

Romans 4:19-25
(Genesis 17:1-8; Luke 24:44-49)
“He Grew Strong in His Faith”

Introduction

I was tempted, after last week’s review of the life of Abraham and the chapter four summary simply to move on today to Romans 5. However, Harold Camping’s prediction that the Lord would “rapture” his people from the world yesterday (May 21, 2011) and strike those who remain with earthquakes and other cataclysmic events, got me thinking about how easily, not only end-time nutcases, but mature, godly people can be deceived by their own misunderstanding of how to read the Bible, and how to recognize God’s voice.

It is easy to refute the predictions of false prophets and fear-mongers like Camping. After all, Jesus said to his disciples, when they wanted to know if the end was at hand, “It is not for you to know the times or seasons the Father has set by his own authority, but you shall be my witnesses” (Acts 1:). In other words, don’t have prophecy conferences, have mission conferences. Don’t waste your time trying to figure out when history ends. Spend the days given to you doing what God has called you to do.

But it is more difficult to address the certainties expressed by earnest, mature followers of Jesus, who believe that God has given them a promise and that their obedience depends on believing what they presume God has promised them, even against all appearances. So this morning, I want us to return to the final verses of chapter four to note three important points, three things crucial to a mature and joyful faith. In these verses, Paul reminds us of the content of biblical faith, the goal of biblical faith, and the ground or foundation of biblical faith.

Body

- 1. The content of biblical faith is God’s covenant promise (4:20a, 25).**
- 2. The goal of biblical faith is God’s glory (4:20b).**
- 3. The ground of biblical faith is God’s character (4:21, 24).**

Conclusion

God’s promises are covenant promises, not merely to me or to you, but to all his people. They are redemptive promises that have as their goal his glory. We believe them because he is faithful and is able to fulfill his promises. In that we hope and in that find our rest whatever disappointments, storms and earthquakes may come. He who has called us is faithful, and he will surely do it.

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