

## ***EARNESTLY CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH – Jan. 2024***

Southview Bible Church \* 135 Bennett Ave. \* Council Bluffs, IA. 51503

Phone: (712) 322-5743 E-mail: pastor@southviewbible.org \* Web Site: www.southviewbible.org

### ***Just By Faith – Just Like Abraham***

In one fell swoop, the Apostle Paul, under inspiration in Romans 4, totally destroyed baptismal regeneration, sacramentalism, and any faith-plus works system! Here he DOGMATICALLY and EMPHATICALLY affirms that we are saved JUST LIKE ABRAHAM on the basis of FAITH ALONE!! The case is irrefutable!

When I use the phrase “Just by Faith” I am using the word “Just” in the sense of a double entendre – meaning the phrase is capable of two meanings. 1) **Just** (that is “Righteous”) by faith; and 2) **Just** (only) by faith! To be “justified” means “to be declared righteous”. On the basis of FAITH ALONE, God declares the believer to be righteous. This is Paul’s overwhelming emphasis in Romans 3:21-31.

Rom. 3:22 “through faith in Jesus Christ”

Rom. 3:22 “on all who believe.”

Rom. 3:25 “by His blood, through faith”

Rom. 3:26 “justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.”

Rom. 3:27 “by the law of faith.”

Rom. 3:28 “a man is justified by faith”

Rom. 3:30 “justify the circumcised by faith”

Rom. 3:30 “uncircumcised through faith.”

Eight times in this section Paul emphasizes that justification is by FAITH ALONE! God’s way of being RIGHT before Him is by FAITH and FAITH ALONE! That is Paul’s MAIN POINT in this whole section! Yes, it’s all about Jesus – Who He is and What He has done, but we must appropriate Him by faith! And it must be by FAITH ALONE! This is God’s way – the only way one can be saved.

And then, to illustrate the truth of JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH ALONE, Paul, at great length, demonstrates this in the life of Abraham in Romans 4. Romans 4 emphasizes that the nature of saving faith is illustrated in the life of Abraham and that we are saved JUST BY FAITH – JUST LIKE ABRAHAM! Abraham, as the premiere example of saving faith, is said to be “the father of all those who believe” (Rom. 4:11; see also 4:16).

The GREAT emphasis of Romans 4 is that “Abraham believed God and it was accounted to him for righteousness” (Rom. 4:3, 22). This is the record of the Scripture (Gen. 15:6). ALL Abraham did was BELIEVE! That’s it! Nothing else! Abraham simply believed in the bare Word of God’s promise and God accounted his FAITH to him for righteousness (cf. Rom. 4:4-5).

In this example of Abraham, Paul, with a single blow, puts down any and all errant teaching that would add anything to FAITH. Justification is JUST BY FAITH! There are THREE keywords that drive home the message of Romans 4.

Faith/Believe = 16 Times

Impute (some form) = 11 Times

Righteousness/Justify = 11 Times

- The KEY message: ***“Faith Imputes Righteousness”***.

The truth that justification is by FAITH ALONE, as illustrated in Abraham, single-handedly destroys baptismal regeneration, destroys sacramentalism, and destroys any faith-plus-works system! The truth of how we are made right with God is supremely illustrated in the life of Abraham, who was justified by faith ALONE before the law was even given and at least 13 years prior to him being circumcised. Abraham was not saved by law-keeping, by rituals, or religious rites. Rather he was saved by FAITH ALONE, and Paul emphasizes that the nature of Abraham’s saving faith is the same for us as well, only now in view of progressive revelation, the object of our faith is specifically our Lord Jesus Christ (Rom. 3:22; 4:23-25).

**Thot.** Salvation is by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone!

***Earnestly Contending, Pastor Dwight J. Oswald***