

What Kind of Faith Justifies Sinners?

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Scripture Basic: Romans 4:1-25

Focal: Romans 4:1-8, 16-18, 23-25

Outline:

II. What God Has Done for Man: Justification by Faith (1:18-11:36)

A. What It Is (1:18-5:21)

1. Universal need of righteousness (1:18-3:20)

2. Righteousness available by faith through Christ's atonement
(3:21-30)

3. This righteousness anticipated in the Old Testament (3:31-4:25)

a. The thesis stated (3:31)

b. Abraham - the test case (4:1-25)

(1) The crucial question (4:1-3)

(2) Exposition of Genesis 15:6 (4:4-25)

(a) How Abraham was not justified (4:4-16)

1. By his good conduct (4:4-8)

2. By his circumcision (4:9-12)

3. By the Mosaic Law (4:13-16)

(b) How Abraham was justified - by faith

(4:17-22)

1. Its object (4:17)

2. Its strength (4:18-21)

3. Its result (4:22)

(c) Application to New Testament Christians

(4:23-25)

Applications:

1. The means of appropriation of salvation has always been essentially the same in every age of human history - by faith.
2. The specific object of that faith has increased - by progressive revelation. In summary, men have always been saved by trusting in whatever Jehovah had revealed to them to date concerning His salvation through the atonement of Jesus Christ.
3. Even in the Old Testament, salvation was not received by good conduct, law-keeping or observance of rituals or ceremonies.
4. Faith may be defined as a firm commitment to a God who can do the "impossible".