

"THIS BLESSEDNESS"
Romans 4:9-15

INTRODUCTION:

A. Paul has written of the great blessings that come to those who believe God and are thus saved by grace.

- 1) There are four listed
- 2) vs. 6, 7 and 8

B. Paul has some questions to answer

- 1) On whom does this blessedness come?
- 2) How is it reckoned?
- 3) What is its sign?

I. This Blessedness, On Whom May it Come?

A. Does it come on the circumcised? vs. 9

- 1) vs. 9a
- 2) "Now does this happiness come to the Jews only? Does it come to the heathen?"
- 3) "We say Abraham's faith was credited to him as righteousness."

B. Under what circumstances did it come to Abraham? vs. 10

- 1) "reckoned" = logizomai = "imputed"
- 2) When did he become righteous?
- 3) Before his circumcision!

II. His Circumcision Was a Sign That He Possessed This Blessedness.

A. It followed after vs. 11a

- 1) "sign" = semeion = "a sign by which anything is designated, distinguished, or identified"
- 2) "seal" = sphrgis = "that which authenticates"
- 3) "and he was afterward given the mark of circumcision as a stamp of God's acknowledgement of the uprightness he had before he was circumcised."

B. This "sign" was for the uncircumcised vs. 11b

- 1) "that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also:"
- 2) Abraham was "saved" before circumcision. This means that we who are not "Jews" may have these blessings imputed to us.

C. Abraham's faith before circumcision made Him the Father of
All who walk in His steps. vs. 12

- 1) "He is the father of circumcision to those who are merely not circumcised."
- 2) "but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had being yet circumcised."
- 3) "walk" = stoicheo = a well-known military term meaning strictly "to march in file"
- 4) "steps" = "footsteps", "track"

III. God's Promise Concerning This Blessedness Was Based on
Faith, Not the Law. vs. 13

A. "For 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."

- 1) "promise" = epaggelia = "a declaration made on account of something"
- 2) "heir of the world" = kleronomos = "one who has a portion", "he who has the inheritance"
- 3) Paul probably has the 1,000 Kingdom in mind
- 4) "The promise to Abraham and his seed that he should inherit the world came not by law, Con. but because of justification by faith."

IV. This Blessedness Must Be By Faith For It Cannot Come By Law
vs. 14-15

A. "For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is void, and the promise made of none effect."

- 1) "void" = kenoo = "to empty", The perf. emphasizes a state or condition brought about by a previous result.
- 2) "of none effect" = katargeo = "to render inoperative"

B. "Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there is no transgression."

- 1) "worketh" = katergazomai = "to work down", hence, "to achieve, effect"
- 2) "wrath" = orge = "punishment", "revenge"
- 3) Because the law brings down punishment, not blessing.

C. "for where no law is there is no transgression"

- 1) "transgression" = parabasis = "a stepping aside, as from right"
- 2) "for where no law exists, no breach of it is possible"

For where no law is &c. This is a general principle; a maxim of common justice and of common sense. Law is a rule of conduct. If no such rule is given and known, there can be no crime. Law expresses what may be done, and what may not be done. If there is no command to pursue a certain course, no injunction to forbid certain conduct, actions will be innocent. The connection in which this declaration is made here, seems to imply that as the Jews had a multitude of clear laws, and as the Gentiles had the laws of nature, there could be no hope of escape from the charge of their violation. Since human nature was depraved, and men were prone to sin, the more just and reasonable the laws, the less hope was there of being justified by the law, and the more certainty was there that the law would produce wrath and condemnation. Barnes, page 109

V. Do You Possess, "This Blessedness"?