

Introduction: Who are our heroes in the faith?

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- Martin Luther (on the eve of the Diet of Worms)

“Before I was married the bed was not made for a whole year and became foul with sweat...There is a lot to get used to the first year of marriage...One wakes up in the morning and finds a pair of pigtails on the pillow which were not there before.”

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Main Point: We are called by God to share the faith of _____ so that we might also trust in God’s _____ in the Gospel and to thereby be blessed along with him.

Galatians 3:6-9

- Paul exhorts the Galatians to _____ what his quotation from Genesis means for them. (vv. 6-7)

(1) The passage he quotes from is one of the most important in all of Scripture.

Genesis 15:6 in Context

- Discouraged after nearly 10 years in the promised land, Abraham expressed his disappointments to the Lord.
- The Lord gave Abraham a visual illustration of the truth of His promises and reiterated them to him.
- Abraham’s response was to believe God’s promises and for his faith to be counted as righteousness.
- God then bound Himself to Abraham with an unconditional covenant.

Like Abraham, the Galatian believers had _____ God’s promises and responded with _____!

(2) The Jewish false teachers had likely used Abraham as an _____ to the Galatians in calling them to place themselves under the Law.

“...in Jewish writings there is a repeated insistence that Abraham’s faith referred to in Gen. 15:6 must always be coupled with Abraham’s acceptance of circumcision in the covenant (Gen. 17:4-14), so that the two matters of believing and keeping the covenant must be consistently brought together when one speaks of the righteousness of Abraham...For Judaism, then, trust in God and obedience to the law were inseparable.” - Richard Longenecker

(3) In view of this OT passage, the Galatians should _____ that they are sons of Abraham.

“Know then that it is those of faith who are the sons of Abraham.”

- The “know” is an imperative. The Galatians believers should rightly understand Gen. 15:6 and its picture of justification by faith apart from works of the Law over and against the Jewish false teachers.

“those of faith” →

“sons of Abraham”

- Similar designations are used throughout Scripture, but only in one instance does it refer to race/ethnicity (Acts 13:26. In the Gospels, it refers primarily to those within Israel who are exhorted to be properly related to God spiritually. Jesus uses the phrase in relation to Zacchaeus’ salvation (Luke 19:9).

“sons of Abraham” : These who are justified by faith are not “the sons of Abraham” (definite), which could be construed to mean they have replaced Jews in this category of existence, nor are they “any sons of Abraham” (indefinite), with little to no emphasis upon how they fit within that group. Rather, they are “sons of Abraham” (qualitative) in that they exhibit the character traits of those who are indeed spiritual sons of Abraham, defined by background and current context as those who exercise faith towards God.” – Michael Burer

- Those who are of faith are connected to Abraham and thus to _____.

“The assertion of v. 7 is meant to remind the Galatians of the common ground they already share with Abraham, quite apart circumcision and the Mosaic Law.” – Ben Witherington III

Key Point: Abraham’s life presents to us a _____ example of faithfulness and that should cause us to rejoice in the doctrine of _____ by faith alone.

- Paul then explains more about how the Galatians have come to this privileged _____. (vv. 8-9)

(1) He describes how it was always God's _____ to justify the Gentiles.

"And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith..."

- The personification of Scripture is intended to draw the closest of relationships between it and its _____.

"foreseeing"—προοράω (prooraō)—to see in advance; to anticipate

- In the Word of God spoken to Abraham, there was _____ into what He intended to accomplish in Christ.

(2) Specifically, the Gospel was _____ to Abraham.

"...preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham"

- The good news about God saving the Gentiles was spoken to Abraham long before it was accomplished through Christ.

προεαγγελίζομαι (proeuangelizomai)—to proclaim good news in advance

(3) Paul offers a quotation that combines elements of numerous passages from Genesis in order to make his point.

"saying, 'IN YOU SHALL ALL THE NATIONS BE BLESSED.'"

- This is a reference to the _____ Covenant.

Genesis 12:1-3

- The initial promises of God were _____ (vv. 12:1,2b,3a), _____ (v. 2a), and _____ (v. 3b)
- The covenant was ratified with Abraham in Genesis 15 with particular emphasis on his offspring and the land promised to them (vv. 18-20).
- The key promises of God to Abraham in the covenant were _____, _____, and _____.

This covenant was unconditional and unilateral, meaning that it us up to God alone to see it is _____!

How was the Gospel "preached beforehand" to Abraham?

1. Abraham was justified in God's sight by _____ with _____ (Gen. 15:6).
2. Abraham saw the Gospel pictured in God's provision of a _____ for Isaac (Gen. 22:10-14).
3. Abraham was told of the coming of one specific _____ of his (Gen. 22:17-18) who would make possible the fulfillment of God's covenant promises to him.

(4) Paul highlights the "_____" portion of the covenant to help explain the Galatian's relationship to Abraham.

"So then, those who are of faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith."

- The word "blessed" is in the _____ tense, indicating the reality of the Galatians' current experience of God's goodness to them in Christ.

- In Christ, the Galatians have become partakers in the universal blessings of the Abrahamic covenant.

"His point is that there is a tangible, spiritual connection between what God said to Abraham before and what is taking place now in believing Gentiles." - Michael Burer

Key Point: Father Abraham had many sons...and ____ am one of them and so are _____.

Paul's Message to the Galatians

The Galatians should understand that, as Gentiles, they do not need to come under the Law to received the blessings of God promised to Abraham and his descendants because they already participate in these blessings through the Gospel.

Concluding Thoughts

1. Looking to Abraham's example encourages us to live _____ lives of faith. (Heb. 11:9,17-19)

2. Looking to Abraham's example encourages us look with hope to the _____. (Heb. 11:10; 13:12-15)

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