

Wherefore Then Serveth the Law (Gal 3:19)? – Part 11

I began this series of posts with my theologically minded FB friends in mind. Perhaps it would only be those who would understand a debate around the subject of this last post. I've made a big deal out of the need to distinguish the difference between God justifying the circumcision 'by faith' and the uncircumcision 'through faith'. I greatly appreciate the Shares, Likes and several comments that were made. However, I'm somewhat surprised that no questions were asked? If I, as a reader, was taking these posts seriously, I would have come up with at least one question in view of the fact that there's been insistence that we're saved 'through faith' today and not 'by faith'. Doesn't Paul, on occasion, state that we're justified 'by faith'? How would I have then addressed that challenging question on statements made that seemingly contradict certain of Paul's own statements?

I'll never forget how I was awakened to the bible version controversy. It was at college when I returned back to the dorm room late from work and my bible (KJB) was in the adjacent room with bunk beds and roommates asleep. I grabbed a roommate's bible for my devotions and after reading several verses I put it down confused. I turned to the front to discover, if recalling correctly, it was a New American Standard Bible (NASB). I was rather a newbie Christian at the time and guess I always assumed there was one bible. I had an encounter with the Living Bible, but understanding it was a paraphrase, never took it seriously.

One of the greatest deceptions of our times, from behind the pulpits across America, are preachers declaring... 'thus sayeth the Lord', not believing it for a second! Most proclaiming to believe and preach the 'word of God', don't believe their bibles are the 'words of God'. The expression, 'word of God', carries a completely different connotation than what is used to. It's virtually impossible to discern doctrine any longer, because there's NO final authority except from those who boast to know Hebrew and Greek. Scholars seem to forget that God was the author of languages (**Gen 11**) and can speak more than one language (**Acts 2:4-11**). Don't you suppose if all that heard the wonderful works of God in their own tongue on the day of Pentecost, that that same God could lead in translation of those words in those tongues? Where are God's words today in the English language? Mixed in among the multitude of English translations?

There is rhyme and reason in a King James Bible that you'll not find in any other version. I've been reading, studying, preaching and teaching for over 45 years and I will testify unequivocally that all bibles don't teach the same thing and I'm not simply referring to the many omissions found in various translations. I've demonstrated a few differences between the KJB from those of the NIV and ESV, within these posts, that reflects on the outcome of certain doctrine.

Regarding the question being asked of myself to myself concerning the use of the expression 'by faith', for salvation today, let me encourage the reader to do the following. In as few settings as possible, read entirely through the books of Romans and Galatians. There are several deterrents to understanding the scriptures. Rejecting the KJB as one's final authority, not rightly dividing the bible and reading the bible in piecemeal or topical only. One of my greatest pet peeves in listening to other's approach to teaching Romans is that it is presented as a book of similarities, when in reality, it is a book of distinctions. Reading books like Romans and Galatians through, at one setting, can literally change one's theology! Study the contexts of 'but now' in Romans (**Ro 3:21; Ro 6:22; Ro 7:6; Ro 16:25-26**)!

The word 'faith' is used in so many different ways in Romans and Galatians: 'by faith', 'through faith', 'of faith', 'faith of Abraham', 'faith of Christ', 'the faith which should afterwards be revealed', etc. These aren't random expressions. They mean something and the key for Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles, was

to use this common word in such fashion as to yet show distinction between God justifying the circumcision (Jew) 'by faith' and the uncircumcision (Gentile) 'through faith' (**Rom 3:29-30**). The 'trick' for the KJB translators was to exactly and expressly convey Paul's line of reasoning and it does that in fine fashion. The problem is that we fail to believe and discern what we're reading!

I had stated in my second post that mankind's rapport is 99% built on a 'by faith' relationship one to another. This applies to friendships, family, employer/employee relationships on down to the person we meet on the street or behind a cash register. There is a trust-trust factor that comes into play within all relationships and reward out of any relationship is based on faithfulness. Consequences come into play when that trust is broken. This 'by faith' principle was established by God towards man on the day of creation that Adam then broke by an act of disobedience. Justification and imputed righteousness continued along this path of a 'by faith' relationship between man and God... "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous..." (**Heb 11:4**)

Hebrews 11:6 But without faith *it is* impossible to please *him*: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and *that* he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

If 'faith' is demonstrated 99% of the time under this 'by faith' principle, how then is 'faith' executed the other 1% of the time? Great question! The answer is even greater!

Though probably on rare occasion, have you ever believed or trusted someone for something that was promised and it was a sheer act of grace or mercy on their part in carry out that promise? In other words, you put faith in someone's else's faithfulness to carry through with a promise that you were totally reliant upon them to fulfill, but perhaps had yet to see the result? This is EXACTLY what justification and imputed righteousness 'through faith' looks like! It is faith illustrated by both Sara and Abraham.

Hebrews 11:11 Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised.

Romans 4:18-22 Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations; according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be. **19** And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sara's womb: **20** He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; **21** And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform. **22** And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness.

Justification and imputed righteousness built on the 'through faith' principle is exactly the OPPOSITE of the same built on the 'by faith' principle. Justification 'by faith' is via faithful obedience towards a faithful God of reward whereas justification 'through faith' is via believing a faithful God of reward! Our justification isn't based on our obedience or faithfulness, but on the obedience and faithfulness of another!

Romans 5:19 For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.

2 Corinthians 5:21 For he hath made him *to be* sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

We've gone full circle. How then does Paul convey this new truth while using familiar words and scripture? In specular fashion, that's how!

Using the 'google map' concept once again, we're going to zoom in on Paul's reference to Habakkuk 2:4 in Galatians 3:11.

Habakkuk 2:4 Behold, his soul *which* is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith.

"...but the just shall live by his faith."

"...by his faith."

Galatians 3:11 But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, *it is* evident: for, The just shall live by faith.

"...for, The just shall live by faith."

"...by faith."

In referencing Habakkuk 2:4, Paul drops the pronoun 'his' that points to the faithful obedience aspect to justification under law while now focusing on the 'faith' aspect relevant to his gospel, which is 'of faith' and 'through the faith of Christ'. Faith on faith! One MUST pay attention to words and context when studying the scriptures. Words matter! Context matters!

Romans 1:17 For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.

Galatians 2:20 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

Philippians 3:9 And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:

Romans 5:1 Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

Once Romans and Galatians are understood as books written to Gentiles showing distinction between justification 'by faith' and 'through faith', the scriptures make a whole lot more of bible-sense.

In answering my own question concerning the legitimacy in using the term 'by faith', relating to one's salvation today, is simply in qualifying it in the context of ... "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." **Gal 3:26** The 1%, as with Sara and Abraham, is our faith in Christ while the other 99% is all about Christ's accomplishments on our behalf and His faithfulness to carry through... "...for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." **2Tim 1:12**

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