

# Romans 4:1-8

## Cause And Effect

**Scripture:** Romans 4:1-8, Ephesians 2:8-10

**Memory Verse:** Romans 4:5 “But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness.”

**Lesson Focus:** Kids should understand the basics of cause and effect. What they (and adults too) often confuse though is that good works are not the cause of our salvation, but the effect! In this text, Paul makes it clear that it is by God’s grace through faith that we are saved apart from works. After establishing that wonderful gospel truth, we will challenge the kids to show their faith is real by their works.

**Activities and Crafts:** Cause and Effect Coloring Picture, Word Search of different terms from lesson, New Bring it Home Sheet for 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup>.  
Craft for 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup>: Cause and Effect Chain

**Starter Activity:** Cause and Effect Challenge

Consider getting the lesson started with some fun that will demonstrate cause and effect. First have some brief introductory discussion on what “cause and effect” means. Explain that the **cause** describes WHY something happened and the **effect** describes WHAT actually happened. Write **cause** and **effect** in two columns on the whiteboard with these basic definitions underneath them which we will reference throughout the lesson.

Then, invite several volunteers up willing to experience several **effects**. You will be the **cause** agent. Write these effects on the white board (in the **effect** “column”) so that the kids know what they are beforehand but have your secret “causes” ready. Try to have some good and some not so good to make it funny and exciting. \* Here are a few ideas below, but feel free to come up with your own:

| <b><u>EFFECTS</u></b>     | <b><u>“SECRET” CAUSE</u></b>                                 |
|---------------------------|--|
| I taste chocolate         | (have a piece of chocolate candy read to give them)          |
| I am wet                  | (gently spray kid with water bottle)                         |
| I am glad                 | (let kid gently spray you with water bottle!)                |
| I am tired                | (kid does pushups or something strenuous for 30 seconds)     |
| I am moving               | (give the kid a piggy-back ride)                             |
| Everything is upside-down | (VERY CAREFULLY hold kid upside-down for a couple seconds)   |
| Everything is dark        | (put sunglasses on kid or a funny paper bag over their head) |

Afterwards, transition into the lesson by adding one more **effect**: I AM SAVED. \*

Q: What is the **cause** for this? Our study from last week answered this question and our text today is going to help us understand it even better. Let’s take a look!

## Bible Study:

Last week we learned what the cause of our salvation was. It was NOT our good works, it was NOT us going to church, it was NOT reading our Bibles. \* Remember that **Romans 3:23** said that ALL have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. The cause of our salvation is God's grace in sending Jesus to die for our sins. (**Teachers:** Consider drawing a cross to represent God's grace as the corresponding cause to the I AM SAVED effect). And as our memory verse from last week (**Romans 3:28**) stated we receive this by faith alone (**Teachers:** Consider adding the word "faith" into that cross). \* Paul is now going to continue making this point by referring back to Abraham from the OT.

Q: What was Abraham (not Abraham Lincoln!) famous for? A: He was a very old man that loved God. God promised that he would be the father of the Jewish nation (and out of this nation would come Jesus, the promised Savior!). But he had no kids! His wife, Sarah, was old too (they were both over 90 years old). (**Teachers:** Consider singing "Father Abraham" with the kids for some silly fun) \*

**Romans 4:1-2:** Paul knew that his audience looked up to Abraham as a spiritual hero and uses his story to settle once and for all that the cause of our salvation is NOT our works. For it is in our nature to insert ourselves and our works into the cause of our salvation! (for then we wrongly brag about our own goodness rather than in God's goodness)

**Romans 4:3:** Paul goes back to **Genesis 15:6** to make his point. \*

Q: What does the Bible say the cause of Abraham's salvation was? A: It was the same grace of God received by faith/believing. (**Teachers:** Consider adding "ABRAHAM IS SAVED" as another effect under I AM SAVED and point it back to the same cross referred to earlier) Abraham was saved by grace alone through faith alone just like we are! Even though it seemed crazy that they would have kids, Abraham trusted in God!

This verse says that God *accounted* or *credited* to Abraham righteousness.

Q: How many of you have ever received money as a gift at your birthday or Christmas? Where do you put it? A: In your bank account or piggy bank. \* You could say the gift you received is *accounted* or *credited* into your piggy bank. It is yours now! In the same way, God *credits* Abraham's spiritual piggy bank completely with His own righteousness (like billions of dollars). What's the cause? God's gracious gift received through faith! \*

**Romans 4:4:** Now here is why grace/faith and works don't mix as the cause!

Q: Have you ever had a chore or a job where you got paid for your work? Give me some examples. \* After you finish the job, what do you expect? A: To get paid! They now OWE you money, especially if it was a job well done.

But if we insert ourselves and our own works into the cause of our salvation, then salvation is no longer a gift! Instead of receiving grace from God into our spiritual piggy banks, we are wrongly telling God that He OWES us money into those piggy banks!

Q: But as we learned from last week, will our works EVER be good enough? NO! \*

**Romans 4:5:** This could not be any clearer! We are to ABANDON our efforts to earn salvation by our works and instead receive God’s grace into our spiritual “piggy banks” through faith ALONE! This is the radical good news of the gospel! As we said last week, every other belief system in the world says you gotta be good, you gotta work, you gotta do this or that and MAYBE you will be saved. That’s NOT good news! The gospel is!

But then some of you might be wondering...do my works matter at all? The answer is an absolute YES, but maybe not in the way you think. We’ve already said that our natural way is to wrongly inject our works into the cause of our salvation. But the Bible actually teaches that good works are an effect of our salvation, not the cause! (**Teachers:** Consider erasing all of the cause/effect examples so far and start a new set with “I AM SAVED” now in the cause column and add GOOD WORKS into the effect column)

**Ephesians 2:8-9:** These verses say what we’ve been learning in Romans already: God’s grace is the cause of our salvation. It is NOT of ourselves, rather it is a free gift from God that we receive through faith! This way no one can brag! But look what is said immediately afterwards...

**Ephesians 2:10:** While we are saved BY grace/faith, we are saved FOR good works. Good works are the effect of our salvation, not the cause! When we are saved, something changes inside of us. The Holy Spirit lives inside of us slowly transforming us from the inside out. We become children of God and with the help of the Holy Spirit we do good works because we love God, not because we have to earn God’s love.

If you read the rest of Abraham’s life in Genesis, he wasn’t perfect. He made mistakes. But he PROVED to us all that his faith in God was real by his good works!

**Romans 4:6:** Paul continues with another OT hero, David, to reinforce his points.

Q: What was David famous for? A: The toasting of Goliath! God did wonderful things through David’s life and just like Abraham, he was a man who trusted in God! \*

**Romans 4:7-8:** These last two verses of our lesson describe another effect of our salvation by grace through faith alone. Let’s read this again so that you hear the word.

Q: How did David describe the effect of his salvation? A: Blessed! (**Teachers:** Add the word “blessed” as another effect of our salvation) \*

**Key Point:** “Blessed” is how we feel when we receive gifts from grandparents that go into our piggy banks. How do we respond? We show our gratitude by saying THANK YOU and giving them a big hug.

**Boys and Girls:** If you believe in Jesus Christ’s death/resurrection, you are blessed! Your sins are forgiven! Your spiritual “piggy bank” is FULL! Show your gratitude by saying THANK YOU to Him and living each and every day in loving obedience to Him! \*

**Teachers:** Consider wrapping up with some small group discussion over various ways you can show God gratitude this week. See [here](#) for a whole bunch of ideas. Stress again that these good works are not the cause of our salvation, but the effect of it!

# BRING IT HOME

Read Romans 4:3-5.  
What is the cause  
of our salvation?

*Parent Signature:*  
\_\_\_\_\_

*Parent Challenge:*  
What was Abraham  
famous for?

Read Ephesians 2:10  
What is the effect  
of our salvation?

