



## The Book of Romans Lesson 6 4Q 2017

by Tim Jennings

### ANNOUNCEMENTS:

**November 17,18, 2017:** Dr. Jennings will be speaking at the Vallejo Dr. SDA church in California.

**January 19,20, 2018:** Dr. Jennings will be speaking at the Tacoma Central SDA Church, Tacoma, Washington.

Sadly, we have had three class members who have had family members pass away in the last several weeks. Our hearts and prayers go out to each one:

- Dean Scott (our board member and Director of Media Production) lost his sister, Valerie
- Linda Ojala (who substitute teaches sometimes) lost her father, Don Wheeler
- George Graves (long time supporter) lost his mother, Mary Lou Graves

### Adam and Jesus

Before we even get to the lesson, an online listener Bobby Miskimen posted this on our Facebook page quoting one of the founders of the SDA church, examining our position and previous statements one righteousness by faith:

Righteousness within is testified to by righteousness without. He who is righteous within is not hard-hearted and unsympathetic, but day by day he grows into the image of Christ, going on from strength to strength. He who is being sanctified by the truth will be self-controlled, and will follow in the footsteps of Christ until grace is lost in glory. The righteousness by which we are justified is imputed; the righteousness by which we are sanctified is imparted. The first is our title to heaven, the second is our fitness for heaven. { RH June 4, 1895, par. 7 }

Reading the other quotes provided in the lesson regarding imputed righteousness further clarify what she meant by this phrase.

So, in my mind there is a distinction, but these are merely 2 steps in the same process:

- 1) By God's imputed righteousness, the human heart is restored to its original design (Ezekiel 11:15-21), the good tree is restored (Luke 6:43-45), we are grafted into the vine (John 15:1-5), etc.
- 2) The Holy Spirit, in cooperation with our new heart/spiritual nature, works out the imparted righteousness of sanctification



I would be interested if you agree or not.

Yes I agree, and we could state it like this:

- Imputed righteousness, which is justification, is the righteousness that sets our hearts right, changes the heart from distrust to trust. This would be the act of grafting us back into trust with God
- Imparted righteousness, which is sanctification, is the flowing into the heart of the Holy Spirit who takes the righteousness of Christ and reproduces it in us, thus changing our desires, motives, attitudes to be like Christ.

So, to give confirmation this is what the founders of our church meant, and that imputed righteousness is not this legal fiction taught in the penal view of God declaring someone to be righteous when they are not, but is the actual setting of the heart right from distrust to trust, from the same founder who wrote that imputed righteousness is our title to heaven we read:

**The proud heart strives to earn salvation; but both our title to heaven and our fitness for it are found in the righteousness of Christ. The Lord can do nothing toward the recovery of man until, convinced of his own weakness, and stripped of all self-sufficiency, he yields himself to the control of God. Then he can receive the gift that God is waiting to bestow. [Notice the heart must change, this is the title to heaven, the imputed righteousness changing the heart from distrust to trust, then we receive the imparted righteousness with transforms us]** From the soul that feels his need, nothing is withheld. He has unrestricted access to Him in whom all fullness dwells. "For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." Isaiah 57:15. {DA 300.1}

I read an article in the Adventist World NAD magazine October 2017 edition, which I felt it was important to bring up as the subject is pertinent to this quarter's lessons. I read this article with incredible sadness, the sadness a doctor might feel at seeing a patient riddled with cancer—this article is riddled with the imposed law lie.

The Title of the article is: *The Fountain of Every Good: The Paradigm shift we call the Reformation.* Laszlo Gullusz Ph.D. p 22

The fresh understanding of the gospel in the sixteenth century brought changes of such an extent that Diarmaid MacCulluch, a well-known scholar writing on the history of the Reformation, summarizes this paradigm shift as "All things made new."<sup>1</sup> Martin Luther's

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<sup>1</sup> Diarmaid MacCulluch, *All things Made New: The Reformation and Its Legacy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2016).



foundational contribution to theology was the recognition that salvation is a free gift of divine mercy, and humans can do nothing to get it except to receive it through faith alone.

This idea was revolutionary, since it stood in sharp contrast to the medieval understanding of salvation in which the concept of merit played a crucial role. **Sin was considered to be a problem of being, which needed healing through a process of transformation.** [Is this incorrect? Does the Bible not teach we are dead in trespass and sin? That we have carnal natures, that our hearts are selfish, that we need to be reborn, regenerated, recreated, that we are born in sin and conceived in iniquity? Does not salvation actually mean healing, Saved, *sodzo* in Greek means to heal—so is this idea of sin being a problem of being wrong? But it is put in this article as if it is wrong—and this is the problem with the Penal Substitutionary view it leads people away from the right diagnosis, substitutes a false legal diagnosis and then gives them a religion with a form of godliness but no power.] **Consequently, it was believed that salvation was the result of becoming a “holy person by cooperating with grace by all means possible.”**<sup>2</sup> [Is this false? Did Jesus not teach, “be ye therefore perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect?” (MT 5:48) Are we not called to be a holy priesthood? (1Pet 2:5,9) Is the author suggesting that Protestantism actually teaches salvation does not result in becoming a holy person by cooperating with God? What are the options here?

- We become holy on our own;
- We become holy in cooperation with God;
- God uses His power to make people holy without any cooperation;
- We don't become holy at all;
- God plays a grand fraud and no one becomes holy, God merely pro-claims they are]

**This system implied that humans must add their effort to the work of God's grace in order to achieve salvation, since eternal life came a reward for cooperating with divine grace.** [The fault lies in viewing the salvation problem through imposed legal lenses, thus adding our effort is viewed as adding to the healing or saving value of Christ's achievements; as if Christ's achievements alone were not enough to save us. The Protestants view is correct to reject any idea that suggests Christ's achievements alone were insufficient to save humanity, or that any actions on our part adds to what Christ accomplished to save the species. However, they are wrong to suggest that there is no cooperation with Divine agencies for our personal salvation. This is all resolved when we return to Design law. In that reality we understand that Christ, singly and alone put the species human right with God in His own human personhood while simultaneously procuring the Remedy that heals all who trust Him. In other words, the species was put right with God in the person of Jesus, who also procured what was necessary to save individual members of the species, who by faith are connected to, i.e. grafted into Christ, who is the righteous vine. But we must trust Him and cooperate with Him for the partaking of and application of His remedy in our lives. This cooperation does not create the

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<sup>2</sup> Roger E. Olson, *The Story of Christian Theology: Twenty Centuries of Tradition and Reform* (Downers Grove Ill.: InterVarsity, 1999), p. 373.



remedy or earn the remedy, it only partakes of the remedy freely provided by Christ. So the Catholic view is that our works add to what Christ has done and our works are necessary for us to merit or be worthy or earn salvation in Christ. We reject this idea. However, the Protestant view that the sin problem is legal and salvation is something declared which does not actually happen within the believer is also wrong and needs to be rejected.] **Purgatory, a concept considered the theological foundation for a vast church business in the medieval period (including the payment for salvation by purchasing indulgences), became for the Reformers the symbol of all that was wrong with this view of salvation.** [Protestants quite correctly reject purgatory along with anything we do to merit, purchase, or pay for salvation. This idea of purchasing salvation came in because of accepting the false impose law view. And in fact, to be rid of purgatory was one of the main reasons Luther came up with the idea of a legally declared justification. He wanted to take away the power the institutional church had over people with the doctrine of purgatory and thus taught that all sins, past, present and future were placed on Christ and punished in Christ, thus we accept the legal application and are declared righteous and there is no need of purging sins. Protestants are right to reject purgatory, but have erred in continuing to view salvation through the imposed law lens thus making the process a legal one, rather than the healing reality it is] The “theology of the cross” lay at the heart of Luther’s argument, highlighting the centrality of God’s mercy despite human sin, instead of demanding from people virtue as a prerequisite for grace.

The key expression in Luther’s thought is the “righteousness of God” (*iustitia Dei*). In Romans 1:18-3:20 **Paul establishes that argument that all people are guilty, and so the main problem of humanity is facing God’s justice.** [Here we see the false law infection clearly. Paul does not teach that all people are guilty, he teaches that all people are sinful, i.e. have a condition of being which is terminal “dead in trespass and sin” (Eph 2:1, Col 2:13) are carnal, which without God’s intervention will result in death. (Rom 6:23, James 1:15, Gal 6:8) Futher, Paul teaches that the sin problem is not God inflicting punishment, but what unremedied sin will do when God stops holding its damaging consequences at bay!] **In pre-Reformation theology the “righteousness of God” was equivalent to the punishment by the divine judge.** [Again the infection of the impose law view in both Catholic and Protestant theology] **Luther challenged this view** as the result of his study of Psalms, Romans, and Galatians in the period between 1513 and 1517 while he lectured on these books at Wittenberg University.

**Luther established biblically that the *iustitia Dei* is not to be understood in terms of God’s righteousness, by which God is Himself justified, but as the righteousness by which He justifies sinful human beings.** [Yes, this is so, but wrongly taught as a legal accounting rather than the truth of actually setting humanity right with God] **Righteousness is a gift from God given for the benefit of humanity. It is a gift by which God declares believers righteous even though they are not in themselves righteous.** [Here is the legal distortion, God declaring us to be righteous, even though we are not. Now while it is true that we are not in ourselves righteous, it is not true that we are not righteous when we experience a heart change from distrust to trust. That is righteous, i.e. set right with God. This idea that we are declared



righteous even though we are not is a deep lie that keeps millions trapped in a form of godliness with no power].

**This new definition of righteousness points to God as “the fountain of every good.”**<sup>3</sup> [Note, this “new definition,” because it was made up by Luther to counter the abuses of a works system that led to indulgences, all based on the false law construct. Protestants and Catholics alike are both stuck arguing back and forth inside the false law arena, thus neither view presents the true gospel nor the true view of righteousness by faith] The cross reveals “an exuberantly happy God who glories in sharing His happiness. He is not stingy or utilitarian, but a God who glories in being gracious.”<sup>4</sup> This is revealed in the climactic statement of Paul’s argument for justification by faith in Romans 4:25: “[Jesus our Lord] was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification” (NIV).

Today, however we need an even stronger focus on the Reformation principles of justification by faith. This biblical teaching has the potential to give us a fresh experience of the work of God, the power of God, the wisdom of God, the strength of God, the salvation of God, and the glory of God so needed in today’s secular post-modern culture. Reformation matters, even after 500 years.

So an overview of history:

- Adam and Eve were created sinless with the capacity to exercise their ability to develop perfect sinless character, they didn’t
- Humanity infected with fear and selfishness God intercedes to save humanity
- The Jewish nation was given truth about God to take to the world to bring all the world into a saving relationship with God—however they became legalistic and exclusive, focusing on rule keeping rather than love for God and others—i.e. no heart change in many
- Jesus came and threw off the legal approach to salvation and revealed the truth about God while developing a perfect human character, destroying the devil’s power (lies Heb 2:14), destroying death (selfishness 2Tim 1:9,10) and destroying the devil’s work (effacing the image of God in man 1John 3:8).
- The New Testament church taught that Jesus overcame sin and Satan for humanity becoming the second Adam perfecting humanity and that He accomplished this singly and alone and that no other human being can add to what Christ did to save humanity.
- However, the NT church taught that the saved must partake of what Christ accomplished, and this partaking was a cooperative relationship with God in which the sinner had to make choices to trust God and to follow in their actions God’s methods and designs. Their choosing to do so does not create the Remedy to sin, nor add to what Christ accomplished but is the internalization and participation in Christ’s accomplishment. All of which result in internal

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<sup>3</sup> Alister McGrath, *Iustitia Dei: A History of the Christian Doctrine of Justification*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 222.

<sup>4</sup> Michael Reeves and Tim Chester, *Why the Reformation Still Matters* (Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway, 2016), pp. 209-210.



transformation of heart and mind—being reborn, circumcision of the heart by the Spirit, having the law written on the heart, having the mind of Christ etc. This is what Paul meant by work out your salvation with fear and trembling, or James that faith without works is dead. It would be like saying faith in your doctor, without taking the remedy he provide is worthless, i.e. doesn't heal.

- The NT church operated upon design law, not imposed law—it was all about healing and renewal
- Then the imposed law lie re-infected Christianity and the idea of renewal of the heart was retained, but legal confusion combined with this and it came to be believed that the healing required legal actions done by both the sinner and the church. Thus the gospel became corrupted to exploit people based on fear, such as the teaching of purgatory and the selling of indulgences, and the idea that one had to act in a certain way or do a certain ritual in order to be saved. Thus human works were blended with the idea of healing to create a false system
- The Protestant reformation threw off the idea of human works providing salvation, teaching instead the reality that the remedy to sin was accomplished by Jesus singly and alone and no human work could add to what Christ has done. However, they simultaneously rejected the idea of sin being a condition of being requiring heart transformation and renewal, thus they have perpetuated a false legal view that has a form of godliness with no power.
- The SDA church was founded to finish the Reformation—to take the good start made by Luther and complete it, which requires that we come back to design law, which eliminates the legal misunderstanding infecting both Protestant and Catholic theologies. Thus, our founders wrote things like this, regarding the cooperation between man and God for salvation, something the Review article above rejects:
- **There are two grand forces at work in the salvation of the human soul. It requires the cooperation of man with the divine agencies-- divine influences, and a strong, living, working faith. It is in this way only that the human agent can become a laborer together with God. The Lord does not sanction in any one of us a blind, stupid credulity. He does not dishonor the human understanding, but, far from this, He calls for the human will to be brought into connection with the divine will. He calls for the ingenuity of the human mind, the tact, the skill, to be strenuously exercised in searching out the truth as it is in Jesus... Ye are labourers together with God. {OHC 310.5}**

## SABBATH

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What do you think of from the Title? Do you think of two paths, two directions, two conditions, two inheritances, two outcomes?

- Adam—fear, selfishness, sin—terminal condition that results in death
- Jesus—love, truth, holiness—remedy that cures the terminal condition and results in eternal life



Jesus took up humanity, damaged and terminal by Adam's choice to break God's design thus corrupting the human species, and cured the sin-condition.

Read Memory Text: "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God." Rom 5:1,2

What does this mean? What law lens do you hear it through? Do you hear a legal process? Do you hear this: "Therefore, being declared legally innocent, we are no longer under God's death sentence because of the legal payment of Jesus, whom we also have access to God's grace...."

What does justification mean? It means putting right, setting right in actuality, not in legal accounting. In other words, when you justify the margins on your document, you actually move the words that are out of line and put them in line you DON'T leave the words misaligned and then declare you have moved them.

This legal declaration of righteousness is a lie, brought about by accepting the lie that God's law functions like our law and tricks good people into accepting beliefs that not only don't heal, but actually undermine trust in God and therefore injure.

Read first paragraph: "Paul has established..." When they say, "the point that justification, or acceptance with God, comes only through faith..." are they saying that justification and acceptance with God are one and the same?

If so, what are they saying justification is doing? Is it doing something to get God to accept us? In the legal view the problem with sin is not the sinner, it is God's attitude of unacceptance, legal condemnation, rejection, wrath and anger and thus, we need Jesus to pay the legal price to this offended god so that this god will now accept us. This is paganism and we must reject it if we are to come to the knowledge of God and reveal Him to the world.

Genuine justification is setting right that which is wrong or deviant. Human beings, after Adam's sin were wrong, or out of harmony with God and God's design—in a terminal condition. Jesus took up humanity, terminal, dying, and set the human species right, first IN HIS OWN HUMANITY. Jesus is the second Adam, the new head of the human race, thus the species human was justified in the person of Jesus—not by a legal declaration, or legal imposition of punishment, but by a healing act. Just like justifying your margins you actually move the words out of harmony to be in line, Jesus took humanity upon Himself and actually moved humanity back into perfection—back into perfect harmony with God and God's design law of love!

This is true justification. Now, all human beings who trust Jesus can partake of what He achieved, and we are individually justified when our hearts/minds/characters are moved from distrust to trust and in trust we open the heart and receive the indwelling Spirit who takes what Christ achieved and reproduces it in us!



What does it mean the righteousness of Christ alone “is enough to give us right standing with our Lord.”

Again, do you hear this as influencing God; that the problem is God’s unaccepting attitude?

Such views are a result of the false imposed law lens.

With design law, it is true that the righteousness of God makes us acceptable why? BECAUSE God will only accept life, healing, restoration. He will not accept death, disease, decay, pain and suffering. It would be like you if your child had some terminal disease, the only thing acceptable to you is full complete healing and cure. Thus the righteousness of Jesus, which is the Remedy, the perfection of humanity, without it we remain terminal.

So, one of the founders of the SDA church wrote, regarding the robe of Christ’s righteousness and what it means to be covered by that robe of righteousness:

This robe, woven in the loom of heaven, has in it not one thread of human devising. **Christ in His humanity wrought out a perfect character, and this character** He offers to impart to us... When we submit ourselves to Christ, **the heart is united with His heart, the will is merged in His will, the mind becomes one with His mind, the thoughts are brought into captivity to Him; we live His life. This is what it means to be clothed with the garment of His righteousness.** Then as the Lord looks upon us He sees, not the fig-leaf garment, not the nakedness and deformity of sin, but His own robe of righteousness, which is perfect obedience to the law of Jehovah. {COL 311.4}

Do you see this is healing, this is not a legal process. In fact, the legal view cheats people from this genuine restoration to righteousness by telling them they are declared righteous even though they are not. We must look higher, expect higher, trust higher, and let God heal our hearts!

Read the next paragraph, “Through the fall of one man...” Do you hear the infection, the lie, the distortion that keeps millions trapped in sin?

This is so deeply imbedding that most Christians don’t even question it.

But what did John the Baptist say about Jesus? Did he say:

- The Lamb of God who takes away the punishment of God for sin?

Or

- The Lamb of God who takes away the record of our sins?

Or did John actually say:



- The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world?

George MacDonald, 19<sup>th</sup> Century Congregationalist Theologian and Preacher wrote:

The Lord never came to deliver men from the consequences of their sins while those sins yet remained ... Yet, feeling nothing of the dread hatefulness of their sin, **men have constantly taken this word that the Lord came to deliver us from our sins to mean that he came to save them from the punishment of their sins.**

**This idea has terribly corrupted the preaching of the Gospel.** The message of the Good News has not been truly communicated. Unable to believe in the forgiveness of the Father in heaven, imagining him not at liberty to forgive, or incapable of forgiving forthright; not really believing him God who is fully our Savior, but a God bound—either in his own nature or by a law above him and compulsory upon him—to exact some recompense or satisfaction for sin, **a multitude of religious teachers have taught their fellow men that Jesus came to bear our punishment and save us from hell. But in that they have misrepresented his true mission.** George MacDonald, *Discovering the Character of God* (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 1989), p. 39

The church cannot finish its mission while taking a pagan concept of God to the world. We must come back to worship Him who made the heavens, earth, sea and all that in them is—the Designer, which requires we reject this false legal view and embrace the truth about God who is love and His law is the law upon which reality is built.

Further, do you notice the false legal view has sins being erased from record books, from history and the historical memory of the universe, rather than sinfulness being erased from the hearts, minds, characters of sinners.

Again, a lie that cheats good people from experiencing healing of their inner being, but instead living in fear of some sin not being confessed and then not being removed from the record books. Or living in fear of someone finding out the history of some sin they committed.

Some have the idea that we won't have any memory or record of the sins of the righteous in heaven because they have been erased from the record books. Hmmm.... think about the following:

- Did David confess his sins and have them forgiven by God? Are they erased from history? Do angels know when we discuss David?
- When the woman washed Jesus feet with expensive ointment and was being criticized Jesus said, "I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven—for she loved much. But he who has been forgiven little loves little." Lk 7:47 NIV84
- Revelation states "And they sang a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders. No one could learn the song except the 144,000 who had been redeemed from the earth. <sup>4</sup>These are those who did not defile themselves with women, for they



kept themselves pure.” Rev 14:3,4 –what does this mean? Is it not the song of their experience, thus only they can sing it because only they went through it? But would they have to remember what they went through in order to sing the song?

- In the book Education I read the following: “ In His temple doth everyone speak of His glory” (Psalm 29:9), and the song which the ransomed ones will sing--the song of their experience--will declare the glory of God: "Great and marvelous are Thy works, O Lord.” p. 308 –Would people have to remember their experience in order to sing the song of their experience?

And one of the founders of the SDA church wrote this:

Every question of truth and error in the long-standing controversy has now been made plain. The results of rebellion, the fruits of setting aside the divine statutes, have been laid open to the view of all created intelligences. The working out of Satan's rule in contrast with the government of God has been presented to the whole universe. **Satan's own works have condemned him. God's wisdom, His justice, and His goodness stand fully vindicated.** It is seen that all His dealings in the great controversy have been conducted with respect to the eternal good of His people and the good of all the worlds that He has created. . . . **The history of sin will stand to all eternity as a witness that with the existence of God's law is bound up the happiness of all the beings He has created.** With all the facts of the great controversy in view, the whole universe, both loyal and rebellious, with one accord declare: "Just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." {Mar 346.2}

We will remember, the record books are not erased; our memories of what we went through serve as part of the evidence that provide security from ever being deceived again and markedly enhance our love, confidence, trust and appreciation for God.

It is Satan who wants the records erased, because the records of reality, of truth, reveal the amazing perfection, goodness, righteousness, holiness of God and the evil, corruption and vileness of Satan.

Our personal histories give glory to God demonstrating His goodness in not rejecting us sick in sin, and that His methods when applied to sinners heal, regenerate and renew us back to perfection.

Read next paragraph, “Paul contrasts Adam and Jesus...” Yes—Jesus came to undo what Adam did—which was to the actually fix the condition of the human species, not to perform some legal process.

Yes—Christ is our substitute—in that “he who knew no sin became sin for us [substitution] so that we might become the righteousness of God.” 2Cor 5:21

This is healing, restoration, regeneration, recreation, actually putting right what was not right, which is the condition of the human heart and mind. This is true salvation, justification, and the purpose of



substitution—to heal and procure the remedy—perfect sinless human character—which no one born of sinful mother and father could ever do.

## SUNDAY

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The lesson asks us to read Romans 5:1-5 and then summarize the message, so let's read these verses from *The Remedy*:

<sup>1</sup>Therefore, if our minds and hearts have been set right through trust, we are at peace with God through the Remedy achieved by our Lord Jesus Christ.<sup>2</sup>It is through Jesus that we know the truth about God and are won back to trust, and thus open our minds to experience God's gracious healing power. Our joy is found in the hope of full restoration into beings possessing Godlike character.<sup>3</sup>Because of this, we rejoice in our trials and afflictions, for we know that trials bring to light our shortcomings and defects of character.<sup>4</sup>If we persevere, choosing God's methods, the defects are removed and character is purified, and pure character increases our hope for God's kingdom.<sup>5</sup>And our hope will not be disappointed, because God pours out his love into our hearts and thereby matures, ennobles, and restores us into his image by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given to us.

Read first paragraph, “Being justified...”

Does this even make any sense? Remember the analogy of the person who stops brushing their teeth and gets cavities, goes to their pastor and the pastor tells the suffering person that Jesus brushed His teeth perfectly and if they accept Him as their substitute then God will declare them to have perfect teeth even though they don't. They just need to leave believing that their teeth are legally declared by God to be without any cavities. So they leave claiming they believe it, but in just as much pain with just as much decay—and thus trust in God is undermined because their experience contradicts what they are told to believe.

This false penal/legal model not only cheats people out of genuine healing it subtly destroys human reason and intelligence, because people know by their experience that they are hurting, struggling, decaying in heart and mind, yet they are told that despite this God in heaven declares they are perfectly righteous. It creates a terrible disconnect where God operates on some plane of existence disconnected from us—a fantasy island, which causes people to actually distrust God. And thus they create theologies to be protected or hidden from God.

Again, this entire distortion happens because people accept the lie that God's law functions like human law, imposed rules requiring legal imposed punishments, and thus create an entire false theology to deal with the wrong diagnosis.

Read next paragraph, “At the same time...”



“What more glorious news could there be for sinners?” How about the truth—that our condition was cured by Jesus, not punished by God.

So in the view put forth by the lesson:

- Who is punishing Jesus?
- Who is the source of pain, suffering and death?

In this controversy between good and evil, who wants to paint God as the one who causes pain suffering and death?

- In this legal penal view, who do we need protection from? So whose agenda does the legal view serve?

This false view leads to all the theological doctrines that function to hide us and protect us from God, and thus cheats us out of the reunion, the reuniting, the reconciliation, the unity, the at-one-ment God offers us to enter into with Him!

Can you reason out the problems that occur when we teach all sins have been laid upon Christ and punished in Christ?

- Does that mean, Hitler, Stalin, abortionists, who have ended hundreds of millions of lives, thus preventing quadrillions of sins from ever being committed reduced the sufferings of Jesus?
- If some people suffering either many days or all eternity (depending on your view) how could Jesus pay that penalty for all the sins of the world in only a few hours?
- If God forgives us our debts as we forgive our debtors, how is it we say our debt was paid? If someone pays your debt, can the person who received payment then turn to you and say, “now that I have received the proper payment, I forgive your debt”?
- Does this mean that if God were not to use His power to inflict punishment for sin that sinners could live eternally in sin because there really isn’t anything harmful about sin other than God will punish you for it?

From the book *Hard Sayings of the Bible* published by IVP:

In some sense, God’s wrath is built into the very structure of created reality. In rejecting God’s structure and establishing our own, in violating God’s intention for the creation and substituting our own intentions, we cause our own disintegration. P 542

The human condition, which Paul describes in Romans 1:18-32, is not something caused by God. The phrase “revealed from heaven” (where “heaven” is a typical Jewish substitute word for “God”) does not depict some kind of divine intervention, but rather the *inevitability of human debasement* which results when God’s will, built into the created order, is violated. Since the created order has its origin in God, Paul can say that the wrath of God is now (constantly) being revealed “from heaven.” It is revealed in the fact that the rejection of God’s truth (Rom 1:18-20), that is, the truth about God’s nature and will, leads to futile thinking



(Rom 1:21-22), idolatry (Rom 1:23), perversion of God-intended sexuality (Rom 1:24-27) and relational-moral brokenness (Rom 1:28-32). P 543

The expression “God gave them over” (or “handed them over”), which appears three times in this passage (Rom 1:24,26,28), supports the idea that the sinful perversion of human existence, though resulting from human decisions, is to be understood ultimately as God’s punishment which we, in freedom, bring upon ourselves. P 543

In light of these reflections, the common notion that God punishes or blesses in direct proportion to our sinful or good deeds cannot be maintained... God loves us with an everlasting love. But the rejection of that love separates us from its life-giving power. The result is disintegration and death. P 543 Kaiser, W., et al., *Hard Saying of the Bible*, Intervarsity Press, 1996,

From one of the founders of the SDA church:

**We are not to regard God as waiting to punish the sinner for his sin. The sinner brings the punishment upon himself. His own actions start a train of circumstances that bring the sure result. Every act of transgression reacts upon the sinner,** works in him a change of character, and makes it more easy for him to transgress again. **By choosing to sin, men separate themselves from God, cut themselves off from the channel of blessing, and the sure result is ruin and death.** {1SM 235.2}

The idea that God must use His power to inflict punishment for sin is Satan’s lie from the beginning. Another quote from the book *The Desire of Ages*. I like to quote this because it not only is put together so beautifully, but provides historical documentation on how the SDA church used to see it, and exposes how deeply the imposed law lie has infected the church:

In the opening of the great controversy, **Satan had declared that the law of God could not be obeyed,** that justice was inconsistent with mercy, and that, should the law be broken, it would be impossible for the sinner to be pardoned. **Every sin must meet its punishment, urged Satan;** and if God should remit the punishment of sin, He would not be a God of truth and justice. When men broke the law of God, and defied His will, Satan exulted. It was proved, he declared, that the law could not be obeyed; man could not be forgiven. Because he, after his rebellion, had been banished from heaven, Satan claimed that the human race must be forever shut out from God's favor. God could not be just, he urged, and yet show mercy to the sinner. {DA 761.4}

**But even as a sinner, man was in a different position from that of Satan.** Lucifer in heaven had sinned in the light of God's glory. To him as to no other created being was given a revelation of God's love. **Understanding the character of God, knowing His goodness, Satan chose to follow his own selfish, independent will.** This choice was final. There was no more that God could do to save him. **But man was deceived; his mind was darkened by**



**Satan's sophistry.** The height and depth of the love of God he did not know. **For him there was hope in a knowledge of God's love. By beholding His character he might be drawn back to God.** {DA 761.5} [What do you hear? Lies believed break the circle of love and trust, broken love and trust result in fear and selfishness. Humans had fear and selfishness in us because we believed lies about God, thus truth about God could dispel the lies and win us back to trust, and in trust to receive the perfect character of Christ to restore us to God's ideal. But Satan, having known the character of God—rejected it. He didn't believe lies about God, but preferred selfishness to love, thus revealing truth to Satan doesn't dispel lies and win to trust and therefore there was nothing God could do for him.]

Through Jesus, God's mercy was manifested to men; **but mercy does not set aside justice. The law reveals the attributes of God's character, and not a jot or tittle of it could be changed to meet man in his fallen condition.** [Why? Because God's law is design law and to change the laws upon which all reality is built would be to destroy all reality] **God did not change His law,** but He sacrificed Himself, in Christ, for man's redemption. "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself." 2 Corinthians 5:19. {DA 762.1}

**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}

Do you see the entire healing view based upon Design law here? No legal imposed law construct!

## MONDAY

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The middle of the states "Romans 5:9 says we can be saved from God's wrath through Jesus. How do we understand what that means?"

Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him! Rom 5:9 NIV84

What does this mean?

What is God's wrath based upon what we just read in *Hard Sayings of the Bible* on Romans 1? God letting go to reap what sin does when God isn't holding its destructive consequences at bay.



So from *The Remedy*:

Now that we have been won back to trust, cleansed in mind and set right with God by all that Christ accomplished at the cross, it is ridiculous to think that God would let us go! Rom 5:9

But read the next paragraph and see how the lesson authors describe the meaning of Romans 5:9, “On the eve of their departure...”

So, what do you hear the wrath of God is? What do they describe the blood of Jesus functionally doing? This is paganism, a god who is wrathful and who uses his power to inflict pain and death unless held at bay by the blood of a human sacrifice.

The correct understanding is what the Bible actually teaches, and what we read above—God strives with all His agencies to win His intelligent creatures back to love and trust in order to heal them from their terminal condition, but if they insist on rejecting Him, He will sadly—in harmony with His law (character)—grant them freedom to reap what they have chosen, separation from Him which results in ruin and death. This is God’s wrath, letting them go.

## TUESDAY

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In the first paragraph the lesson makes an excellent point worth noting—God designed that human beings should live forever. In other words, death was not designed by God, but is an intruder to God’s order.

The lesson asks us to read Romans 5:12 “Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned...” NIV84

and then the lesson states, “Commentators have argued more over this passage of Scripture than most others.”

Why?

Read next paragraph, “One point they argue over....” I like how they said Jesus is the only remedy!

From *The Remedy*:

Therefore, the infection of distrust of God—which deformed humanity's heart and mind with selfishness and fear, and which results only in death—infected the human race when Adam accepted Satan's lies about God and broke trust with him. This infection of fear and selfishness is inherited by all human beings, so all are born infected.

When we come back to Design law all the confusion clears up.



## WEDNESDAY

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Read Romans 5:13,14:

for before the law was given, sin was in the world. But sin is not taken into account when there is no law. <sup>14</sup>Nevertheless, death reigned from the time of Adam to the time of Moses, even over those who did not sin by breaking a command, as did Adam, who was a pattern of the one to come. NIV84

What does this mean? If it is a legal problem, and there is no law, and then no accountability—then why were people still dying from Moses to Adam? What does this reveal? That sin is not a legal problem, but a condition of being that is terminal without Remedy:

From *The Remedy*

This is revealed by the fact that before the written law was given, the infection of distrust, fear and selfishness was already present in the world. But this infection of distrust, fear and selfishness is not diagnosable without the law.<sup>14</sup> Nevertheless, even without being diagnosed as infected with this terminal condition, humans still died, all the way from the time of Adam to Moses—even those who did not break a specific command, like Adam did—revealing that the problem is the infected state of our minds and not a legal issue with God. Adam, the first man, being the conduit through which the infection entered humanity, also represents the one man who is the conduit of the antidote that cures all those who accept it.

Read third paragraph, “It is true that...” Do you see any problems here? What?

Who is the punisher according to this paragraph? So what is the problem with sin? Is the problem sin itself, or a god who punishes you for it? And if God is the punisher for sin, then what do we need salvation from? From the punishment of God, so God sent Jesus to be punished—this is the corruption, all based on the false law view, just as George MacDonald described in the earlier quote.

This teaching, right here in this paragraph, is what obstructs the final message of mercy from going to the world, from what some call the work of the 3 angels to lighten the world with the truth about God to prepare for the second coming of Christ.

## THURSDAY

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The lesson states “As humans, we received nothing from Adam but the sentence of death...” How do you hear this?

Could you state what we received from Adam more accurately?



Read third paragraph, “Look at the opposing...” Yes, Christ came to undo all Adam did—excellent, this is worthy of deep contemplation, lets examine the contrast and understand what it means.

- Death from Adam—life from Christ
  - Why death—what causes death? From where does death originate? Wages of sin, sin when full grown—thus sin comes from transgressing God’s design protocols, laws, of life
  - Then where does life originate—in God, and it flows out to all that live in harmony with His laws (designs) so Christ by his death destroyed death and brought life and immortality to light—how?
  - By destroying the infection of fear and selfishness at the Cross and establishing in humanity the perfect character of love, i.e. the law of love the protocol of life!
- Disobedience from Adam—obedience from Christ
  - What does this mean? Adam broke the law upon which life is built to operate and thus his condition became terminal. Christ restored the law upon which life is built and the healed the terminal condition
- Condemnation from Adam—Justification from Christ
  - From where does Adam’s condemnation come? From the condition itself, from being fearful and selfish, rather than operating on love, truth and freedom. Where does being set right originate? In Christ’s singular victory of overcoming the drive to survive, the fear and selfish temptations with perfect love and thus establishing a new human character, which put humanity back right with God and His design for life.
- Sin from Adam—righteousness from Christ
  - Sin is what? Transgression of the law, or being out of harmony with God’s design protocols for life i.e. the law of love. Righteousness is being perfectly in harmony with God and His designs for life, and thus Christ developed a perfect righteous character. Heb 5:8,9 and thus when made perfect became the source of salvation for all who obey him.

## **FRIDAY**

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Read and discuss questions