



Life Guide

applying God's Word to life

Working or Believing?

March 7-9, 2020

Romans 4:1-5, 13-17

¹ What then shall we say that Abraham, our forefather, discovered in this matter? ² If, in fact, Abraham was justified by works, he had something to boast about—but not before God. ³ what does the Scripture say?

“Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.”

⁴ Now when a man works, his wages are not credited to him as a gift, but as an obligation. ⁵ However, to the man who does not work but trusts in God who justifies the wicked, his faith is credited as righteousness.

¹³ It was not through law that Abraham and his offspring received the promise that he would be heir of the world, but through the righteousness that comes by faith. ¹⁴ For if those who live by law are heirs, faith has no value and the promise is worthless, ¹⁵ because law brings wrath. And where there is no law there is no transgression.

¹⁶ Therefore, the promise comes by faith, so that it may be by grace and may be guaranteed to all Abraham's offspring—not only to those who are of the law but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham. He is the father of us all. ¹⁷ As it is written, “I have made you a father of many nations. He is our father in the sight of God, in whom he believed—the God who gives life to the dead and calls things that are not as though they were.”

1. What specific things out in the world that make you say, “That ain't right.”? (Check Romans 1:28-32 for general categories.)
2. What specific things in your own life make you say, “That ain't right.”? (Check Romans 2:1-5 for general categories.)

3. Craft three (or more) talking points to prove this statement: The most important question in the world is “How do unrighteous people get right with a righteous God?”

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4. These are two leading theories of how to get righteous: Working (we do good and offer it to God) and Believing (God does good and credits it to us.) Put each theory in your own words and give an example to illustrate it.

a. Working =

Example:

b. Believing =

Example:

5. In Ro. 4:1-5 Paul claims that Genesis 15:6 (*Abraham believed the Lord and it was credited to him as righteousness.*) proves that people get righteous by believing. Explain his logic.

6. What are the differences between a wage and a gift? List 3 every-day ways your life would be different if your righteousness was a wage instead of a gift.

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7. Explain this statement: “The Working Theory of righteousness ruins the beauty of God's promise. (Cf. Ro. 4:14-15)

8. List negative characteristics of someone who always *needs* to be right.

9. How does the Believing Theory of righteousness free you from those characteristics?