

Romans 4 Who Owes Who(m)?

11/1/09 - The Exchange

- I. Running start
 - A. 1:16-17
 - B. 2 No basis for self righteousness, we do the same things
 - C. 3 All, Jews and Gentiles, law or not, are sinners. Jump to HI. God's righteousness is only accessed through Jesus.
 - D. 4 God's righteousness is imputed to us by faith.
 - E. Paul is going to say the same thing in different ways in order to get his point across. In other words, he's going to repeat himself to make sure he is understood. That is to say, for emphasis, he is going to be redundant. Repeatedly.
- II. 4:1-8
 - A. 4:1-5 Abraham
 1. 4:1 Reword - What then shall we say that Abraham our father according to the flesh has found? Ancestor of Jews only? Nope. He himself was a Gentile buy definition, pre Hebrews.
 2. 4:2 Even if Abe had done it all right, it still wouldn't have fixed the problem. It isn't what we do, it's what we are. 3:10-18.
 3. 4:3
 - a) Go to the context, Genesis 15:1-6
 - (1) Just won a huge victory, blessed by Melchizedek.
 - (2) From the beginning, God promised him offspring. It was already "too late" and getting later. Promise?
 - (3) Side note. God speaking, us hearing and obeying, life in the Spirit.
 - b) account/impute - logizomai. 11 times in Rom. 4, 40 times in the NT, 17 times in Romans. Needs attention.
 - (1) To put together in the mind. To count. To acknowledge what is already real, not supposition. To "give credit where credit is due." Accountant. Balance checkbook.
 - (2) God logizomaid righteousness to Abe.
 - (3) Faith is the only thing you can do when there is nothing you can do. Could Abe do anything? No.
 - (4) The situations God puts us in where it feels like there is nothing we can do isn't Him abandoning us, it's an opportunity for what we should do in the first place - have faith. Has the idea that "God is with me/us" come to equal "He is making it so I can do it on my own?" Backwards.
 4. 4:4 You are a day laborer. Start of the day you tell the boss you are going to work 8 hours. You owe him because of your promise. End of the day, you worked the 8 hours, who owes who? The boss owes you. The boss pays you. After you have worked does he owe you anything? No. You do this all year. End of the year, doe he owe you anything? No. He gives you bonus. Is that debt or grace? Grace.

- 5. 4:5 Paul is contrasting works and faith. But what about James 2:14-24? Luther wanted James out of the NT! Not works to earn, but to demonstrate. Fruit tree. Doesn't do to become, does naturally. If no fruit, not that kind of tree.
- B. 4:6-8 David. Paul is using another example of the same concept, an anti-example. Not impute, not logizomai what is real. Psalm 32.
- III. 4:9-15 The point is the contrast between law/works and grace/faith. Righteousness is imputed to those who have faith, not the law/works.
- IV. 4:16-25
 - A. 4:16-22 Faith based on a promise. Again, God speaking, relationship, the Spirit.
 - B. 4:23-25 Our predicament and the context of Paul's run here is who is worthy of salvation? Who owes who(m)? The gospel. Our reality. Nothing we can do about our offenses or our need for justification. Faith is the only thing you can do when there is nothing you can do.
- V. Trying to get God's attention the wrong way?
 - A. Trying to get God to notice us, either on our own merits or compared to the merits of others (jump to HI), in effect thinking we can get Him to owe us something.
 - B. You want to get God's attention? Psalm 51:16-17.
 - C. Begins with HS illumination, conviction of sin, righteousness, judgment. Repentance, relationship, reality. Ps. 32:11.