

Romans 4:13~25

³⁸Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, *Master, we would see a sign from thee.*

Not an uncommon question...man has always been asking to “see proof” to the claims of scripture... These men are no different, they are simply asking to “see something tangible” to support the claims that he had just made. In the verses preceding up to this question, Jesus had in so many words “claimed” to be the Christ from God...

Their question could be put this way... Show us some proof... “*We’ll believe it when we see it...*”

Look at Jesus’ response...³⁹ An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign...

Jesus declares, that “seeking for *Tangible evidence*” manifest a “Wicked heart!”

T: Believing comes by “*Hearing*” not “*Seeing...*” This is something I want to take a few moments to develop... We need to understand what it means to “*Walk by faith and not by sight...*” as Paul stated in 2Corinthians 5. As Paul says here in Romans 1:17, the “*Just shall live by faith!*”

Remember the story in Luke 16... The **Rich man finding himself in Hell...pleaded with God...**

²⁷Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou would send him to my father’s house: ²⁸For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment.

²⁹Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.

³⁰And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent.

³¹And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.

In the early days of my Christian life, I struggled with understanding of that... I used to think, that if I saw a man come back from the dead that would make a believer out of me... But Christ makes it clear that it would not! Why is that?

“*Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by...WHAT?...the word of God.* (Romans 10:17)

I want you to *hear this...* “**Faith**” is a “**Result**” of the work of the *Word of God*, and the *Spirit of God* in the Human heart!”

Our “**Faith in God**” is not even **OUR faith!** The faith we have in God is the result of God...

(Ephesians 2) ⁸For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: ⁹Not of works, lest any man should boast.

(Romans 10:17) “*Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by...the word of God.* Paul made that statement, in the context of stressing the need for preaching... How shall they hear without a...What...PREACHER!

That’s why Paul says...“*God has chosen the “foolishness of preaching” to save them that believe.*”

The scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, *Master, we would see a sign from thee.*

...there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: ⁴⁰For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale’s belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the

earth. ⁴¹The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas *is* here.

What did he mean by...the “*Sign of the prophet Jonah?*”

⁴⁰For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale’s belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

Jesus told these men who asked for a “Sign” to look to the scriptures! That the scriptures held the “Signs” they were looking for to prove his claims to be the Son of God!

In this particular case, Jesus answered their question, by pointing to the “Sign” of Jonah, in that Jonah’s 3 days and night in the whale, was a “Sign” that pointed to a much greater reality... *Christ death, burial and resurrection!*

The “Scriptures” are filled with “Signs” that Point to the “Reality of Jesus Christ!”

(Genesis 22) The offering of Isaac... a “Sign...” **God offering up Christ...**

(Exodus 3) God’s speaking to Moses in a burning bush... a “Sign...” **God with man...**

(Exodus 12) The Blood on the “door post” a “Sign...” **The atoning blood of the Lamb of God.**

(Exodus 13) The offering of “a Lamb” for the all “Firstborn” males... a “Sign...” **God’s Lamb.**

One of my favorite being the “Sign” Jesus pointed Nicodemous too... ¹⁴*And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: ¹⁵That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.*

(Numbers 22) The Serpent on the pole... a “Sign...” (**Faith in Christ on the Cross...**)

³⁸The scribes and of the **Pharisees** asked... *Master, we would see a sign from thee.*

While the O.T. was full of signs that *supported his claims!*

Here in Romans 4, Paul points to another one of those “Signs” the “*Sign of Circumcision*”

(Genesis 17) Abraham’s circumcision, “Sign” of His Covenant with Abraham...

A sign that pointed to the means that God established to bring about salvation... The “*Removal of the flesh!*” **Cross**

Nowhere is that more clearly stated, as that in ...

(Colossians 2) ¹¹In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ:

(Galatians 6) ¹⁴But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world. ¹⁵For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision avails any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.

Earlier in Galatians 1:4, Paul explained the WILL of God... In that God sent Christ to deliver us from this present evil world... His means...the cross... The only thing able to separate us from the world unto God.

(Galatians 5) ²⁴And they that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.

(1John 2) If any man loves the World...the love of the father is not in him...

True Circumcision! **The “Circumcision of Abraham...”** ²⁸For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: ²⁹But he is a Jew, which is one

inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.

(Vs 13~15) ¹³For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, *was* not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law... but through the righteousness of faith. ¹⁴For if they which are of the law *be* heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect: ¹⁵Because the law works wrath: for where no law is, *there is* no transgression.

What an incredible statement and glorious truth!

Here Paul declares that God's promise to Abraham was "unconditional!"

In that, it was not based on Abraham or his children "KEEPING" their end of the bargain!

THANK GOD FOR THAT! Paul goes on to say, that if it were on those basis, we would be without HOPE! That if it were through the Law, then the contract would be rendered "*Null and Void.*" The contract would be dissolved, because the law only causes men to fail!

¹⁵Because the law works wrath: for where no law is, *there is* no transgression.

The only thing the law is good for, is too point out ones guilt, to condemn. If there were no rules, then we wouldn't be guilty of breaking them. But when rules are put in place, we realize we are breaking them...

(Romans 7) ⁷What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet. ⁸But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead. ⁹For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.

No one is justified by keeping the Law, but rather the Law served the sole purpose of condemning men, rendering them guilty before God! To point them to Christ!

(Vs 13) ¹³For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, *was* not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith...

T: "God's Promise" was not based on Abraham or his children "KEEPING" their end of the bargain... but it was based on God keeping His!

The only "Condition..." is, we that we put our "trust in God", believing Him to do what he said!

Is Christ Blood sufficient for your sins?

(Vs 16) Is a marvelous statement... ¹⁶Therefore *it is* of faith, that *it might be* by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all,

Paul goes on to reveal WHY God has established the means of salvation the way He did! Paul says, that God has made it that salvation comes by Faith, through Grace, for a particular reason...

What is that reason? Is it so, he would be glorified, that he would be praised by men... Even though that is true, and ultimately the result, that is not WHY he designed the plan the way he did...

What is the reason? ¹⁶Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace...

...to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed;

What's he mean by that?

T God has made it that salvation comes by Faith, through Grace...

So that the promise is available *to everybody*... Whether you be a Jew, or a Gentile...
Whether you be "*of the Circumcision*" or "*Uncircumcision!*"

Think about it...If salvation is only available to those who keep the law...who is it available too? **NOBODY!**

(Vs 16) Look at it again...¹⁶Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all,

...not to that only which is of the law, (**Who are the people of the law?**) The Jews...

...but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; (that has to do with believing Gentiles...)

You mean to say, that the "*Faith of Abraham*" was a "*Gentile Faith?*"

Wasn't Abraham a Jew?

No...Abraham was a "*Caldean Gentile*..." That is a shocker to many Jewish people by the way...
But he was a Caldean Gentile...

That's what is so marvelous about this passage... By using Abraham as the illustration of his message... Paul reminds the Jews; those "*who trust in the law*", those "*who trust in circumcision*"...three important truths about the one they call "Father Abraham."

- 1) He was justified in his "*Uncircumcision*"... (14 years before he was circumcised)
- 2) He was justified 430 years before the Law even came to be...
- 3) He was a "Gentile..."

Abraham illustrates, "*uncircumcised...believing Gentiles...*"

That's really exactly what verse 12 is saying...¹²*And the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had being yet uncircumcised.*

So Paul says look... By making salvation by Faith, through Grace...

God has made it available to everybody, whether you're of the law,(a Jew)...

...or whether you're like Abraham, just a believing Gentile!

Man is Justified by Grace, through Faith...

Read Vs 17~25...In Closing...