

Romans 4:1-12

Pray that God would open your eyes to see how big He is, and how great His love for the world is.

Read Romans 4:1-12

Look Closer... Paul has just made the claim (in Romans 3:21-29) that God is offering His righteousness to the world through Jesus, and that this comes through faith, not by the works of the law. This would be confusing to some Jewish Christians, since all they knew was following the law, and God demanded that His people know and obey His commands.

So Paul uses Abraham as an example of God justifying His people, not by works, but through faith. In Genesis 15, Abraham is worried that God was not going to be able to fulfill His promises; but, after God revealed to Abraham how big and powerful He was, Abraham believed God, and God counted that belief as righteousness.

Think about it... Paul is not just talking about how the gospel works, but he's trying to show the church in Rome how the gospel brings people together. The issue of following the law was pushing Jewish and Gentile Christians apart. By saying that all are "justified" by faith, Paul means that God's *family* are all those who have faith in Jesus. Thus, the Jews and Gentile (conservatives and liberals, rich and poor, minority and majority) Christians *need* to treat one another like family, for God has made them (us) family.

Pray about it... God has made us family, yet political, social, and denominational (different sorts of churches) differences have divided the church. Pray that God would cause us to repent of the ways that drive us apart, and that he would cause us to be more open-minded, asking good questions, and treating one another like family, when the opportunity to exercise our brotherly and sisterly love in Jesus comes.