

Intro: Catholic Dogma - Pg 250-251

XIV. Abraham - Justified by Faith

A. Not by Circumcision - vs 9-12

1. If Abraham was justified by faith, then why Circumcision
 - a. 1st Century Jews believed that circumcision
 - i. set them apart as God's people
 - ii. Made them acceptable to God - Book of Jubilees 15:25
 - iii. The Jalkut Rubem (a Yiddish commentary) taught "Circumcision saves from Hell"
 - iv. The Midrash Millim taught that God told Abraham "no one who was circumcised should be sent to hell"
 - v. The Rabbis used Ge 17:10-14 to teach the above forgetting that 17 comes after 15 when Abraham was justified by faith
 - vi. the concept of salvation was based on their obedience
 - b. Paul coming from a legalistic background
 - i. had been circumcised the eighth day - Phil 3:5
 - ii. Had been taught by the Holy Spirit that circumcision
 - had never saved a Jew
 - could never save a Gentile - Ro 2:25-29
 - iii. Warned believers of a false circumcision, teaching that believers were the true circumcision - Phil 3:2-3; Gal 5:1-4
2. Paul's first question and the reason for it - vs 9
 - a. Does this *blessedness* then come upon the circumcised only, or upon the uncircumcised also? (being justified)
 - b. For we say that faith was accounted to Abraham for righteousness. - Ge 15:6
3. The logical follow-up question and the answer - vs 10
 - a. How then was it accounted? (Abraham's righteousness)
 - b. While he was circumcised, or uncircumcised?
 - c. Not while circumcised, but while uncircumcised.
4. The Chronology of Abraham's adventures w/ God
 - a. Entered into a covenant of promise w/ God at 75 years of age - Ge 12:1-4
 - b. Justified - Ge 15 assuming he had only been in the land for a couple of years
 - c. Hagarizing God's promise - Ge 16; Abe being 86 when Ismael is born - vs 16
 - d. At 99, Abraham is given the mark of the covenant, circumcision - Ge 17
 - i. at least 14 years after Abraham was justified
 - ii. 24 years after he entered a covenant relationship w/ God
 - iii. No other Jews existed, Abraham is basically an uncircumcised Gentile
5. Then why circumcision? Paul says - vs 11
 - a. it was a sign - And he received the sign of circumcision,
 - i. a physical, racial mark of identity
 - ii. Even after justification by Faith, Paul had no problem w/ a Jew being Circumcised - Act 16:3 - Timothy, only half Jew
 - b. it was a seal - a seal of the righteousness of the faith
 - i. righteousness ...which he had while still uncircumcised, that he might be the father of all those who **believe**,
 - though they are uncircumcised, - Gentiles who believe
 - that righteousness might be imputed to them also, - Ga 3:7
 - ii. the father of circumcision

- to those who not only are of the circumcision, (Jews physically)
- but who also walk in the steps of the faith which our father Abraham had while still uncircumcised.

B. Not by the Law - vs 13-15

1. For the promise that he would be the heir of the world - Ge 12:3; 15:5; 18:18; 22:18

a. The four parts of God's promise

i. a land - Ge 15:18

ii. A people - numerous - Ge 13:16; Ge 15:5; Ge 22:17

iii. A blessing to the world through Abraham's descendants - Ge 12:3

iv. A Redeemer from the descendants of Abraham

- in essence preaching the Gospel to Abraham - Gal 3:8

- Abraham believed that God would provide a lamb - Ge 22:8,18

- Abraham believed that God would raise up his son - Heb 11:17-19

b. The Seed

i. Jesus said that Abraham rejoiced to see my day - Jo 8:56

ii. In your seed, all the nations of the earth will be blessed - Ge 22:17; Ga 3:16

iii. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. - Ga 3:29

c. was not to Abraham or to his seed through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.

i. the purpose of the law was to reveal God's perfect standards of righteousness - Ga 3:24

ii. God has never recognized any righteousness but that of faith b/c it is imputed (accounted - *logizomai*) by Him - Ro 4:3; He 12:2

d. Faith exemplified by Abraham's willingness to go to a land he had never seen - Heb 11:8-10

2. The reason why couldn't be a part of imputing righteousness

a. For if those who are of the law are heirs,

i. faith is made void

ii. the promise made of no effect (nullified) - Ga 2:21; 3:18

iii. *katargeo* - to be (render) entirely idle (useless), abolish, cease, cumber, deliver, destroy, do away, become (make) of no (none, without) effect, fail, loose, bring (come) to nought, put away (down), vanish away, make void.

b. the law brings about wrath; for where there is no law there is no transgression - Ro 3:20; 5:13,20; 7:8,10-11; 1Co 15:56; 2Co 3:7,9; Gal 3:19

C. By God's Grace - vs 16-17

1. Conclusion - Therefore it is of faith that it might be according to grace

a. It is God's Grace not man's faith that provides the way which is the reason why faith is not another human work as some believe - Ro 3:24

b. Grace is the divine power that brings justification so that the promise might be **sure** to all the seed,

i. not only to those who are of the law,

ii. also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all

2. Paul's defense always goes back to scripture - (as it is written,

a. "I have made you a father of many nations") in the presence of Him whom he believed--God, - Ge 17:5; Eph 2:1,5;

b. Two proofs

i. who gives life to the dead - Ro 8:11;

ii. calls those things which do not exist as though they did; - creation - Heb 11:3