

JUSTIFICATION THROUGH FAITH

Romans 3:29-30 ... "Or is he the God of the Jews only? Is he not also the God of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also, since there is one God who will justify the circumcised [Jews] by faith and the uncircumcised [Gentiles] through faith."

In ancient days, God demanded that Jewish males be circumcised as a sign of their commitment to God. It was a spiritual act. Today, circumcision is common for hygiene purposes. If you are not born as a Jew, getting circumcised does not make you a Jew. Circumcision was also practiced by other ancient peoples as a confession of allegiance to their false gods. So, when God gave the command to Abraham, it would have been a concept that Abraham understood because it was already being practiced by other peoples, but for pagan purposes.

In the second part of today's verse, Paul writes: "there is one God who will justify the circumcised BY faith and the uncircumcised THROUGH faith." The distinction is in the words "by" and "through." Jewish males were circumcised to align themselves with God's covenant of provision, protection, and promise. Their relationship with God was bound up in a strict following of God's laws, which included animal sacrifices and other ritual formalities. Therefore, when Paul wrote that Jews were formerly justified BY faith, he meant they were justified BY following those ordinances; by performing certain acts.

As Gentiles, you and I are not bound to the same ordinances that Jews practice. We are not required to perform animal sacrifices or be circumcised. Christ gives us the opportunity to enjoy the same promises as the Jews by simply believing in him. Therefore, Paul says we Gentiles are justified THROUGH our faith in Christ; we are justified by simply believing in him, not by performing certain acts.

Jews, however, are not excused from the requirement to believe in Christ. Upon his death on the cross as the final and superior sacrifice, all men fell under God's opportunity for salvation ONLY by accepting Christ as Lord and Savior. Circumcision, strict adherence to the law, animal sacrifices and other Jewish rituals are no longer sufficient for a Jew to be saved. Both Jews and Gentiles have the same opportunity and the same requirement. Romans 3:21-22 reads: "But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed...even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to ALL and on ALL who believe. For there is no difference..."

If you are a born again Christian, you obtained your salvation not by doing good works or performing rituals. Salvation is your gift from God for simply believing in Jesus, which means that you believe everything he taught and everything he instructs you to do. That is how your faith – through obedience to Christ – justifies you in the sight of God.

Copyright © 2018 Datu Wali Mission Foundation