

## Session 4: Biblical Righteousness

### I. The Suffering of Christ Before the Glory of Christ

"How foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe *all* that the prophets have spoken! <sup>26</sup> *Did not the Christ have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?*" <sup>27</sup> And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself. (NIV Luke 24:25-27)

Just as man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment, <sup>28</sup> so Christ was sacrificed once *to take away the sins* of many people; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but *to bring salvation* to those who are waiting for him. (NIV Hebrews 9:27-28)

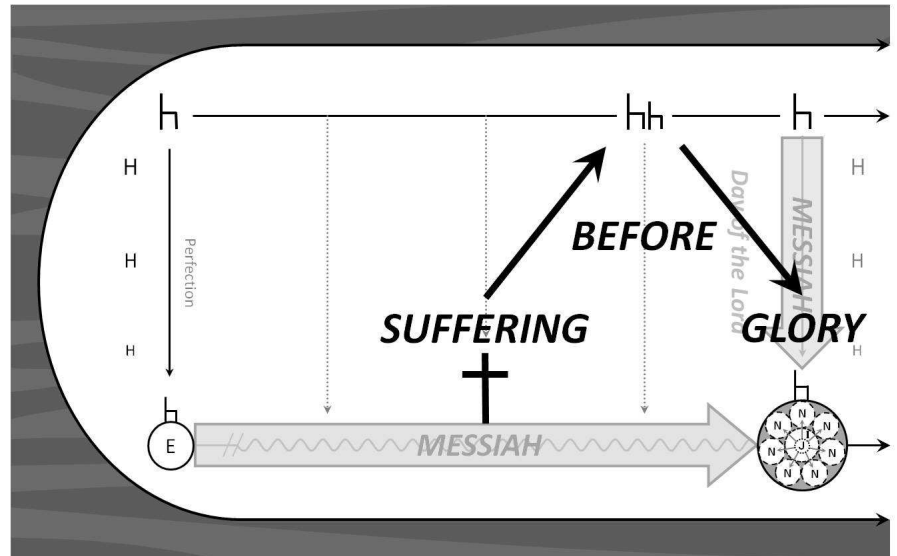


Fig. 4A – Temporal Suffering of the Christ Before the Temporal Glory of the Christ

Concerning this salvation, the prophets, who spoke of the grace that was to come to you, searched intently and with the greatest care, <sup>11</sup> trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted *the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow...* <sup>13</sup> Therefore, prepare your minds for action; be self-controlled; set your hope fully on the grace to be given you *when Jesus Christ is revealed.* (NIV 1 Peter 1:10-13)

### II. The Interpretation of the Suffering of the Christ as an Atonement

I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. <sup>16</sup> For I tell you, I will not eat it again *until it finds fulfillment in the kingdom of God...* <sup>18</sup> I tell you I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes... <sup>20</sup> This cup is *the new covenant in my blood*, which is poured out for you ["for the forgiveness of sins", Mt. 26:28]. (NIV Luke 22:15-20)

#### A. Same Hope, Different Righteousness

I believe everything that agrees with the Law and that is written in the Prophets, <sup>15</sup> and *I have the same hope in God as these men*, that there will be a resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked. <sup>16</sup> So I strive always to keep my conscience clear before God and man. (NIV Acts 24:14-16)

What then shall we say? That the Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, *have obtained it*, a righteousness that is by faith; <sup>31</sup> but Israel, who pursued a law of righteousness, *has not attained it.* <sup>32</sup> Why not? Because they pursued it not by faith but as if it were by works. They stumbled over the "stumbling stone." ... <sup>10:1</sup> Brothers, my heart's desire and prayer to God for the Israelites is *that they*

*may be saved.* <sup>2</sup> For I can testify about them that they are zealous for God, but their zeal is not based on knowledge. <sup>3</sup> Since they did not know *the righteousness that comes from God* and sought to establish their own, they did not submit *to God's righteousness.* <sup>4</sup> Christ is the end of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes. (NIV Romans 9:30-10:4)

## B. The Righteousness of God

I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God *for the salvation* of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile. <sup>17</sup> For in the gospel *a righteousness from God* is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: "The righteous will live by faith." (NIV Romans 1:16-17)

But now *a righteousness from God*, apart from law, has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. <sup>22</sup> *This righteousness from God* comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference, <sup>23</sup> *for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,* <sup>24</sup> and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. (NIV Romans 3:21-24)

For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that *one died for all*, and therefore all died... <sup>19</sup> that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, *not counting men's sins against them.* And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. <sup>20</sup> We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. <sup>21</sup> God made him who had no sin *to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.* (NIV 2 Corinthians 5:14-21)

## C. The Wickedness of Man

What shall we conclude then? Are we any better? Not at all! We have already made the charge *that Jews and Gentiles alike are all under sin.* <sup>10</sup> As it is written: "There is no one righteous, not even one; <sup>11</sup> there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God. <sup>12</sup> All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one." [Ps. 14:1-3; 53:1-3] <sup>13</sup> "Their throats are open graves; their tongues practice deceit." [Ps. 5:9] "The poison of vipers is on their lips." [Ps. 140:3] <sup>14</sup> "Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness." [Ps. 10:7] <sup>15</sup> "Their feet are swift to shed blood; <sup>16</sup> ruin and misery mark their ways, <sup>17</sup> and the way of peace they do not know." [Ps. 59:7-8] <sup>18</sup> "There is no fear of God before their eyes." [Ps. 36:1] <sup>19</sup> Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be silenced and *the whole world held accountable to God.* (NIV Romans 3:9-19)

Is the law, therefore, opposed to the promises of God? Absolutely not! For if a law had been given that could impart life, then righteousness would certainly have come by the law. <sup>22</sup> But the Scripture declares that *the whole world is a prisoner of sin*, so that what was promised, being given through faith in Jesus Christ, might be given to those who believe. (NIV Galatians 3:21-22)

## III. Three-Fold Expression of the Righteousness of God

But now *the righteousness of God* has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it- <sup>22</sup> the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: <sup>23</sup> for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, <sup>24</sup> and are *justified* by his

grace as a gift, through the *redemption* that is in Christ Jesus,<sup>25</sup> whom God put forward as a *propitiation* by his blood, to be received by faith. (<sup>ESV</sup> Rom. 3:21-25)

## A. Propitiation (Gk. *hilasmos*)

Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to *make propitiation for the sins* of the people. (<sup>ESV</sup> Hebrews 2:17)

In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him.<sup>10</sup> In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be *the propitiation for our sins*. (<sup>ESV</sup> 1 John 4:9-10)

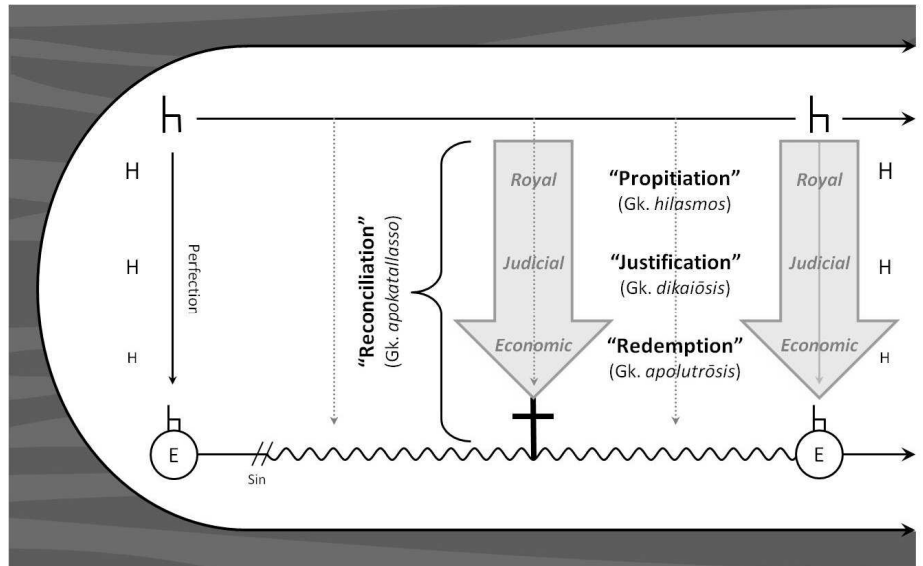


Fig. 4B – The Three-Fold Expression of the Righteousness of God

## B. Justification (Gk. *dikaiōsis*)

For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God...<sup>4</sup> Now to the one who works, his wages are not *counted as a gift* but as his due.<sup>5</sup> And to the one who does not work but *trusts him who justifies the ungodly*, his faith is *counted as righteousness*. (<sup>ESV</sup> Romans 4:2-5)

Therefore, since we have been *justified through faith*, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,<sup>2</sup> through whom we have gained access by faith *into this grace* in which we now stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God...<sup>6</sup> You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, *Christ died for the ungodly*.<sup>7</sup> Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, though for a good man someone might possibly dare to die.<sup>8</sup> But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, *Christ died for us*.<sup>9</sup> Since we have now been *justified by his blood*, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him! (<sup>NIV</sup> Romans 5:1-9)

## C. Redemption (Gk. *apolutrōsis*)

But whoever would be great among you must be your servant,<sup>27</sup> and whoever would be first among you must be your slave,<sup>28</sup> even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life *as a ransom* for many. (<sup>ESV</sup> Matthew 20:26-28)

The blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkled on those who are ceremonially unclean sanctify them so that they are *outwardly clean*.<sup>14</sup> How much more, then, will the blood of

Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, *cleanse our consciences* from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God! <sup>15</sup> For this reason Christ is the mediator of a new covenant, that those who are called may receive *the promised eternal inheritance*—now that he has died as *a ransom* to set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant. (<sup>NIV</sup> Hebrews 9:13-15)

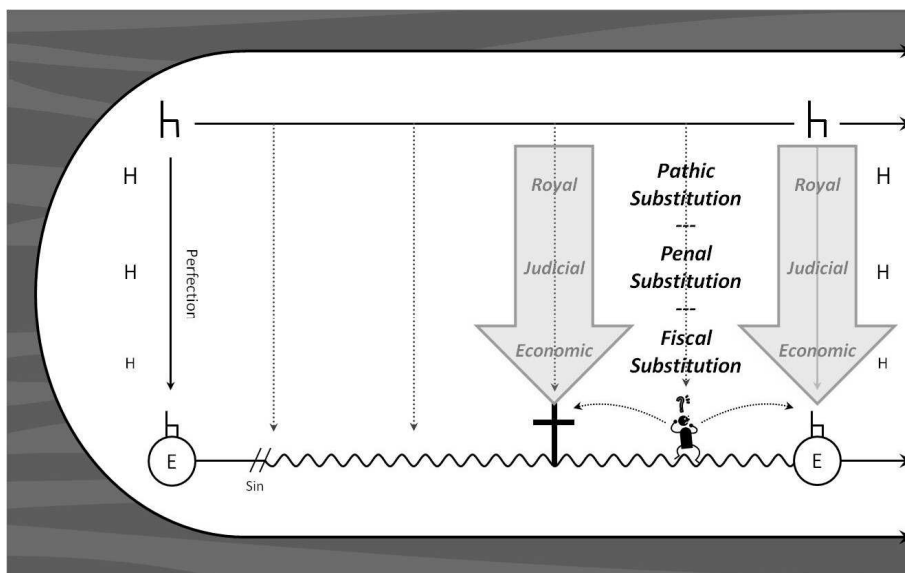


Fig. 4C – The Three-Fold Substitutionary Nature of the Cross

Since you call on a Father who judges each man's work impartially, live your lives as strangers here in reverent fear. <sup>18</sup> For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were *redeemed* from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, <sup>19</sup> but with *the precious blood* of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect. (<sup>NIV</sup> 1 Peter 1:17-19)

## IV. The Contention of the Cross

### A. The Circumcision Group

Some men came down from Judea to Antioch and were teaching the brothers: "*Unless you are circumcised, according to the custom taught by Moses, you cannot be saved.*" <sup>2</sup> This brought Paul and Barnabas into *sharp dispute and debate* with them. (<sup>NIV</sup> Acts 15:1-2)

When Peter came to Antioch, *I opposed him to his face*, because he was clearly in the wrong. <sup>12</sup> Before certain men came from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles. But when they arrived, he began to draw back and separate himself from the Gentiles because he was afraid of *those who belonged to the circumcision group*. (<sup>NIV</sup> Galatians 2:11-12)

Beware of the dogs, beware of the evil workers, *beware of the false circumcision*; <sup>3</sup> for we are the true circumcision, who worship in the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh... <sup>18</sup> For many walk, of whom I often told you, and now tell you even weeping, that *they are enemies of the cross of Christ*, <sup>19</sup> whose end is destruction, whose god is their appetite, and whose glory is in their shame, who set their minds on earthly things. (<sup>NASB</sup> Philippians 3:2-19)

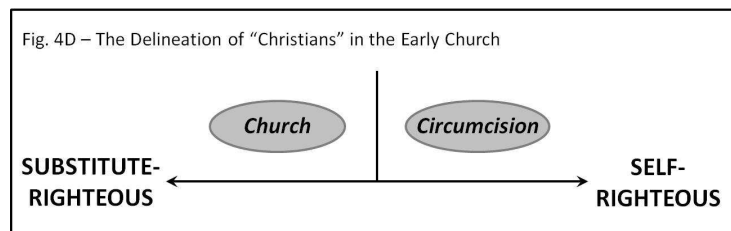
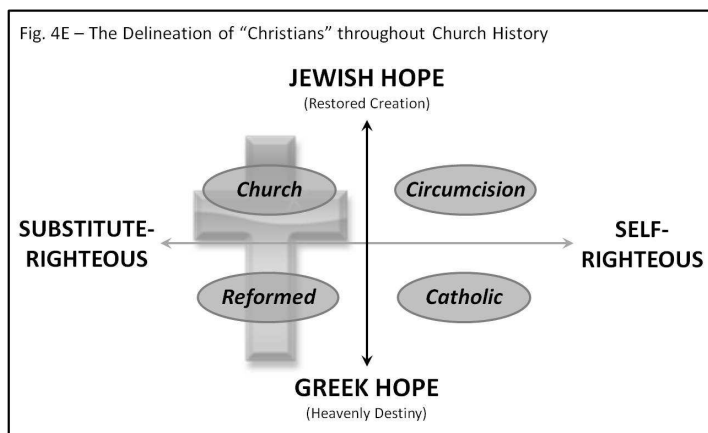


Fig. 4D – The Delineation of "Christians" in the Early Church

Therefore, remember that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth and called "uncircumcised" by those who call themselves "the circumcision" (that done in the body by the hands of men)... (NIV Ephesians 2:11)

## B. Justification by Faith Alone

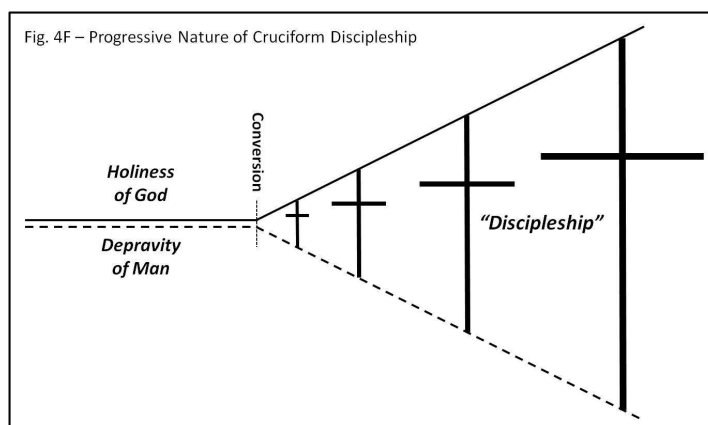
God, who knows the heart, bore witness to them, by giving them the Holy Spirit just as he did to us, <sup>9</sup> and he made no distinction between us and them, having *cleansed their hearts by faith*. <sup>10</sup> Now, therefore, why are you putting God to the test by placing a yoke on the neck of the disciples that neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear? <sup>11</sup> But we believe that *we will be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus*, just as they will. (ESV Acts 15:8-11)



We ourselves are Jews by birth and not Gentile sinners; <sup>16</sup> yet we know that a person is *not justified by works of the law* but through faith in Jesus Christ, so we also have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be *justified by faith in Christ* and not by works of the law, because by works of the law no one will be justified. <sup>17</sup> But if, in our endeavor to be justified in Christ, we too were found to be sinners, is Christ then a servant of sin? Certainly not! <sup>18</sup> For if I rebuild what I tore down, I prove myself to be a transgressor. <sup>19</sup> For through the law I died to the law, so that I might live to God. <sup>20</sup> *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. <sup>21</sup> I do not *nullify the grace of God*, for if justification were through the law, then *Christ died for no purpose*. (ESV Galatians 2:15-21)

But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, <sup>5</sup> even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ- *by grace you have been saved*... <sup>8</sup> For *by grace you have been saved through faith*. And this is not your own doing; it is *the gift of God*, <sup>9</sup> not a result of works, so that no one may boast. (ESV Ephesians 2:4-9)

I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of *knowing Christ Jesus* my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ <sup>9</sup> and be *found in him, not having a righteousness of my own* that comes from the law, but that which comes *through faith in Christ*, the righteousness from God that depends on faith- <sup>10</sup> that I may know him and the



power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death,<sup>11</sup> that by any means possible I may *attain the resurrection from the dead.* (<sup>ESV</sup> Philippians 3:8-11)

## C. The Witness of the Church

We are witnesses of everything he did in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem...<sup>42</sup> He commanded us to *preach* to the people and to *testify* that he is the one whom God appointed as judge of the living and the dead.<sup>43</sup> All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name. (<sup>NIV</sup> Acts 10:39-43)

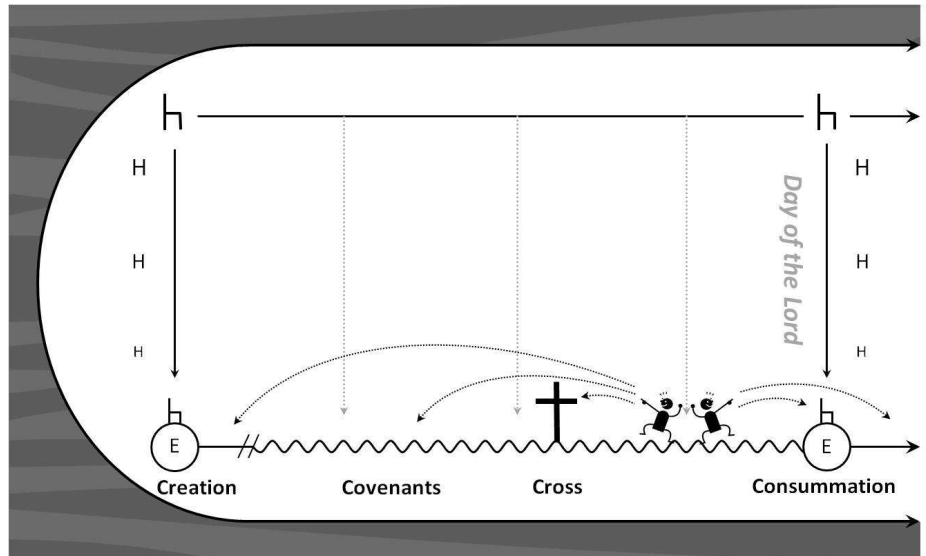
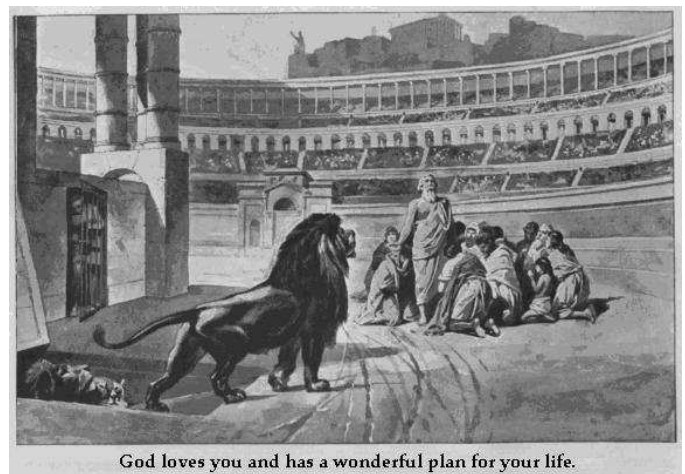


Fig. 4G – The Historical Nature of the Church's Witness

For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless *in his sight.* In love<sup>5</sup> he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will--<sup>6</sup> to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has *freely given us* in the One he loves.<sup>7</sup> In him we have *redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins,* in accordance with the riches of God's grace<sup>8</sup> that he lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding. (<sup>NIV</sup> Ephesians 1:4-8)

For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him,<sup>20</sup> and through him to *reconcile to himself* all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace *through his blood,* shed on the cross.<sup>21</sup> Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior.<sup>22</sup> But now he has *reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death* to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation--<sup>23</sup> *if you continue in your faith,* established and firm, not moved from the hope held out in the gospel. This is the gospel that you heard and that has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven, and of which I, Paul, have become a servant.<sup>24</sup> Now I rejoice in what was suffered for you, and *I fill up in my flesh what is still lacking in regard to Christ's afflictions,* for the sake of his body, which is the church. (<sup>NIV</sup> Colossians 1:19-24)



God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life.