

Simply Christ
Gospel Newsletter
Sharing the simplicity that is in Christ

March 25, 2019

A HEART OF FAITH

One person's junk is another person's treasure. The things you may despise, another holds in high regard. This is certainly true with God. Jesus said, *"...that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God."* Luke 16:15. When a person begins to see things as God does, their sense of "true value" is completely changed. As Saul of Tarsus, Paul once viewed his natural lineage and religious works of the Law as his greatest possessions, but when he saw the glory of Christ, those things he once trusted in became as garbage in his own sight. Philippians 3:1-8.

When Paul said, *"Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness"* Romans 4:3, he was not saying God credited to Abraham something which was not actually true. He was reminding us that God views the attribute of "believing God" and "trusting in Him" to be greater value than any religious work. A "heart of faith," such as Abraham possessed, may not seem valuable to many people, but it has great value to God. Its value is such that God deems it to be righteousness. Consider how this *"righteousness"* of "faith" in the heart of Abraham affected his relationship with God.

The Bible says, *"By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went."* Hebrews

11:8. When a person believes and trusts in God, he can call them, send them, or lead them, and they will follow him.

God promised Abraham a child by Sarah, who was barren. The Bible says Abraham *"...staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God."* Romans 4:20. If God finds a person who believes and trusts in him, there is no limit to what God can do for them, in them, and through them for his glory.

The apostle said, *"By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called: Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead..."* Hebrews 11:17-19. When a person has a heart of faith like Abraham, God can ask anything of them, and they will freely give it to him.

Because Abraham *"believed in the Lord"* Genesis 15:6, God could say to him *"...a father of many nations have I made thee."* Genesis 17:5. If God finds a person who will *"believe Him"* as Abraham believed him, he can make them to be everything he has purposed them to be.

When we see, as God does, the true nature of "a heart of faith," we understand why God considers it to be righteousness. He values it far above sacrifices, religious works, and the keeping of ordinances, ceremonies, and commandments. A person can do any of those things and not even believe in God, but when God finds a person with a heart that "believes Him," and will "trust in Him," he has everything the person is and possesses.

The righteousness of having “a heart of faith” is a righteousness even a sinner can offer to God, but I promise you, if a sinner offers the “*righteousness of faith*” to God, they will be a sinner no longer! As the publican in the temple did, they also will go home justified! Luke 18:13-14. This “*righteousness of faith*” is the “*faith*” that gives us “*access into God’s grace!*” Romans 5:2.

The “*gift of righteousness*” Romans 5:17 we receive through redemption is different than the “*righteousness of faith.*” The “*righteousness of faith*” proceeds from our hearts and is received by God. The “*gift of righteousness*” proceeds FROM God and comes into our hearts. Paul calls this the righteousness “*...which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:*” Philippians 3:9. We can only receive this righteousness when we believe God as Abraham believed God. This righteousness changes everything that we are. It imparts unto us a new heart, a new spirit, and a new nature. It is the work of Christ within us, who died upon the cross to “*make many righteous!*” Romans 5:19.

Abraham “*died in faith*” without receiving the promises he truly longed for. Hebrews 11:13. He could only see Christ and the great redemption he would bring “*afar off.*” Yet anyone today who has the same “heart of faith” as Abraham, can receive every promise of redemption. There is no limit to what God will do in them. He will call them and they will come. He will give them the “unbelievable” promises of Christ, and they will not stagger at believing them. He will say, I give you the promised blessing of a new heart, a new nature, and a new life, and they will receive it. He will ask for their full surrender, and they will

freely give themselves unto him. He will speak through the gospel saying, "I have made thee a vessel of honor for my glory" and they will in every way "*...be to the praise of his glory!*" Ephesians 1:12.