

THE
P R O M I S E

He did not waver in unbelief at God's promise but was strengthened in his faith
and gave glory to God

Romans 4:20:

Romans – Chapter 4

Doctrine of Justification

(Job 9:2 “...how can a man be righteous before God?”)

1. Sovereignty of God – Rom. 8:33

“Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who **justifies.**”

2. Without a Cause by Grace – Rom. 3:24

“and all are **justified** freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.”

3. By Blood of Christ – Rom. 5:9

“Since we have now been **justified** by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God’s wrath through him!”

4. By Christ’s Obedience - Rom. 5:19

“so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made **righteous.**”

5. Resurrection of Christ – Rom. 4:25

“He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our **justification.**”

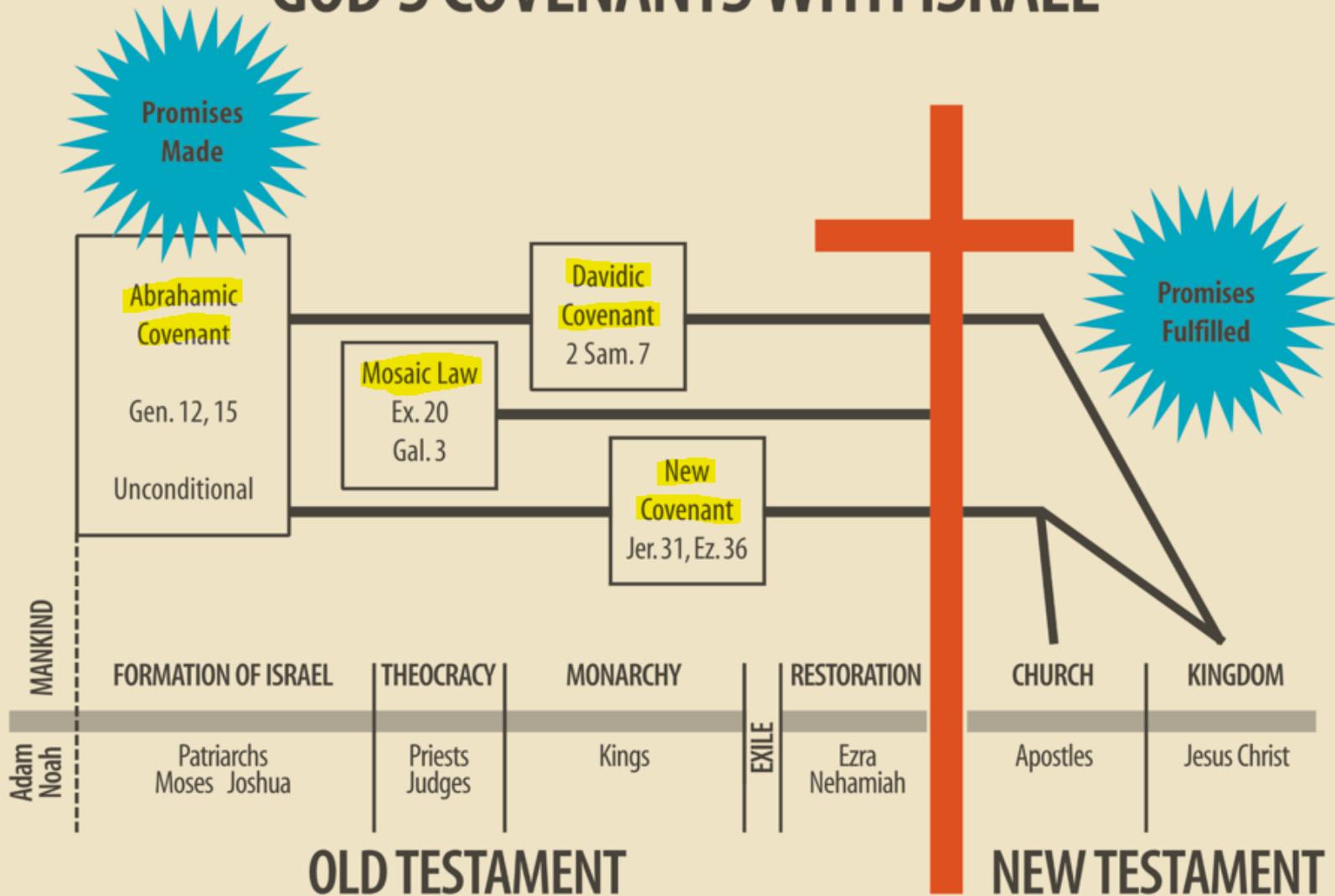
6. Work of the Holy Spirit – 1 Cor. 6:11

7. By Faith in Christ – Gal. 2:16

“**justified** by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law”

8. Evidence is to be found in our Works - James 2:24

GOD'S COVENANTS WITH ISRAEL



God's Promises

Abrahamic Covenant

This **unconditional** covenant, first made to Abraham in Genesis 12:1-3, promised God's blessing upon Abraham, to make his name great and to make his descendants into a **great nation**. The covenant also promised blessing to those who blessed Abraham and cursing to those who cursed him. Further, God vowed to **bless the entire world** through Abraham's seed. Circumcision was the sign that Abraham believed the covenant (Romans 4:11). The fulfillment of this covenant is seen in the history of Abraham's descendants and in the creation of the nation of Israel. **The worldwide blessing came through Jesus Christ, who was of Abraham's family line.**

Mosaic Covenant

This **conditional** covenant (Sinai covenant), found in Deuteronomy 11 and elsewhere, promised the Israelites a **blessing for obedience and a curse for disobedience**. Much of the Old Testament chronicles the fulfillment of this cycle of judgment for sin and later blessing when God's people repented and returned to God. Sacrifices and offerings were prescribed for sins, **The purpose of the Law, says Paul, was to make people aware of their inability, so that when Jesus Christ came, they would recognize their need for Him.**

Davidic Covenant

2 Sam. 7:8-17, promises the **future Kingdom of Christ** would be "born of the seed of David according to the flesh" (Rom. 1:3) (also Jer. 23:5; Is. 9:7, 11:1; Luke 1:32; Rev. 3:7). This is an **unconditional covenant** (promise/contract) made between God and David through which God promises David and Israel that the **Messiah (Jesus Christ) would come from the lineage of David and the tribe of Judah and would establish a kingdom that would endure forever.**

All 3 Old Testament Covenants Fulfilled by Jesus Christ

New Covenant: the promise that God made with humanity that He will forgive sin and restore fellowship with those **trust in Jesus Christ's shed blood** on the cross as the final atonement (Mark 14:24). The Old Covenant was written in stone, but the New Covenant is written on our hearts. (Deut. 29:4; Jer. 31:31, 33; Ezek. 36:26, 27; Heb 8)

What is Faith

- **Faith** exercises itself as in the case of Abraham, by **believing God's Promises.**
- God had said many things to Abraham, and he believed them all.
- **Saving Faith** (faith that Justifies) results in **believing God's Promises concerning His Son, Jesus Christ, as presented in the Word of God.**

Romans 4 Overview

Abraham Justified by Faith

- Satan's primary strategy is to create confusion and error in regard to the doctrine of Salvation.
- Context of Rom. 4 is it continues the discussion of 3:27-31. but now takes the theological argument and uses a real person to illustrate his point.
- Paul makes Abraham the star witness, and makes **5 arguments that justification is by faith alone** to refute the common view that Abraham was justified by works.
 - 1. Theological** (4:1-5) – saved by faith, since he was actually unrighteous based on merit
 - 2. Biblical Interpretation** (1) Romans 4:3 explained by Gen. 15:6 (Abraham accounted righteous); & (2) Romans 4:7-8 explained by Psalm 32: 1-2
 - 3. Historical** (4:9-12) (covenants; circumcision came after Gen 15:6)
 - 4. Logical** (4:13-17a) (if works, then Abraham's promise would be contingent on an impossible condition)
 - 5. Experiential** (4:17b-25)

Romans 4:1-4

Abraham Justified by Faith

- **4** What then shall we say that Abraham our father has found according to the flesh? ² For if Abraham was justified by works, he has *something* to boast about, but not before God.
- ³ For what does the Scripture say? “**Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.**”
- ⁴ Now to him who works, the wages are not counted as grace but as debt.

Romans 4:1-8

Abraham Justified by Faith

(Theme 4:1-8: Abraham is Justified by Faith, not Works)

- **Paul choses Abraham to highlight** because he lived 430 years before the Old Mosaic Covenant was established, and Abraham was **revered by Jews** as the father of the Jewish people who was thought to have obeyed the Tora in advance and was **the most righteous man ever**.
- Jews interpreted Gen. 15:6 (Abraham believed God and it was accounted to him as righteousness) through the lens of Gen. 17 (circumcision) and Gen. 22 (offering of Isaac), meaning he was considered righteous **because he obeyed God**. Paul turns this argument upside down and puts full priority on Gen. 15:6 (Gal. 3:6-7; Rom. 4:11; John 8:56; **Heb 11:8-19**)
- When Abraham received God's Unconditional Promises, he left his homeland and his friends in Faith and Obedience and began the long journey. **But Abraham disobeyed God in many instances and therefore was not righteous based on works** (bringing his father, nephew Lot, going to Egypt during famine instead of trusting God, lying to Pharaoh about his wife being his sister, committing adultery with Hagar.) **However, Abraham always came back to God in Faith.**

Examples of Abraham's Faith – Hebrews 11

⁸ **By faith Abraham**, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, **obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going.** ⁹ **By faith** he made his home in the promised land like a **stranger in a foreign country**; he lived in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. ¹⁰ **For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God.**

¹¹ **And by faith** even Sarah, who was past childbearing age, was **enabled to bear children because she considered him faithful who had made the promise.** ¹² And so from this one man, and he as good as dead, came descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as countless as the sand on the seashore.

¹³ All these people were still living by faith **when they died. They did not receive the things promised**; they only saw them and welcomed them from a distance, admitting that they were foreigners and strangers on earth.

¹⁴ People who say such things show that they are looking for a country of their own. ¹⁵ If they had been thinking of the country they had left, they would have had opportunity to return. ¹⁶ Instead, **they were longing for a better country—a heavenly one.** Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them.

¹⁷ **By faith Abraham, when God tested him, offered Isaac as a sacrifice.** He who had embraced the promises was about to sacrifice his one and only son, ¹⁸ even though God had said to him, “It is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned.” ¹⁹ **Abraham reasoned that God could even raise the dead**, and so in a manner of speaking he did receive Isaac back from death.

Romans 4:1-8

Abraham Justified by Faith

(Theme 4:1-8: Abraham is Justified by Faith, not Works)

- Abraham means “Father of Many” yet he waited in FAITH until he was 99 to have Isaac!!
- In response to Abraham’s faith in God’s Promises, despite his regular disobedience, it was accounted to him as righteousness (he was Justified or saved—his sin was **imputed** to Christ, and Christ’s righteousness **imputed** to him.)

Romans 4:3/Gen. 15:6 – KEY WORD

Imputed=Accounted=Credited=Counted

Mentioned 10 times in Chapter 4 alone!

A bookkeeping record is kept by God on us- at least 4 Books

1. Book of Life – population roll – **Rev. 20:12**
2. Lambs Book of Life – record of those who are chosen – **Rev. 20:15**
3. Book of our Thoughts, Words & Deeds – Mal. 3:16; Matt 12:36; Matt 6:20; Heb. 6:10
4. Personal Record of Each Person

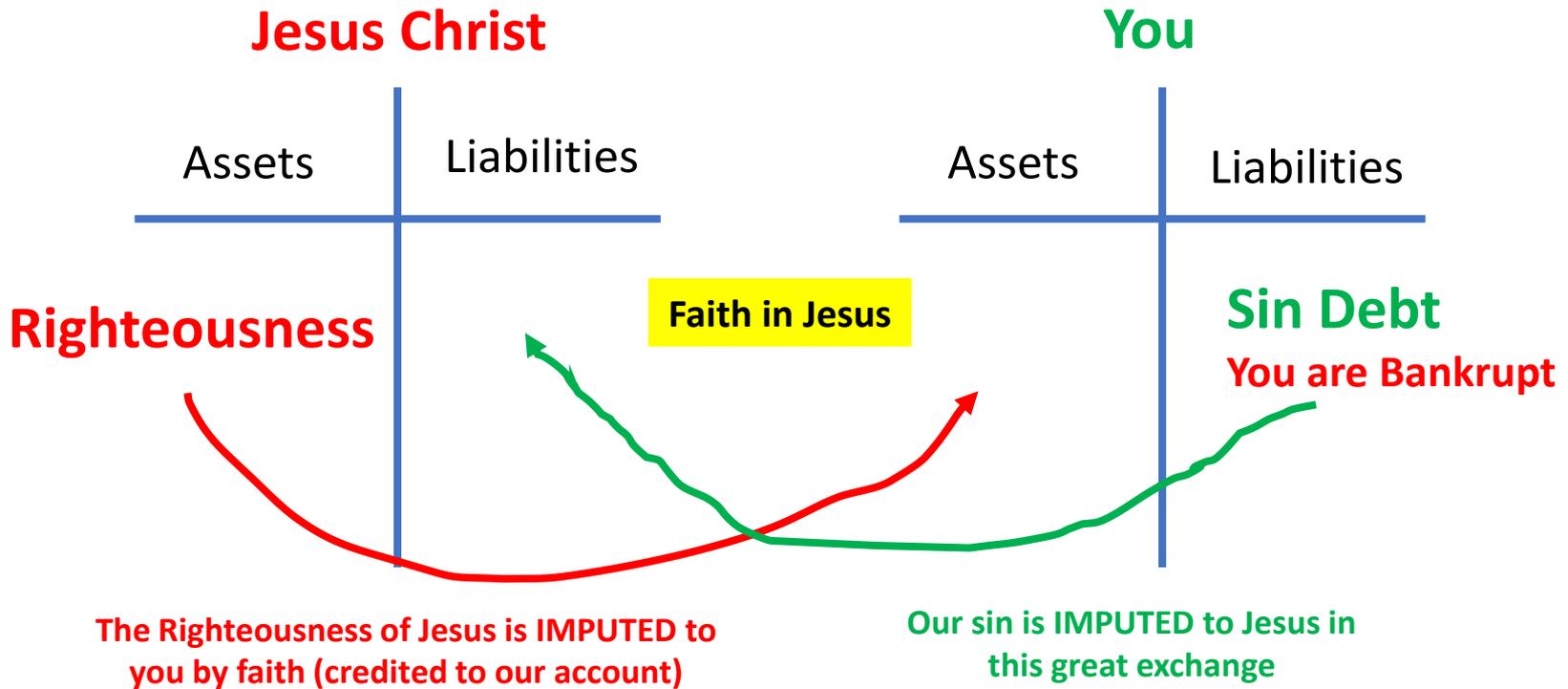
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WH-Wc_Kehms– Song: There is Record Book – **No one on Earth will remember your “legacy” only God will.**

- On the **liability** side is the **debt of all your sin** and you have no assets since all your efforts are false currency to God
- The only **asset** you may have is **Righteousness Imputed** or given to you by God Himself for trusting in Jesus Christ. It’s like getting an undeserved deposit (Grace) in your bank account that pays all your debt and leaves you with a large asset (Eternal Life).(Song: “Jesus Paid it All”)

Note: God also records our tears (Ps 56:8); Hairs on head (Matt 10:30)

Righteousness Analogy 3

Imputation Principle = The Heart of Salvation Doctrine



2 Corinthians 5:21

“For He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”

Why Works are not Counted as Righteousness

- If man were able to save himself through self-righteous works, then salvation **would not be a gift of God's GRACE, but it would be a WAGE that is DUE (like when you work and get paid, it is not gift but a wage you earned)**, and God is no one's debtor (but we are debtors to Him – see Matt. 18:21-35). This is a fact and is logical. Also Vineyard Workers Parable.
- Other reasons works cannot save man:
 - we are incapable of reaching the standard of righteousness demanded;
 - there still would be no atonement for forgiveness of sins; and
 - this would nullify Christ's sacrifice on the Cross & God's glory

Isaiah 64:6 “But we are all like an unclean *thing*,
And all **our righteousnesses are like filthy rags;**”

Romans 4:5

God ONLY justifies the “ungodly”

- Self-confessed sinners who reach out from a convicted heart in faith to receive God’s free, unmerited gift of salvation
- “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I did not come to call *the* righteous, but sinners, to repentance.” Mark 2:17
- **Questions to Ponder:**
 - (1) Why do you think you are going to heaven (it better not include things you’ve done!)
 - (2) What about the murderer and adulterer (i.e. King David), are their sins any different than yours when it comes to justification (Rom. 3:22-23 “there is no difference, all have sinned and fallen short”)

Romans 4:6-8 – King David

- ⁶ just as David also describes the blessedness of the man to whom **God** imputes **righteousness apart from works**:
- ⁷ “Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven,
And **whose sins are covered**;
- ⁸ Blessed is the man to whom the **LORD shall not impute sin.**”

Romans Quotes directly from Psalm 32:1-2

Romans 4:6-8

David is Second Witness

- Romans 4 is primarily focused on proving that even in the OT, Abraham was not justified by works, but by faith.
- Now Paul invokes Psalm 32:1-2 to quote the great king David, almost as a second witness to this fact.
- This Psalm is written after David's adultery with Bathsheba and his murder of her husband (2 Sam. 11).
- Despite the enormity of his sin and absence of personal merit, David knew the blessing of imputed righteousness.

Romans 4:9-17

Abrahamic vs. Mosaic Covenant

(Theme 4:9-17: Abraham is Justified by Grace, not Law)

Historical Background & Context

Traditional view was that Abraham was the father of those who obeyed the Torah by obeying the command of circumcision.

- **4:9** – Righteousness/forgiveness of sin applies to both **Jew** (“circumcised”) & **Gentiles** (“uncircumcised”) based on faith.
- **4:10-12** – Abraham was accounted righteous by faith (Gen 15:6) 14 years before the command of circumcision (Gen 16:16 Abraham was 86, Gen. 17:1-11 Abraham was 99 when commanded to be circumcised), and 430 years (Gal 3:17) before the Law of Moses was given, providing **historical and chronological evidence** that circumcision was not the basis of faith, but only the sign that faith had occurred (**like baptism today or any other ordinance/sacrament**).

Romans 4:13-25

- **13 For the promise that he would be the heir of the world was not to Abraham or to his seed through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.** ¹⁴ For if those who are of the law *are* heirs, faith is made void and the promise made of no effect, ¹⁵ because the law brings about wrath; for where there is no law *there is* no transgression.
- **16 Therefore *it is* of faith that *it might be* according to grace, so that the promise might be sure to all the seed, not only to those who are of the law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all** ¹⁷ (as it is written, “I have made you a father of many nations”) in the presence of Him whom he believed—God, who gives life to the dead and calls those things which do not exist as though they did; ¹⁸ who, contrary to hope, in hope believed, so that he became the father of many nations, according to what was spoken, “So shall your descendants be.” ¹⁹ And not being weak in faith, he did not consider his own body, already dead (since he was about a hundred years old), and the deadness of Sarah’s womb. **20 He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God, ²¹ and being fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform. ²² And therefore “it was accounted to him for righteousness.”**
- ²³ Now it was not written for his sake alone that it was imputed to him, ²⁴ but also for us. **It shall be imputed to us who believe in Him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, ²⁵ who was delivered up because of our offenses, and was raised because of our justification.**

Romans 4:13-17

God's Promise to Abraham

- **V.13** – Logical argument – based on v.9-12, Abraham is the father of all those who have faith in Christ (“seed” of Abraham), meaning both Jews & Gentiles.
- **V.14-15** – Righteousness by Faith or Works (Law) are not compatible since the law is impossible to keep – if by the Law, then the promise of the new Covenant would be rendered void since making a promise contingent on an impossible condition nullifies it. This is Logical
- **V16-17** – Since the promise to Abraham is based on Faith and grace, both Jews and Gentiles can have the righteousness of God. God's promise to make Abraham a father of many nations (Rom 17; Gen 17:5) has failed if it's rooted in the Law of Moses, since no one can obey the whole Law, but if it's based on faith, then all can be saved. This is logical.

Main Truths of Rom. 4:9-17

1. Gospel of Christ was anticipated in God's covenant with Abraham in that it is based on Faith (Gen 15:6). Therefore those whose faith in Christ alone for salvation are the fulfillment of the promise to Abraham.
2. This is in contrast to the Mosaic covenant which is legalistic, exclusive and impossible to keep. What then is its purpose? To convict mankind of its sin (Rom 3:20) and thereby drive people to the gospel of God's grace in Christ.
3. The Abrahamic covenant (not the Mosaic covenant) contains the most realistic hope for restoring Israel and the conversion of Gentiles, since its basis of faith foreshadows the new covenant.

Romans 4:12

The Steps of Faith

1. Separation

- From the world – (John 15:19) and unbelievers. We are to be strangers and pilgrims (Heb 11:13, 1 Peter 2:11). “Be ye Separate” (1 Cor. 6:14-18).
- Separation from (1) Worldly pleasures; (2) Worldly Alliances such as business & marriage; (3) Unbelievers. It’s not hard to deny yourself something you don’t want.
- Abraham left his Home in obedience, so should we.

2. Dedication to God

- Deny Ourselves – Separation from Sin – Sanctification – if we refuse to change our life in obedience, there is no evidence of salvation.

The person used by God must “walk in the steps of faith of Abraham” Rom. 4:12

Romans 4:17b-25

Faith, Abraham & the Christian

(Theme 4:17b-25 Abraham is Justified by Divine Power, not Human Effort)

Abraham's faith in God's Promise

that he would be the father of
many nations
(4:17-22)

Christian's faith in God's Promise

that justification is based on Jesus'
atoning death & resurrection
(4:23-25)

Object of Faith

"Against all Hope"* v18, he
believed in **God** 1) Resurrection;
2) Creation & 3) Procreation

Christian's **faith** is in the **God** that
can do **the impossible** * – raise
Jesus from the dead (v.24b)

Source of Faith

Promise of God (v.20-21)
(believing the Promise is the key!!!
Of the 3 Covenants!) John 8:56, Gal 3:16

Promise of God (v.25) that
Jesus atoned for our sins – the
promise of our Salvation!

Result of Faith

Justification apart from works
to the Glory of God (v.22)

Justification apart from works
to the Glory of God (v.24-25)

* Mark 10:27 "With men it is impossible, but not with God, for with God all things are possible." Faith isn't in faith itself, but in God and based on Facts.

Saving Faith of Abraham

1. He believed what appeared to be impossible (v18)
 - He expected something that had been promised
2. He was not weak in faith (v19)
3. He didn't worry about his own weakness, his body was as good as dead at 100 years old (v.19)
4. He didn't worry about circumstances outside of his control – Sarah having a dead womb (v.19)
5. He did not waiver in unbelief but grew strong in faith (v20) (because in v17 he believed God was the **creator** and had the **power to give life to the dead - Heb 11:17**)
6. Giving glory to God, that is the key (v20)
7. Convinced that the promise would come true (v21)
8. He was credited with divine Righteousness (v22)