

Podcast 299 Mixing the Promises of God with Faith

Scott Moore: Welcome to the "Building Faith Families" podcast with Steve Demme. I'm your host Scott Moore. Thanks for joining us today.

Steve: We've been talking about promises of God and how God watches over His Word to fulfill it. Every Word of God is inspired and profitable. We're going to add a secret ingredient today.

Let's Pray:

Father, help us as we listen to your Word. We know that faith comes from hearing the words of Christ. As we listen to your Word, give us faith today in a new way and in a personal way. Help us in our own walk with God, not that we're not inspired by listening to Jesus and David and Abraham and Noah and how God made these promises to them and changed their life as a result, but I pray that each one of us on our journey would be benefiting from hearing your Word and believing it. In Jesus' name, Amen.

I'm pretty sure we're only going to spend time today in three books of the Bible. I know that's a record for me. The books are Hebrews and Genesis and Romans. Hebrews 4:2, it says, "Good news came to us just as to them," talking about the people in Exodus, "but the message they heard did not benefit them, because they were not united by faith with those who listened." The key words there are, **united by faith**.

The King James puts it a little differently, "Unto us was the Gospel preached as well as unto them, but the Word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it." Mix with faith, unite with faith. Apparently, these people had the same message preached to them but they didn't mix it with faith.

Let's take those words, mix with faith and look a little deeper into their word origins. Faith is pretty self-explanatory. It's from the Greek word Pistis which means faith or faithfulness. My favorite definition of faith is found in Hebrews 11:1, "Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen."

Chapter 11 of Hebrews is comprised of people who saw God's promises from afar, and they believed them. They believed what God had said.

Here's the interesting word. This word mix together or unite. Mixing your faith, uniting your faith, hence to agree with, comes from two words. The beginning of the word comes from syn, S-Y-N, which means to be identified with, and then keránnymi, "mix into a new and improved compound" or "mix together into a superior compound – "a holistic blend" (unified whole) where the parts work together synergistically.

Syn is like synergist or synergistic. The idea is, when you mix together a superior compound emerges where the parts work together synergistically. In our context, we have God's word, and then we have faith. When you mix the truth of the Word with faith, you have a winner.

The only other time **sugkerannumi** is used in the New Testament is found in 1 Corinthians 12, which says, "God has put the body together such that extra honor and care are given to those parts that have less dignity." God has put the body together. He has united, mixed together, created this wonderful compound by putting it together.

The third word is profit. The Word of God didn't profit them, not being mixed with faith. That's our focus today. This word is used several times in the New Testament. One, I thought you might benefit from is Matthew 16. Jesus told His disciples, "If anyone would come after me, let them deny himself, take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it. Whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. For what will it **profit** a man if he gains the whole world and loses his soul, or forfeits his soul? Or what shall a man give in return for his soul?"

The word for profit or benefit, is Ophelio. I like all this Greek.

Scott: Sounds very smart.

Steve: Well, I've been doing my homework. God's been leading me to go deeper into His word because if every word is inspired, every word is profitable. Then every word is worth looking at.

Scott: Amen

Steve: The father of all of us who believe is Abraham. Abraham was an incredible example of faith. We're going to go back and read the first account of Abraham in Genesis and then read how Paul references him over and over in Romans.

When Abraham, at this point Abram was 75 years old, the Lord said to Abram in Genesis 12:1-2 "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you, and I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great so that you will be a blessing."

Then the next chapter, He said, "I will make your offspring as the dust of the Earth so that if one can count the dust of the Earth, your offspring also can be counted."

Genesis 15, the word of the Lord came to him, "This man shall not be your heir." That's when Abraham was getting a little discouraged, he said, "The years are going by. Time is ticking and I don't have a baby here. How about if we try this fella?"

God said, "This man should not be your heir. Your very own son shall be your heir." He brought him outside and said, "Look toward heaven, number the stars if you are able to number them."

He said to him, "So shall your offspring be." Here's the key sentence which we're going to read several more times. He believed the Lord and he counted it to him as righteousness. Abraham is somewhere between 75 and 99. We don't know. He was getting older and older. He knew that his time for bearing children had perhaps already passed.

God keeps saying, "Count the sand on the seashore. That's your kids" a little bit later. "Count the stars in the sky. That's your kids." He believed God. He didn't believe the science. That's the expression in our culture today, look at the science. He didn't believe the science. He believed the Lord.

Now, Abram is 99 in Genesis chapter 17. I'm not going to read the whole chapter, but it's hard not to. I'm going to read two chunks. The first one says, when Abram was 99 years old, the Lord appeared to Abram and said to him, "I am God Almighty, walk before Me and be blameless that I may make my covenant between me and you and may multiply you greatly."

Then Abram fell on his face and God said to him, "Behold, my covenant is with you, and you shall be the father of a multitude of nations. No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham, for I have made you the father of a multitude of nations. I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make you into nations. Kings shall come from you."

Wow. First, He started with sand on the seashore. Then He talks about the stars in the sky. Then He goes on, I'm skipping it. He promised them the land of Canaan.

In the 17th chapter the concept of circumcision is introduced. In the 15th verse God said to Abraham, "As for Sarai, your wife, you shall not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. I will bless her. Moreover, I will give you a son by her. I will bless her, and she shall become nations. Kings of people shall come from her."

Then Abraham must have been feeling comfortable in God's presence, for he fell on his face and laughed and said to himself, "Shall a child be born to a man who is 100 years old? Shall Sarah, who is 90 years old bear a child?"

Abraham said to God, "Oh, that Ishmael might live before you." God said, "No. Sarah your wife shall bear you a son and you shall call his name Isaac."

I have to interject here. I read my Bible through every year. I have a son named Isaac. I had always assumed that Isaac was named Isaac which means laughter because of Sarah laughing by the tent, which we all know the story. She was laughing within herself when God said, "Why are you laughing?" She says, "Oh, I wasn't laughing." He says, "Yeah, you were."

I just love that, it was if God said, "I'm God. I know when people laugh." Anyway, it was Abraham in the 17 chapter who fell on his face and laughed to himself. God named him Isaac right there.

It's the 18th chapter that then God comes to the tent and Sarah laughs. I really believe it was Abraham that laughed first and thus the name Isaac, then Sarah later. You get this because you read the Bible and don't just assume everything.

We've covered all the bases from 75 to 99. God keeps, you might say, upping the ante in increasing His promises. "You're going to be a father, you're going to be a father of

a bunch of people, you're going to be a father of nations and kings shall come from your loins."

Abraham twice said, "How about this guy?" "No." "How about Ishmael?" "No. You're going to have a son. His name shall be called Isaac." Abraham believed God. He didn't look at His body, he looked at God and what God has said to him.

Now I'm going to jump to Romans 4 which is the ultimate example of faith. Paul is writing about the difference between works and faith. "We're righteous not because of what we do, but by believing in Jesus."

He appeals to Abraham and he quotes him three times, maybe four, in this chapter. We're starting in Romans 4:13, "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."

"For if it is the adherence of the law or to be made the heirs, faith is no and the promises void, for the law brings wrath but where there is no law there is no transgression. 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 inherit of the law but also to the one who shares a faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all."

As it is written, "I have made you the father of many nations," quoting Genesis 17:5. Abraham is the father of all who believe. All of us today are children of Abraham, because of our faith in Jesus, but he's the one that was the dad, the first to believe. He's the one that gave us an example of what it means to believe God's word and not look at natural stuff, but to keep our eyes up.

Back to Romans 4. "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." Quite a definition of God. He gives life to the dead, He calls into existence the things that do not exist.

Now to Abraham, "In hope, he believed against hope that he should become the father of many nations as he has been told, so shall your offspring be." Quoting Genesis 15:5. He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body. He didn't consider his own body, he looked at the science which was as good as dead since he was about 100 years old, or when he considered the bareness of Sarah's womb.

"No unbelief made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, fully convinced that God was able to do what He had promised." I have to read that sentence again.

"No unbelief made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, fully convinced that God was able to do what He had promised. That is why his faith was counted to him as righteousness." Quoting again Genesis 15.

"The words it was counted to him were not written for his sake alone but for ours. Also, it will be counted to us who believed in Him, who raised from the dead Jesus our

Lord, who was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification." This faith that we're talking about was not just for him, it was for us.

"Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Whoever made the chapter and a verse breaks, should have included the first few verses in Chapter 5 in chapter 4.

I'll read that one more time, "The words it was counted to were not written for his sake alone, but for ours also."

Abraham, his faith, is what made him Abraham. This is why we're talking about him and why he's all through the bible. It's why he's in Hebrews 11, it's why he's in Romans 4. Abraham is the father of all who believe.

It's not just believing what God said to Abraham. We now need, as we started off with, to mix with faith the word of God so that it benefits us as it did Abraham. It says in Romans 10:9–13, "If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved." Don't just hear those words. Mix them with faith, for with the heart one believes and is justified. With the mouth, one confesses and is saved.

For the scripture says, "Everyone who believes in Him will not be put to shame, for there is no distinction between Jew and Greek for the same Lord as Lord of all bestowing His riches on all who call on Him." Quoting Joel now, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

Abraham is in scripture as an example for us. We are to believe and mix with faith what God has said to us. God has said to us that if we call on Him and if we believe that God raised Him from the dead and confess with our mouth, we will be justified and saved. We will enter into that ark that we have talked about in a previous podcast.

Good news came to us just as to them, but the message they heard did not benefit them because they were not united by faith with those who listened. For those of us today, listening to this podcast, if you have not believed in Jesus, believe in Him. I know that you believe, or you wouldn't be listening to this podcast.

"Faith comes from hearing, hearing through the Word of Christ." (Romans 10:17)

If you doubt these things, read them yourself. Keep reading Scripture and keep asking God to give you faith and help you to believe His Word.

Let's close in prayer:

Father, in Jesus' name help those that are hearing these words today. Help all of us to believe every word that You have spoken in the scriptures. Help us to mix them with faith so that they profit us, and especially those who aren't sure where they stand with Jesus. I pray that You will inspire them and put faith in their hearts.

As they hear these words today may their faith be increased and grow. Then they too will believe that God raised Jesus from the dead. That God Has forgiven their sins in

Christ. If they call on Him, they will be adopted into his family and they will be saved. I believe that with all my heart.

Thank you for Your words. Thank You for helping me to love the words of God. Help us all to not only read them and hear them but that like that crazy word in Greek, help us to mix them with faith. Unite them with faith so that they profit us as well as Abraham, in Jesus' name. Amen.