

WHAT IS “THE FAITH OF ABRAHAM?”

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As many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ... and if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.”

Galatians 3:27,29



What does the scripture tell us? It says that *if* one is baptized into Christ, he has put on Christ, or become a Christian. Then, when you have become a Christian, you are a true descendant of Abraham, and an heir of the promise. Now this does not mean, that we are Jews. Abraham himself was not a Jew. He was a Chaldean and came from Ur of the Chaldees.

The outstanding thing about Abraham was his faith. He developed a faith that was accounted perfect in God's eyes. David developed the same kind of faith. Jesus had perfect faith also, and to a greater degree than either Abraham or David, for Jesus was God's own Son.

We are interested in having the same kind of faith Abraham had because this verse declares that, if we belong to Christ, we have something in common with Abraham, and will be heirs of great promise.

What kind of faith did Abraham have? In the first place, he left his home in Ur of the Chaldees and traveled to a strange country because he believed God. God had told him that if he would move to a far country, even Palestine, God would make him into a great nation, would bless him, would make his name great, and he would be a blessing to many people.

Because Abraham believed, he went.

Later, when Abraham had a son, God asked him to offer that son as a sacrifice upon an altar. Though Abraham was deeply tested in this, he did not falter. He did as God had commanded. He obeyed God. In Abraham's mind, Isaac was as good as dead because God had commanded him to slay Isaac. We know that God stayed Abraham's hand as the knife was uplifted, and a ram was provided for the offering. The New Testament tells us that the reason Abraham was willing to obey God in this matter of slaying his son was because Abraham believed that God was able to resurrect Isaac from the dead. (Heb. 11:19.) Abraham's life was one experience after another of believing God and obeying God. Because he had such great faith in God and was so obedient to God, Abraham's faith was counted to him for righteousness.

Because Abraham had such great faith, he is called the father of the faithful in the New Testament. If we, then, have as much faith as Abraham had, we would *have the faith of Abraham*. This is exactly what Romans 4:11, 12, 13, and 16 says: “He received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised: that he might be *the father of all them that believe*, though they be not circumcised; *that righteousness might be imputed unto them also*; the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only, but who also *walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham*, which he had being yet uncircumcised. For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith... Therefore it is of faith that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of *the faith of Abraham*; who is the father of us all.”

There are two main truths we see here. First, Abraham is the father of all godly people; that is, the father of all faithful people in this matter of having faith. Second, because of his faith, God made him a promise. That promise is here stated in Romans 4:13: Abraham is to be heir of the world; he is to inherit the earth. Verse sixteen adds that all who have the faith of Abraham come under this promise. They also shall inherit the earth.



Now we are beginning to see into the depths of God's meaning when He said, "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

Let us look a little further into the promises God made to Abraham, for there were several promises that God made to him. According to Galatians 3:29, any promise that God made to Abraham comes to us through Jesus Christ.

Turn first to Genesis 13:14 and 15. God told Abraham, "Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: for *all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever.*" This promise included two things: inheritance, and everlasting life. God said Abraham was to inherit land, and that inheritance was to last forever.

Here, then, are two promises that every Christian can claim—inheritance in the earth, and eternal life (to be given when that inheritance is given to us). Jesus gave His people the same promise in Matthew 5:5. "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." Some would tell us today that we are going to heaven to live forever, but Jesus said that His people would inherit the earth. He further said, in Revelation 5:9, 10, that His people would reign on the earth. Then He said that they would reign a thousand years. By putting these together it is easy to see that our hope is in the coming of Jesus to give us the earth, to give us eternal life, and permit us to reign with Him a thousand years. This is the Bible hope. Our part in these promises depends upon our faith.

Another promise that God gave Abraham is found in Genesis 22:17 and 18. It concerned a Seed that Abraham would have. Notice that the passage mentions two seeds: a multitudinous seed and a single Seed. We will read only about the single Seed, who was Jesus Christ. "Thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed."

Now you say, "How do you know this is speaking of Christ?" The answer is found in Galatians 3:16: "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to *seeds*, as of many; but as of one, and to *thy seed, which is Christ.*"

So the promises were made to Abraham and his seed. Jesus was Abraham's seed, and we are Abraham's seed if we are in Jesus.

Now these promises that God has made to the faithful are of great value. The object of Jesus' life was to confirm these promises. This is recorded in Romans 15:18: "Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, *to confirm the promises made unto the fathers.*"

God has made what promises to us for the future? We all know that He will *today* give the "faithful" peace and comfort, strength and encouragement, and will guide each one through life. But what has God promised to His people for eternity? These promises we have read are the promises God has made to His people for eternity: eternal life and eternal inheritance of the earth. Jesus confirmed them. He promises us the same promises. These promises are sure.

Jesus is the Seed of Abraham and will possess the gate of His enemies. Jesus shall rule over this earth when He comes. Harken to the signs of the times, my friends, for Jesus' return is at hand. Repent and do the first works, or else you must suffer the wrath of God.

So, you see that it is important to have faith in God and faith in God's promises. Abraham is not more important than Jesus Christ our Savior. God had a place for them both in His plan for us. He gave the promises to Abraham and his seed. Christ is the Seed of Abraham. Through Christ we become heirs of God's promises to Abraham — eternal inheritance and eternal life. This is why the Bible speaks of those who have "the faith of Abraham" as being heirs of the promises.

