

Going Deeper – Romans 4:13–25

Big idea

God's saving promise to Abraham (including the Messiah) comes by faith and rests on grace, not the Law. We trust the God who gives life to the dead and calls things that are not as though they are; Jesus was delivered up for our sins and raised for our justification.

Sermon recap (tied to the text)

- Promise, not Law (vv. 13–15). Abraham's inheritance and the messianic promise did not come through the Law. The Law arrives centuries later and exposes sin; it cannot give life.
- Of faith... according to grace (v. 16). Justification is through faith alone; its power and certainty rest in God's grace, not the strength of our faith.
- Father of all who believe (v. 16). Both Jew and Gentile who share Abraham's faith are included.
- The God who gives life to the dead (v. 17). Abraham and Sarah were as good as dead, yet God fulfilled His word; God also imputes righteousness to the ungodly.
- Written for us (vv. 23–25). Christ was delivered up for our sins and raised for our justification—this is how sinners are declared righteous today.

How to go deeper this week

Day 1 — Promise versus Law

Read: Romans 4:13–15; Galatians 3:15–18.

Reflect: Where have you slipped into thinking God's blessing depends on performance?

Pray: Confess any performance-based mindset; thank God that His promise stands on grace.

Day 2 — Before circumcision: timing matters

Read: Genesis 12:1–3; 15:1–6; 17:1–5.

Reflect: Abraham was counted righteous before the sign. What "signs" or habits are you tempted to rely on to feel right with God?

Practice: Write one sentence of assurance grounded only in God's promise (e.g., "God counts me righteous by faith in Christ, not by my record").

Day 3 — Of faith... according to grace

Read: Romans 4:16–17.

Memorize: Romans 4:16.

Reflect: How does grace make God's promise "guaranteed"?

Pray: Ask God to deepen your confidence in His grace and to widen your heart for those outside your circle, since Abraham is father of many nations.

Day 4 — Hope against hope

Read: Romans 4:18–22; Hebrews 11:11–12, 17–19.

Identify: One "impossible" situation you're facing.

Practice: Write a brief prayer naming the situation and affirming God's ability: "Lord, I am fully convinced You can do what You have promised."

Day 5 — Delivered up, raised for our justification

Read: Romans 4:23–25; 1 Corinthians 15:17–22.

Reflect: What difference does Christ's resurrection make for your assurance today?

Practice: End the day with a five-minute "resurrection examen": confess sin, thank Christ for the cross, rest your conscience on His empty tomb.

Practical applications (this week)

- Performance-to-grace audit: Make a short list of places you strive to "earn" God's favor (devotions, serving, giving). For each item, replace the pressure statement with a grace statement from Romans 4 (e.g., "God's promise rests on grace, not my output").
- Name and entrust the impossible: Share your "hope against hope" situation with a trusted friend and ask them to pray Romans 4:20–21 over you this week.
- Give glory to God in waiting: Choose one simple act of obedience that aligns with God's promise (encourage someone, forgive, give) and do it explicitly "to give glory to God" while you wait.

Reflection and discussion

1. If the Law brings knowledge of sin but not life, where do you still look to rules, routines, or "badges" for your standing with God?
2. Abraham believed against hope (vv. 18–22). What would "giving glory to God" look like in your current impossible situation?
3. How does "raised for our justification" (v. 25) change the way you handle guilt, fear, or uncertainty this week?

Scripture for further study

- Genesis 12:1–3; 15:6; 17:5
- Galatians 3:6–9; 15–18
- Hebrews 11:11–12; 17–19
- Romans 5:1–2
- 1 Corinthians 15:17–22