

Sunday, March 5, 2023—Galatians 3:6-7 The Children of Abraham

### What is Faith?

- Before we deal with this difficult passage of Scripture, we first must remind ourselves about the definition of faith.
- Hebrews 11:1—standard definition of faith.
- We must always remember that God is a dispensationalist. He told different people different things during different times. Therefore, faith is believing what God said to you.
- Hebrews 11:7—by faith, Noah built the ark because that is what God told Noah to do. We cannot build an ark by faith today.
- Matthew 19:16-22—Christ told the rich young ruler two things were necessary if he wanted to inherit eternal life: 1) keep the commandments, 2) sell all that he had.
- How would the rich young ruler demonstrate his faith in what Christ told him? He would have kept the commandments and sold his possessions.
- We already know from our studies in the book of Galatians that today we are not required to keep the commandments to be justified. Faith in God believes the specific revelation that God has given to you.
- We are going to be looking at some interesting passages concerning the justification of Abraham and we need to keep this important definition of faith in mind as we do so.

### Galatians 3:6

- **Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.**
- In verses 1-5, Paul asks the Galatians a series of questions in order to make a point about how they were justified. In verses 6-9, Paul begins a discussion about Abraham to illustrate his point in verses 1-5.
- When Paul is talking here in Galatians 3 about men being justified by faith, he is not talking about a new principle, but an extremely old one.
- **Even as Abraham believed God**—the word “believed” is a verb that means “credited, assented to, as true,” according to Noah Webster’s *American Dictionary of the English Language*. Abraham assented unto and accepted as true what God told him i.e., he believed God.

- **and it was accounted to him for righteousness**—God took Abraham’s belief and “accounted” it to him for “righteousness.” The English word “accounted” means “esteemed, deemed, considered, regarded, valued” i.e., “accounted for,” according to Noah Webster. The Greek word, *logizomai* is a word of accounting. In the outline of Biblical Usage in the tools feature on Blue Letter Bible we read the following:
  - “This word deals with reality. If I reckon (*logizomai*) that my bank book has \$25 in it, it has \$25 in it. Otherwise, I am deceiving myself. This word refers more to fact than supposition or opinion.” ([BLB](#))
- It is a word of accounting. Consider the following usages examples from Romans 4.
  - Rom. 4:3—“counted”
  - Rom. 4:4—“reckoned”
  - Rom. 4:5—“counted”
  - Rom. 4:6—“imputeth”
  - Rom. 4:8—“impute”
  - Rom. 6:11—“reckon”
- Galatians 3:6—God “accounted” Abraham’s faith for “righteousness.” The word “righteousness” is related to justification and how a man may attain a state of approval before God. God took Abraham’s belief/faith and “accounted” it i.e., credited to him for a right standing before God.
- Genesis 15:6—is the verse Paul is quoting in Galatians 3:6?
- Romans 4:2-5—when Abraham believed God in Genesis 15, was he “justified” based upon his own works or by simply believing God?
- So, faith for Abraham in Genesis 15 did what God said. But God did not tell Abraham to do anything except believe. Is this not the same way we get justified today? Yes!

### **Galatians 3:7**

- **Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham.**
- **Know ye therefore that they which are of faith**—the verb “know” is in the indicative mood. Paul is commanding that the Galatians need to know the truthfulness of what his is saying. “Faith” is a noun in this verse. Those who have “believed” in verse 5 are “of faith” in verse 6.

There is connection between faith and belief. Please consider the following definitions of “faith” offered by Noah Webster:

- “Belief; the assent of the mind to the truth of what is declared by another, resting on his authority and veracity, without other evidence; the judgment that what another states or testifies is the truth. I have strong faith or no faith in the testimony of a witness, or in what a historian narrates.”
  - “The assent of the mind to the truth of a proposition advanced by another; belief, or probable evidence of any kind.”
  - “In theology, the assent of the mind or understanding to the truth of what God has revealed. Simple belief of the scriptures, of the being and perfections of God, and of the existence, character and doctrines of Christ, founded on the testimony of the sacred writers, is called historical or speculative faith; a faith little distinguished from the belief of the existence and achievements of Alexander or of Cesar.”
- **the same are the children of Abraham**—Paul makes a clear statement in this verse that those who are “of faith” are the children of Abraham.
  - Does this verse mean that we are spiritual Israel as much of professing Christendom believes? No. Nowhere does Paul teach that the Body of Christ replaced Israel.
  - Paul’s point is that we are Abraham’s spiritual children because we, too, have exercised faith in what God’s Word says to us. We cannot be the physical children of Abraham because that distinction is reserved for his physical descendants, that nation of Israel.