

Wherefore Then Serveth the Law (Gal 3:19)? – Part 9

Read carefully the following two related passages. In reading, ask the question... is Paul comparing oranges to apples or is he comparing apples to apples?

Deuteronomy 30:11-16 For this commandment which I command thee this day, it *is* not hidden from thee, neither *is* it far off. **12** It *is* not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? **13** Neither *is* it beyond the sea, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? **14** But the word *is* very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it. **15** See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil; **16** In that I command thee this day to love the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments and his statutes and his judgments, that thou mayest live and multiply: and the LORD thy God shall bless thee in the land whither thou goest to possess it.

Romans 10:1-11 Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. **2** For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. **3** For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. **4** For Christ *is* the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. **5** For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them. **6** But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down *from above*;) **7** Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.) **8** But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, *even* in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; **9** That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. **10** For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. **11** For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

Romans 10 became very familiar to me as a new Christian in the early 70's because it was a passage often used in witnessing Christ to unbelievers. It was also somewhat a confusing passage to me. I was led to believe that Old Testament saints looked forward to the cross for salvation much like we look back to the cross. In other words, an OT saint got 'saved' just like we do today, by grace and through faith without works, in looking forward to the cross. Nothing could be further from the truth and this false narrative has led to much confusion and contradiction regarding the means and methods God has chosen to use in justifying the circumcision 'by faith' and the uncircumcision 'through faith' (**Rom 3:29-30**).

If justification (salvation) under the OT was the same as Paul describes for us today in Romans 10, why then is Paul focused in on the subject of 'righteousness' and not 'justification' here in this context? The answer is found in Romans 3:22-26, with focus on verse 24.

Romans 3:22-26 Even the righteousness of God *which is* by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: **23** For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; **24** Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: **25** Whom God hath set forth *to be* a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; **26** To declare, *I say*, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.

Under Pauline truth, we are justified freely as there was a work element (faithful obedience) under the OT and focus here is the law. Again... Under the Old Testament, a just man was one who was righteous before the LORD. Imputed righteousness was based on faithful obedience. This is why Paul is comparing apples with apples in Romans 10. Imputed righteousness today is 'of faith' and the law wasn't... "For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them." Paul stated... "...for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law." **Galatians 3:21** Under the Mosaic Covenant, man had to provide the life.

Let's illustrate. Take a simple example of a household in which a list of chores is posted on a refrigerator.

This list includes the following:

- Wash the dishes
- Clean the table
- Take out the garbage
- Make the bed
- Vacuum the floors
- Wash the clothes
- Feed the dog

Two weeks after the chore list is posted, the sink is full, the table dirty, garbage overflowing, bed not made, floors filthy, clothes piled up and dog is starving. Why? The exact reason being is that the list of chores is 'dead' and no action was implemented! Obviously, there are consequences when expectations aren't carried out and even when things are followed through on, there can be consequences if not carried out with proper attitude. Israel failed under law because they sought it not 'by faith', but as it were by the works of the law (**Rom 9:30-32**).

Imputed righteousness under Paul's gospel, which is 'of faith', is salvation via confessing the Lord Jesus and believing in one's heart that God hath raised him from the dead. This is Paul's gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the mystery which was kept secret since the world began... "Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began," **Romans 16:25**

Let it be clear... nobody, but nobody under the OT looked forward to the cross for salvation! This concept is a fairytale! Nobody got saved confessing with their mouth the Lord Jesus, believing in their heart that God would raise him from the dead. Not Abel, not Noah, not Abraham. Neither Job, Moses, David, Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach or Abed-nego. No prophet or person from either the Northern or Southern kingdoms of Israel and Judah; NO ONE! Even under kingdom preaching by John the Baptist and the disciples, without understanding of the cross (**Mk 1:1; Lk 7:22; Lk 9:1-6; 18:31-34; Lk 20:1; 24:44-47; Jn 20:8-9**), they were preaching a gospel; the gospel of the kingdom.

Under the Mosaic Covenant, one lived unto righteousness. Under Paul's gospel, one believes unto righteousness!

1 Corinthians 15:1-4 Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; **2** By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. **3** For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; **4** And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:

The next and final post on this series will answer the question... Wherefore then serveth the law today?

2 Tim 2:15 "Study..."!