



The Gospel in Galatians Lesson 4 3Q 2017 Justification by Faith Alone

SABBATH

What does the title mean to you? What law lens to you hear these words through?

Before we even address questions like justification and atonement, we have to determine some basic facts:

- What is sin? –transgression of the law
- Is this transgression a behavior—a deed, a bad act, or is it a condition of heart and mind?
- “everything that does not come from faith is sin.” Rom 14:23
 - Is the focus on the specific act, or the motivation for the act?
 - Then, how does transgression of the law relate to a condition of heart and mind?
- What is God’s law?
- How does God’s law function?
- Does God’s law function no differently than man’s law—rules imposed requiring imposed punishments? –this is Satan’s allegation “Every sin must meet its punishment urged Satan.” DA 761
- Is God’s law design law, protocols upon which life and health are constructed to operate?
- If sin is breaking laws that function like human laws and therefore require the lawgiver to inflict just punishment, then what is justification? It is a legal solution—which is what many theologians argue.
- However, if God’s law is design law, protocols upon which reality and life is built, then what is justification—putting right what is not as God designed it to be.

This week I discovered a lecture given to a conference of pastors by a theology professor who spoke for over an hour on why what we teach in this class is wrong.

The theologian said that the word *justification* is legal language and therefore by definition of the word requires a legal explanation.

There are several problems with the theologian’s explanation: first the Bible was not written in English, or Latin, thus the word justification does not exist anywhere in Scripture. It is a word used by the translators who, already have a legal bias and thus, introduce legal ideas.

Secondly, even if we use the word *justify*, legal definitions are not the only legitimate definitions to that word. *Justify* also has meaning with no legal elements at all, to justify the margins on your document is not a legal act, but an actual moving or setting what is not in line to being in line.



Finally, *justify* can also mean to **show, demonstrate** or **prove** an action, position, person, claim to be right. The legal view has justification being declaration not demonstration. But the justification of setting right and demonstrating are the true Biblical definitions. The legal definition is not Biblical, it is the lie and I will give you the evidence for this so every person can be fully persuaded in their own mind.

The demonstration aspect of justify is what God was doing in the Great Controversy; God is the one being justified—God is showing, demonstrating, proving His righteousness and Paul speaks about this in Romans 3:25, 26:

From GNT:

God offered him, so that by his blood he should become the means by which people's sins are forgiven through their faith in him. God did this in order to demonstrate that he is righteous. In the past he was patient and overlooked people's sins; but in the present time he deals with their sins, in order to demonstrate his righteousness. In this way God shows that he himself is righteous and that he puts right everyone who believes in Jesus. GNT

Thus, justify can mean something legal, but it can also mean simply proving what is already true (God's character and methods of love) and also setting what is not in harmony or in line with God's design back to God's original design.

We cannot tell from the word itself, which meaning is the correct one. So the theologian who says it must be legal because it is a legal word demonstrates a huge bias and denies other possibilities.

From Wikipedia, which does a really good job of defining the penal substitutionary view of justification by faith, states:

Sola fide (Latin: by faith alone), also known as justification by faith alone, is a Christian theological doctrine that distinguishes most Protestant denominations from the Catholic Church, the Eastern Orthodox Church, and some parts of the Restoration Movement.

The doctrine of sola fide asserts God's pardon for guilty sinners is granted to and received through faith alone, excluding all "works". All mankind, it is asserted, is fallen and sinful, under the curse of God, and incapable of saving itself from God's wrath and curse. But God, on the basis of the life, death, and resurrection of his Son, Jesus Christ alone (*solus Christus*), grants sinners **judicial pardon, or justification**, which is received solely through faith. Faith is seen as passive, merely receiving Christ and all his benefits, among which benefits are the active and passive righteousness of Jesus Christ. Christ's righteousness, according to the followers of "sola fide," **is imputed (or attributed) by God to the believing sinner (as opposed to infused or imparted)**, so that the divine verdict and pardon of the believing sinner is based not upon anything in the sinner, nor even faith itself, but upon Jesus Christ and his righteousness alone, which are received through faith alone.



Martin Luther opposed the Catholic teaching of righteousness by combination of Jesus' sacrifice and our works. Luther's position was that our works of penance, pilgrimage, offerings, abasement, flagellation or any other work could not justify us. **We agree completely!**

The question that separates our position with the legal penal view is not whether we can contribute to our own justification—we absolutely state we cannot. The question is: What is justification? Is it legal, or is it actual something that is achieved in human beings? Is it declared by not experienced, or is it only declared once it is experienced?

The reason this division exists is because there are two ways to understand God's law and depending on what view of God's law one holds that directly determines how one understands justification.

The legal penal theologians hold that God's law functions no differently than the laws sinners make—rules imposed requiring judicial oversight and imposed punishment. And therefore claim, as Wikipedia states above, that justification is when the righteousness of Jesus is imputed which means declared or accounted in a legal way in the courts of heaven, but not experienced in the believer. They make God out to declare something as true which is not actually true.

Further, they accuse us, because our model has an actual change occurring within the believer, of teaching Moral Influence Theory. (MIT)

Their accusation is actually diagnostic of their level of understanding. They claim we teach MIT because they are operating at level four moral development and people can only comprehend one level above their current level—and Moral Influence is level 5.

We do not promote Moral Influence Theory, and in fact we demonstrate its deficiencies, however the theologians who oppose us cannot comprehend what we are saying and thus claim we are Moral Influence. In the lecture the theologian admitted this multiple times “I really didn't understand what he meant by that.” “He dressed it up with things not typically in MIT but if you eliminate those elements you get moral influence theory.”

That would be like saying, “he put wings and an engine on it and called it an airplane, but if you remove the wings and engine you get a soap box.”

They are being as honest as they are capable of being—they simply don't comprehend this perspective. This has happened many times in human history:

- Jesus presents design law truth and the legal theologians oppose Him and take offense that He doesn't support their legal views
- Apostles refuse to promote legal theology and are opposed by the Judaizers
- John Wesley and was opposed by leaders of the Church of England and they made fun calling him a Methodist (GC 257)



- Jones, Waggoner, and Ellen White when they presented the healing view were opposed by the legal believing leadership in the SDA church
- We are still facing the same long battle—who is God and how does His government work—like sinful humans, which is what penal substitution teaches, or do we worship the Creator and Designer who operates upon the laws of love, truth, and freedom?

Design law understands Justification differently:

- When Adam and Eve sinned did God get changed?
- Did God's law get changed?
- Did the condition of humankind get changed?
- So what needs to be "set right" in order to bring unity or at-one-ment?
- Does something need to be done to God, to God's law?
- Does something need to be done in sinners to fix what sin has done to them?

Jumping to FRIDAY and reading the first paragraph:

“The danger has been presented to me again and again of entertaining, as a people, **false ideas of justification by faith**. I have been shown for years that Satan would work in a special manner to confuse the mind on this point. The law of God has been largely dwelt upon and has been presented to congregations, almost as destitute of the knowledge of Jesus Christ and His relation to the law as was the offering of Cain. I have been shown that many have been kept from the faith because of the mixed, confused ideas of salvation, **because the ministers have worked in a wrong manner to reach hearts**. The point that has been urged upon my mind for years is the **imputed righteousness of Christ**...” Faith and Works p 18

What is the danger? What was she warning about? A false view of righteousness by faith which dwells on law and not on the character of Jesus—the exact problem we have in the church today which promotes justification as a legal issue and imputed righteousness as something declared rather than realized within the believer. Thus they obstruct the gospel and keep people from the faith.

Here is another quote from the same author:

What is justification by faith? It is the work of God in laying the glory of man in the dust, and doing for man that which it is not in his power to do for himself. When men see their own nothingness, they are prepared to be clothed with the righteousness of Christ... {FLB 111.2}

The thought that the righteousness of Christ is imputed to us, not because of any merit on our part, but as a free gift from God, is a precious thought. The enemy of God and man is not willing that this truth should be clearly presented; for he knows that if the people receive it fully, his power will be broken. {FLB 111.6}



What is justification by faith? God's work in doing something legal, or in doing something actual?

What work could we not do? What law lens are you thinking through?

What is the actual problem human beings have because of Adam and Eve's sin—is the problem legal or a state of being?

What do we need to be right with God?

- A new record?
- A legal document?
- A legal declaration?
- Or a new heart and right spirit?
- Does God's law need to be sustained, supported, shown to be without defect? How?
- Penal view—by paying the legal death penalty inflicted by God
- Design law view—by doing what the law requires, perfectly restoring humankind into harmony with the law, i.e. justifying or setting right humankind and demonstrating that deviations result in death.

Again from the same author:

The law requires righteousness,--a righteous life, a perfect character; [why does the law require this? Why does the law of respiration require we breathe?] and this man has not to give. He cannot meet the claims of God's holy law. But Christ, coming to the earth as man, **lived a holy life, and developed a perfect character. These He offers as a free gift to all who will receive them. [what is another way of saying a holy life and perfect character? The righteousness of Christ. And what is another way of saying offers a free gift to all who will receive them? Imputed! Imputed is not legal or declared it is a remedy of a new heart, life, attitude, desires, mindset within the believer received from Christ.] **His life stands for the life of men.** Thus they have remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God. More than this, **Christ imbues men with the attributes of God. He builds up the human character after the similitude of the divine character,** a goodly fabric of spiritual strength and beauty. **Thus the very righteousness of the law is fulfilled in the believer in Christ. God can "be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus."** Rom. 3:26. {DA 762.2} [Where is the righteousness of the law fulfilled? In record books? In courtrooms in heaven? **IN THE BELIEVER!****

What do you hear? What is justice? What is justifying here? What is actually happening, do we find something legal or something transformational, putting sinful beings back into harmony with God's design?

And what was necessary? A new sinless character. And could sinful humans do this for themselves? Could any work on our part achieve this? So, did Christ do something, **Objective**, that we could not do



and can never do? What? He developed a perfect sinless HUMAN character, by exercising His HUMAN brain and power of choice!

- Thus the species human was justified, or set right with God, in the person of Jesus Christ.
- God's law of love, being restored into Christ's humanity while Christ destroyed the infection of fear and selfishness, resulted in what? Christ's humanity rising from the dead. Thus, God's law was vindicated—it was demonstrated, the law was revealed to be the source of life. "The law of the Lord is perfect reviving the soul!" It is design law!
- God was justified, demonstrated to be right in how He governs, how His law works, and for suspending the ultimate consequences for unremedied sin until Jesus came to provide remedy and offering that remedy to us.
- Jesus now stands as the head of humanity, where Adam was created to stand. In heaven, Jesus now is the representative of human beings, the head of the species human. Thus His life stands for the life of humanity. And we as individuals can partake of what Christ achieved—remedy, which is a perfect character, and when we do we are set right!
- So our individual justification, or setting right is when we move from distrust to trust and open the heart to God, then we become partakers of the divine nature and it is no longer I that live, but Christ lives in me. We are right with God and God declares this to be so, because it is so.

But, those of the legal mindset, stuck on human law, confuse and obstruct this healing because they move the justification away from what Christ accomplished in His own person, throw down the law of God and replace it with human law, and move justification away from our participation in Christ's accomplishments, and instead put it in record books and courts in heaven, with the adjustments being made to God's attitude and our legal accounts.

Further the penal view adherents are adamant that imputed righteousness is legal accounting, where God imputes to our records in heaven the righteousness of His Son declaring us legally justified or righteous, even though we are not. Whereas, they would teach, that imparted righteousness is what we experience within us to transform us to Christlikeness.

This distinction is of their own imagination, a fantasy, created by their own false understanding of law and failure to understand reality, and these ideas, these legal fantasies obstruct the final work of God on earth—what some call the 3 Angel's message.

Listen to these quotes by the one of the founders of the SDA church, what some of the founders of SDA church historically taught:

He would have us comprehend something of His love in giving His Son to die that He might counteract evil, **remove the defiling stains of sin from the workmanship of God, [to what is this referring? Is it not the human being?] and reinstate the lost, elevating and ennobling the soul to its original purity through Christ's imputed righteousness.** TMK 206 **Is this declared in some legal way, is it some application to records or courts in heaven, or is it an**



actual change happening within the believer being? And what is this healing change accomplished through? The *imputed* righteousness of Christ!

"But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory even as by the Spirit of the Lord" (2 Cor. 3:18). Beholding Christ means studying His life as given in His Word. We are to dig for truth as for hidden treasure. We are to fix our eyes upon Christ. When we take Him as our personal Saviour, this gives us boldness to approach the throne of grace. **By beholding we become changed, morally assimilated to the One who is perfect in character.** [Where is the focus? Where is the change? Is this legal or actual in the believer?] **By receiving His imputed righteousness, through the transforming power of the Holy Spirit, we become like Him.** [Again, where is the change, where is the impact of the *imputed* righteousness of Christ? This is not legal, the entire legal doctrine of penal substitution taught in Christianity is based on a lie, it is based on the false view of God's law and this doctrine obstructs God's final message to the world] The image of Christ is cherished, and it captivates the whole being. {AG 96.4}

Abundant grace has been provided that the believing soul may be kept free from sin; for all heaven, with its limitless resources, has been placed at our command. We are to draw from the well of salvation. . . . In ourselves we are sinners; but in Christ we are righteous. **Having made us righteous through the imputed righteousness of Christ, God pronounces us just, and treats us as just.** [What did this say? Did it say "having declared us righteous"? No! Having MADE us righteous through what? The imputed righteousness of Christ, then, having first made us righteous THEN God pronounces us righteous or just! This is a repudiation of the penal substitution doctrine.] He looks upon us as His dear children. Christ works against the power of sin, and where sin abounded, grace much more abounds. {AG 181.4}

We aim too low. The mark is much higher. Our minds need expansion, that we may comprehend the significance of the provision of God. **We are to reflect** the highest attributes of the character of God. . . **The law of God is the exalted standard to which we are to attain through the imputed righteousness of Christ.** {OHC 364.2} [What is aiming too low? Is aiming to low aiming for legal adjustment, for record erasure, for a declaration of being righteous *even though we are not*? What law is the law of God? Is it not the law of love, which is design protocol, and to attain it means what? To be healed, restored, renewed, born again, through what? The imputed righteousness of Christ! This is truth! We must reject the legal penal view and expand our minds to a higher and loftier reality of God's design and plan to heal and restore us to His perfect ideal!]

Last week we suggested it might be a good test of our doctrines to examine what those doctrines say about God.

What does penal substitutionary ideas about justification say about God?

In the imposed law construct, which is the basis for penal substitutionary theology:



- God is the source of inflicted punishment i.e. death
- Thus death comes out from God
- Who do they teach killed Jesus on the Cross?
 - For a loving God to maintain His justice and righteousness, the atoning death of Jesus Christ became ‘a moral and legal necessity.’ God’s ‘justice requires that sin be carried to judgment. **God must therefore execute judgment** on sin and thus on the sinner. **In this execution the Son of God took our place, the sinner’s place, according to God’s will.** SDA Believe 27 p. 111
 - Why did **God the Father choose** a cross to be the instrument of death? Why did He not choose to have Christ instantly beheaded or quickly run through with a spear or sword? **Was God unjust in executing judgment on Christ with a cross** when He could have done it by beheading, a noose, a sword, a gas chamber, a bolt of lightning, or a lethal injection? (Whidden, W., *Ministry Magazine*, February 2007. <http://www.ministrymagazine.org/archive/2007/February/sinners-in-the-hands-of-god.html>)
 - One of the fundamental problems of the Moral Influence Theory is that it rejects the substitutionary nature of Christ’s death. The idea that **God had to kill the innocent** instead of the guilty in order to save us is considered a violation of justice. (emphasis mine) Rodriguez, A., *Adventist World Review*, December 2007; p. 40.
 - In this false legal view sin is not harmful, it is criminal, and would not result in death but requires God to kill, thus God is the one we need protection from
- It promotes dualism, that both good and evil exist eternally, that life and death find their origin in the eternal being—God

But what does inspiration say?

- Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet **we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted.** (Isaiah 53:4)
 - What did God prophecy would happen? Has it?
- Jesus speaking to those who would later crucify Him said, “You belong to your **father, the devil**, and you want to carry out your **father’s desire. He was a murderer** from the beginning...” (John 8:44)
 - Who is the source of death according to Jesus?
- Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. ⁸**The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction;** the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life. Gal 6:7,8 (What kind of law is described here?)
 - What is the cause of death according to Scripture?
- **Satan** saw that his disguise was torn away. His administration was laid open before the unfallen angels and before the heavenly universe. **He had revealed himself as a murderer. By shedding the blood of the Son of God, he had uprooted himself from the sympathies of the heavenly beings.** White, E.G., *Desire of Ages*, p. 761.



- Who killed Jesus according to EGW?

With which view do you agree?

Which law is the true law of God?

So what is genuine Justification?

Justification - Healing Substitution Model: Is not a legal status. Instead it simply means being set right with God. Christ, as our substitute, took defective humanity upon Himself and in His person (human brain) destroyed the carnal nature, perfectly living out the law of love and developed a perfect human character. Therefore, the human race (species) was set right (justified) with God in the person of Jesus Christ. Through this achievement (a free gift), Christ's perfect character is now offered to all mankind. Each individual person is "justified" (set right) when they are won back to trust by the truth Jesus revealed. In this mindset of trust, they experience the indwelling of the Holy Spirit who "sanctifies" them by transfusing Christ's character into the believer.

So does the Bible give evidence that it is as we teach and not as the legal theologians teach?

Romans 4:1-3:

What then shall we say that Abraham, our forefather, discovered in this matter? ² If, in fact, Abraham was justified by works, he had something to boast about—but not before God. ³ What does the Scripture say? "**Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.**" NIV

What shall we say, then, of Abraham, the father of our race? What was his experience? ² If he was put right with God by the things he did, he would have something to boast about—but not in God's sight. The scripture says, "**Abraham believed God, and because of his faith God accepted him as righteous.**" GNT

What does it say here? That Abraham believed, or had faith, which means what? That he trusted God.

What is the natural state of the sinful human heart?

the sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. Rom 8:7
NIV

The natural state of the sinful heart is opposition and distrust of God. But, what is the condition of Abraham's heart as described above?

What came first, God's recognition and declaration that Abraham was righteous or Abraham's heart change from distrust to trust?



God's recognition, declaration, accounting of Abraham as righteous is because Abraham had his heart set right with God. Abraham was changed from distrust to trust.

Just as EGW described above: **Having made us righteous through the imputed righteousness of Christ, God pronounces us just, and treats us as just.** {AG 181.4}

Notice what Paul says later in Romans 4:

⁹ Is this blessedness only for the circumcised, or also for the uncircumcised? We have been saying that Abraham's **faith was credited to him as righteousness.** ¹⁰ Under what circumstances was it credited? Was it after he was circumcised, or before? **It was not after, but before!**

What is Paul saying? That the works—circumcision—did not have any place in justifying, setting right, healing Abraham, but was a sign of what had already taken place in Abraham. But what had already taken place? His heart had been set right—a real and actual change, not some legal accounting in books.

What is happening within Christianity is worse than just a theological disagreement—the penal legal view is the infection of thought that God warned through His prophetic penmen would come into Christianity and war against the saints and obstruct God's plan and keep people trapped in sin. Today the promulgation of this false legal theology prevents the church from fulfilling its mission of taking the gospel to the world so Christ will return.

Jesus said that when the gospel of the kingdom shall be preached as a witness to all nations, then the end will come... what kingdom? The kingdom of love.

But what has actually happened, because of the acceptance into Christianity of the lie that God's law functions no differently than human law, is that Christianity, including the SDA church, has taken the false gospel of a legal dictator, who is the source of inflicted death and who even killed His Son, to the world.

God is waiting for a remnant people at the end of time to come back to the truth about Him and His design law of love and take this good news to the world!

SUNDAY

Read second paragraph, "The verb to..." Let's read Galatians 2:15-17:

"We who are Jews by birth and not 'Gentile sinners' ¹⁶ know that a man is not justified by observing the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus



that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by observing the law, because by observing the law no one will be justified.

¹⁷ "If, while we seek to be justified in Christ, it becomes evident that we ourselves are sinners, does that mean that Christ promotes sin? Absolutely not! NIV

Can someone explain what that means? What law lens do you read it through?

What does justify mean—something legal, or something in reality being set right?

Does the text actually say anything about a courtroom, a legal accounting, or some declaration? No, all of this is read into the text by those who come to the text with their human imposed law construct projected onto the divine government.

Galatians 2:15-17 from *The Remedy*:

"We who were born Jewish—part of God's specially chosen educational team, blessed with the symbolic teaching tools—and not part of the ignorant Gentile world,¹⁶ clearly know that a person is set right with God not by rituals, symbols, or keeping to a certain educational script, but simply by trusting Jesus Christ. So we, too, have been won back to trust by the evidence Christ has revealed of God's true character and methods and thus our minds are set right with God by trust in Christ, and not by rituals or adhering to a certain set of rules, because it is not possible to heal the mind and set the heart right with God by behaviorally following a set of rules.

¹⁷ "If while we seek to be healed and set right with God, through the truth that Christ has revealed, it becomes obvious that the infection of selfishness has not been eradicated from our hearts, does that mean Christ promotes selfishness? Absolutely not!

MONDAY

Read second paragraph, "The phrase..." Do you see how deeply imbedded the lie has become?

It is absolutely true that our works cannot justify us—however, it would be easier for people to comprehend if we simply said, no amount of work on our part can produce a remedy that heals our hearts and cleanses our minds from fear, selfishness, guilt and shame.

TUESDAY

Read third paragraph, "It's important to remember..." Remember they are speaking of legal justification, and thus in their thinking, if faith was part of justification then the act of faith becomes a legal work, which would have merit or value and contribute to our legal change in status. In their



model this is not so, only by the legal application of the perfect life of Jesus can we be legally declared righteous.

They do not comprehend that part of what is wrong is our lack of trust, and our lack of trust is an obstacle to our justification—and what Paul in Romans 14:23 says is sin. Without our trust there is no justification for any individual sinner. So trust does not provide remedy, but trust is necessary for us to partake of the remedy. And trust is won by evidence of God’s trustworthiness revealed in Christ.

Additionally, the species human was justified, set right, restored to perfection, put right with God in the person of Jesus Christ who took upon Himself humanity defective by sin and cured the condition, carried humanity to perfection. Thus, the act of setting the species right with God was accomplished completely singly and totally by Jesus alone and it was this same act that procured the remedy that heals us.

We become partakers of the divine nature, no longer our sinful selves, but Christ living in us.

WEDNESDAY

What does the title, “The Obedience of Faith” bring to your mind?

What is obedience?

Is obedience about what one does? Is merely following orders? Is the obedience God wants what we get from a well trained dog? Is it about performance?

Or is obedience not primarily about performance but the desire to *understand* and follow the instructions to the best of one’s ability?

Is obedience then, about trust—I trust my dive instructor and thus when my dive instructor tells me to adjust my regulator in a certain way, I am eager to listen and follow what he says. But what if I misunderstand or what if I don’t have the strength to turn a stuck valve but try with all my might?

When the Jesus came down from the mount of transfiguration he found his disciples flummoxed because they had been trying to heal a boy, cast out a demon that caused seizures, but had not succeeded. Were His disciples disobeying by trying to cast out the demon? Or were they obeying? But in that case they didn’t have the wisdom, understanding, faith, strength to accomplish the task. But did they have hearts that wanted to?

This is Biblical obedience, an awareness of our helpless, sick, terminal condition, our inability to cure what is wrong with us, COUPLED with the knowledge of God’s true character—His goodness, love, desire to heal and restore us. Then, we have an eager and humble attitude to listen to God, to discover



and understand His wisdom, His methods, His ways and to apply them to our lives to the best of our ability.

The problem with traditional Christianity and the penal legal approach is that it shifts the focus away from a humble eagerness to listen to God, to a fearfulness to identify the right rules and follow them lest we get punished. This results in a distorted system in which people are taught to place their faith in systems that put barriers between their hearts and God—like the blood, the robe, the mediator to plead, pay, erase, hide and protect us from God.

THURSDAY

Read first paragraph, “One of the main...”

We received this email from Sweden this week:

Last Sabbath I was conducting the English Bible study at our church and, as I normally do, I used your notes and even made a handout with your statements about coercion and false religion, mark of the beast, and the circle of love and trust. Our church is little and they don't know about your teachings, but last Sabbath we had a guest who is a teacher, raised and educated in Scotland, and he even preached afterwards.

At the Bible study he argued that he knew about your teachings and that they had a principal at their school in Romania who followed and believed your teachings and that they had problems with him, because he never punished the pupils. He let them do whatever they wanted without any consequences, but talking to them. The pupils lost their respect for him and eventually the principal had to go.

The email went on to describe more of their discussion about what we actually teach and how love really functions with healthy boundaries, discipline, restraint etc.

But, this argument that the true gospel of Christ leads people to sin is one Paul faced and one we face. This argument is based on people being stuck at level four and below and in their mind, if there isn't some punishment for sin, then there is no restraint against it.

So, to those who make such arguments, the Bible has an answer:

Where is the wise man? Where is the scholar? Where is the philosopher of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? ²¹ For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe. ²² Jews demand miraculous signs and Greeks look for wisdom, ²³ but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, ²⁴ but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God



and the wisdom of God. ²⁵ For the foolishness of God is wiser than man's wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than man's strength. 1Cor 1:20-25

Those who operate on the world's system of imposed law and imposed punishment find God's system of design law foolish and they cannot comprehend it.

The imposed law view has all kinds of loopholes, you may break the law, and such breaks require punishment, but you can get someone to pay the penalty for you so you don't have to pay it. And you can commit more and more sin and as long as you claim the legal payment and repent asking God's forgiveness then Jesus will pay your penalty.

The legal view creates loopholes around the law.

Design law—there are no loopholes, the law of God cannot be changed without life in the universe being destroyed—because it would be like changing gravity, or the nuclear force, or the laws of thermodynamics. Everything upon which God's creation rests would disintegrate.

So, sin, is deviation from design, and we are either restored, (healed) to be in harmony with the design, or not. Christ came, not to pay a legal penalty but to put humankind back in harmony with God's law.

What about pardon language, what is pardon?

Consider this quotation:

Satan deceives many with the plausible theory that since God's love for His people is so great, He will excuse sin in them; that while the threatenings of God's Word are to serve a certain purpose in His moral government, they are never to be literally fulfilled. But in His dealings with His creatures, God has maintained the principles of righteousness by revealing sin in its true character—**by demonstrating that its sure result is misery and death. The unconditional pardon of sin never has been and never will be. Such pardon would show the abandonment of the principles of righteousness that are the very foundation of the government of God. . . .** {CTr 139.4}

What is the cause of misery and death—sin, which is what, deviating from God's design law, and why can sin not be unconditionally pardoned? Because it would be like saying "I pardon you for not breathing" it cannot be done. One must comply with the laws upon which life is built, then one can be pardoned for prior deviations—why? Because one is now in harmony with the law.

Pardon and justification are one and the same thing. Through faith, **the believer passes from the position of a rebel**, a child of sin and Satan, **to the position of a loyal subject of Christ Jesus**, not because of an inherent goodness, but because Christ receives him as His child by adoption. The sinner receives the forgiveness of his sins, because these sins are borne by his Substitute and Surety. The Lord speaks to His heavenly Father, saying: "This is My



child, I relieve him from the condemnation of death, giving him My life insurance policy--eternal life--because I have taken his place and have suffered for his sins. He is even My beloved son." Thus man, pardoned, and clothed with the beautiful garments of Christ's righteousness, stands faultless before God. {FW 103.2}

What is actually happening, a legal process, or a change in state of being? What makes one a rebel? A legal status or an actual state of sinfulness, having a heart at war with God and His principles? Then what makes one a loyal subject of Christ—a legal claim by Jesus, or a change in the inner man accomplished by Jesus when we trust Him? Justification is setting right that which is wrong, and that means fixing what is out of line with God and His character of love, truth and freedom. Thus we are pardoned for our past only when we are healed from the cause of the past sins, so pardon and setting right are the same an actual healing of the inner person.

FRIDAY

Read and discuss questions.



ANNOUNCEMENTS:

July 14,15, 2017: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at Lakeport SDA church, in Lakeport CA.

August 18,19, 2017: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at the Celebration SDA church in Celebration, Florida.

Sep 5, 2017: Dr. Jennings' new book *The God-Shaped Heart* will be released by Baker Books. Here is a brief description:

Love is more than emotion, more than compassion, more than positive regard for another; love is power—the power to live, heal and be free. Love is functional, operational, with specific design parameters built into the fabric of reality. Love is intelligent and as we intelligently choose to harmonize with how love functions we not only experience greater health, fulfillment and wellbeing, we are transformed to become forces for good in the world. In *The God-Shaped Heart* Christian psychiatrist Dr. Tim Jennings explores the healing power of love, exposes a belief system infecting Christianity that obstructs love, and identifies eternal truths that open the heart to God's transforming power of love.

September 15,16 2017: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at the Church in the Valley, Aldergrove, British Columbia, Canada.

September 26-Oct 1, 2017: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at the AACC World Conference, Nashville TN, and our ministry will have a booth in the exhibit hall.

October 12-16, 2017: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at Garden Grove SDA church in Garden Grove, CA. This will be a multi-speaker event focusing on the atonement. For more information contact:

Garden Grove Seventh-day Adventist Church

12702 9th Street
Garden Grove, CA 92840
Church office hours: Monday - Thursday 9:00 am - 4:00 pm

Phone: (714) 534-1987

Fax: (714) 534-3877

Email: office@gardengrovesda.com

October 27, 28, 2017: Dr. Jennings will speaking at the Arlington SDA church in Arlington, TX. For more information contact: <http://www.arlingtonadventist.com/>