

Facilitator:

1. Open with Prayer
2. Welcome any newcomers
3. Try to keep your discussion to an hour and a half at the most.

Facilitator: Encourage your members to **BRING THEIR BIBLES** and use them during Connect Group.

CONNECT Group study questions for November 26, 2017

Title: Faith Transaction—Romans 4:16-25

Read: Romans 4:16-25

For this reason it is by faith, in order that it may be in accordance with grace, so that the promise will be guaranteed to all the descendants, not only to those who are of the Law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all, 17 (as it is written, “A father of many nations have I made you”) in the presence of Him whom he believed, even God, who gives life to the dead and calls into being that which does not exist. 18 In hope against hope he believed, so that he might become a father of many nations according to that which had been spoken, “So shall your descendants be.” 19 Without becoming weak in faith he contemplated his own body, now as good as dead since he was about a hundred years old, and the deadness of Sarah’s womb; 20 yet, with respect to the promise of God, he did not waver in unbelief but grew strong in faith, giving glory to God, 21 and being fully assured that what God had promised, He was able also to perform. 22 Therefore it was also credited to him as righteousness. 23 Now not for his sake only was it written that it was credited to him, 24 but for our sake also, to whom it will be credited, as those who believe in Him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, 25 He who was delivered over because of our transgressions, and was raised because of our justification.

Review: Read the notes from Pastor Peppy’s lesson, *Faith Transaction*, and share what God revealed to you from his message.

Question: We have learned that in the same way Abraham was **not** saved by good works, circumcision, or by keeping the Law, we are **not** saved by good works, following rituals, or living by a list of do’s and don’ts. Our sal-

vation is by faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ, a free gift of God's grace.

Why do so many people resist accepting God's free gift of salvation? What reasons, objections, misconceptions do people have that keep them in unbelief? **Facilitator:** Take some time with this. Get your group members to recall factors they might have weighed before finally accepting God's grace by faith. Have someone **Read:** 1 Corinthians 1:18-25 and have members cite examples from their experience.

Question: From Abraham's human perspective, all hope in the promise God made to him that he would be the father of many nations evaporated with his and Sarah's advanced age. Yet, in the Apostle Paul's words, Abraham "*[i]n hope against hope ... believed.*"

Can you recall a time when it seemed all hope was lost, but God proved that what he promised he was able to perform? **Read:** Romans 4:19-21 from our text and discuss ways you can "*[grow] strong in faith*" and "*give glory to God*" as did Abraham. Also, **Read:** Philippians 1:6.

Facilitator: One way is to keep a journal of prayers offered and prayers answered.

Question: As we grow in grace and our faith in God strengthens, we lean more heavily on his power to "*... work out [our] salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure*" (Philippians 2:12b-13).

What is it that holds us back from telling everyone we meet about the gospel, even after growing in faith and experiencing God at work within us? Do you recall times when you could have shared your faith, but didn't? Why was that? Do you think it was a lack of belief?

Read Mark 9:23-25. Do you share the prayer of the father whose child had a deaf and dumb spirit?