

Grace That Changes Everything

Romans 4:13–25 Faith That Trusts God's Promise

Let us pray: "May the words of my mouth and the meditation of our hearts be acceptable in Your sight, O Lord, our rock and our redeemer. Amen."

The theme that will guide us throughout the month of June is **Grace That Changes Everything**. Each Sunday we will journey through Paul's Letter to the Romans, focusing on the Epistle readings and discovering how God's grace transforms every part of our lives—from faith and peace to identity and freedom. Today we begin with Romans 4:13–25 under the theme, **"Faith That Trusts God's Promise."**

When Paul wrote his letter to the Christians in Rome, he was writing to people living at the center of the sphere's greatest empire.

Rome was a city built on power, achievement, status, wealth, military strength, and human accomplishment. The Romans believed that success came through strength. Many believed that security came through influence and position. Even among believers there were questions: How does a person become right with God? Through religious works? Through obedience to the law? Through human effort?

Into that environment Paul writes a surprising message. He points not to an emperor, a military victory, or human achievement. He points to an old man named Abraham.

Why Abraham? Because Abraham's story proves that God's promises are fulfilled not by human strength but by faith. Paul writes in verse 13: **"For the promise that he would inherit the world did not come to Abraham or to his descendants through the law but through the righteousness of faith."**

The foundation of our faith is not what we do for God. The foundation is what God has promised to do for us. This is also the foundation of our salvation. We are not saved because we have done enough, believed perfectly enough, obeyed faithfully enough or follow God's commandment consistently. We are saved because God has acted for us in Jesus Christ. Salvation is God's gift, received by faith.

First, God's promises are bigger than our circumstances.

Paul reminds us that Abraham faced impossible circumstances. His body was old. Sarah was beyond childbearing years. Everything visible suggested that God's promise could not happen.

We can easily relate to Abraham. As a congregation, we may sometimes look at ourselves and think, "We are aging. We are a small congregation. Our resources are limited." In our personal lives we may think, "I am not strong enough. I am not capable enough. I have too many failures. My situation will never change."

It is typical. We often evaluate ourselves by what we can see. We measure our future by our limitations. We place impossible barriers before us and conclude that nothing can be done. Yet verse 19 says Abraham, **"did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body."**

Notice that Abraham did not ignore reality. He saw the facts clearly. He knew the obstacles. Faith does not deny reality. Faith believes that God is greater than our reality. *Abraham saw obstacles. God saw possibilities.*

The promise was not dependent on Abraham's ability. It did not depend on what Abraham could achieve. It depended entirely on God's faithfulness. The same is true for us. God's work in our lives, in our church, and in our salvation does not depend on our strength. It depends on His grace. We do not have resources to save ourselves. But we have faith in Christ that saves us through Grace.

Second, faith is trust, not certainty.

Verse 20 tells us: **"No distrust made him waver concerning the promise of God."** Abraham did not know how God would accomplish His promise. He did not have a timetable. He did not have all the answers. What he had was trust.

Many people think faith means having every question answered. Biblical faith is different. Faith is trusting God's character when we cannot see God's plan. Job said by faith. "I do not know how this will unfold, but I know the One who holds my future." *Abraham trusted that God always keeps His word.*

That kind of faith speaks directly to our daily lives. It is true that the journey of faith is often marked by unanswered questions, delayed answers, and prayers that seem to echo in silence. We do not always know what tomorrow will bring.

Even among believers there are questions: How does a person become right with God? Through religious works? Through obedience to the law? Through human effort? And perhaps the deepest question of all: *Can I be certain that I am saved?*

But faith reminds us that God is already there. We may not understand His ways, but we can trust His promises. No matter what kind of question we have, one thing is crystal clear. We are already saved by grace in Jesus Christ.

Third, the same promise is ours in Christ.

Paul concludes by saying that Abraham's story was written not only for him but also for us. Verse 24 says that righteousness will be considered to us who believe in Him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead.

The God who fulfilled His promise to Abraham is the same God who raised Jesus from the grave.

The God who gave life where there was barrenness is the God who brought resurrection where there was death. *This is the heart of the gospel.*

Many of us evaluate ourselves harshly. We see our sins, our failures, our weaknesses, and our shortcomings. We may feel unworthy before God. We may wonder whether we have done enough or whether God could truly accept us.

Romans 4 reminds us that our standing before God does not rest on our performance. It is based on God's promise fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

Despite our spiritual weakness, we are saved by grace. Despite our failures, we are forgiven. Despite our sin, we are reconciled to God.

Jesus was **"handed over to death for our trespasses and was raised for our justification"** (Romans 4:25).

Because Christ died and rose again, we have peace with God. We do not need to earn His acceptance. We receive it through faith. And that same God continues to work in our lives today.

Our hope rests not in our strength, our plans, or our achievements. Our hope rests in God's promise fulfilled through Jesus Christ.

So what is the challenge for this week?

Each of us carries something we cannot control. A concern. A burden. An uncertainty. A situation without an obvious answer.

Rather than allowing fear to take the lead, let God's promise take the lead.

Each morning pray: *"Lord, I trust Your promise more than my fear."* Then take one step of faith instead of one step of worry. Allow faith to control our plans, strategy, courage, appointment. When we do that we will realize that God is the center of our lives.

Because faith that trusts God's promise is never trusting in wishful thinking. It is trusting in the God who keeps His word.

The God of Abraham. The God of Paul. The God who raised Jesus Christ from the dead. That God is our God.

And that changes everything. *Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.*