

Redemption in Romans Lesson 11 3Q 2010

The Election of Grace

SUNDAY

Read Romans 10:4:

Christ is the end of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes.

Thoughts? What does it mean “end of the law?” Does it mean he brought an end to the penalty the broken law required by paying our legal debt? No! Why not? Somehow being an end to the law brings righteousness - How would paying a penalty bring righteousness? It doesn't –

The classic example often given of a speeder coming into court and the judge finds him guilty and then gets off the bench and pays the fine himself – demonstrates the weakness – we have our fine paid, but how does that change us? We are still speeders – more so if we now know the judge just didn't pay that fine but all future fines are likewise paid in full.

The third paragraph in the lesson points out that the word translated “end” can also be translated “goal” or “purpose” of the law. How is Christ the end, goal or purpose of the law?

What was the goal or purpose of the law? The written law was given to diagnose sin and lead us to Christ is that what this is referring to? Is Christ the end, goal or purpose of the written law's diagnosis?

Or is there another, deeper understanding of God's law?

- Love does no harm to its neighbor. Therefore **love is the fulfillment of the law.** Romans 13:10
- The **entire law** is summed up in a single command: “**Love your neighbor as yourself.**” Galatians 5:14

- If you really keep the **royal law** found in Scripture, “**Love** your neighbor as yourself,” you are doing right. James 2:8
- Jesus replied: “**Love** the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘**Love** your neighbor as yourself.’ **All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.**” Matt 22:37-40
- The **law** of the Lord is perfect, **reviving** the soul. Ps 19:7

Is Jesus the complete fulfillment of the law of love? And does this idea fit with the text in regard to righteousness for everyone? Did Jesus restore the law into humanity?

The law is more than a code on stone but a living law upon which life is built. Doesn't that mean we can only really see and understand God's law when it is seen in a living being – Jesus?

Read first paragraph, “Legalism...” thoughts

What forms of legalism have you heard or seen?

Works of the law as the lesson points out, with which some again try to burden us. How may read the blog for this week posted yesterday regarding circumcision and feast days? Some argue we should still be observing them because God never said to stop – what is the weakness of this position?

Any other forms of legalism?

What about legal penal substitution? Is this a form of legalism? Jesus died to pay our legal penalty, or to pay the law, or so the Father could offer us legal pardon etc.?

What about models that have legal events transpiring in heaven in which God declares things to be such and such when they are not? Or record books are being adjusted and sins are being erased from the books – a heavenly, legal, record keeping scheme?

Do we teach various forms of legalism and call it righteousness?

If our sin problem isn't a legal problem how would you describe our problem and God's solution?

Read second paragraph, "Romans 10:4..." thoughts? What is righteousness? What does righteousness mean?

Does it mean harmony with God's law? What law? Would it be the law of love? And how do we understand the law of love? Is it imposed? Is it the design template for life? If righteousness means harmony with the law of love which is the law of life, in what would we expect righteousness to result? Health and life?

- In the way of righteousness there is life; along that path is immortality. Proverbs 12:28
- He who pursues righteousness and love finds life, prosperity and honor. Proverbs 21:21

So if righteousness is the same as perfect harmony with the law of love – how do we achieve it?

He [God] would have us comprehend something of His love in giving **His Son to die that He might counteract evil, remove the defiling stains of sin from the workmanship of God**, and reinstate the lost, elevating and **ennobling the soul** to its original purity **through Christ's imputed righteousness**. TMK 206

What do you hear in this description? What does imputed righteousness do? Penal models claim imputed righteousness is a legal proclamation or accounting as if it were so – but notice this description is an actual event, achievement, transformation that occurs within the believer – all possible because of Christ's actual achievements on earth.

"But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to

glory even as by the Spirit of the Lord" (2 Cor. 3:18). Beholding Christ means studying His life as given in His Word. We are to dig for truth as for hidden treasure. We are to fix our eyes upon Christ. When we take Him as our personal Saviour, this gives us boldness to approach the throne of grace. **By beholding we become changed, morally assimilated to the One who is perfect in character. By receiving His imputed righteousness, through the transforming power of the Holy Spirit, we become like Him.** The image of Christ is cherished, and it captivates the whole being. {AG 96.4}

Again what do you hear? How are we changed? By meditating, admiring, worshipping, surrendering, choosing, beholding and loving Christ!

Brain science reveals that what we believe actually changes us and by beholding we are transformed more and more to be like that which we revere and admire. Even DNA expression can be changed.

MONDAY

Read Romans 11:1-7:

I ask then: Did God reject his people? By no means! I am an Israelite myself, a descendant of Abraham, from the tribe of Benjamin. ² God did not reject his people, whom he foreknew. Don't you know what the Scripture says in the passage about Elijah—how he appealed to God against Israel: ³ "Lord, they have killed your prophets and torn down your altars; I am the only one left, and they are trying to kill me"^a? ⁴ And what was God's answer to him? "I have reserved for myself seven thousand who have not bowed the knee to Baal."^b ⁵ So too, at the present time there is a remnant chosen by grace. ⁶ And if by grace, then it is no longer by works; if it were, grace would no longer be grace.^c

^a 1 Kings 19:10,14

^b 1 Kings 19:18

^c Some manuscripts *by grace. But if by works, then it is no longer grace; if it were, work would no longer be work.*

Thoughts?

Who is the remnant? Was Israel the remnant or was the remnant a group from within Israel who were loyal to Christ? What about in the SDA church? Is the remnant the SDA church or those who in the church experience renewing grace and the true knowledge of God?

Read Romans 11:7-10:

What then? What Israel sought so earnestly it did not obtain, but the elect did. The others were hardened, ⁸ as it is written: “God gave them a spirit of stupor, eyes so that they could not see and ears so that they could not hear, to this very day.”^{d 9} And David says: “May their table become a snare and a trap, a stumbling block and a retribution for them. ¹⁰ May their eyes be darkened so they cannot see, and their backs be bent forever.”^e

Thoughts?

Read last paragraph, “In these verses...” thoughts? Does God blind people to salvation? But the lesson emphasizes this is not about salvation but about the role people are to take. Does God use His power to blind people to His calling for their lives?

How do we understand these passages?

Each actor in history stands in his lot and place; for God's great work after His own plan will be carried out by **men who have prepared themselves to fill positions for good or evil.** In opposition to righteousness, men become instruments of unrighteousness. But **they are not forced to take this course of action.** They need not become instruments of

^d Deut. 29:4; Isaiah 29:10

^e Psalm 69:22,23

unrighteousness, any more than Cain needed to. . . . {CC 371.2}

Men of all characters, righteous and unrighteous, will stand in their several positions in God's plan. With the characters they have formed, they will act their part in the fulfillment of history. In a crisis, just at the right moment, they will stand in the places they have prepared themselves to fill. Believers and unbelievers will fall into line as witnesses to confirm truth that they themselves do not comprehend. **All will cooperate in accomplishing the purposes of God, just as did Annas, Caiaphas, Pilate, and Herod. In putting Christ to death, the priests thought they were carrying out their own purposes, but unconsciously and unintentionally they were fulfilling the purpose of God.** {CC 371.3}

God looks into the tiny seed that He Himself has formed, and sees wrapped within it the beautiful flower, the shrub, or the lofty, wide-spreading tree. So does He see the possibilities in every human being. **We are here for a purpose. God has given us His plan for our life, and He desires us to reach the highest standard of development.** . . . {CC 371.4}

Thoughts?

TUESDAY

Read third paragraph, "Into this tree..." thoughts? Do you think the tree represents Israel? Are we to derive our sap from Israel?

Isn't Jesus the vine and we are the branches?

"I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶ If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. ⁷ If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you. ⁸ This is to my Father's glory, that you bear

much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples. John 15:5-8

Read fourth paragraph, “What happened...” thoughts?

Have you ever struggled with either question, once saved always saved, or every sin loses your salvation? What is the problem with both?

Both perspectives are legalistic in nature – Once saved always saved is based on sin being in legal trouble with God, once we accept the legal payment Jesus has made, then all sins past, present, future have been paid for and we are saved. Any future sin is already been paid for so we cannot be lost, once we accept Jesus and His legal payment.

The other view, is also legalistic, every sin committed must be punished (who urged this idea? see DA 761) and therefore if we don't confess and ask forgiveness for every individual act of sin then those sins won't be “paid” for and won't be “erased” from the record book and will stand against us in the judgment and result in required punishment of eternal death.

Both views are wrong because both have accepted a wrong concept of God's character, government and what sin actually is.

What is the truth?

WEDNESDAY

Read Romans 11:25-27:

I do not want you to be ignorant of this mystery, brothers, so that you may not be conceited: Israel has experienced a hardening in part until the full number of the Gentiles has come in. ²⁶ And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: “The deliverer will come from Zion; he will turn godlessness away

from Jacob. And this is^a my covenant with them when I take away their sins.”^b

Thoughts? The lesson says this passage has been debated for centuries, what do you think it means?

To whom does God’s covenant of removing their sins from them apply? Is it not to all people or only to genetic descendants of Abraham?

Who, according to the Bible is a descendent of Abraham?

³⁹“Abraham is our father,” they answered.

“If you were Abraham’s children,” said Jesus, “then you would^c do the things Abraham did. ⁴⁰ As it is, you are determined to kill me, a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God. Abraham did not do such things. ⁴¹ You are doing the things your own father does.”

“We are not illegitimate children,” they protested. “The only Father we have is God himself.”

⁴² Jesus said to them, “If God were your Father, you would love me, for I came from God and now am here. I have not come on my own; but he sent me. ⁴³ Why is my language not clear to you? Because you are unable to hear what I say. ⁴⁴ You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father’s desire. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies. John 8:39-44

What did Jesus say makes one a child of Abraham?

Romans four Paul already made the point that Abraham is the father of all who believe, or trust God like Abraham did, both the circumcised and uncircumcised.

^a Or *will be*

^b Isaiah 59:20,21; 27:9; Jer. 31:33,34

^c Some early manuscripts “If you are Abraham’s children,” said Jesus, “then

Paul makes the same point to the Galatians:

Consider Abraham: “He believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.”^a ⁷ Understand, then, that those who believe are children of Abraham. Gal 3:6,7

So what does the text in Romans mean? Here is my paraphrase:

11:25 I want to explain to you this mystery – this unexplainable rejection of God’s plan by Israel, so that you will not become conceited and make the same mistake: A large part of the genetic descendants of Abraham have hardened their hearts to God and rejected the truth as revealed by Jesus, therefore God’s plan for Abraham’s descendants will not be fulfilled until those hardened and broken off are replaced by a large number of Gentiles who are grafted in. ²⁶ And so all true children of Abraham – those like Abraham in character, not genetics, will be saved, as it is written:

“The deliverer will come from Zion;
he will remove all selfishness and sin from all those who trust God like Jacob.

11:27 And my promise to them is this: I will heal them and remove all sin, disease and defect from them restoring them perfectly to my original ideal.”

Thoughts?

What was God’s plan for Israel? To reveal the truth about God to the world – and God’s plan for Israel will not be fulfilled until all of us, who will accept Jesus come in and reveal Him in our lives and characters.

THURSDAY - Any questions or comments about Thursday’s lesson?

FRIDAY Read questions 1-3 and discuss

^a Gen. 15:6