**Small Group notes – 31 May 2020**

**Faith for the Ages – Romans 4**

In this chapter Paul addresses objections to his teaching on justification by faith alone.

What does Justification mean? A dictionary definition:

***“Justification means being declared righteous. It is a legal term used in the Bible to describe the act of God in which He declares that a person is not guilty. A person who is justified is therefore in a state of acceptance with God”.***

When Paul is putting forward his arguments for justification by faith alone he refers to Abraham. Abraham is considered to be the founding Father of three monotheistic religions: Judaism, Islam & Christianity. Whether you are reading the writings of the Old Testament Hebrew prophets, the Epistles in the New Testament, or the Koran each refers to Abraham as the *‘Friend of God’*. If Paul can show that Abraham came into a right relationship with God through faith alone and not by works, then he can prove his case that the rest of us need to be saved by faith alone as well.

* **Faith alone, not works –** Romans: 4:1-8
* **Faith alone, not rituals –** Romans: 4:9-12
* **Faith alone, not the law –** Romans: 4:13-17

How can I be justified by faith alone? How can I be made in right with God by faith alone?

This big theme in Romans is this; that we are saved, declared not guilty not because of what we have done but because of what He has done for us in Jesus.

**Questions**

* According to Paul how are Old Testament saints such as Abraham & David justified? v1-8
* What are some of the differences between justification by faith and by works? v4-8
* Is it more appealing to us that God accepts us only when we think and feel good about ourselves? When we don’t feel acceptable how can the examples of Abraham & David give us hope?
* In Paul’s day some taught that unless a person was circumcised he had no hope of being saved? How does Abraham’s experience refute this idea? V9-12
* What kinds of rituals or false ideas do people today have about what is required for Salvation?
* According to Paul in verses 13-15, what is the purpose of the Law?
* In what way does the belief that we are made right with God by faith alone help or hinder you?

**Prayer & response**

Reflect together on the impossible things that God has promised to his people. An example: the promise and free gift of eternal life. Give thanks to God for his power to bring such things about.

**Reminders** - Lunch time reflections continue Mon, Wed & Friday @ 12.20pm

Please continue to pray for Ian McDonalds recovery. Please continue to pray for national, local and worldwide situations. Pray for the UK Government as easing of restriction come into place, for wisdom, clear communication and interpretation by society.