

The Gospel in Galatians Lesson 6 4Q 2011

The Priority of the Promise

What do you think of God's Promises?

What promises of God can you name?

- A Savior to crush Satan – Genesis 3:15
- Never to destroy the entire world with a flood again
Genesis 9:11
- To be faithful
 - Know therefore that the LORD your God is God; he is the faithful God, keeping his covenant of love to a thousand generations of those who love him and keep his commands. DT 7:9
 - He is the Rock, his works are perfect, and all his ways are just. A faithful God who does no wrong, upright and just is he. DT 32:4
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- To never change Heb 13:8
- To save all who trust Him John 3:16
- To come again and put an end to sin John 14:1-3

Are God's promises ever misused? How?

SABBATH

Read memory verse – Galatians 3:18

Thoughts? What should this tell those who insist on having a legal model for salvation? Our inheritance is through Christ, not through the law.

I included a link to an article "Did Jesus die for our sins?" The article documents that the penal substitution model, the legal model, was not part of Christianity until the 12th century. Interestingly, not written by an SDA.

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/christian-piatt/did-jesus-realy-die-for-the-sins-of-humanity_b_1007345.html

Here are some quotations from early church Fathers Justin and Ireneus, from the first and second century after Christ, documenting they taught the Healing Substitution Model, calling it "recapitulation" that Christ came to fix humanity from the damage sin caused by Adam's fall.

“According to the Apology and Dialogue of Justin, **Christ accomplishes the conversion and restoration of humanity to its destination** by His teaching as to the worship of the true God and a virtuous life in faith in the eternal reward of immortality, which He will bestow at His second coming.”¹

Nevertheless we find also in Justin ideas that resemble the doctrine of Ignatius as to a Divine economy in the Incarnation whose purpose is to **overthrow of death and Satan.**

Justin Taught Christ came to do three things – overthrow death, destroy Satan and restore humanity back to God’s design providing eternal life.

“(Christ) having been made flesh submitted to be born of the Virgin, in order that through this dispensation the Serpent, who at the first had done evil, and the angels assimilated to him might be put down and death might be despised.”² In fact we find in Justin clear indications of the presence to his mind of the **recapitulation theory**, afterwards more fully developed by Irenaeus, according to which **Christ becomes a new head of humanity, undoes the sin of Adam by reversing the acts and circumstances of his disobedience, and finally communicates to men immortal life.** Compare the sentence quoted by Irenaeus from Justin’s treatise against Marcion, “The only-begotten Son came to us, recapitulating His creation into Himself.”³ Compare also

the following passage: --

1. Thomasius, D.G., I.P. 394, note by Bonwetsch
2. "Dial." 45.
3. Irenaeus "Adv. Haer." IV. 6, 2, Harvey's edition II. P. 159.

Quoted Franks page 20, 21

Here is from Irenaeus:

"We come here to the famous Irenaeian doctrine of Recapitulation. **The conception is that of Christ as the Second Adam, or second head of humanity, who not only undoes the consequences of Adam's fall, but also takes up the development of humanity broken off in him, and carries it to completion, i.e. to union with God and consequent immortality.**"

'It was God recapitulating the ancient creation of man in Himself, that He might slay sin, and annul death, and give life to man.' Also III. 18, 1: 'The Son of God, when He was incarnate and was made man, recapitulated in Himself the long line of men, giving us salvation compendiously (*in compendio*), so that what we had lost in Adam, viz. that we should be after in the image and similitude of God, this we should receive in Jesus Christ.'

Franks p 37, 38

He also teaches Christ accomplished three things – destroy death, sin and Satan and restore mankind to God's original design providing eternal life.

What does this mean? What we teach in our class is what the Christian church taught for hundreds of years after Christ's time on earth. It was centuries later that the penal idea infected Christianity and corrupted the gospel.

It is our mission, in this time in history, to present the truth about God, which will lighten the world for His return. And in order to do that we must stop representing Him as a dictator, punisher, executioner, and in need of appeasement.

SUNDAY

Read first paragraph "Even if his..." thoughts? Why did God give the law four hundred years after the promise?

What was the purpose of the written law?

We know that the law is good if one uses it properly. ⁹ We also know that law is made not for the righteous but for lawbreakers and rebels, the ungodly and sinful, the unholy and irreligious; for those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers, ¹⁰ for adulterers and perverts, for slave traders and liars and perjurers—and for whatever else is contrary to the sound doctrine ¹¹ that conforms to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which he entrusted to me. 1Tim 1:8-11

The law was added so that the trespass might increase. But where sin increased, grace increased all the more. Rom 5:20

The written law is like an MRI it examines and diagnoses, it does not cure. Thus the written law is not for the healthy or righteous but for the unhealthy unrighteous.

Near the end of the first paragraph the lesson states, "God's covenant was based on nothing other than His own will." What is God's will toward mankind?

MONDAY

Read first paragraph, “Paul has argued...” thoughts?

What does it mean to be justified?

Through him everyone who believes is justified from everything you could not be justified from by the law of Moses. ⁴⁰ Take care that what the prophets have said does not happen to you: Acts 13:39,40

From the SDA Bible Commentary:

The verb translated “is justified” is not found elsewhere in Acts. In Paul’s teaching this is, in fact, the first recorded instance of the doctrine of justification, which became so characteristic of his theology (see Rom. 3:21–26). In the context of “forgiveness of sins,” the word “justified” means “acquitted,” “declared not guilty.”¹

Thoughts?

What does justify mean? Is Justification, a mere legal declaration? What are the problems with this idea?

- It is a result of a misdiagnosis of the sin problem. It is based on the idea that the sin problem is a legal problem needing legal solution
- It minimizes the awfulness, and evilness of sin, failing to appreciate how it actually damages and destroys
- It makes the sin problem a problem with the law or law giver.
- It makes God out to be a distorter of reality, declaring righteous those who are not and declaring innocent those who are guilty.

¹ Nichol, F. D. (1978; 2002). *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, Volume 6* (290). Review and Herald Publishing Association.

Then why do people hold to this doctrine?

- It gives a false security of claimed legal pardon without the required personal heart transformation and repudiation of selfishness in the heart.
- In other words, people can claim this type of righteousness while they are still unrighteous in heart, just as the doctrine itself proclaims God does.

What is Bible justification?

- Consider first the margins on your word document, if you “justify” the margins what are you doing? All that is out of harmony, line, or order is brought into line harmony and order.
- What is out of or harmony, line or order as a result of sin that needs to be put right? Is it God? Is it God’s law? Is it mankind’s “record”? Is it the nature/character/heart of man?
- Justification is the process of putting back to rightness with God that which is out of harmony or at enmity with God. And that is man’s heart/mind.

Thus we read –

He who is unjust, let him be unjust still; he who is filthy, let him be filthy still; **he who is righteous, let him be righteous still**; he who is holy, let him be holy still.”²

The Greek for righteous is the exact same as “justify” and it does not say “let him who is declared righteous continue to be declared righteous”.

God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. 2Cor 5:21

² *The New King James Version*. 1982 (Re 22:11). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

Notice, we *become* the righteousness of God through Christ, not simply are declared righteous.

Notice how EGW gets this exactly right:

The law requires righteousness,--a righteous life, a perfect character; 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. 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."**
Romans 3:26. {DA 762.2}

What is justification to EGW? It is rebuilding in humanity the righteousness of God's character!

Explaining Jesus' parable of the branch connected to the vine notice the description in the book Desire of Ages:

So the soul dead in trespasses and sins receives life through connection with Christ. By faith in Him as a personal Saviour the union is formed. The sinner unites his weakness to Christ's strength, his emptiness to Christ's fullness, his frailty to Christ's enduring might. **Then he has the mind of Christ.** The humanity of Christ has touched our humanity, and our humanity has touched divinity. **Thus through the agency of the Holy Spirit man becomes a partaker of the divine nature. He is accepted in the Beloved.** {DA 675.3}

When is the sinner accepted in the beloved? When He is declared righteous, but is not, or when he becomes a partaker of the divine nature, when he has the mind of Christ?

The legal/penal idea is a fraud designed to have people rest satisfied with a legal claim of righteousness without an actual change of heart from selfish, to loving/righteous.

Read second paragraph, “Paul’s argument in Romans 3...” thoughts?

Why did Paul know that some would fear he was “abolishing the law?” Because he was dealing with people who have a legal mentality when it comes to the plan of salvation. They had misdiagnosed the problem and had created a false understanding of the solution. As Paul tried to lead them away from a legal solution, to the actual healing of mind and character, he knew they would resist.

From my paraphrase:

Romans 3:27 Where, then, is human bragging or accomplishment? It has no place, for our healing has been accomplished by God, through trust made possible by Jesus. And why is boasting not possible? Because our efforts to conform to a set of rules does not establish trust or remove the infection of selfishness from our hearts! Only trust in God eliminates fear and opens the heart to God and then he uses his divine power to apply the remedy Christ achieved in order to recreate us, in love, to be like Jesus. ²⁸ Therefore, we insist that a man is cleansed – set right with God, only by trusting in God and opening his heart to him – and this is different from keeping rules. ²⁹ Is the Creator of the entire human race the God of the Jews only? Is he not God of all humanity, including Gentiles? Of course – he is the God of all humanity, ³⁰ and he will heal the circumcised if they trust him and the uncircumcised will also be healed if they trust him. ³¹ Do we then destroy or make useless, by

our trust, the written code God gave to help us? Of course not! We show that the written code was helpful in diagnosing our sickness, revealing God's plan to heal and leading us back to trust so we could be healed.

Thoughts?

FRIDAY

Read top section, "In their bondage..." thoughts?

What do you hear?

- What is their condition? The law "condemns them" which means what? It diagnoses them as terminal
- What was the obstacle they had in getting well?
 - They had lost the knowledge of God and the *principles* of his covenant – what were they?
- Why did God take them to the Red Sea?
- Why did God want to reveal his power? His power to do what?
- God's power is "power to help." When you read about God's power to you *always* see His power is manifest to help us, and deliver us from sin? Or do we primarily see and teach God uses His power to punish and destroy?
 - Flood – keep open the channel to save the world and unify the universe
 - Sodom and Gomorrah to stem corruption and keep open the channel for Messiah
 - Plagues of Egypt – reveal the impotence of false gods and open their minds to their condition, leading them to healing, including the Egyptians
 - Thunder at Sinai, stop an orgy, idol worship, selfishness, and bring them to a knowledge of their condition and need
 - Power to keep scorpions and snakes out – to protect
 - Power to heal when looked at snake on pole – to heal
 - Power to provide manna and water

- Drought for 3.5 years and Fire at Mt. Carmel – to reveal impotence of Baal and again bring people back to God for healing
- Power to raise a dead man whose body touched the bones of Elisha – to reawaken the message of Elijah and Elisha and turn minds back to the true God
- Power to break Dagon when the ark was there and give hemorrhoids to the pagans – to open their minds to the impotence of their gods and lead them to the true God
- Power to stop the fire from consuming the three worthies and the lions from eating Daniel – to bring pagan rulers to a knowledge of God
- Power demonstrated by Jesus in all His miracles, to heal and restore
- Power of miracles done by Apostles to bring people to the knowledge of God

God uses His power to heal and restore, not to punish and destroy!

TUESDAY

Read first paragraph, “Some, believing...” thoughts?

Many have argued over the law in Galatians that “was added.” Some have argued it was just the ceremonial law others the 10 Commandments, others all law since sin. What do you think?

I am asked concerning the law in Galatians. What law is the schoolmaster to bring us to Christ? I answer: Both the ceremonial and the moral code of ten commandments... "The law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith" (Gal. 3:24). In this scripture, the Holy Spirit through the apostle is speaking especially of the moral law. {1SM 233, 234}

The lesson is absolutely right on this point!

Read the second paragraph, “Paul is not...” thoughts?

Read last paragraph, “While the ceremonial..” thoughts?

What do you think about the idea, “that shows us that sin is not just part of our natural condition but is, indeed, a violation of God’s law.”

We use the language “natural heart” or “natural condition” commonly, from our earthly vantage point – but is it really natural?

Do you see an oxymoron in this? Do you see that God’s law, or design protocol, is what defines our true “nature” or defines what is “natural” for mankind? And if that is so then all violations of God’s law are unnatural?

We might say the natural sinful heart, or what is natural for a heart infected by selfishness. But, I just wanted to point out that our condition in sin and selfishness, is not natural to God’s order or design. It is an infection to be cured and purged!

WEDNESDAY

Read top dark section, “Does Paul’s statement...”

Thoughts?

Had the 10 Commandments been in existence long before Sinai?

If man had kept the law of God, as given to Adam after his fall, preserved by Noah, and observed by Abraham, there would have been no necessity for the ordinance of circumcision. And if the descendants of Abraham had kept the covenant, of which circumcision was a sign, they would never have been seduced into idolatry, nor would

it have been necessary for them to suffer a life of bondage in Egypt; they would have kept God's law in mind, and there would have been no necessity for it to be proclaimed from Sinai or engraved upon the tables of stone. And had the people practiced the principles of the Ten Commandments, there would have been no need of the additional directions given to Moses. {PP 364.2}

Was the written law in existence in heaven before Sinai?

But in heaven, service is not rendered in the spirit of legality. When Satan rebelled against the law of Jehovah, the thought that there was a law came to the angels almost as an awakening to something unthought of. In their ministry the angels are not as servants, but as sons. There is perfect unity between them and their Creator. Obedience is to them no drudgery. {MB 109.2}

Read last paragraph, “The role of the law...” thoughts? This is well said.

THURSDAY

Read first paragraph, “In Galatians...” thoughts? How do you hear this? What does it mean? Is it good news? Why?

How might you rephrase it? What would our position be if we had to rely on ourselves *to create a remedy* for sin?

Read second paragraph, “Although...” thoughts? Why is the law subsidiary to the promise? Is it because it was mediated by angels and Moses? Is that what makes it subsidiary? Or is it subsidiary by its very nature – it is a diagnostic tool, whereas Christ is the cure!

Read last paragraph, “As majestic...” thoughts?

I don't understand the sentence, "In stark contrast, God's promise was made directly to Abraham (and therefore, to all believers), for there was no need for a mediator."

What do you understand that to be saying?

While we rejoice that there are worlds which have never fallen, these worlds render praise, and honor, and glory to Jesus Christ for the plan of redemption to save the fallen sons of Adam, as well as to confirm themselves in their position and character of purity. The arm that raised the human family from the ruin which Satan had brought upon the race through his temptations, is the arm which has preserved the inhabitants of other worlds from sin. Every world throughout immensity engages the care and support of the Father and the Son; and this care is constantly exercised for fallen humanity. Christ is **mediating** in behalf of man, and the order of unseen worlds also is preserved by his **mediatorial** work. Are not these themes of sufficient magnitude and importance to engage our thoughts, and call forth our gratitude and adoration to God?" {RH, January 11, 1881 par. 4}

Thoughts?