

“God, who alone does great wonders, created the universe from nothing (1:19–20), calls the dead to life (4:17), and justifies the ungodly [which is] “the greatest of all his wonders.”” – F. F. Bruce¹

Romans 4:9-17 The Promise Realized Through Faith

Is this blessing then only for the circumcised, or also for the uncircumcised? For we say that faith was counted to Abraham as righteousness.¹⁰ How then was it counted to him? Was it before or after he had been circumcised? It was not after, but before he was circumcised.¹¹ He received the sign of circumcision as a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised. The purpose was to make him the father of all who believe without being circumcised, so that righteousness would be counted to them as well,¹² and to make him the father of the circumcised who are not merely circumcised but who also walk in the footsteps of the faith that our father Abraham had before he was circumcised.¹³ For the promise to Abraham and his offspring that he would be heir of the world did not come through the law but through the righteousness of faith.¹⁴ For if it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void.¹⁵ For the law brings wrath, but where there is no law there is no transgression.¹⁶ That is why it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his offspring—not only to the adherent of the law but also to the one who shares the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all,¹⁷ as it is written, “I have made you the father of many nations”—in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist.

What is the wonder of all wonders?

- Resting in Christ > My best efforts – 4:13 *For the promise to Abraham and his offspring that he would be heir of the world did not come through the law but through the righteousness of faith.*

- God’s inheritance has a redeeming, not a corrupting power.
 - What does it mean to be “*heir of the world*”?
 - Abraham’s physical descendants would inherit Canaan as a base of operations to be a light to the Gentiles. Every lighthouse needs a location.
 - Abraham’s spiritual descendants would inherit the earth by making disciples of all nations.
 - Notice, this incredible promise comes through one avenue only: *the righteousness of faith*.
- Your greatest gain rests on something other than your work – 4:14-15 *For if it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void.* ¹⁵ *For the law brings wrath, but where there is no law there is no transgression.*
 - The God “*who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist,*” invites you into His family plan – 4:16-17 *That is why it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his offspring—not only to the adherent of the law but also to the one who shares the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all,* ¹⁷ *as it is written, “I have made you the father of many nations”—in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist.*
 - If God’s grace is a strong enough foundation for His promise, it should be strong enough for your problems.
 - God doesn’t project; God guarantees.

¹ Robert H. Mounce, *Romans, vol. 27, The New American Commentary* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1995), 123.