

Never Doubt God

Text : **Romans 4: 16-25**

INTRODUCTION :

A. What made Abraham such an outstanding figure in the Bible ?

1. He was the standard of ideal relationship with God during the patriarchal age.
2. He was the standard of ideal relationship with God during the Mosaic age.
3. He remains the standard of relationship with God during the Christian age.

B. Abraham was not held up as an example of godly living.

1. He had defects in his character and in his conduct.
 - a. He took his father and his nephew when God told him to separate from his family.
 - b. He lied when he was in a frightening situation.
 - c. He listened to his wife when she told him to produce an heir with Hagar.
2. Thus, Abraham's special relationship with God was not based upon the merits of his life.

C. Abraham is God's example of the relationship He wants to have with all men.

1. God wants to have the same relationship with you as he did with Abraham.
2. God did not approve of Abraham's sins, but He still accepted Him.
3. God does not approve of your sins, but He'll accept you on the same basis as Abraham.

D. The thing that set Abraham apart from other people was the trust he had in God.

Romans 4: 19-21 Without becoming weak in faith he contemplated his own body, now as good as dead since he was about a hundred years old, and the deadness of Sarah's womb; ²⁰ yet, with respect to the promise of God, he did not waver in unbelief but grew strong in faith, giving glory to God, ²¹ and being fully assured that what God had promised, He was able also to perform.

1. Many of Abraham's contemporaries knew about God.
 - a. We know many believed in God.
 - b. We know others worshipped God.
 - * **There was a priest of God, Melchizedek. ... Gen. 14:18**
2. Though Abraham had every reason to doubt God He trusted Him.
 - a. The promises had been made many years before.
 - b. Both Abraham and Sarah were very old.
 - c. Sarah was postmenopausal.
3. Abraham not only believed, he had faith, he trusted God, he didn't doubt God's promises.

External situations change, but mankind has remained basically the same since the beginning of time. Many know God exists and many believe what they have been taught about God, but few truly have faith in God.

I. Only those who have faith have a positive relationship with God.

A. No one can please God without faith.

Heb. 11: 6- And without faith it is impossible to please Him, (**Statement of fact**)
for he who comes to God must believe that He is
and *that* He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.

B. One can only have a relationship with God / Christ through faith.

1. **Gal. 3: 26-** For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.
2. **Eph. 3: 11-12** *This was* in accordance with the eternal purpose which He carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord, ¹² in whom we have boldness and confident access through faith in Him.

C. One can only be saved through faith. (Like Abraham, we all have defects.)

1. **Eph 2: 8-** For by grace you have been saved through faith;
and that not of yourselves, *it is* the gift of God;
2. **I Pet. 1: 8-9** Though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory,
⁹ obtaining as the outcome of your faith the salvation of your souls.

II. Faith is based upon knowledge, but requires more than just knowledge.

A. Knowing, even believing is not faith. The devils believe.

1. **Luke 4:34-** Let us alone! What business do we have with each other, Jesus of Nazareth? Have You come to destroy us? I know who You are—the Holy One of God!”
2. **James 2: 19-** You believe that God is one. You do well; the demons also believe, and shudder.

B. Faith is founded upon knowledge.

1. **Rom. 10: 17-** So faith *comes* from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.
2. **Gal. 3: 2-** This is the only thing I want to find out from you: did you receive the Spirit by the works of the Law, or by hearing with faith?
3. It is only when one trusts the message heard that faith is developed.

C. Faith will only grow in the heart that is receptive to it. (Athiests memorize scripture.)

1. **Luke 8: 8-** ... As He said these things, He would call out,
"He who has ears to hear, let him hear." (Ears = receptive heart)
2. One must come to value God before faith can develop in his heart.
Luke 12: 34- For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.
3. One's heart must be soft and open to receive faith implanted within.
 - a. **James 1: 21-** Therefore, putting aside all filthiness and *all* that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls.
 - b. **True faith does not dwell in the head, but in the heart of man.**
 - c. **Once the heart is full it overflows into ones mind, conversation and life.**

D. As knowledge becomes faith it affects every aspect of one's life.

1. **ILL-** When a devastating hurricane is forecast some believe and some have faith.
 - a. Those who believe but have no faith stay.
 - b. Those who have faith in the forecast evacuate.
2. This is what James teaches in the 2nd chapter of his book. (**James 2: 14-26**)
3. **Character is shaped by that which flows from the heart and character determines how one lives. Faith takes over one's life.**

III. How does one develop trust in that which he knows ? Experience

A. No one is born with knowledge of God, or belief in Him, or love for Him.

1. More knowledge can help develop faith, but doesn't always do so.
2. **ILL -** I Had years of experience, I memorized specifications and I was certified by the U.S. Navy, but when I became the quality control officer, I had no confidence.
 - Experience produced confidence both and increased skill.
3. Experience walking with the Lord gives us ever greater faith and increasing confidence.
 - a. **Heb. 5: 14-** But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil.
 - b. **The mature take in stride that which overwhelms the young.**

B. Each trial in our life should increase our faith.

1. **James 1: 2-4** Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, ³ knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. ⁴ And let endurance have *its* perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

2. Trials are only of benefit if accepted with the proper attitude.
 - a. They are not joyous occasions.
 - b. They we must **Consider it all joy** if we are to benefit from trials. (**place a value**)
3. The Hebrew Christians were praised for having this attitude.

Heb. 10: 34- For you showed sympathy to the prisoners and accepted joyfully the seizure of your property, knowing that you have for yourselves a better possession and a lasting one. (**How would you react ?**)

IV. Our faith holds strong because of the promises and the one who made them.

A. Abraham followed God many years without receiving the promises of God.

1. Logically, it was impossible for them to be fulfilled.
2. His attempt to make it happen failed. (**Ishmael was rejected.**)
3. He never doubted God.

* **This must be our goal as we build our faith.** NEVER DOUBT GOD !!

B. Our hope is built on much better promises.

1. **Heb. 8: 6-** But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, by as much as He is also the mediator of a better covenant, which has been enacted on better promises. (**eternal dwelling with God**)
2. The One who made the promise cannot lie.

Tit. 1: 1b-2 ... for the faith of those chosen of God and the knowledge of the truth which is according to godliness,² in the hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, ...
3. **II Pet. 1: 2-4** Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord; ³ seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence. ⁴ For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of *the* divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust.

C. The promises come only after our faith is tested and proven.

1. **Read and briefly Exegete ... I Pet. 1: 3-9**
2. **Read and briefly Exegete ... I Pet. 4: 19**
3. **Read and briefly Exegete ... I Pet. 5: 8-10**
4. **Rom. 8: 18-** For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.

CONCLUSION :

A. Though the years roll by, we have no reason to doubt the promises of God.

1. **Read and briefly Exegete ... II Pet. 3: 8-15**
2. **James 1: 12-** Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which *the Lord* has promised to those who love Him.
3. **Rev. 2: 10-** ... Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.

B. The promises are only to those who have lived by faith in Christ Jesus.

1. All will face the struggles of life on planet earth.
2. Those who have entrusted their souls to Christ, walk toward a glorious future.
I Pet. 4: 19- Therefore, those also who suffer according to the will of God shall entrust their souls to a faithful Creator in doing what is right.

C. As they approach the father, the Christians run to Him in anticipation.

1. We all have the same expectation as did the Apostle Paul.
II Tim. 4: 7-8 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; ⁸ in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing.
2. Remember our text :
Read and briefly Exegete ... Rom. 4: 19-25

INVITATION :

1. Have you put your trust in the living Christ ?
2. Only in Him can the promise of eternal life be secured.
3. Place your trust in Him and start walking with Him today.