ABSTRACT
JUDGMENT, JUSTIFICATION, AND THE FAITH EVENT IN ROMANS

Raymond Foyer, MA
Marquette University, 2016

In this study, I identify two commonly perceived incompatibilities regarding judgment and justification in Romans. The first is between judgment according to works and Paul’s negative teaching that justification does not come through “works of law” or “works.” The second concerns judgment according to works and Paul’s positive argument that justification comes graciously by faith. I attempt to resolve both of these problems. In the first chapter, I make the case that “works of law” and several similar terms in Romans do not all have the same meaning and do not pose a problem of compatibility.

In order to address the second alleged incompatibility, in chapters two through four I argue that Paul qualifies both judgment according to works and justification by faith in several ways throughout Rom 1–11. First, in Rom 1:18–3:20 and in the rest of Rom 1–11 divine mercy is the norm before the final judgment. Second, what I refer to as the primary argument (Rom 3:21–5:21 along with Rom 1:16–17; 10:5–13) and the secondary argument (Rom 6–8) cannot be reduced to “faith alone” but are held together through what I call the faith event, which has three components: faith, baptism, and reception of the Spirit. Believers are assured of salvation on the basis of faith, but because they have been baptized and have received the Spirit, they are commanded to live in a way that reflects their death with Christ and their resultant life with him. Furthermore, their eventual co-glorification with Christ is conditioned on “putting to death the deeds of the body” as well as co-suffering with Christ. Finally, in Rom 9–11 Paul warns Gentile believers of the possibility of falling away into unbelief.