

*If his good deeds had made him acceptable to God, he would have had something to boast about. But that was not God's way. For the Scriptures tell us, "Abraham believed God, and God counted him as righteous because of his faith." Romans 4:2-3*



What is something you find easy to trust, and something you find hard to trust? Why?

1. Read Romans 4:1-5. There is a tension in believing something and trusting it – what do you think the difference is?
  - Why do so many believe in God, but struggle to trust Him with their lives?
  - In verses 4-5 we see the contrast between earning wages and receiving a gift – how do people today still try to earn acceptance from God, rather than receiving His acceptance through faith?
2. Read Genesis 12:1-4 God calls Abraham to leave everything without giving him a destination – what “unknowns” challenge people when it comes to trusting God?
  - Why do you think God doesn't always reveal the “full picture”?
  - How can fear of uncertainty prevent obedience, even when God has spoken clearly?
  - What would it look like, practically, to trust God in every situation? (read Proverbs 3:5-6)
3. In Genesis 15:5-6 Abraham believed God's promise when by human standards it was impossible, what reveals biblical faith over wishful thinking?

4. When Abraham is mentioned in Romans 4:21 we are told he was fully convinced that God was able to do what He promised. What steps can we take to strengthen our confidence in God and His promises?
5. Read Genesis 22:1-12 Why is God's command here so difficult and confusing?
  - Hebrews 11:17-19 reveals a little of Abraham's faith and motivation – but what is Abraham trusting about God's character?
  - What can we learn about trusting God when His ways don't appear to make sense?
  - What do you believe would be the hardest thing, or person to surrender to God? Why?

Read Romans 4:9-11

6. Abraham was declared righteous before the religious sign – why is the order (faith first, sign second) important for understanding salvation?
  - What is the difference between a sign of faith, and the foundation of our salvation?
  - How does this help with understanding the role of Baptism? (Acts 16:31-33 may help)
7. Paul emphasises in Romans 4:23-25 that the account is for “us also” – in what areas is it easier to trust – our effort, abilities, goodness or readily available help – rather than God?
  - What is something you can do to place more trust in God?
  - Why should we believe and emphasise the resurrection as our confidence in trusting God? (1 Corinthians 15:17-20)
8. Romans 4:7-8 calls those who know their sins are forgiven blessed, why do you think so many Christians still live with guilt instead of joy?
  - What do you believe would change if every believer (you included) lived each day in the joy of knowing their sins are forgiven?