Faith in Jesus Christ our Savior, the descendants of Abraham, we are Saved from our sin and have eternal life in Heaven.

HOW in your life have you demonstrated your faith in God?

1. You are here today. You are sitting here listening to the Word of your Lord which I have the blessing and honor to proclaim to you. You are also singing praises to God and joining together in prayer.

While many are coming up with excuses and reasons to not worship God in joint public worship, you are demonstrating your faith by being in the House of the Lord with fellow believers.

2. You are able to also demonstrate your faith in God when during times of illness you patiently wait for the rd's healing or for God to call you to heaven.
3. By telling others about Jesus, Your Savior and theirs, you demonstrate your faith.
4. By studying God's Word at home and praying for others and for yourself, you practice your faith.

Through Faith in Christ Jesus, we are Children of Abraham, - N.T. Children of Abraham, not biologically, but
Through Faith in Christ Jesus, and heirs of eternal Life in Heaven AMEN