

Faith or Effort?

ROMANS 4:13-25

Sunday, October 26, 2025 | Wawasee Bible | Milford, Indiana | Pastor Josh Weiland

We're made right with God by **FAITH**—not **EFFORT**, (v. 13-16)

by **grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone...** Eph. 2:8-9; Gal. 2:16; Rom 3:28; Titus 3:5

but **faith is measured by obedience** James 2:17, 26; 1 John 2:3-4

it's how it worked for **ABRAHAM** (v. 16b-22)

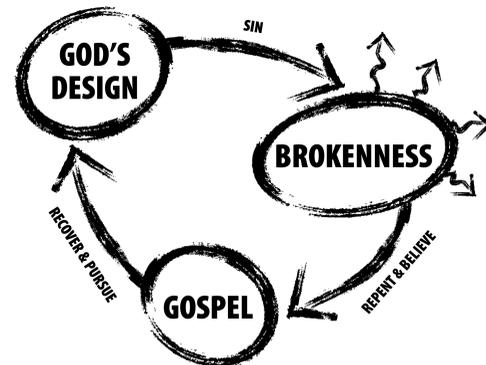
he had **reason to doubt** v. 17-19 Genesis 17:17; 18:12

he still **trusted God's promise** v. 19-22 Hebrews 11:8, 11-12; 17-19; 2 Corinthians 5:7

and it's how it works for **US**. (v. 23-25)

imputed righteousness v. 24
2 Corinthians 5:21; Philippians 3:9; Isaiah 61:10

repent & believe v. 24-25
Mark 1:15; Acts 16:31; 17:30; 20:21; John 3:16



We are *sent* to love people and invite them to follow Jesus with us.



Like Abraham, we face a culture filled with false gods and competing beliefs, a world overflowing with new idols and modern ideologies. Like him, we're called to trust the one true God—**fully convinced** (v. 21) of his power and faithfulness even when circumstances test us.

Take a moment to reflect:

Where in life are your convictions about God's character being tested right now?

In what areas are you being invited to move from *partial belief* to *full confidence* in Christ?

Our trust in God is often revealed through our confidence in truths like these:

- **God's forgiveness is complete.** I don't have to carry guilt or keep trying to earn his approval. (Psalm 103:12; Romans 8:1)
- **Eternal life is real.** This world isn't all there is—the reality of heaven and hell remind me my choices matter forever. (John 11:25-26; 2 Corinthians 4:17-18)
- **My life has purpose.** I was created intentionally, and my story fits within God's larger plan. (Ephesians 2:10; Psalm 138:8)
- **My service matters.** Even small acts done in faith have eternal value. (1 Cor. 15:58)
- **God's love never runs out.** His resources aren't limited; his care is constant. (Lamentations 3:22-23; Romans 8:38-39)
- **My future is secure.** God's protection and promises hold firm, even when I can't see the way forward. (Philippians 1:6; Heb. 13:5-6)
- **God watches over those I love.** His faithfulness extends beyond me to the people I entrust to him. (Psalm 121:7-8; Isa. 54:13)

Let Abraham's example remind you: faith grows strong when we choose to be **fully convinced** that God is able and can be trusted to do all he has promised (Romans 4:21).



Study Guide

Questions & Scripture for Further Study

What is this? – Each week people from Wawasee Bible meet in small groups in various homes to learn about Jesus, pray, eat, laugh, & live life together. **We call them Life Groups.** The questions here are based on the sermon each week (often a related part of Scripture), and guide each group's study. If you're interested in connecting with a Life Group, let us know on a Connect Card or at the Connect Desk!

Welcome to Life Group!

Getting to Know You

Part of our goal at Life Group is just learning more about each other. Toward that end, take some time to catch up with each other as you gather.

If it helps, here's a question to discuss and get you going. Have everyone answer:

*What's something you've learned over time that you can only **really** understand by doing it—not just by knowing about it?*

Digging Deeper – A Bible Study

Use this guide for further personal and group study this week. For the most impact in your life and in your group, *work through it on your own before you gather with your Life Group.* If your Life Group isn't gathering this week, use this guide for further study personally.

1. Looking back at your notes from this week's message, was there anything you heard for the first time or anything that caught your attention, challenged, or confused you?
2. This weekend's message reminded us that we're saved (made right) with God through faith alone, but that saving faith doesn't stay alone. Genuine faith is revealed through how we live. Since biblical faith is always active, how do these verses challenge us to live in such counter-cultural ways that others can't help but notice the difference?

Matthew 5:43-48

Matthew 7:12

Luke 6:35-36

- Which of the actions mentioned in these passages is the most challenging for you to consistently live out? Which is the easiest?

3. One of Abraham's most profound moments of faith came when God asked him to take his son up the mountain as a sacrifice (**you might go read it in Genesis 22**). Abraham's trust in God at that moment can leave us wondering, "*Could I ever trust God like that?*" How do the following passages help us grow toward that same kind of deep trust in God??

Mark 9:14-29

John 4:46-53

Hebrews 12:1-3

- Is there anything in your life right now that you're having difficulty trusting God for? Share with your group. Then stop and pray for each other.

(Study Guide continues on back panel...)

At Wawasee, each of us is growing to increasingly live out these four roles as we follow Jesus together.



Secure Son/Daughter

I live each day increasingly confident in being a loved child of God—resting in grace, not striving to achieve approval.



Courageous Connector

I cultivate honest relationships that cross barriers and create belonging—even before belief.



Ready Storyteller

I live each day with a sense of sentness, ready to reveal my story and God's story.



Legacy Builder

Because of Jesus, I multiply what has been given to me by spiritually investing in others for kingdom impact.

Word Find in the **Word**

Find the words from a passage related to this week's message.

Word Find: Galatians 3:24-29 (NLT)

Find the words **bolded** below.

24 Let me put it **another** way. The law was our **guardian** until **Christ came**; it **protected** us until we could be **made right** with God through **faith**. 25 And now that the way of **faith** has **come**, we no **longer need** the law as our **guardian**. 26 For you are all **children** of God through **faith** in **Christ Jesus**. 27 And all who have **been** united with **Christ** in **baptism** have put on **Christ, like** putting on new **clothes**. 28 **There** is no **longer** Jew or **Gentile, slave** or **free, male** and **female**. For you are all one in **Christ Jesus**. 29 And now that you **belong** to **Christ**, you are the **true children** of **Abraham**. You are his **heirs**, and God's promise to **Abraham belongs** to you.

D H M R I G H T U P E R
K B P C B E L O N G E R
K F P P L N T F A I T H
C H R I S T B E E N L E
P B A P T I S M T K I I
N R B K C L C A M E K R
E M R D H E S L A V E S
E T A H I L J E S U S E
D R H C L O T H E S H P
G U A R D I A N M M C M
E E M F R E E A A T O A
P R O T E C T E D L M L
T F C A N O T H E R E E

- In the early church, many believers were confused about whether Gentile Christians needed to be circumcised or follow Old Testament Jewish laws. In **Galatians 2:11–16**, Paul confronts Peter (Cephas) over this very issue, defending the freedom believers have through faith in Christ rather than works of the law. After reading the story, discuss the following questions together:

If you'd like help understanding this passage more, use this QR code to an article at **gotquestions.org**.
<https://www.gotquestions.org/incident-at-Antioch.html>



- Observation:** What stands out to you in this story—what surprises you, confuses you, or challenges you?
- Imagine being in the room when this confrontation happened. What do you think Paul, Peter, and Barnabas were feeling before and after Paul spoke up?
- Interpretation:** Why was this moment so critical for the early church that Paul felt compelled to confront Peter publicly? What was truly at stake?
- Application:** If you had to explain why this incident still matters today, how would you describe its significance to another believer? How does it shape your understanding of what it means to live by faith rather than by rule-keeping?

- In **Romans 4**, Paul points to Abraham as the model of someone made right with God through faith, not by keeping the law. How does Paul's confrontation with Peter in **Galatians 2** illustrate the same truth?

- What similarities do you see between Abraham's story and this incident?
- How does this help you better understand what it means to live by faith today?

Taking it Home

- Faith can be defined simply as "*trusting God enough to do what he says.*" Is there any area in your life where you're struggling to trust God to do what he says that you'd like prayer for?
- Looking back over this week's sermon and homework, what's the most important thing for you to remember?

As you close, take time to pray with and for one another.

This week's Study Guide is adapted in part from a study by North Coast Church in Vista, CA. North Coast is a sister church of Wawasee Bible and part of the EFCA.



Wawasee Bible is part of the Evangelical Free Church of America. View our Statement of Faith online at wawaseebible.com/beliefs. Learn more about the EFCA at efca.org.

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PART 7

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We're Glad You're Here Today!

Scan QR code for our **App** with **Bulletin, Connect Card, & more.**

<https://wawasee.today>