

# FAITH COMES BY HEARING THE WORD OF GOD 2.28.2021

Let's look at the Bible readings for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Lent, Feb. 28, to prepare for on-line, drive-in, and in-person worship (10 am) with Abounding Joy.

## 1ST READING: Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16

<sup>1</sup>When Abram was ninety-nine years old the Lord appeared to Abram and said to him, "I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless, <sup>2</sup>that I may make my **covenant** between me and you, and may multiply you greatly." <sup>3</sup>Then Abram fell on his face. And God said to him, <sup>4</sup>"Behold, my **covenant** is with you, and you shall be the father of a multitude of nations. <sup>5</sup>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. <sup>6</sup>I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make you into

nations, and kings shall come from you. <sup>7</sup>And I will establish my **covenant** between me and you and your offspring after you throughout their generations for an everlasting **covenant**, to be God to you and to your offspring after you."

<sup>15</sup>And God said to Abraham, "As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. <sup>16</sup>I will bless her, and moreover, I will give you a son by her. I will bless her, and she shall become nations; kings of peoples shall come from her."

## SOME QUESTIONS TO PONDER RELATED TO GENESIS, CHAPTER 17

1. In the Bible a name change usually denotes a change in one's relationship with God. Abram means: "exalted father," while Abraham means: "father of a multitude." Sarai means: "princess," while Sarah means: "my princess." What's the significance of these changes?
2. Look up the definition of a covenant (a key term in this story and in the whole Bible).
3. God's covenants with His people are usually unilateral, that is, they are one way; based on God's promises to His people. What promise does God make at the end of verse 7?
4. Still childless, Abram is 99 and Sarai is about 90 when this promise of a son of their own (and eventually a great nation from them) comes to them. How does Jesus fit into this story?

## 2ND READING: Romans 5:1-11

<sup>1</sup>Therefore, since we have been **justified** by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>2</sup>Through him we have also **obtained access by faith into this grace** in which we stand, and we rejoice in **hope** of the glory of God. <sup>3</sup>Not only that, but we **rejoice** in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, <sup>4</sup>and endurance produces character, and character produces **hope**, <sup>5</sup>and **hope** does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us. <sup>6</sup>For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the

ungodly. <sup>7</sup>For one will scarcely die for a righteous person — though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die — <sup>8</sup>but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. <sup>9</sup>Since, therefore, we have now been **justified** by his blood, much more shall we be **saved** by him from the wrath of God. <sup>10</sup>For if while we were enemies we were **reconciled** to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be **saved** by his life. <sup>11</sup>More than that, we also **rejoice** in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received **reconciliation**.

## SOME QUESTIONS TO PONDER RELATED TO ROMANS, CHAPTER 5:

1. This passage is chock-full of gracious promises regarding what God has done for us in Jesus. Identify at least 5 of those promises.
2. Paul uses the terms “saved,” “justified,” and “reconciled” to describe what Jesus has done for us. How are those words similar and dissimilar?
3. What do verses 6 + 8 say about what we do to make ourselves qualified to receive God’s love?
4. Do you see the Holy Trinity in these verses? If so, where?
5. What is the source and cause of our joy (rejoicing) as Christians (see vss. 3 and 11)?

## THE GOSPEL: Mark 8:27-38

<sup>27</sup>Jesus went on with his disciples to the villages of Caesarea Philippi. And on the way he asked his disciples, **“Who do people say that I am?”** <sup>28</sup>And they told him, “John the Baptist; and others say, Elijah; and others, one of the prophets.” <sup>29</sup>And he asked them, **“But who do you say that I am?”** Peter answered him, “You are the Christ.”

<sup>30</sup>And he strictly charged them to tell no one about him. <sup>31</sup>And he began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes and be killed, and after three days rise again. <sup>32</sup>And he said this plainly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. <sup>33</sup>But turning and seeing his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, “Get behind me,

Satan! For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man.”

<sup>34</sup>And calling the crowd to him with his disciples, he said to them, “If anyone would **come after** me, let him **deny** himself and take up his cross and **follow** me. <sup>35</sup>For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever **loses** his life for my sake and the gospel’s will save it. <sup>36</sup>For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul? <sup>37</sup>For what can a man give in return for his soul? <sup>38</sup>For whoever is **ashamed of me** and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of Man also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.”

## SOME QUESTIONS TO PONDER RELATED TO MARK, CHAPTER 8:

1. The setting of this story, Caesarea Philippi, is a place where many different gods were worshiped. Why is that important given the questions that Jesus asks His disciples?
2. This is the first of three “Passion Predictions” in Mark (see chapters 8, 9, and 10) where Jesus foretells His coming suffering, death, and resurrection. Why, though they had been told ahead of time, were the disciples still shocked and surprised when it happened?
3. In vs. 29 Peter hits it out of the park with a correct answer. In vs. 32 he strikes out. Did Peter understand what it meant for Jesus to be the Christ (the Messiah, in Hebrew)?
4. Do vss. 34-37 operate as Law (telling us what God expects of us) or as Gospel (announcing our forgiveness through Jesus)? How do these words accuse and condemn you?
5. Are vss. 34-37 a prescription of what we need to do to be saved, or a description of how we will live as the Holy Spirit gets ahold of us, puts our old self to death, and empowers us to walk in the way of trusting God and loving others?