

By Faith or Through Faith...why the Confusion?

Controversy that exists in discerning O.T. truth from N.T. truth in the area of justification is a result of two things:

1. Not rightly dividing the word of truth
2. Not discerning each of the components of 'By faith' and 'Through Faith'

Romans 3:30

Seeing *it is* one God,

which shall justify

the circumcision

by faith,

Subject of Justification – Faith of God
Means of God's righteousness – Commandments
Method of obtaining God's righteousness – Trust & Obey

and uncircumcision

through faith

Subject of Justification – Faith of Christ
Means of God's righteousness – Jesus Christ
Method of obtaining God's righteousness – Believing

The doctrine behind each of God's methods in dealing with Jew and Gentile, 'by Faith' and 'through Faith', is triune in nature and has to be interpreted as such. The doctrine of the Godhead (Ac 17:29; Rom 1:20; Col 2:9), commonly referred to as the Trinity, is an example of such doctrine and of how it needs to be approached.

Triune doctrine of the Godhead

The doctrine of the Godhead is composed of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. The Godhead is a unity of one made up of more than one (Gen 1:1 'elōhîm; Mt 28:19; John 17:11, 20-24). Distinction not only has to be made between each member of the Godhead, in regards of their relationship to each other, but also in regards of each their relationship to man. Reference to God can be made in general, with task at hand, in figuring out which member of the Godhead is being referred to; any combination of scenarios is endless depending on the doctrine or subject at hand. Certain topics, such as creation and redemption, have involvement of all three members each playing a very different role. An emphasis on any one member and their role, without considering all the members and each role, can lead to either a wrong deduction or perverted doctrine.

Triune doctrines of 'by faith' and 'through faith'

As the chart indicates, there are three elements to consider under each category. Different passages or verses can refer to each as a whole (by faith or through faith) or any element or combination within each. Often, an emphasis on a particular point, under either, can create a stumbling block to an indiscriminate student in neglecting or entirely missing another essential component. Such a case, as under 'by faith', may put emphasis on the role of faith, but not works or vice versa. Another common mistake made is crossing elements, from one category to the other, as well as certain bible translations heretically make 'by faith' and 'through faith' synonymous... and the uncircumcised through that same faith (Cp. KJB to NIV; Rom 3:30).