

## Handout #3: Christian Interpretations of Abraham

<sup>21</sup> But now, apart from law, the righteousness of God has been disclosed, and is attested by the law and the prophets, <sup>22</sup> the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ<sup>a</sup> for all who believe. For there is no distinction, <sup>23</sup> since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God; <sup>24</sup> they are now justified by his grace as a gift; through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, <sup>25</sup> whom God put forward as a sacrifice of atonement<sup>b</sup> by his blood, effective through faith. He did this to show his righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over the sins previously committed; <sup>26</sup> it was to prove at the present time that he himself is righteous and that he justifies the one who has faith in Jesus.<sup>c</sup>

<sup>27</sup> Then what becomes of boasting? It is excluded. By what law? By that of works? No, but by the law of faith. <sup>28</sup> For we hold that a person is justified by faith apart from works prescribed by the law. <sup>29</sup> Or is God the God of Jews only? Is he not the God of Gentiles also? Yes, of Gentiles also, <sup>30</sup> since God is one; and he will justify the circumcised on the ground of faith and the uncircumcised through that same faith. <sup>31</sup> Do we then overthrow the law by this faith? By no means! On the contrary, we uphold the law.

**4** What then are we to say was gained by<sup>d</sup> Abraham, our ancestor according to the flesh? <sup>2</sup> For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. <sup>3</sup> For what does the scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness."<sup>4</sup> Now to one who works, wages are not reckoned as a gift but as something due. <sup>5</sup> But to one who without works trusts him who justifies the ungodly, such faith is reckoned as righteousness. <sup>6</sup> So also David speaks of the blessedness of those to whom God reckons righteousness apart from works:

<sup>7</sup> "Blessed are those whose iniquities are forgiven,

and whose sins are covered;

<sup>8</sup> "blessed is the one against whom the Lord will not reckon sin."

<sup>9</sup> Is this blessedness, then, pronounced only on the circumcised, or also on the uncircumcised? We say, "Faith was reckoned to Abraham as righteousness."<sup>10</sup> How then was it reckoned to him? Was it before or after he had been circumcised? It was not after, but before he was circumcised. <sup>11</sup> 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 ancestor of all who believe without being circumcised and who thus have righteousness reckoned to them,<sup>12</sup> and likewise the ancestor of the circumcised who are not only circumcised but who also follow the example of the faith that our ancestor Abraham had before he was circumcised.

Romans 3:21 - 4:12