

Abraham: The Father of Faith, Part 2

A Study of the Book of Romans

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Key Truth: Through Abraham's faith, God produces a singular people for himself among those who are circumcised and those who are uncircumcised.

In Romans 4:9-12 Paul makes it clear that circumcision is not the doorway to salvation. If it was, then Abraham would have to have been circumcised before he was counted righteous by God (Genesis 15:6). Instead, it was the other way around. Likewise, for Christians, if you replace "circumcision" with any other work (being baptized, going to church, praying, feeding the hungry, giving financially) – any work that stands between you and Christ – it will be a barrier to salvation, rather than a doorway to salvation. This is not to say that circumcision – at least for the Jews – was bad. There was a purpose to circumcision. It was a sign of righteousness, not the channel for righteousness. Only faith in Jesus Christ is that true channel for righteousness. Abraham led the way.

DISCUSS

Read **Romans 4:9-12** and discuss with the group a statement or concept that stood out to you or impacted you in part 2 of the sermon entitled "**Abraham: The Father of Faith.**"

DIG IN

1. Blessed with or without Circumcision (Romans 4:9-11a)

What blessing is Paul talking about in verse 9? Why does that blessing depend on faith?

Why is it important that Abraham was circumcised after he believed? In what ways does that help us understand salvation today?

Read John 6:28-29: What is our only "work" leading to salvation? What does this "work" involve?

In what ways does Abraham's circumcision demonstrate the concept of justification *producing* works?

2. Righteous with or without Circumcision (Romans 4:11b-12)

According to verse 11, what is the purpose of circumcision? In what ways does this make Abraham the father of Gentile believers?

Why does walking in the footsteps of Abraham's faith (v. 12) do more to demonstrate faith among the Jews than simply being circumcised (see John 8:39-42, 56)?

Why would God want to separate people through circumcision in order to bring them together through faith (see Ephesians 2:11-18)? In what ways was Jesus counted "uncircumcised" so that we could keep the precepts of the law (Romans 2:26)?

DO

What lessons do you learn from these verses that you will take with you throughout the coming week?