

**Nov. 17, 2019**

**Speaker:** Eric Naus **Series:** This I Believe – The Book of Romans

**Passage:** Romans 4.1-25

## Community Group Questions: "Faith Matters"

1. In your opinion, how important is faith for the Christian life? If you were to rate faith on a scale of 1-10, how important would it be? Read Romans 4:1-25 aloud as a group. According to this passage, how important is faith to God, and why?
2. In verses 1-8, Paul explains that God justifies the ungodly by faith. Rather than working to earn a "wage" of righteousness, God credits righteousness as a "gift" to anyone who puts their faith in Jesus. In our high-performance culture, why is it so difficult for people to embrace a salvation that they cannot earn? In your own life, when did you first understand and embrace the free gift of salvation by faith in Christ? Share your story with the group.
3. Much of this chapter refers to the story of Abraham, recorded in Genesis 15:1-6. Go back and read this account. Notice vs. 6, where it says that Abraham believed God, and he "counted" it to him as righteousness. That word "counted" is an accounting term which means to "credit" or "reckon" something to someone's account. God saw Abraham's faith, and he "reckoned" Abraham to be righteous. How does Abraham's example help us understand how faith works for Christians today, as they put their trust in Christ?
4. In Romans 4:9-12, Paul makes it clear that salvation by faith is available not only to the Jews (the "circumcised") but also to the gentiles (the "uncircumcised"). He points out that Abraham was saved by faith (in Genesis 15) long before he was required to be circumcised (Gen. 17). This means that every kind of person, no matter their social status, ethnicity, gender, age, or background, must come to God the exact same way: by faith in Christ. In a world like ours with so many divisions, exclusive groups, and levels of status, why is this message of faith so important?
5. In verses 13-25, Paul elaborates on the example of Abraham's faith. As you read these verses, what characteristics of Abraham's faith do you find especially inspirational? How can these same aspects of faith be applied to our lives as Christians today?

Prayer suggestion: Pray for one another's faith. Pray that God would encourage us in our doubts and strengthen us to trust him in each and every situation in our lives.