

SERMON OUTLINE

SERMON TITLE: How to Be Strong in the Faith

SERMON REFERENCE: Romans 4:16-25

LWF SERMON NUMBER: #2052

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1) INTRODUCTION

- a) God looks for the stamp of faith on our lives.
- b) When God called Abraham, He told Abraham that all of the nations of the world would be blessed through him.
 - i) Genesis 12:2-3
 - ii) God did not want to make the Jewish nation simply a reservoir of blessing.
 - (1) He wanted to make them a channel of blessing and that through them, all the nations of the world would be blessed.
 - iii) God also wants each of us to be a channel of blessing.
 - (1) As God made Abraham a blessing, God will make us a blessing.
 - (a) God made Abraham a blessing by faith.
- c) The Scripture that we will study today talks about Abraham's faith.
 - i) The Bible says that it was a strong faith.
- d) Romans 4:16-25
 - i) This passage is speaking about our relationship to God.
 - ii) "Quickeneth" means to bring the dead to life.
 - iii) "And calleth those things that were not as though they were" means that God brings something out of nothing.
 - iv) What happened to Abraham so long ago is an example and a lesson to us.
- e) We cannot please God without faith.
 - i) Hebrews 11:6
 - ii) If we please God, it doesn't matter whom we displease.
 - iii) If we displease God, it doesn't matter whom we please.
 - iv) The way to please God is to believe God.
- f) We cannot be saved apart from faith.
 - i) Ephesians 2:8
 - ii) Romans 5:1
 - iii) Anybody can be saved if they will put their faith where God put their sins: upon the Lord Jesus Christ.
- g) It is faith that enables us to live the Christian life.
 - i) 1 John 5:4
 - ii) Some people are overcomers, while others are overcome.
 - (1) The difference is faith.
 - iii) To some people, Heaven is just as real as if they were already there; to others, it's not real.
 - (1) Hebrews 11:1
 - (2) Faith makes the difference.
- h) What is faith?
 - i) Faith is not a hunch.
 - ii) Faith is not positive thinking.
 - iii) Faith is not believing everything will work out.
 - iv) Faith is taking God at His Word.
 - v) Faith is not responding to emotions, feelings, miracles or signs.
 - vi) Faith is not believing simply that God can; faith is knowing that God will.

- vii) Real faith, strong faith is death to doubt.
 - (1) It is dumb to discouragement.
 - (2) It is blind to impossibilities.
 - i) If we believe as Abraham believed, then we will achieve as Abraham achieved.
 - i) If you study the life of Abraham, you will see that he made some big mistakes.
 - ii) But in the New Testament, we don't find one word about his mistakes.
 - (1) God remembered Abraham, not for his failures, but for his faith.
 - j) Romans 4:20
 - i) Abraham was strong in faith.
 - k) Today's message will mention five things that are true about Abraham's faith that can also be true about our faith.
- 2) STRONG FAITH RECEIVES THE GIFT OF GOD (ROMANS 4:16)
- a) Strong faith is a gift of God.
 - b) Romans 4:16
 - c) What is grace?
 - i) Grace is God taking the initiative.
 - ii) Grace is the unmerited favor of God given to sinners such as we, where there is no merit whatsoever.
 - d) Salvation is the grace gift of God, but so is the faith that we have to receive that salvation.
 - e) Grace is not the reward for our faith.
 - i) It's grace that takes the initiative to give us that faith.
 - ii) We don't generate faith.
 - (1) We are totally depraved by nature.
 - (2) There is nothing in us that could generate faith.
 - (3) Ephesians 2:1
 - (a) It's not just that we're sick; without Jesus, we are dead.
 - iii) Our faith is the gift of God's grace.
 - f) God must give us faith.
 - i) Romans 12:3
 - ii) The only reason that we could have faith is that God takes the initiative and puts that faith in our own hearts.
 - g) Faith is a gift of God, and faith receives the gift of God.
 - i) This does not mean that God will believe for us.
 - (1) We must do our own believing.
 - (a) For example, breathing is a gift of God.
 - (i) God gives us lungs, and He gives us air.
 - (b) But we can smother if we want to.
 - (2) We can fail to believe God.
 - ii) Faith is a gift of God, which means that no one can say that they just can't believe, and it's not their fault.
 - (1) If you wish to believe, you can.

- (2) But you can smother the truth if you want to.
 - iii) God will enable you to believe.
 - (1) When we do believe, there is no bragging or boasting on our part.
 - (a) To God be the glory.
 - h) Faith is simply taking God at His Word.
 - i) You must find a word from God.
 - ii) Romans 4:13-14, 16
 - (1) Faith is our response to the promises of God, to the Word of God.
 - iii) Romans 10:17
 - (1) You'll never have faith if you don't get a word from God.
 - (2) You have to get a promise from God in order to have faith, and the Bible is full of promises.
 - iv) You have to get into the Word of God.
- 3) STRONG FAITH RELEASES THE GRACE OF GOD (ROMANS 4:16)
 - a) Romans 4:16
 - i) Faith links us to grace.
 - b) We're not saved by faith; we're saved by grace.
 - i) But it is faith that links us to grace.
 - c) The only way that grace can operate is through faith.
 - i) Jesus died on the cross and paid for our sins, but that does us no good until we put our faith where God has put our sins, on the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - d) Grace is released by faith.
 - i) Unbelief holds grace a prisoner.
 - ii) Matthew 13:58
 - (1) They fettered the grace of God in their own lives.
 - iii) Romans 4:16
 - (1) We can be sure that we're saved because our confidence is not in ourselves.
 - (a) Since it is by grace, then we can be sure.
 - (b) Grace is the one thing that can make the promise sure.
 - e) Thinking that you can get to Heaven by good works is a guarantee that you will never be sure; you will always wonder if you have done enough.
 - i) This is not a "know-so" salvation, but a "hope-so" salvation.
- 4) STRONG FAITH RESPECTS THE GREATNESS OF GOD (ROMANS 4:17)
 - a) The key to Abraham's strong faith was that he had respect for the greatness of God.
 - b) Romans 4:17
 - i) He mentions two things that God can do that nobody else can do:
 - (1) God raises the dead.
 - (2) He makes something out of nothing.
 - ii) This was very important for Abraham to believe.

- (1) He was one hundred years old, and his wife Sarah was ninety years old when God told him that they would have a son.
 - (2) Even though they were both past child-bearing years, Abraham believed that God could bring life out of death and something out of nothing.
 - iii) Strong faith doesn't look at the problem; it looks to Almighty God.
 - c) People with weak faith have a small God.
 - i) If your faith is weak, then you need to get to know God.
 - ii) Psalm 9:10
 - iii) Glance at your problem; gaze at your God.
 - d) Romans 4:18
 - i) Do you think there's no hope for you?
 - ii) Do you think that other people can know God, but you can't?
 - (1) God has hope for you.
 - iii) "Against hope" in this passage refers to human hope.
 - iv) "Believed in hope" is Heavenly hope.
 - (1) With human hope, it is impossible.
 - (2) With Heavenly hope, all things are possible.
 - (a) Matthew 19:26
 - v) The difference is that Abraham looked at God and believed God.
 - (1) Don't look at yourself or your problems; look at God.
 - (2) God brings something out of nothing.
 - (a) If we'll become nothing, then He will make something out of us.
 - e) Abraham faced two impossibilities:
 - i) That he could have a child.
 - ii) That God can tell a lie.
 - (1) That first impossibility became a possibility because God did exactly what He said He would do.
 - (a) God cannot lie, and Abraham had a promise from God.
 - f) Strong faith respects the character of God.
 - i) God is God.
 - (1) When we see this, then we'll have strong faith.
 - ii) Mighty faith looks to God alone and laughs at impossibilities.
- 5) STRONG FAITH REGARDS THE GUIDANCE OF GOD (ROMANS 4:20-21)
- a) Romans 4:20-21
 - b) Real faith responds to the guidance of God.
 - i) There is the obedience of faith.
 - c) Hebrews 11:8
 - i) By faith, Abraham obeyed.
 - d) Faith is more of a verb than a noun.
 - i) The difference between belief and faith is that faith is belief with legs on it.

- ii) Strong faith not only believes that God can but that God will, and He will do it by me.
 - e) James 2:21-23
 - i) In Romans, the Apostle Paul is talking about being justified before God.
 - ii) In this passage, James is talking about being justified before men.
 - (1) Not that men justify us, but that men can see.
 - (2) We show our faith by our works.
 - (a) We are not saved by faith and works.
 - (b) We are saved by faith that works.
 - (c) We are justified by faith alone, but the faith that justifies is never alone.
 - (i) It always has works.
 - f) If your religion hasn't changed your life, then you'd better change your religion.
 - i) 2 Corinthians 5:17
 - ii) When God does something in your heart and life, it will be seen.
 - iii) If anyone says that they are trusting God but they are not going to make it known, then they're not really trusting Him.
 - (1) Romans 9:33
 - iv) Faith without works is dead.
 - (1) James 2:20
 - (2) Walking a church aisle won't save anybody, but what it indicates will save everybody.
 - v) Mark 8:38
 - g) Faith is acting upon what we know to be true.
 - i) We faithfully obey.
 - ii) If we have Paul's faith, then we'll have James' works.
- 6) STRONG FAITH REFLECTS THE GLORY OF GOD (ROMANS 4:20-21)
- a) Unbelief does not glorify God.
 - b) The greatest thing we can do to give God glory is not give a large sum of money or even go overseas as a missionary, but to believe God.
 - c) Faith says that God is trustworthy.
 - i) 1 John 5:10
 - d) Never boast about your belief in a good God and a strong God, and then fail to believe Him.
 - e) Romans 4:23-25
 - i) This wasn't just written for Abraham, but for us, also.
- 7) CONCLUSION
- a) Abraham believed that God could bring life out of death and make something out of nothing.
 - b) If you believe that God raised Jesus from the dead and that He can make something out of you, then you can be saved.

- c) Faith is not an emotion; it is taking God at His Word.
- d) Do you want to be saved?
 - i) You can be today.
- e) Receive the Lord Jesus Christ into your life today.
- f) Pray to Him now, and ask Him to come into your life.
- g) Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
 - i) Romans 3:23
 - ii) Romans 10:9-10
 - iii) Romans 10:13
 - iv) Acts 16:31
 - v) John 3:16