

LIFE GROUP APPLICATION QUESTIONS

These questions are for the **December 26, 2021**, sermon, "The Promise Depends on Faith." Please read the sermon passage (Romans 4:13-17) together out loud.

Sermon Outline

FAITH IS, A growing certainty; a constant reliance on God, including his works and promise.

1. Faith believes God. (13)
 - a. Not, "believes in God," like some believe in a certain diet, or UFOs.
 - i. But "believes every word" that God says.
 1. Faith grows by searching out God's Word.
 2. Faith grows by learning that God is faithful in every life season.
 - ii. Abraham was declared righteous when he believed God.
 - b. God does not test our faith in order to prove our faith to him; God tests our faith in order to prove himself to us.
 - c. When we are confused or grow tired of waiting, come seek answers from God.
2. Faith happily shines the spotlight on Jesus. (Rom 4:24-25, Gal 3:16)
 - a. Abraham did not merely believe that God existed.
 - i. He believed that God would send one male offspring, the Messiah.
 - ii. Christmas is not merely about the signs God sent to identify the correct baby.
 - b. Christmas is about the fact that Jesus, this baby, is God himself, come to die in our place, to be raised the third day and to offer life to all who believe him.
3. Faith completely changes everything about your life (4:13-16)
 - a. Because you believe God, he is pleased with you.
 - i. When we believe God (faith), he "declares us righteous" (in right relationship).
 - ii. Right relationship with God brings moral change (not vice versa).
 - b. Two specific examples:
 - i. The future: not afraid of the future, including worldwide political changes.
 - ii. Mission: intense commitment to make disciples now.

Life Group Discussion Questions

1. Based on #1, above: As we examined the signs of the coming of the Messiah (born in Bethlehem, virgin birth, accompanied by a 'forerunner' (prophet), etc.), it's obvious that Jesus is the Promised One. That means Jesus is God (Psalm 110) and that the government of earth is on his shoulders (Isaiah 9) and that his kingdom will last forever and ever. Do you think most people grasp why Christmas is really not (merely) about a baby?
2. Based on #1, above: Faith is a "growing certainty." It grows through "more Bible knowledge" and through trusting God through new life experiences ("various trials," James 1:2-4). In what way is your faith a "growing certainty"?
3. Based on #2, above: Faith shines a spotlight on Jesus. We do this first in our heart, and with our words. How have you improved at glorifying Jesus in your heart during a recent trial?
4. Based on #3, above: In what ways has believing God changed everything about your life? What is different today because you believe God? How have you become less anxious? More focused?