

Romans 4:13-14: Abraham, and his not yet formed family, received a promise (blessing, reward) because of his faith. And it wasn't because of him obeying the 10 Commandments, or because of circumcision for neither had yet been put in to place. But because of **FAITH ALONE**! By now everyone should know that Faith is taking God at His Word; believing God.

Examples - Hebrews 11 people all were counted as righteous (worthy, not perfect) because of their faith - Noah's was for building an ocean cruise liner in the middle of the desert, for up to 120 years, where bodies of water were not yet present! Noah took God at His Word. - Joshua and Caleb had faith in God saying that He would drive out the Canaanites and so their eyes viewed the enemy from God's perspective. - little shepherd boy David took out a 9' tall warrior with a sling and a rock with an accuracy that came from God Himself. Purely because of the faith of Victory before he even stepped into their ring..... and on and on and on! The word, the action of, faith is used 36 times in chapters 1-4!

Romans 4:15: "The law brings God's anger" means that God does not respect you for what you do. He respects you for what Christ did. Trying to earn your way into heaven is an insult to God.

Romans 4:16+17 God told "Abram" (exalted father, Hebrew) that He would make him in to "Abraham" (father of many nations, father of a multitude) in Genesis 17:5-8 (note: Abraham is considered the starting point (father) of the Jew, the Muslim (Islam), and Christianity.

(Judaism). (17) notice our God is the God that "creates things that did not exist before"; "breathing the World and "man" in to existence. Giving life where there was none. I do not think that any other religion can claim this, or God allows to claim this.

Romans 4:18 Abraham (Abram) was 90 years old, and Sarai was well beyond child bearing years (80 years old) so there was no reason to have "hope" (knowing it to be so) that he would be a father. Yet, "... he had hope [and so] he became the father of many nations, exactly as God had promised."

Romans 4:19-22 Abraham (and Sarah) trusted in God's promise. Yes, they did try to take things in their own hands to help God out but that was forgiven them. God waited till they were 99/89 years old (respectively) to do His miracle. Why? Because at 99/89 it is IMPOSSIBLE to have a child unless God makes it so. Just like the IMPOSSIBILITY of a virgin giving birth to the God Child. (22) Abraham (and Sarah) were made right by God "because he (they) believed." (note: we are made right by God because we believe on Jesus)

Romans 4:23-25 repeats that same truth.

Romans 5:1-2 Again, repeats that God's grace covers us because of our faith in the finished work of the cross in Jesus Christ.

Romans 5:3 (NIV) "Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance." (NKJV) "Not only that, but we also glory in tribulation, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance and perseverance character, and character hope".

These are extremely hard to swallow. It might be better to look at it as: God's grace is sufficient for us (2 Corinthians 12:9). In 2 Corinthians 11:22-33 we see some of what Paul suffered - go ahead and read. Now, read 2 Corinthians 12:1: THIS IS WHAT PAUL WENT TO FOR HOPE!! It is what God asks us to go to! He wants us to not dwell in the ugly of our circumstances but rather to look at what awaits us. Now read 2 Corinthians 12:2-10.

What does the perseverance of the people in the Bible, martyrs, and Paul's ordeals tell us??