

## Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes

### Third Quarter 2017: *The Gospel in Galatians*

#### Lesson 4 “Justification by Faith Alone”

#### Read for this week’s study

Galatians 2:15–21; Ephesians 2:12; Philippians 3:9; Romans 3:10–20; Genesis 15:5, 6; Romans 3:8.

#### Memory Text

“I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me” (Galatians 2:20, ESV).

#### Lesson Outline from Adult Sabbath School Study Guide

- I. Introduction
- II. The Question of “Justification” (*Galatians 2:15, 16*)
- III. Works of the Law
- IV. The Basis of Our Justification
- V. The Obedience of Faith
- VI. Does Faith Promote Sin?
- VII. Further Study

#### Questions and Notes for Consideration

##### Facilitator: Jon Paulien

1. Read or recite (memory text) Galatians 2:20. At first glance this is a text that seems fairly clear, but on further reflection can be quite foggy. What do you think Paul means by “crucified with Christ,” “I no longer live,” “I live by faith,” and “gave Himself for me?” We have a sense of each of these, but the harder you try to pin them down, the deeper things seem to get. And that is only the tip of the iceberg of challenging terms in Galatians 2. (Sabbath afternoon)
2. Read Galatians 2:15. What point do you think Paul is making when he says “we ourselves are Jews by birth and not Gentile sinners?” When it comes to salvation, what are the differences between Jews and Gentiles and how are they the same? Read Galatians 2:16-17. Paul uses variations of “justified” or “justification” four times in these verses. What does he mean by them? When describing Paul’s theology, people often contrast it with “legalism.” What does that word mean and why doesn’t Paul actually use it? How does Galatians 2:15-17 apply to our everyday experience today? (Sunday’s lesson)

3. In Galatians 2:16 Paul three times says that a person is not justified by “works of law.” What does that phrase mean and how do Galatians 2:17; 3:2-5; 3:10 and Romans 3:20 help us understand its meaning? (Monday’s lesson)
4. Read Philippians 3:9. What is “faith” in the healing model of salvation and what is “faith” in the legal model? Read Romans 3:22, 26 and Galatians 3:22. How do these texts help us understand the basis by which God provides the way for our salvation? (Tuesday’s lesson)
5. What do the following texts teach us about the origin of faith (Genesis 15:5; John 3:14-16; 2 Corinthians 5:14-15; Galatians 5:6)? If faith is our response to God, what should that response include? Consider what the following texts say about faith (John 8:32 36; Acts 10:43; Romans 1:5, 8; 6:17; Hebrews 11:6; James 2:19). (Wednesday’s lesson)
6. Read Galatians 2:17-18. How does Paul respond to the accusation that a doctrine of justification by faith alone encourages sin? Read verses 19-21. How does Paul describe union with Christ? In what way does this refute the objections raised by his opponents? (Thursday’s lesson)
7. What is it about justification by faith that made it such a crucial factor in freeing millions of people from the spiritual bondage of Rome during the Reformation? How can that message come to have similar power today? (Friday’s lesson)

### Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

**Recommended Listening:** The entire series by Graham Maxwell on the book of Galatians is available at <http://pkp.cc/MMGALATIANS66>

Lou: You have said a great deal about trust this evening. I can hear a person saying something like this, “When are we going to get on to the really important ideas of justification and sanctification, expiation, propitiation, atonement, substitution and so forth. Haven’t we spent long enough on trust?”

Graham: I think we have been talking about justification, but we’ve given it another name. We’ll even use those names, because they are an important part of our history. And when we talk to our friends for whom those *are* the words, then we should use them if we are going to communicate at all. But I’d rather use the words the Bible uses. And some would say, “Well, aren’t those the words the Bible uses?” No. It’s going to be interesting to arrive in the Kingdom and settle all debates by going up to Paul and saying, “Give us the last word, Paul. What did you mean by justification?”

“Could I hear that one more time?” he’ll say.

“Yes. Justification. You know, your favorite word.”

“Well, I never used it.”

“How about sanctification?”

“No.”

“Propitiation? You mean you used none of those terms? Expiation?”

Paul never used one of them. Neither did Jesus or anybody else in the Bible. You see, they are largely Latin words that came from a period when Latin was largely used for theology. A good many of the words, a good share of the heavier words, have Latin derivation. Some come from Greek. We'll look at *Sola Scriptura*. That's pure Latin. And no one studies Latin these days, by and large. Why do we keep using it? Why not “the Bible only.” Or the word that I used previously, the *Christomonistic principle*. That's Greek. *Christos* (Christ) and *monos* (only). Why not say the “Christ alone” principle? So I would rather use simple terms as we go through; but having discussed the whole plan of salvation and its transforming experience, we'll sprinkle these terms through if you like, so you can see where they fit. But Jesus described the whole truth about his Father and how we could be saved without ever using one of those words. Jesus spoke Aramaic.

Lou: I wonder if the words become a sort of shorthand? But the danger of that is we think we understand what we are talking about when we may have loaded the word with meaning that really isn't fair to the Scripture.

Graham: That's the hazard. It's well to go back to the beginning, and we'll try to do that. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, *Conversations About God*, #3 with Lou Venden, “All God Asks is Trust” recorded January, 1984, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link: <http://pkp.cc/3MMCAG>*

I do not find those legal concepts in the book of Romans, of all places. But that's where they say you get propitiation. Ah, but what is propitiation? It's been loaded in one direction. Justification's been loaded. Sanctification's been loaded. And Paul never used one of those words anyway. It would be very helpful, I think, for us to drop every one of these heavily, now prejudiced and biased and conditioned terms, since they weren't used by the Bible anyway, and adopt some nice new simple ones. For justification I would nominate “set right”. For sanctification I'd nominate “keep right” and things like that. Ellen White loves those words. She says “the only way in which God could set and keep men right was to reveal the truth about His character.” Now that is not a passage oft quoted. This is a magnificent article, “God Made Manifest In Christ,” where all the way through she says what went wrong was a false picture of God. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio presentation, *Questions People Are Asking*

About the Plan of Salvation, recorded April, 1983, Redlands, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

<http://pkp.cc/1MMQUESTP> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/2MMQUESTP> (Part 2)

Lou: I want to ask the same question but in another way: Isn't it enough to be justified? Do I also have to be sanctified? Are you saying here that the healing-trust model really challenges that kind of separation and that kind of thinking?

Graham: Very much so. Of course those two words do not occur in the Bible. They are English words of Latin derivation. Not to make light of them. But the Greek word could be more literally translated "set right, put right" for "justification." Now if a person has been really set right with God and he now loves and trusts him and is willing to listen, don't you think he would say, "What else do you want me to do, Lord?"

"I want to heal you if you will cooperate."

"Absolutely! Just tell me, and I'll follow." There's no way to be justified without sanctification following. If you're not willing to be kept right, you obviously haven't been set right. So being set right and kept right are all part of the same package. They belong together.

Lou: But I worry a little –for example, one of the questions that came in early in our series: "You've made it so complicated. There is so much to think about: justification, sanctification, and all of this. If what really is at stake is simply trusting God, why isn't it enough to say, 'I'm going to have the faith of a little child? I'll just trust God, and don't bother me with all the rest of this.'"

Graham: But don't underestimate the faith of a little child. The faith of a little child implies he's really willing to listen. So if we really have the faith of a little child, we are willing to listen and to be trusting, which by the way is why a little child needs protection, because he's too willing to trust anybody. So he needs protection. But on the good side, the faith of a little child is wonderful. Why, I have all my grandchildren home visiting right now. I love it! And they will sit there and listen and believe anything Grandpa says. I could get away with murder, you know, but I won't do it. But to have them sit and look and hang on every word is beautiful. I love it. Well, if we have the faith of a little child we're sitting there listening to God and saying, "Tell me. Tell me more. Tell me more." Look, there's no way to have the faith of a little child without following along and sanctification will come with it and we'll be healed. There's no way to avoid it.

Lou: As I remember the little children in our house, they were trusting, but they also loved to ask "Why?"

Graham: Oh, that's part of the faith of a little child.

Lou: They are eager to grow.

Graham: Yes. I love that. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, #14 with Lou Venden, “God Can Completely Heal the Damage Done” recorded May, 1984, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link: <http://pkp.cc/14MMCAG>*

For hundreds of years, justification, and propitiation, and sanctification, and atonement, and imputed and imparted righteousness, and all these complex terms, (many of them heavy with Latin etymology) have only served to make the plan of healing and salvation more and more complicated. In fact, the plan of salvation can be spelled out in such complex detail that only a few initiates who understand this terminology really seem to have a grasp of what’s going on. I think that’s a gross perversion of the truth. Now—I should take that back a little. Grammarians do that with language; you know how they can spin it out. I have a grammar of the New Testament that must be five inches thick and it’s only one of scores of grammars, very complex. And the Greeks have been talking Greek without reading that volume all these years. It’s the same way with salvation. Children have been won back to faith and trust in God. And he’s forgiven them. And they’ve had peace with God. And they’ve grown up to be trusting boys and girls, and men and women. And they’ll be saved in his Kingdom, and they’ve never heard the words justification, sanctification, propitiation, expiation, dispensation, glorification, and they don’t know the difference between imputed and imparted righteousness, none of those terms. You see, some of them only listened to Jesus and they’ve never heard Paul.

Did you ever stop to think that Jesus never used those words? Do you mean that Jesus didn’t understand the *plan of salvation*? No one was saved under the ministry of Christ?

Jesus would say, “Come unto me, and let me save you and heal you. Trust my Father.” He said a lot about repentance, a lot about trust, a lot about forgiveness and being healed. He never talked about justification, sanctification, propitiation, expiation. He never used those words.

Don’t tell me Jesus had to read Paul later on to learn about the plan of salvation! And this isn’t minimizing Paul. I think it’s just to warn us that Paul’s description of the plan of salvation is not the only description of the plan of salvation. Paul under inspiration described the plan of salvation magnificently, to a special audience who would understand these terms. Jesus talked to another audience. He talked about vines, he talked about agricultural things. He didn’t talk about law courts and law terminology.

So now we are in Romans, and we’re going to use these terms, but let’s remind ourselves constantly that one can be won back to faith in God without ever hearing one of these words. And I love to teach a class in righteousness by faith without using one of them, for weeks on end. And then when we’ve agreed that the everlasting good news about God shows that he’s worthy of our trust and faith—he stands ready to forgive, accept, and heal us; he wants us to

have peace and be comfortable in his presence, and it only makes sense to listen to such a God and obey his advice and commands on every subject! Only when that's all over do we say, "Now, let's see if we can sprinkle these terms along through here." You could have the experience without ever using them. Let us not be tyrannized by theological terminology, especially terminology that Jesus never used. But then let's be grateful (to be sure) that inspiration brought us Romans. To me, it's the greatest book to explain all of this. But I don't want to be tyrannized by the terms. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series Romans, chapter 3, recorded October, 1978, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

<http://pkp.cc/5MMROMANS66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/6MMROMANS66> (Part 2)

Lou: I've heard the Romans 10:4 text mentioned so often: "Christ is the end of the law." Doesn't that mean real freedom from the law? Wouldn't that be the answer to the problem of the law being a hindrance to our freedom? "Christ is the end of the law."

Graham: We don't have to love and behave anymore. We can be disorderly and live in chaos?

Lou: Well, what does that text mean?

Graham: Yes, that's the thing. The text needs to be analyzed, first for the words and then for the context. First of all, the word "end." Now, a rare meaning is the purpose of the law, but I doubt that's the meaning in the context. I think it means termination, all right. Law does not have an article in front of it, meaning any particular law. Although, whether the article is there or not is not totally convincing in the context. You've got to read the whole setting. In the setting, Paul all the way through the book of Romans is contrasting the obedience that springs from love and trust, and the obedience that springs from law. And the obedience that springs from law is often the obedience that comes from fear, and that even turns us into rebels as we obey. So he comes to 10:4. It's interesting—10:4—doesn't that mean the end of something in radio communications? "Ten-four," "Christ is the ten-four." The meaning is "Christ is the termination of law as a way of being saved."

It's the end of legalism, is what that means. *Phillips* has a marvelous rendering of that. "Christ means the end of the struggle for righteousness by works of law, that everyone who has faith in God may be saved." That's beautifully done.

Lou: But along with a text like Romans 10:4, I think of the one in Romans 6 which I could hear someone asking. It says, "We are not under the law, but under grace." Now isn't that another statement of real freedom to not be under the law but under grace?

Graham: And again, what is the meaning of being "under the law?" And we often explain that as meaning we're not under the condemnation of the law. I think again, it's this contrast with Paul; that in our relationship with God, we're not under law, we're under grace. We do not deal

with a legalistic god. We deal with a God who is graciousness personified. And he says, "If you would realize you are dealing with a gracious God, then that helps to get rid of sin." Because when you're dealing with God in a legalistic manner, it even provokes the sin.

And you remember in Romans 7 Paul describes this. He says, "There was a day when I looked at the law and it provoked me to sin. Especially number Ten irritated me, until I realized God's gracious purpose in giving it to us. Now," he says, "I delight in the law." So one really cannot understand law until one understands God's gracious purpose, which means one has to know what he's like. And that's his message. We do not deal with a God of legalism, but a God of graciousness. It makes all the difference in the world. That makes sin even more serious.

{Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, #18 with Lou Venden, "God's Law is No Threat to Our Freedom" recorded April, 1984, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link:*

<http://pkp.cc/12MMCAG>

Romans 12, you remember; "Be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may approve what is excellent." Jesus said there would be false prophets. John says test all the spirits. Ellen White is so biblical on this point: "God never asks us to believe anything for which he does not provide adequate evidence. And it is evidence that appeals to the reason. We must bring everything," she says, "within the bounds of reason, lest the enemy so come as to set everything in a disorderly way." She says don't call blind credulity 'faith'. It's the devil's substitute. Presumption is the devil's substitute for faith.

And yet, is it not in the realm of religion, that's the only one, where we are invited to believe without evidence? And that's called very wonderful, because that's 'faith'. And the more willing you are to believe without evidence, the more faith you have. Which would mean that the more you know what you believe in, the less faith you will need? Because eventually, when you really know, you won't need any more faith because you know. So if you really know God, then you don't need any faith. That doesn't make much sense, does it?

We shouldn't be using the word "faith" at all, because faith has come to mean "believing in something you know isn't so," or believing something for which you have inadequate evidence. The word in the Bible is "trust." And the Bible warns us against trusting people we do not know. Don't even trust prophets who say, "I am a prophet of the Most High, and the angel of the Lord has told me this." "But he lied to him." {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, The Picture of God in all 66 – Philippians and 1&2 Thessalonians, recorded May, 1982, Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

<http://pkp.cc/69MMPOGIA66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/70MMPOGIA66> (Part 2)

In the narrower view, faith is a willingness to believe, whether we have any evidence or not, just because God has said so. In the larger view, faith is our confidence in God, based upon the more than adequate evidence he revealed. And that kind of faith is deeply stirred by the realization that God does not ask us to believe without evidence. That's what makes him so believable. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, *The Larger View*, #1, recorded October, 1982, Monterey, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link: <http://pkp.cc/1MMLVIEW>*

How you define faith and trust enters into this. And we need to read other places. To me, faith is just a word we use to describe a relationship with God as with a person well known; and we get to know him through the gospel. The good news is about God, that he is infinitely worthy of our trust. It implies an attitude toward God of love, and trust, and deepest admiration. It means having enough confidence in God, based upon the more than adequate evidence, all summed up in the good news, to be willing to believe what God says—as soon as we're sure *he* said it! And to accept what God offers, as soon as we're sure *he's* offering it, and to do whatever God wishes, without reservation, as soon as we're sure *he's* asking us, and not somebody else. Anybody who has such a trusting relationship with God, of love, trust, and admiration, willing to listen, is perfectly safe to save.

He could die just beginning that relationship, like the thief on the cross. He would arise loving, trusting, and admiring that kind one in the middle. He will be willing to listen, and accept all kinds of instruction and correction. He is therefore safe to save. But you can't regard God in that attitude without a new heart and a right spirit. So you are a new creature, which he's going to mention in a moment.

And that's what David eventually wanted—truth and honesty in the inner man. Mention honesty, and you remember Micah, Amos, Hosea, they all talked about this. All God asks of us is that we stand humbly in his presence with an honest willingness to listen, and let him do for us whatever needs to be done.

I would add that even though with the passing of time I'm finding more and more that everything God has asked us to do makes such good sense and I agree with him; I would have to say that being still somewhat ignorant and immature, I'm willing to obey this trustworthy God when he instructs me to do something beyond my present understanding. Wouldn't that be safe? Because he's proved always to make such good sense in every other respect. And I think that's what Abraham said to him. "God, you've always made such good sense. But your command to sacrifice the son of the promise makes no sense to me. But I know it will. So God, I'm on my way." I believe faith says to God, "God, I hear you, and I've checked that carefully. It is you. And I am on my way. But as I go, in all reverence, may I ask why?" And that's how we



come to know God. And for three days and three nights Abraham thought that through; and in the end he said, "God, I'm even beginning to think of ways in which you could work this out. I'm not telling you how, but I know you will; because you'll not contradict yourself in the promise you gave me about my son. Maybe you'll resurrect my son. Just as you gave him miraculously, you could easily resurrect him. Or maybe you'll provide a substitute."

And that's what God chose to do. And Abraham is cited in Hebrews 11 as one who trusted God, but thought it through. Faith is not blind. You can jump off a cliff if you take leaps in the dark, and call that faith. It is not safe. History is strewn with the wreckage of people who leap in the dark and call it faith. Light makes faith possible, and without it we ought to wait. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, The Picture of God in all 66 – Galatians, recorded May, 1982, Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link: <http://pkp.cc/65MMPOGIA66>*

Lou: Is that same thing true when we come to Revelation 14:12? That's not on our Reference Sheet, but that's a very familiar verse. It speaks about "those who keep the commandments of God and have the faith of Jesus."

Graham: "Of Jesus" in some versions reads, "Faith in Jesus" or "Remain loyal to Jesus." The Greek technical point is exactly the same. It could go either way. But which could be better, to have a faith in God as Jesus had, or to have faith in Jesus as bringing the truth about the Father? Have either one, and you're going to arrive at the same place.

Lou: So we need both.

Graham: You need both. I like to translate it both ways. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, #18 with Lou Venden, "Satan's Final Effort to Deceive" recorded May, 1984, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link: <http://pkp.cc/17MMCAG>*

### **Further Study with Ellen White**

Faith is not feeling. "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." [Hebrews 11:1.] True faith is in no sense allied to presumption. Only he who has true faith is secure against presumption, for presumption is Satan's counterfeit of faith. {GW 260.2}

It is a law both of the intellectual and the spiritual nature, that by beholding, we become changed. The mind gradually adapts itself to the subjects upon which it is allowed to dwell. It becomes assimilated to that which it is accustomed to love and reverence. {GC88 555.2}

Christian life is more than many take it to be. It does not consist wholly in gentleness, patience, meekness, and kindliness. These graces are essential; but there is need also of courage, force, energy, and perseverance. {MH 497.1}

God bids us fill the mind with great thoughts, pure thoughts. He desires us to meditate upon His love and mercy, to study His wonderful work in the great plan of redemption. Then clearer and still clearer will be our perception of truth, higher, holier, our desire for purity of heart and clearness of thought. The soul dwelling in the pure atmosphere of holy thought will be transformed by communion with God through the study of Scriptures. {COL 60.1}

The faith that works by love and purifies the soul produces the fruit of humility, patience, forbearance, long-suffering, peace, joy, and willing obedience. {HP 109.6}

Jesus does not call on us to follow Him, and then forsake us. If we surrender our lives to His service, we can never be placed in a position for which God has not made provision. Whatever may be our situation, we have a Guide to direct our way; whatever our perplexities, we have a sure Counselor; whatever our sorrow, bereavement, or loneliness, we have a sympathizing Friend. If in our ignorance we make missteps, Christ does not leave us. His voice, clear and distinct, is heard, saying, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." [John 14:6.] "He shall deliver the needy when he crieth; the poor also, and him that hath no helper." [Psalm 72:12.] {GW 263.1}

"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee: because he trusteth in Thee." [Isaiah 26:3.] The arm of Omnipotence is outstretched to lead us onward and still onward. Go forward, the Lord says; I will send you help. It is for My name's glory that you ask; and you shall receive. Those who are watching for your failure shall yet see My word triumph gloriously. "All things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive." [Matthew 21:22.] {GW 263.2}

It is contrition and faith and love that enable the soul to receive wisdom from heaven. Faith working by love is the key of knowledge, and everyone that loveth "knoweth God." 1 John 4:7. {DA 139.3}

It is faith that familiarizes the soul with the existence and presence of God; and when we live with an eye single to His glory, we discern more and more the beauty of His character. Our souls become strong in spiritual power, for we are breathing the atmosphere of heaven, and, realizing that God is at our right hand, we shall not be moved.... We should live as in the presence of the Infinite One.... {OHC 324.5}

Divine wisdom will order the steps of those who put their trust in the Lord. Divine love will encircle them, and they will realize the presence of the Comforter, the Holy Spirit. {OHC 324.6}

The Redeemer of the world clothed His divinity with humanity, that He might reach humanity; for it took the divine and the human to bring into the world the salvation that was needed by fallen man. Divinity needed humanity that humanity might afford a channel of communication between God and man. Man needs a power out of and above himself to restore him to the likeness of God; but because he needs divine aid, it does not make human activity unessential. Faith on the part of man is required; for faith works by love and purifies the soul. Faith lays hold upon the virtue of Christ. The Lord does not design that human power should be paralyzed; but by cooperating with God, the power of man may be efficient for good. God does not design that our will should be destroyed; for it is through this very attribute that we are to accomplish the work He would have us to do both at home and abroad. He has given to every man his work; and every true worker sheds forth light to the world, because he is united with God and Christ and heavenly angels in the grand work of saving the lost. {1SM 375.2}

A sullen submission to the will of the Father will develop the character of a rebel. Service is looked upon by such a one in the light of drudgery. It is not rendered cheerfully and in the love of God. It is a mere mechanical performance. If he dared, such a one would disobey. His rebellion is smothered, ready to break out at any time in bitter murmurings and complaints. Such service brings no peace or quietude to the soul. {12MR 236.1}

The man who attempts to keep the commandments of God from a sense of obligation merely—because he is required to do so—will never enter into the joy of obedience. He does not obey. When the requirements of God are accounted a burden because they cut across human inclination, we may know that the life is not a Christian life. True obedience is the outworking of a principle within. It springs from the love of righteousness, the love of the law of God. The essence of all righteousness is loyalty to our Redeemer. This will lead us to do right because it is right—because right doing is pleasing to God. {COL 97.3}

We are not to think of God only as a judge, and to forget him as our loving Father. Nothing can do our souls greater harm than this; for our whole spiritual life will be molded by our conceptions of God's character. {RH, April 5, 1887 par. 10}