

Romans

Sundays at Sladebrook, April - June 2013

Introduction and Aim of this Teaching Series:

The book of Romans is perhaps the best known summary of Christian doctrine in the New Testament. Within its pages, the truth of God's Divine purposes for humanity and humanity's need to respond are revealed. The work of Christ is central to all that is taught in Romans with its focus on such fundamental doctrines as Justification, Righteousness, Election and Sanctification. These truths are not only key to understanding our faith, but essential if we are to share this gospel effectively with others.

The aim of this series is to grapple with these great themes that we might better understand what lies at the heart of the Christian message and our own lives. But more than that, that may we desire, as a result of these studies, to express the Christian life and share the Gospel in the ways Romans so clearly teaches so that God might be glorified in the lives of His people.

Each week - Reflecting on Romans Together:

Questions *There is so much in the book of Romans it would be impossible to remember everything! However, as part of our response to God's Word and as His people learning together, there will be a brief opportunity each week for the church family to ask questions at the end of each session.*

Each week - Responding to Romans Personally:

In:Sight - What have I learned? *Scripture is intended to illuminate. Things become clear when we allow the Word to speak. Meditate on each passage until the Word of God starts to speak, transforming our minds, changing our attitudes and affecting our lives.*

Heart:Felt - How do I feel? *God's Word should touch our emotions and enrich our relationships with God and each other. Pray that each week the Holy Spirit will enrich your relationship with Christ and with His Church.*

Life:Change - What am I going to do? *So you've heard the sermon now what?! The only way in which these studies will truly impact you and others is to apply practically God's Word in real life situations. So go and do!*

Romans

God's Righteousness Revealed

7. Accessing Abraham's Account

Why faith is fundamental

Romans 4v 1-25



“For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith...”
– Romans 1v 17

Sladebrook Evangelical Church

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Introduction:

One of the key concepts in Scripture is faith: “*Without faith it is impossible to please God.*” (Heb. 11v 6) “*the righteous will live by faith.*” (Hab. 2v 4) “*By grace we have been saved through faith...*” (Eph. 2v 8) Faith is fundamental to our understanding of God and His purposes! To go beyond mere knowledge or theory regarding God’s existence and purposes, we need to wade into deeper waters than human reasoning often allows. To embrace the gospel, we must heed these Scriptures and open our hearts to their Divine truth. Remember, “*... faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word about Christ.*” (Rom. 10v 17) Paul reminded the Romans that the gospel is not simply a matter of retaining Jewish ethics, but having total trust in Christ and the saving power of His cross, which alone can make us right for eternity.

Having highlighted the problem of unrighteousness and the dangers of self-righteousness, Paul now points to the way of righteousness. The Apostle has already challenged those who are happy to trust in what they can see and do, even if they are attempting to observe God-given ceremonies or laws. Man cannot hope to be declared righteous by such things, as they only expose and condemn him. Only by recognising our utter inability to be holy can we see the hope that lies beyond ourselves.

Paul focuses his attention on the example of Abraham; Israel’s first and finest example of righteousness. The Apostle demolishes any last notion that his works saved him. By heralding the great Patriarch’s need to trust in God alone, he dispels the idea that a man, even as great as Abraham, was made righteous by his actions. To compound his point, Paul mentions David, (another legendary Israelite figure) who also acknowledged his gratitude to the Lord for dealing with the sins which stood against him. Hebrews says: “*faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.*” (Heb. 11v 1) Ultimately, the only way to be sure and certain is to trust in Christ alone. Only then can we hope to receive His righteousness for ourselves and enjoy the eternal blessing that He brings.

**Key verses this week:**

“What does the Scripture say? “Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.” - Romans 4v 3 (Cf. Genesis 15v6)

ACCESSING ABRAHAM’S ACCOUNT: Why faith is fundamental

This week we shall look at Paul’s teaching on why we must have faith in God as opposed to trusting in works: Using the examples of Abraham and David, we shall see how these gospel truths apply to us.

Read: Romans 4v 1-25

- **Faith is Required: *it begins with belief*** - 4v1-8
Neither Abraham or David were justified before God by their works, rather, they were dependent on God alone to save them.
- **Faith is Revealed: *it shows in our lives*** - 4v 9-15
Rituals and regulations cannot make a man righteous, but true faith will be exhibited when a person desires to live in obedience to God.
- **Faith is Rewarded: *it leads us to blessing*** - 4v 16-25
Although it seemed impossible, by faith Abraham trusted God’s promise and received a lasting reward – a wonderful picture of what we have in Christ by faith.

**Reflecting on Romans Together:**

- *Are you a man or woman of faith? How does your faith show?*
- *Are there any obstacles in your life to living the life of faith?*
- *Is there something you are unwilling to trust God for?*
- *Where do you currently need to step out in faith?*
- *Do you have any questions about today’s study?*

Responding to Romans Personally:

- **In:Sight** - *What have I learned today from God’s Word?*
- **Heart:Felt** - *How does this truth make me feel?*
- **Life:Change** - *What is my response going to be this week?*