

Regeneration Versus Justification

Written by Michael Gowens

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This short writing is an excellent piece highlighting the difference in two very fundamental Bible doctrines which are often confused, Regeneration and Justification.

The Gospel-means position confuses the doctrine of *Regeneration* with the doctrine of *Justification* by

Faith. In Ro 4:1-25, Paul employs the experience of Abraham to teach the great doctrine of justification by faith: "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted unto him for righteousness."

Most proponents of the gospel-means position use this verse to teach that the sinner must believe the gospel in order to be saved, or, if you please, born again. But is this verse talking about

regeneration

? No, it's talking about

justification

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Justification

is a

legal term

. It speaks of something that takes place in a court room.

Regeneration

, on the contrary, is a

biological term

. It speaks of something that takes place in the delivery room. To use Ro 4:1-25 to teach that a sinner can be saved if he will believe the gospel is to ignore this important fact.

Of the three times that Abraham's experience is cited in the New Testament as an example of the life of faith, {Ro 4:1-25} {Heb 11:1-40} {Jas 2:1-26} not one can be employed to suggest the idea that he was born again by his act of believing. Ro 4:1-25 describes an experience in the life of Abraham that is recorded in Ge 15:1-21.

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Ge 15:1-21

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of course, occurred several years after Abraham initially left Ur, by faith.

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Ge 12:1-20

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Does Ro 4:1-25 teach that a sinner may receive eternal salvation when he believes the gospel?

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No. Why not? Because the example the writer cites for *justification*

by faith, Abraham, had been walking by faith for several years before the experience described in this chapter. In other words, Abraham was already a

regenerate

man before "he believed God and it was accounted unto him for righteousness."