

Why Faith Is Important to God

Romans 4:1-5

The writer of Hebrews tells us “*without faith it is impossible to please God*” (Heb. 11:6). Your relationship with God commences with faith; “*Know that a man is **not** justified by observing the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ*” (NIV Galatians 2:16), it continues with faith; “*The just shall live by faith*” (Rom. 1:17), and it shall conclude in faith: “*Looking unto Jesus, the author and **finisher** of our faith*” (Heb. 12:2). It is safe to say that the Christian life is characterized by faith. Our text contains an amazing statement in vs. 5.

“*To him that believes on him that justifies the ungodly **his faith is counted for righteousness.***”

Why is faith so important to God? Why is it essential to see I can't work for His favor?

I. If I could work to attain my good standing with God I'd be proud of my work!

“*For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God*” (v.2). This verse could be translated: “*If Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about. But before God **such a thing is inconceivable.***”

(A). Pride is the most common sin of all sins, and the vilest sin of all sins.

Not the pride of doing a job well, or the pride in family or community, but the pride of life that is based on an independence of and from God (Prov. 6:17).

(B). Pride is the mother of self-righteousness.

A proud person finds the gospel of grace foolishness. It is much easier for a proud person to establish a list of rules to follow, and follow them, than believe.

“*God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble*” (James 4:6).

II. If my works made me right with God then my life would not be a life of grace.

“*Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt*” (v. 4).

(A). Grace is my only strength in times of trial.

“*My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness*”

(II Cor. 12:9). Without an awareness of grace, I will become bitter in the storm.

(B). Grace should be my primary source of identity.

“*I am what I am by the grace of God*” (I Corinthians 15:10).

III. My faith in God “who justifies the ungodly” is supremely honoring of His work.

“*But to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness*” (v.5). Abraham is an OT example of this faith.

(A). It was physically impossible for Abraham to have children at 100 years of age.

(B). God told Abraham that He would do what Abraham could not do himself.

(C). Abraham believed God would do the work and God credited him as righteous.

This is a beautiful example of what faith is all about; a belief in my inability, a firm trust in God's ability, and a reliance on God to do what I cannot do myself. God's grace is given to the ungodly on the basis of the work of our Lord Jesus.

“*In God we boast all the day long*” (Psalm 44:8). I shall not boast anything else.

The ultimate test of our spirituality is the measure of our amazement

at the grace of God D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones.