

Romans: Futile Faith versus Saving Faith

Romans 4:1-25

Romans 3:28 – [28] *For we hold that one is justified by faith apart from works of the law.*

Thesis Statement of Romans 4: Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness (Genesis 15:6).

The Characteristics of Futile Faith (v.1-15)

- It is futile to trust in your own works of righteousness (v.1-8, 13-15).
 - Whether those are positive acts (the deeds you have done as acts of obedience) (v.1-5, 13-15)...
 - ...Or negative acts (the things that we abstain from as acts of obedience) (v.6-8).
- It is futile to trust in a status symbol (v.9-12).

The Characteristics of Saving Faith (v.16-25)

- Trust in God, the Promise-Maker (v.16-22).

“Before we are in a position to believe God’s promises, we need to be sure of both his power (that he is able to keep them) and of his faithfulness (that he can be relied upon to do so).”

–John Stott

-Trust in God’s ability.

-Trust in God’s faithfulness.

2 Timothy 2:13 – [13] *If we are faithless, he remains faithful—for he cannot deny himself.*

“Faith always looks at the problems in light of the promises.” –John Stott

-Trust without sight.

- Trust in Christ, the Promised One (v.23-25).

-Trust in Jesus’ death for your sins.

-Trust in Jesus’ resurrection for your eternal life.

John 11:25 – [25] *“I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live.”*

Next Sunday (Easter Sunday)—Romans 5:1-11

Application

- How do we grow stronger in our faith?

-Don't merely pursue stronger faith; pursue God Himself.

-Focus on facts about God over and against focusing on the things that might impede your faith.

- Is my view of God limited by my life situation or shaped by God's Word?
- Do I spend more time dwelling on my circumstances than on God's character?
- Do I spend more of my mental capacity fearing future unknowns or rehearsing God's faithfulness?
- Do I spend more energy reacting to ever-changing circumstances or reflecting on God's unchanging promises?

-Realize that you cannot grow alone.

1) Christ the sure and steady anchor
In the fury of the storm
When the winds of doubt blow through me
And my sails have all been torn
In the suffering, in the sorrow
When my sinking hopes are few
I will hold fast to the anchor
It shall never be removed

2) Christ the sure and steady anchor
While the tempest rages on
When temptation claims the battle
And it seems the night has won
Deeper still then goes the anchor
Though I justly stand accused
I will hold fast to the anchor
It shall never be removed

3) Christ the sure and steady anchor
Through the floods of unbelief
Hopeless somehow, O my soul, now
Lift your eyes to Calvary
This my ballast of assurance
See his love forever proved
I will hold fast to the anchor
It shall never be removed

4) Christ the sure and steady anchor
As we face the wave of death
When these trials give way to glory
As we draw our final breath
We will cross that great horizon
Clouds behind and life secure
And the calm will be the better
For the storms that we endure

Christ the sure of our salvation
Ever faithful, ever true
We will hold fast to the anchor
It shall never be removed

-Matt Boswell & Matt Papa, "Christ the Sure and Steady Anchor"