

INTRODUCTION - ROMANS 4:13 - 5:21

Having made the case for righteousness through faith in Jesus, Paul now ties together some major themes of this letter: righteousness, justification, and reconciliation. As we consider this section of the letter, we would do well to note how each theme relates to the others and how the believer can draw hope from them. In a world with the potential to draw us further from God, we have the hope and blessed assurance of God who seeks to hold us close.

Keep up: complete N.T. Wright, *Romans: 18 Studies for Individuals and Groups*, p 31-37.

Righteousness avails justification which makes reconciliation possible.

Romans 4:13-25 → The relationship between faith and the law

Paul's argument really takes shape in this section of the letter. Here, Paul seems to be tying up any loose ends from previous statements because it is necessary to really dig deeper into the essence and meaning of faith. To accomplish this, Paul locates the law as being antithetical to faith (4:14-15) and unnecessary for faith.

On what grounds can Paul suggest that righteousness does not belong only to circumcised Jews? The argument here is that uncircumcised people and non-Jews can receive the righteousness of God because faith in God's promise precedes and supersedes adherence to governing laws. Though faith and laws may shape the way we live they are not the same. Faith permits one to live according to God's word, and it comes first.

This is demonstrated by the following statements:

- "...not to Abraham or to his seed through the _____, but through the _____ of faith" (4:13).
 - "...not only to those who are of the law, but also to those who are of the _____ of Abraham..." (4:16).
 - "As it is written, 'I have made you a father of many _____'" (4:17).
 - "Now the words, 'it was reckoned to him,' (see 4:22) were not written for his sake alone, but for ours also. It will be reckoned to us who _____ in Him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead." (4:23-24).
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Romans 5:1-5

Romans 5:1 is the central point of the first portion of Romans, in that it defines the implication of righteousness, the result of justification that comes from trusting Jesus for salvation. What do these things mean?

Earlier in this series we said that righteousness and justification are closely related terms. Righteousness expresses a state of being/doing equitably, good, just, true. To say that we are

justified by faith is to say that we are counted as _____ because of our _____ in the Lord Jesus Christ.

- For what reasons does Paul say we can boast? _____
 - How is this different than the boasting Paul warns against in 4:2? _____
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Hope: expectation, trust, confidence
Glory: praise, honor, good opinion of, renown

Romans 5:6-11

If ever you want to know, or remember, the extent to which God has already gone to demonstrate God's love for you, remember this portion of text. God loves you! God loves us! Let's count the ways this section recalls God's love for us:

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Romans 5:12-21

There is an interesting dialectic at work in this section. That is, to explain the necessity of justification and to develop the notion of reconciliation with God, Paul centers one concept by first lifting up, then knocking down another. In this instance, Paul lifts up the presence and prevalence of sin, then knocks it down by centering Jesus and His death. The dialectic approach is effective because it helps us to appreciate the why, what, and how of justification and reconciliation.

As noted in the introduction to this series, Jesus is the center of attraction--He is preeminent. With these verses, meditate on the effects of His preeminence on your life and the hope you have.