

THE OBEDIENCE OF FAITH IN THE LETTER TO THE ROMANS

Part II: The Obedience of Faith and Judgment by Works

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THE previous study of the obedience of faith in Romans was an attempt to determine exegetically the meaning of Paul's unique phrase ὑπακοή πίστεως. It was concluded that the phrase is deliberately ambiguous, denoting simultaneously the obedience which is faith and the obedience which is the product of faith. Because of its essentially two-sided character, it was suggested that the notion of faith's obedience provides the link between present justification by faith alone and future judgment according to works. Since faith, obedience, and judgment generally in Paul are such well-worn territory,¹ the scope of this article is restricted to an examination of the relation of the obedience of faith to final vindication (justification) in the day of judgment. In particular our attention will be focused on the theology of Rom 2:13.

In his seminal study of "The Eschatological Aspect of the Pauline Conception of the Spirit,"² G. Vos comments that the biblical idea of "salvation" is, strictly speaking, a future condition ("immunity from the condemnation of the last day") which has been projected back into the present. Similarly:

¹ For works devoted to faith and obedience in Paul, see my "The Obedience of Faith:" *A Pauline Phrase in Historical Context* (WUNT 2/38; Tübingen: Mohr, 1991) 2 nn. 5-6. The judgment motif has been canvassed, e.g., by L. Mattern, *Das Verständnis des Gerichtes bei Paulus* (ATANT 47; Zürich: Zwingli, 1966); C. J. Roetzel, *Judgment in the Community: A Study of the Relationship between Eschatology and Ecclesiology in Paul* (Leiden: Brill, 1972); J.-M. Gambier, "Le jugement de tous les hommes par Dieu seul, selon la vérité, dans Rom 2.1-3.20," *ZNW* 66 (1975) 187-213; K. P. Donfried, "Justification and Last Judgment in Paul," *ZNW* 67 (1976) 90-110; E. Synofzik, *Die Gerichts- and Vergeltungsaussagen bei Paulus* (GTA 8; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1977) esp. 78-90; U. Wilckens, *Der Brief an die Römer* (EKKNT; 3 vols.; Zürich/Neukirchen: Benziger/Neukirchener, 1978-82) 1.142-46; N. M. Watson, "Justified by Faith, Judged by Works—an Antinomy?" *NTS* 29 (1983) 209-21; K. R. Snodgrass, "Justification by Grace—to the Doers: An Analysis of the Place of Romans 2 in the Theology of Paul," *NTS* 32 (1986) 72-93; R. Heiligenthal, *Werke als Zeichen* (WUNT 2/9; Tübingen: Mohr, 1983) esp. 165-97; A. J. Hultgren, *Paul's Gospel and Mission: The Outlook from His Letter to the Romans* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985) 98-111; F. Watson, *Paul, Judaism and the Gentiles* (SNTSMS 56; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986) 119-22; L. J. Kreitzer, *Jesus and God in Paul's Eschatology* (JSNTSup 19; Sheffield: JSOT, 1987) 99-129. The studies of Donfried and Mattern come the closest to the present one in their recognition of the importance of faith's obedience for the judgment texts in Paul.

² In *Redemptive History and Biblical Interpretation: The Shorter Writings of Geerhardus Vos* (ed. R. B. Gaffin, Jr.; Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1980) 91-125.

Justification is, of course, to Paul the basis on which the whole Christian state rests, and in so far eminently concerns the present, and yet in its finality and comprehensiveness, covering not merely time but likewise eternity, it presents remarkable analogies to the absolute vindication expected at the end.³

The impact of Vos' remarks is that justification, as any other facet of soteriology, transpires in stages, corresponding to salvation inaugurated and salvation consummated. The problem, however, is not so much the recognition of this basic datum as is the presence of biblical—particularly NT—passages which ground eschatological justification in *the works of the individual*. We think, for instance, of Jesus' warning to the Pharisees: "I tell you, on the day of judgment men will render account for every careless word they utter; for by your words you will be justified, and *by your words you will be condemned*" (Matt 12:36-37). All the more striking because of its author is the pronouncement of Rom 2:13: "For it is not the hearers of the law who are righteous before God, *but the doers of the law who will be justified.*" And, of course, there is James' insistence that justification is by works and not by faith alone (2:24). Even in passages where "justification" as such is not mentioned, the same perspective is evident, e.g., 2 Cor 5:10: "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be repaid according to what he has done in the body, whether it be a good thing or a worthless thing."⁴

The question then is how the NT and particularly Paul can make what appears to be a quantum leap from present justification by faith alone to future justification, which entails an assessment of one's life "in the body." In answering, we shall argue that Paul himself provides the bridge between these seemingly polar opposites.

I. *Paul's Dialogue with Israel in Rom 1:1-3:8*

(1) To review briefly from the first article, one of Paul's prime purposes in Romans is to redraw the boundaries which mark out the people of God. Whereas once to be a member of the covenant people was to live within the perimeters set by the Torah, the eschatological people have assumed a new corporate identity. And since with the advent of Jesus Christ there is "no distinction" between Jew and Gentile, Paul seeks in Romans to expound the social and ethical expressions of this new entity. At the outset (1:1-7) then he draws upon concepts evocative of Israel's relationship to Yahweh and applies them to *all* the Romans, the κληροῖς of Jesus Christ. The pivotal

³ Ibid., 93.

⁴ Translation mine. The same principle is embraced elsewhere, e.g., Matt 16:27; 1 Cor 9:24-27; Col 3:25; 2 Tim 4:14; 1 Pet 1:17; Rev 2:23.

point of the introduction is v. 5—the obedience of faith among all the nations for Christ’s name’s sake—“a very neat and fitting summary of his complete apologetic in Romans.”⁵

(2) Rom 1:1-7 is paralleled by 1:16-17,⁶ which is normally taken to be the letter’s thematic statement. Without going into detail, we note that the revelation of the righteousness of God to *all believers*—the Jew first but also the Greek—is the functional equivalent of “the obedience of faith among all the nations.” As modern research has shown, *δικαιοσύνη* is essentially a relational concept.⁷ As predicated of God, it has to do with his fidelity to the covenant: “God is ‘righteous’ when he fulfills the obligations he took upon himself to be Israel’s God, that is, to rescue Israel and punish Israel’s enemies.”⁸ As is well known, in the Psalms and in chaps. 44ff. of Isaiah, God’s righteousness becomes synonymous with his salvation—hence Yahweh’s *δικαιοσύνη* (הקדצ / קדצ), his “act to restore his own and to sustain them within the covenant.”⁹ Thus the *δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ* which has now been manifested apart from the law is “God’s action on behalf of those to whom he has committed himself.”¹⁰

This dynamic or “action-oriented” understanding of righteousness (as opposed to “status only”)¹¹ has a twofold bearing on our particular concern. For one thing, it alerts us that the primary controversy between Paul and Judaism had respect not to grace as opposed to “legalism,” i.e., earning salvation through the accumulation of merit and thus establishing a claim upon God,¹² but to the Jewish restriction of the grace of God to Israel

⁵ J. D. G. Dunn, *Romans* (WBC; 2 vols.; Dallas: Word, 1988) 1.18.

⁶ Common to both are Jew/Gentile, the gospel, faith, obedience/righteousness, power.

⁷ See, among others, Hultgren, *Paul’s Gospel*, 12-46; E. Käsemann, “‘The Righteousness of God’ in Paul,” in *New Testament Questions of Today* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1969) 172; K. Kertelge, “*Rechtfertigung*” bei Paulus (NTAbh 3; 2d ed.; Münster: Aschendorff, 1967) 15-24; D. Hill, *Greek Words and Hebrew Meanings* (SNTSMS 5; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967) 85-86; J. Reumann, *Righteousness in the New Testament* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1982) 12.

⁸ Dunn, *Romans* 1.41. Cf. W. Eichrodt, *Theology of the Old Testament* (2 vols.; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1967) 1.241-42.

⁹ Dunn, *Romans* 1.41.

¹⁰ *Ibid.* 1.166 (on 3:22).

¹¹ Reumann, *Righteousness*, 15-16. In agreement with Hultgren, Paul’s imagery of justification is more prophetic/apocalyptic (theological/theocentric) than forensic (anthropological/anthropocentric) (*Paul’s Gospel*, 37).

¹² Instead of “legalism” I prefer “nomism,” or, in the phrase of R. N. Longenecker, “reacting nomism,” i.e., “the molding of one’s life in all its varying relations according to the Law in response to the love and grace of God” (*Paul: Apostle of Liberty* [New York: Harper & Row, 1964] 78). “Reacting nomism” consequently is, for all intents and purposes, the same as E. P. Sanders’ now famous “covenantal nomism” (*Paul and Palestinian Judaism* [Philadelphia: Fortress, 1977] 236 et passim). H. Räisänen prefers to speak of “Biblicism” rather than “legalism” (Paul and the Law [WUNT 1/29; Tübingen: Mohr, 1983] 184; cf. id., “Legalism and Salvation by the Law: Paul’s Portrayal of the Jewish Religion as a Historical and Theological Problem,” in *Die paulinische Literatur und Theologie* [ed. S. Pedersen; Aarhus: Forlaget Aros, 1980] 63; B. S. Jackson, “Legalism,” *JJS* 30 [1979] 1-22).

(though including proselytes).¹³ Thus for Paul to draw upon a term so well established in the OT and in intertestamental literature was in effect for him to say that God's pledge to uphold and sustain the ancient covenant people now has equal applicability to "the Greek," who is no longer obliged to become as "the Jew" in order to claim the promise of the *δικαιοσύνη Θεοῦ*. As J. A. Ziesler puts it: "God's righteousness is his own covenant loyalty, now in Paul widened beyond a covenant with Israel and made universal. This righteousness is saving precisely in that man, Jew or Gentile, is now drawn into and lives in God's righteousness."¹⁴ "God's righteousness," according to 10:3, is no longer peculiarly that of the Torah but is now embodied in Christ, the *τέλος* of the law. Hence justification in Paul is primarily concerned to answer the question, On whose behalf does the God of Israel go into action to effect salvation? Is it Israel only or also the Gentiles?¹⁵

In the second place, because *δικαιοσύνη* assumes as its frame of reference the Hebrew (as contrasted with the Greco-Roman) notion of righteousness, we are alerted to the possibility that the semantic range of the verb *δικαίω* is broadened by its relation to the OT concept of the *δικαιοσύνη Θεοῦ*. According to Reumann's findings, "'righteousness/justice/justification' terminology in the Hebrew scriptures is 'action-oriented,' not just 'status' or 'being' language, and binds together forensic, ethical and other aspects in such a way that some sort of more unified ancient Near Eastern view

¹³ This now widely accepted appraisal of Paul and Judaism was sparked off by Sanders' *Paul*. J. D. G. Dunn, most prominently, has applied Sanders' assessment of Judaism as "covenantal nomism" to Paul's teaching on the law, e.g., "The New Perspective on Paul," *BJRL* 65 (1983) 95-122; "Works of the Law and the Curse of the Law (Gal 3:10-14)," *NTS* 31 (1985) 523-42; *Romans* 1.1xx-lxxi. It is this particular approach which I am assuming throughout, including Dunn's criticism of Sanders' (and H. Räisänen's) appraisal of Paul and the law. An adequate response cannot here be provided to dissenting reviews of Sanders on Judaism and Dunn on Paul, such as H. Hübner, "Pauli theologiae proprium," *NTS* 26 (1980) 445-73; id., *Law in Paul's Thought* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1984); id., "Was heißt bei Paulus, 'Werke des Gesetzes'?" in *Glaube and Eschatologie. Festschrift für Werner Georg Kümmel zum 80. Geburtstag* (eds. E. Grässer and O. Merk; Tübingen: Mohr, 1985) 123-33; R. H. Gundry, "Grace, Works, and Staying Saved in Paul," in *The Best in Theology* (eds. J. I. Packer et al.; Carol Stream, IL: Christianity Today, n.d.) 1.81-100; S. Westerholm, *Israel's Law and the Church's Faith: Paul and His Recent Interpreters* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988). Dunn has replied to several of his critics in *Jesus, Paul, and the Law: Studies in Mark and Galatians* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1990) 206-14, 237-41.

¹⁴ J. A. Ziesler, *The Meaning of Righteousness in Paul: A Linguistic and Theological Enquiry* (SNTSMS 20; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972) 187. In Reumann's words, "The gospel of God's righteousness will have to do not just with his loyalty to his covenant people but with his whole creation and all peoples" (*Righteousness*, 65). Cf. R. D. Kaylor, *Paul's Covenant Community: Jew and Gentile in Romans* (Atlanta: John Knox, 1988) 60.

¹⁵ As K. Stendahl puts it, Paul's discussion of Jew/Gentile equality (in Romans 2 and 3) is carried on "in light of the new avenue of salvation, which has been opened in Christ, an avenue which is equally open to Jews and Gentiles, since it is not based on the Law, in which the very distinction between the two rests" (*Paul Among Jews and Gentiles* [London: SCM, 1977] 81).

can readily be presupposed."¹⁶ "Justify" at times is certainly an adequate translation of δικαίω. Nevertheless justification is inclusive of more than "acquittal." Indeed, it is the pregnant significance of the idea which modern scholars have sought to preserve by the resurrection of the archaic term "right-wise." Even in those instances in the LXX where δικαίω (= the hiphil of קָדַשׁ) is strongly forensic in meaning, Ziesler reminds us that it is forensic in the Hebrew sense, i.e., the verb signifies "restoration of the community or covenant relationship, and thus cannot be separated from the ethical altogether. The restoration is not merely to a standing, but to an existence in the relationship." If such is an adequate grasp of δικαίω, insight is immediately provided into how Paul can move so deftly from justification by faith here and now to ultimate justification by works.

(3) Having stated his thesis that the δικαιοσύνη Θεοῦ is now available to all without distinction,¹⁹ Paul proceeds in 1:18-3:20 (including the recapitulating statement of 3:23) to eliminate Jewish superiority by a series of arguments designed to place Israel on an equal footing with the remainder of humanity.²⁰ Kaylor has correctly seen that although Paul does indeed address himself to the reality of universal human sinfulness, his central design is to show that there is *no real distinction between Gentile and Jew*: "This affirmation of non-distinction in sinfulness has as its larger purpose the affirmation that there is no distinction in salvation! There is one new covenant that unites Jew and Gentile as the one people of God."²¹ Paul's message to Israel then is that the Torah is powerless to provide freedom from sin's power.²² In so saying, he is "preparing the way for the presentation of one new covenant in Christ which will bind Jew and Gentile together as one new people of God, renewed by God's grace and empowered by the Spirit to fulfill God's will in ways that neither Gentile nor Jew has been able to accomplish."²³

The first item of his agenda is pursued in 1:18-32, where he implicates Israel in the disobedience of Adam, thus reducing the covenant people to

¹⁶ Reumann, *Righteousness*, 16 (italics mine).

¹⁷ E.g., throughout the English version of R. Bultmann's *Theology of the New Testament* (London: SCM, 1952), and Reumann, *Righteousness*, 11 et passim. E. P. Sanders opts for a somewhat unwieldy term of his own devising, "to righteous" (*Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People* [Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983] 13-14 n. 18 et passim).

¹⁸ Ziesler, *Righteousness*, 20.

¹⁹ "All" throughout Romans bears a strongly qualitative sense, i.e., "all God's beloved in Rome" (1:7), Jew and Gentile in Christ, as documented by P. Minear, *The Obedience of Faith: The Purposes of Paul in the Epistle to the Romans* (London: SCM, 1971).

²⁰ Kaylor, *Community*, 32, terms this section "Gentile and Jew: Alike in Covenant Breaking." The whole of Kaylor's treatment of Romans is supportive of the interpretation herein presented.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 34.

²² *Ibid.*, 35.

²³ *Ibid.*, 45-46.

the level of Greco-Roman paganism, as startling a notion as that must have been to his Jewish compatriots. Since the appearance of M. D. Hooker's article "Adam in Romans I,"²⁴ students of Romans have been aware that Paul's depiction of man and his plight is modeled on the fall of Adam in Genesis 3.²⁵ Although it is hardly true that Adam was an idolater in the same sense as the pagan world of Paul's day, he can justly be accused of serving the creature rather than the creator; "and it is from this confusion between God and the things which he has made that idolatry springs."²⁶ Most relevant for our purposes, Paul does not exempt Israel from the indictment of idolatry. Although his thought moves mainly within Genesis 3, the words ἤλλαξαν τὴν δόξαν (τοῦ ἀφθάρτου θεοῦ) in Rom 1:23 are extracted from Ps 106(105):20 and Jer 2:11 (cf. Deut 4:15-18), which have to do with *Israel's* idolatry.

It is here that Paul's running debate with Judaism in the Roman letter comes into play. His implication of Israel in Adam's sin of idolatry seeks to make the chosen people at one with the rest of humanity. Especially noteworthy in this regard is the affinity of this passage with the book of Wisdom. Scholars have long been aware that Paul's denunciation of idols and immorality is modeled on Wisdom and have rightly emphasized the similarities.²⁷ However, Hooker is right that the differences are no less striking than the similarities.²⁸ The most striking discrepancy is that whereas in Wisdom the Gentiles and *apostate* Jews engage in idolatry, in Romans 1 Israel *qua* Israel, no less than the Gentiles, is involved in and repeats the primal sin of Adam. Paul, in other words, has reduced contemporary Israel to the level of paganism—the Israel which is unswervingly loyal to the Torah and the God of the Torah. I have argued elsewhere²⁹ that the idolatry in question is Israel's continued attachment to the Torah after it has served its purpose in salvation history, the idolatry of elevating the law of Moses to a position of unwarranted devotion and bestowing on it a permanence it was never intended to have in God's ultimate plan. Thus, according to Paul, due to her own idolatry, Israel is in no position to be the mediator of salvation.

²⁴ *NTS* 6 (1959-60) 297-306; cf. id., "A Further Note on Romans I," *NTS* 13 (1966-67) 181-83.

²⁵ Cf. J. D. G. Dunn, *Christology in the Making* (London: SCM, 1980) 101-2; D. J. W. Milne, "Genesis 3 in the Letter to the Romans," *Reformed Theological Review* 39 (1980) 10-18.

²⁶ Hooker, "Adam," 301.

²⁷ E.g., A. T. S. Goodrich, *The Book of Wisdom* (London: Rivingtons, 1913) 398-403; W. Sanday and A. C. Headlam, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* (ICC; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1895) 51-52; E. E. Ellis, *Paul's Use of the Old Testament* (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1957) 77-80; C. Romaniuk, "Le Livre de la Sagesse dans le Nouveau Testament," *NTS* 14 (1967-68) 505-7.

²⁸ Hooker, "Adam," 299.

²⁹ D. B. Garlington, "ἸΕΡΟΣΥΛΕΙΝ and the Idolatry (Romans 2:22)," *NTS* 36 (1990) 142-51.

(4) Rom 2:1-3:8 forms the central section of the broader division of 1:18-3:20. Considering the amount of space Paul devotes to Israel here, it would follow, as remarked above, that his actual intention is to remove the nation from a position of superiority, particularly as this segment of the letter is the outgrowth of 1:18-32 (διό, 2:1). Before turning his attention directly to the one who calls himself a Jew (2:17),³⁰ the groundwork is laid in vv. 1-16 for the indictment of Israel. Before giving detailed consideration to 2:13, it will be useful to survey the main features of 2:1-3:8.

(a) At the outset of chap. 2 (vv. 1-5), Paul continues to speak in broad generic terms: his adversary is man as such (ὁ ἄνθρωπος), vv. 1, 3. Even so, he is occupied with man as he stands in judgment on other men. That Jewish man is in the back of his mind is evident from vv. 17-24, because this man charges others with sin, while he himself is not free from its taint. The Jew who believed that God would judge the world "in righteousness" (Ps 9:8; 96:13; 98:2, 9) himself will be the object of wrath (the punitive side of righteousness),³¹ because the judgment of God is "according to truth" (v. 2), i.e., God's covenant faithfulness,³² or, more specifically, his "righteousness" as defined as his commitment to his creatures,³³ a proposition established in chap. 1. It is he who is presumptuous in his judgment of others and must acknowledge that the goodness of God (especially in the gospel) is meant to lead *him* to repentance (v. 4),³⁴ it is he who is delinquent in his responsibility to the creator. (In what sense this is true we shall see below.) Cam-

³⁰ See Wilckens, *Romer* 1.147-48.

³¹ The declaration of 1:17 that the righteousness of God is revealed in the gospel alludes to Ps 98:2, 9: "The Lord has made known his salvation; before the nations he has revealed his righteousness . . . for he comes to judge the earth; he will judge the world in righteousness and the peoples with uprightness." Not only so, the same Psalm underlies the programmatic statement in 1:18 that the wrath of God is being revealed from heaven. Accordingly the wrath which Israel expected to fall on the Gentiles because of their lack of conformity to the Mosaic standards will fall on her because she refuses to render to God the obedience of faith which has Christ as its object; she, in other words, will not submit to the righteousness of God (10:3) as revealed eschatologically in the gospel.

³² The ἀλήθεια group in the LXX frequently does service for אמת etc., designating God's fidelity to the covenant. Particularly striking are passages in which God's ἀλήθεια represents his determination to punish Israel for breaking the covenant, e.g., Neh 9:33; Pr Azar 4-5, 8-9; Tob 3:2; Add Esth 14:6-7; 1QS 1.26. See further R. Marcus, *Law in the Apocrypha* (New York: AMS Press, 1966) 3-4; Roetzel, *Judgment*, 32.

³³ The thesis of Käsemann's "The Righteousness of God' in Paul." Paul thus denies a role to the Torah in eschatological judgment by assigning that function to the primal creator/creature relationship established in Eden. This in itself informs us that the focus of judgment is loyalty to or apostasy from God the creator (not one's allegiance or lack thereof to the Sinai covenant). Cf. below n. 89. As a sidelight, what is known as "common grace" is actually the δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ, the concrete manifestation of which is his "goodness," designed to lead the disobedient to repentance (Rom 2:4; Acts 14:17).

³⁴ The riches of God's kindness is a prominent covenant idea (cf. Rom 10:21 = Isa 65:2 LXX). As the Israel of old, the Israel of Paul's day remains the object of Yahweh's pleading: his goodness is still being extended to his people, this time in the preaching of Jesus Christ. Yet, in typical fashion, the nation's heart is hard and impenitent (Rom 2:5).

bier then is quite right that the religious situation addressed by Paul is that of the exclusive Jewish claim to salvation, which is reflected by the vocabulary of judgment (various forms of κρίνω).³⁵

(b) The principle of judgment according to works, commensurate with judgment "according to truth,"³⁶ introduced in vv. 6-16, becomes in Paul's hands an implement for the undoing of Israel's boasting in national privileges.³⁷ A whole host of OT texts lie behind the proposition that "he will render to everyone according to his works."³⁸ Snodgrass furthermore is right that judgment according to works is one of the most basic assumptions of Judaism and appears in all strata of Jewish literature.³⁹ For our purposes it is noteworthy that Paul again draws upon the creation language of man as God's image when he depicts the "works" according to which God will judge as the quest for "glory, honor and immortality"; to those thus inclined will be given "eternal life" and "peace" (vv. 7, 10). Likewise the talk of "obedience" in v. 8, as confirmed by 5:12-18, is a conspicuous creation reference. By appealing to creation categories, Paul implies that, acceptability to God is not conditioned on Jewishness but on one's commitment to be an accurate image-bearer of God the creator. Thus the "righteousness" in which God will judge the world is no longer tied to all the particulars of the Torah.⁴⁰ Vv. 10-11, which look back to 1:16-17, make it explicit that "glory, honor, and peace" are for "everyone who does good, the Jew first and also the Greek." In the words of Peter, "Truly I perceive that God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right [ἐργαζόμενος δικαιοσύνην] is acceptable to him" (Acts 10:34-35).

(c) Vv. 12-16 develop the proposition that the possession of the law is in itself no guarantee against wrath in the day of judgment; what is required is obedience to the law, which Romans as a whole clarifies to be "the obedience of faith." Thus Gentiles, who possess on their hearts the functional equivalent of the law written on tables of stone, are qualitatively in the same position as Israel. Once more, Paul levels humanity by means of creation ideas, in this instance the law of creation inscribed on Adam's heart.

³⁵ Cambier, "Jugement," 189.

³⁶ As Cambier shows ("Jugement," 188), the twofold center of interest, works and truth, is established at the outset of chap. 2 in vv. 1 and 2 and then continued into vv. 6-16: works (2:6, 11) correspond to the judgment of the inner person (vv. 9-16).

³⁷ Israel's boasting is interpreted as her pride in covenant privileges (Rom 9:4-5), in agreement with Dunn, "New Perspective," 95-122; id., "Works," 523-42; id., Romans 1.1xx-lxxi, 110-11; Räisänen, *Paul*, 170, 177; id., "Paul's Conversion and the Development of his View of the Law," *NTS* 33 (1987) 410-12, and contra Westerholm, *Law*, 169-73.

³⁸ See C. E. B. Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* (ICC; 2 vols.; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1975-79) 1.146; Snodgrass, "Justification," 90 n. 44.

³⁹ "Justification," 77. See his assemblage of passages on p. 90 n. 38.

⁴⁰ According to 2:12-16, the law by which the Gentiles will be judged is the functional equivalent of the law written on stone; but even here the focus is on the law of God which transcends Sinai and finds its origin in creation. It is this law that the Gentiles do "by nature" (φύσει), i.e., as created in the image of God.

(d) Rom 2:17-3:8 approach the subject along the lines of a synagogue debate. Drawing upon the perspective established in 2:1-3, 2:17-24 judge the Jew guilty of the very things of which he accuses others. We find here the reversal of those passages in Jewish literature which tie morality to Israel's segregation from the nations.⁴¹ Then vv. 25-29 move from the realm of "morals" into that of the "boundary markers"⁴² of Israel, specifically circumcision.⁴³ The argument is to similar effect as in vv. 12-16, viz., circumcision in itself is no preventive against the judgment of God, because the uncircumcised man who keeps the law will be regarded as circumcised. In addition, for the first time in Romans Paul speaks of the "true Jew" as one who is identified by means of internal not external realities. Anticipating 7:6, where the antithesis of "Spirit" and "letter" likewise comes to the fore, 2:29 places the genuine Jew within the realm of the Spirit, i.e., the era of the Spirit's work in the eschaton. In other words, from now on Jewishness is defined in relation to the *new* creation and effectively to Christ, the Lord who is the Spirit (2 Cor 3:17).

Rom 3:1-8 carry the dialogue with Israel to a final step. Paul here qualifies that being Jewish does indeed have advantages, particularly as regards being entrusted with the "oracles of God" (cf. Sir 1:15; 'Abot 1:1). Yet this is so only if Israel is faithful, which Paul denies, at least in the case of "some" (v. 3). This rejection of Israel's claim to faithfulness makes sense in light of the charge of idolatry in 2:22, i.e., his compatriots have not been loyal to the only God after all, inasmuch as they have allowed the Torah to usurp the place reserved for his Son.⁴⁴ When judged by the criterion of fidelity to the creator (κατὰ ἀλήθειαν, 2:2), the Jew is as guilty as the Gentile. Stephen's anti-temple polemic (esp. Acts 7:39-53)⁴⁵ is to the same effect: because the temple has become a virtual idol to them, his executioners, who received the law, have not kept it.

⁴¹ E.g., Ep. Arist. 139-43; Josephus, *Ag. Ap.* 2.169-75; Philo, *Mos.* 1.278; *Jub.* 22:16; *Pss. Sol.* 17:28; 3 Macc 3:4. The outlook articulated so clearly by these individual passages is characteristic of entire documents, such as Judith, the Additions to Esther, and the Qumran corpus.

⁴² Dunn's phrase (from the articles "New Perspective" and "Works," as cited above). More recently A. J. Saldarini has spoken of the "boundary mechanisms" for maintaining the integrity of God's people (*Pharisees, Scribes and Sadducees in Palestinian Society* [Wilmington: Glazier, 1988] 136).

⁴³ The importance of circumcision can hardly be underestimated. From M. Stern's *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism* (3 vols.; Jerusalem: Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1976-83) it is evident that although other ancient peoples practiced circumcision, the Jews were preeminently "the circumcised." To illustrate, the author of *Jubilees* (15:25, 28-29) identified circumcision with the sign of the Mosaic covenant, which was actually the Sabbath (Exod 31:12). O. Betz, "Bescheidung," *TRE* 5.718-19, shows how some later authors equated circumcision with law-obedience, even to the extent of identifying "the blood of the covenant" (Exod 24:8) with "the blood of circumcision."

⁴⁴ Gal 4:3, 8-11 draw a parallel between the Galatians' former bondage to idols and their desire to embrace the bondage of the Mosaic law.

⁴⁵ See J. D. G. Dunn, *Unity and Diversity in the New Testament* (London: SCM, 1977) 271.

This survey of 1:1-3:8 provides the necessary context and framework of interpretation for the justification of the doers in 2:13 and the bearing which the obedience of faith has on that declaration. Of the essence of understanding the relation of faith and works in Paul is a grasp of the direction in which his thought moves as he pens the words of Rom 2:13 (and like statements elsewhere). The upshot is that the actual subject matter of this lengthy section of the letter is Paul's response to the inbred nationalism of his Jewish contemporaries, the gist of which is his denial that Israel in fact occupies the uniquely favored position imagined by her. Hence the mentality against which he argues is not that of a "legalistic" works-righteousness method of salvation, but one which would confine (eschatological) salvation to the members of a specific group—Israel. Because such is the real issue under debate, we are prevented from prejudging that there was in his mind a necessary contradiction between good works in this life and justification in final judgment. In other words, an attempt on Paul's part to circumvent a "legalistic" understanding of justification is simply out of accord with the aim pursued by him.

II. *The justification of the Doers of the Law: Rom 2:13*

Because Rom 2:13 must be seen as part of an integral whole, it will be necessary to say something in more detail about the verses immediately preceding and following.⁴⁶

The *entrée* into v. 13 is provided by vv. 6-12, which state the principle of judgment by works; this forms Paul's rebuttal to the presumptuous person who judges others (vv. 1-5). In other words, this ἄνθρωπος will not escape condemnation precisely because God is an impartial judge whose verdict is κατὰ ἀλήθειαν (v. 2); he will render to every man according to his deeds (v. 6). With Ps 62:12 and Prov 24:12 in mind, Paul pens what in and of itself was a perfectly acceptable dictum to first-century Judaism. Indeed, the notion of vindication for the faithful covenant-keepers is one of the commonplaces of Jewish thought (e.g., 2 Macc 7:9; 4 Macc 17:11-12; Tob 4:9-11; *Pss. Sol.* 9:3-5). The Jew would have understood his justification in terms of his faithful practice of the full range of covenant obligations,⁴⁷ including sacrifice for sins committed. Correspondingly the nations are to be condemned because of their rejection of these standards.

That Paul has something else in mind, however, is indicated by the creation phraseology of v. 7: τοῖς . . . ὑπομονὴν ἔργου ἀγαθοῦ δόξαν καὶ τιμὴν καὶ ἀφθαρσίαν ζητοῦσιν [ἀποδώσει] ζωὴν αἰώνιον. That is to say, consonant with 1:18-3:20, the standard of judgment is one which transcends the Sinai covenant and roots the vindication of the individual in matters which pertain to humanity as such, not simply *Jewish* humanity.

⁴⁶ See Dunn's analysis, *Romans* 1.76-77, 89.

⁴⁷ Cf. *ibid.* 1.85.

(a) The combination of "glory" and "honor" recalls Ps 8:5's (LXX v. 6) depiction of man's (Adam's) creation (cf. Job 40:10). "Glory" stands by itself in Rom 1:23 and 3:23: in both cases it designates the obverse of the quest delineated in 2:7. In the former, man outside of Christ has rejected the creation glory of Yahweh for the sake of idols, while in the latter he has failed to measure up to his capacity as God's image (glory).⁴⁸

(b) "Immortality" (ἀφθαρσία) in the LXX occurs only in Wisdom and 4 Maccabees. Wis 2:23 is particularly relevant: "God created man for immortality [ἐφ' ἀφθαρσίᾳ], and made him the image of his own eternity." This not only gives voice to the author's conception of man's reason for existence, it places in parallel the ideas of immortality and image: man is God's creation image by virtue of his capacity for endless life. 4 Macc 17:12, especially striking in view of Paul's present argument, makes "the prize for victory" of the Jewish martyrs "immortality in long-lasting life." If Paul in fact has such a conception in mind, his appeal to immortality represents a reversal of the mentality of 4 Maccabees as a whole, which makes abstinence from pork of the essence of fidelity to God and thus a precondition of ἀφθαρσία (see especially 5:14-38). In the same vein, according to 2 Macc 6:18-20; 7:1, one ought to be willing to die rather than partake of swine's flesh. Particularly striking for us is the connection of such refusal and the prospect of resurrection (eternal life) in 2 Maccabees 7 as a whole.

(c) "Life" as a creation motif is exhibited by the prominence given the idea in the first two chapters of Genesis. Outside the NT the exact phrase "eternal life" occurs only in Dan 12:2; 2 Macc 7:9; 4 Macc 15:3, where it is tantamount to resurrection, and in 1QS 4.7, where everlasting life (נצח חיים) is clearly in view. The phrase features prominently in Paul's delineation of the work of Christ and its effects in Rom 5:12-6:23. "Eternal life" then is equivalent to the life of the age to come, i.e., resurrection and "immortality," and in effect a completion of the program commenced and yet interrupted with Adam.⁴⁹ Noteworthy is the phrase "the justification of life" (δικαίωσις ζωῆς) in 5:18. This is justification as it inevitably results in life and from which it is inseparable.

(d) If we bring v. 10 into view, another creation term emerges, viz., "Peace." In biblical thinking "peace" is a virtual synonym of "rest," i.e., the sabbath rest held forth to man upon the completion of his mandate to subdue the earth,⁵⁰ but in the course of biblical history undergoes a semantic shift and becomes synonymous with the "salvation" (new creation) procured by Christ.⁵¹ Significantly, Paul's statement in Eph 2:15-17, lo-

⁴⁸ See further *ibid.* 1.167-68.

⁴⁹ Cf. the comments of Dunn, *Christology*, 110-11.

⁵⁰ See, e.g., A. G. Hebert, *The Throne of David: A Study of the Fulfilment of the Old Testament in Jesus Christ and His Church* (London: Faber, 1941) 159-63.

⁵¹ A. T. Lincoln, "Sabbath, Rest, and Eschatology in the New Testament," in *From Sabbath to Lord's Day: A Biblical, Historical, and Theological Investigation* (ed. D. A. Carson; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1982) 197-220.

cated in a context replete with creation associations, that Christ has made and then preached peace serves to further the proposition that Jew/Gentile distinctions have now been abolished by the blood of the cross.

It is in light of these observations that the adverbial phrase **καθ' ὑπομονὴν ἔργου ἀγαθοῦ** (Rom 2:7) is to be given its obvious and straightforward meaning: "patient persistence in doing what is recognized to be good."⁵² This speaks of the modality of man's quest to be all that he was intended to be in the original design of the creation. That human activity is envisaged is confirmed by the synonymous expressions "obeying the truth" (v. 8) and "doing good" (v. 10), as well as by the antitheses "disobeying the truth," "obeying wickedness" (v. 8), and "doing evil" (v. 9). Moreover, as Dunn further comments, the verb **ζητέω** reinforces **ὑπομονή**: "what is in mind is a sustained and deliberate application (present participle), rather than a casual or spasmodic pursuit of the goal."⁵³ If we may state one of our major conclusions beforehand, it is just **ὑπομονή**, endurance in testing, that defines in large measure what is intended by "the obedience of faith" which issues in eschatological justification.

The effect of this evocation of the creation goal of man's existence is that "God shows no partiality" (v. 11),⁵⁴ which in turn opens up the way into the paragraph of vv. 12-16, where Paul's intentions surface even more clearly. The terms used by him to bifurcate the human race (from the Jewish point of view) are significant. V. 12 distinguishes between those who have sinned **ἀνόμως** and those who have sinned **ἐν νόμῳ**. Thereafter **νόμος** becomes the fulcrum of the discussion of final judgment (vv. 13-15). One's relation to the law, in other words, is reflective of the normal Jewish distinction between the people of God and outsiders: the Torah (in its unmodified form) was to be the standard of the great assize, and according to it one would be vindicated or condemned. Thus to be **ἐν νόμῳ**, i.e., Jewish,⁵⁵ was to be safe,⁵⁶ and to be **ἀνόμως** (**μη ἔχοντες νόμον**, v. 14), i.e., Gentile, was to be lost. Once again, Paul speaks formally in terms acceptable to Jewish ears, but he turns them to Israel's disadvantage. "His real point . . . is that judgment will not depend on whether the individual starts from within the

⁵² Dunn, *Romans* 1.86. We shall see in our final study that the "good work" of 2:7 relates to the knowledge of good and evil in the Garden of Eden. Ultimately the "good work" is allegiance to God the creator and a refusal to be seduced by Satan's alternate explanation of the creator/creature relationship (tantamount to idolatry). Cf. Rom 16:19b.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ On **προσωποληψία**, see *ibid.* 1.89.

⁵⁵ On **ἐν νόμῳ** and similar phrases, see further Dunn's comments, "Works," 532-35. According to Dunn's assessment, "Paul is referring to the typical Jewish self-understanding of the people of God as circumcised and defined by the law, as characterized by practice of the law's distinctive features" (p. 535).

⁵⁶ As Sanders more than once affirms, "all Israelites have a share in the world to come unless they renounce it by transgression [i.e., apostasy]" (*Paul*, 147, citing *m. San.* 10.1).

people of the law or from outside. Both will be judged; sin in both cases will be condemned."⁵⁷

The escalating argument of 2:6-3:8 reaches a climax when 2:13 enters the picture as an explanation of why remaining within the perimeters of the law is no insurance against the eschatological wrath of God. That is to say, the Torah—with its boundary markers of Jewish identity—as a mere possession is not enough, "For it is not the hearers of the law who are righteous before God, but the doers of the law will be justified." Paul, in other words, grounds "immunity from the condemnation of the last day"⁵⁸ in one's performance of the law, not in pride of its ownership (as illustrated by Bar 4:3-4).

Not surprisingly by this time, Paul draws on conceptions which in themselves were familiar to his contemporaries. The combination of "hearing" and "doing," as Dunn notes, was characteristic of Judaism. Indeed, as Wilckens⁵⁹ points out, the *shema* of Deut 6:4—"Hear, O Israel"—has doing in view. However, what would have sounded odd was Paul's *contrast* of the two here, hearing *versus* doing, because, in point of fact, the respective descriptions "hearers of the law" and "righteous" were complementary and overlapped in large measure.⁶⁰ This leads us to infer that in driving a wedge between these interdependent components of Jewish self-definition, Paul has in mind *a different kind of "doing the law,"* a doing,⁶¹ as we shall see, commensurate with "the obedience of faith."

Interestingly, the first occurrence of δικαίω in the letter is here in 2:13, where it has reference to the future justification (δικαιωθήσονται) of οἱ ποιηταὶ τοῦ νόμου. Of course, beginning with 3:21 Paul will explain that the ultimate vindication of the people of God has been secured by the "redemption which is in Christ Jesus" (3:24). Nevertheless the future tense,

⁵⁷ Dunn, *Romans* 1.96. "What one finds in Romans 2 is essentially a Jewish view of judgment, but one that is radicalized and applied to both Jew and Gentile" (Snodgrass, "Justification," 78). Snodgrass adds that Jewish texts normally accord mercy to Israel while condemning Gentiles according to their works. As for Jewish self-assessment: "The degree to which the Jews were automatically accorded mercy or were also judged according to works differs in the various writings and often depended on how much an author was pleased or displeased with his Jewish contemporaries" (ibid).

⁵⁸ Vos, "Spirit," 93.

⁵⁹ Wilckens, *Römer* 1.132.

⁶⁰ Dunn, *Romans* 1.97. He cites Deut 4:1, 5-6, 13-14; 30:11-14; 1 Macc 2:67; 13:48; *Sib Or* 3:70; Philo, *Cong.* 70; *Praem.* 79; Josephus, *Ant.* 5.107, 132; 20.44. Cf. his comments on 1:17 and 10:5. Much of my *Obedience* is devoted to arguing that in the pre-Christian materials hearing and doing (i.e., faith and obedience) are tantamount to each other. Thus a first-century Jew, offered the option of hearing or doing, would have rejected it as a false alternative. Cf. Dunn, *Romans* 2.613; id., "Works," 535; id., "New Perspective," 112; H. J. Schoeps, *Paul: The Theology of the Apostle in the Light of Jewish Religious History* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1961) 202; M. Buber, *Two Types of Faith* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1951) 56; F. Mußner, *Der Galaterbrief* (HTKNT; Freiburg: Herder, 1981) 170.

⁶¹ Dunn, *Romans* 1.132.

appearing in this setting of last judgment, serves to underscore that justification properly speaking is yet to be. It is here that Vos' observation, cited above, is particularly relevant. That a certain quality of life is envisaged is confirmed by the "*parallelismus membrorum*" of 2:13a, b; that is, those who will be justified are the *δίκαιοι παρὰ θεῶν*. The latter phrase is steeped in the OT/Jewish idea of conformity to the covenant, as confirmed by *τὰ τοῦ νόμου* and *τὸ ἔργον τοῦ νόμου* (2:14, 15) to which the consciences of the Gentiles bear witness.⁶²

Attempts have been made to deny that the perspective of Rom 2:13 is Paul's.⁶³ Ziesler, for example, takes it to be the expression of the Jewish viewpoint, "used to demonstrate to the Jews that their traditional way of justification is really no way, because while possessing and hearing the law, they do not fulfil it."⁶⁴ Along similar lines are those interpretations which seek effectively to make the verse hypothetical, i.e., Paul formulates the principle of justification according to strict justice for the purpose of demonstrating that no one can be justified by the law (assuming the factor of sin).⁶⁵

However, such interpretations falter because there is nothing in Paul's language to suggest either that the viewpoint represented is someone else's exclusively or that he is speaking in hypothetical terms. His pronouncement about future justification by "doing good" is as realistic as his declaration of God's wrath upon the one who "does evil"; on this he and his Jewish interlocutor are in agreement. Indeed, it is precisely in terms of the continuity between Paul and Judaism at this point that the genius of his ar-

⁶² Rom 2:14-16 is problematic for many interpreters of Paul; Cranfield (*Romans* 1.155-16) and Räisänen (*Paul*, 103-6) give the different views. Sanders (*Law*, 123-24) sees these verses, when compared with 1:18-32, as forming the "principal incongruity" of Romans 1 and 2. Yet there is no basis here for the justification of man outside of Christ. The *γάρ* of 2:14 is the last in a sequence of four *γάρ*-clauses (vv. 11-14), whose function is to deny Jewish superiority predicated on the possession of the law; all of them relate to the proposition of vv. 9-10 that judgment and reward respectively are allocated in terms of obedience, not national privileges. Gentiles can "do" as well as Israel; and what they do is no less than the law inscribed for Israel on the tables of stone. In themselves, however, vv. 14-16 do not affirm that Gentiles or Jews can be justified by (their own) works: they are simply the last link in a chain of reasoning that Jews *qua* Jews are no better off than pagans *qua* pagans. If anything—given the backdrop of 1:18-32—the verses teach that Jew and Gentile are equally exposed to the wrath of God and both must seek "the redemption which is in Christ Jesus" (3:24). To say that Gentiles at times perform the requirements of the law (*ὅταν* plus the subjunctive) is not to attribute to them "the obedience of faith" requisite for justification in final judgment: *man outside of Christ cannot be obedient*.

⁶³ The various approaches have been categorized by Snodgrass, "Justification," 73-74; Sanders, *Law*; 125-26; Räisänen, *Paul*, 103-6.

⁶⁴ Ziesler, *Righteousness*, 189.

⁶⁵ E.g., C. Hodge, *A Commentary on Romans* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1975) 53-54; R. Haldane, *Exposition of the Epistle to the Romans* (London: Banner of Truth, 1960) 88-90; J. Murray, *The Epistle to the Romans* (NICNT; 2 vols.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1959-65) 1.71-72.

gument in Romans 2 emerges. In other words, because the Judaism of Paul's day knew of a future vindication based on present fidelity to the covenant, Paul's concern is seen to be that of calling into question the prevailing understanding of who "the righteous" are and the grounds on which they may expect to be justified.

The difference [between Paul and Judaism] is that the dominant strands in the Judaism of Paul's time started from the presupposition of a favored status before God by virtue of membership of the covenant people, which could be characterized by the very link between "hearing the law" and "the righteous" which Paul here puts in question. Like his fellow Jews and the whole prophetic tradition, Paul is ready to insist that a doing of the law is necessary for final acquittal before God; but that doing is neither synonymous with nor dependent upon maintaining a loyal membership of the covenant people.⁶⁶

This statement of the matter leads us to draw both a negative and a positive conclusion. Negatively, since Paul endeavors to undermine a nationalistic/exclusivistic understanding of the judgment, his purpose is not to deny the place of works (behavior) as such in the scheme of ultimate justification. Wilckens is quite correct that there is nothing in Paul's theology which is inimical to works.⁶⁷ Positively, as intimated above, we are informed that the specific character of "doing" present in Paul's mind is in one important respect other than that assumed by his Jewish counterparts. It is to this we now turn.

III. *The Doing of the Law as the Obedience of Faith*

Foundational to an understanding of faith's obedience in Paul is a historically accurate picture of the same theology in Judaism. R. N. Longenecker is justified in his disapproval of those Christian scholars who have followed E. Schurer's assessment of Judaism as a "fearful burden which a spurious legalism had laid upon the shoulders of the people";⁶⁸ and we agree with writers from G. F. Moore onward that ancient Judaism has not been given the kind of fair reading it should have received by NT scholars. Hand in hand with the "legalistic" conception of Judaism has gone the notion that the rank and file of the Jewish people had no concern with heart purity and internal religion. Bultmann, for example, contended that obedience for the Jew was "formal" rather than "radical," in that "the law failed to claim the allegiance of the *whole* man."⁶⁹

⁶⁶ Dunn, *Romans* 1.98.

⁶⁷ Wilckens, *Römer* 1.145.

⁶⁸ Longenecker, *Paul*, 65. Thyen, for example, applies H. Braun's assessment of the Psalms of Solomon to the whole of pre-Christian Judaism (see H. Thyen, *Studien turn Sündenvergebung im Neuen Testament and seinen alttestamentlichen and jüdischen Voraussetzungen* [FRLANT 96; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1970] 76-77).

⁶⁹ *Primitive Christianity in Its Contemporary Setting* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1956) 68.

We cannot here enter fully into the issue. Suffice it to say that the sources can be read otherwise so as to suggest that the conception of faith's obedience in the Judaism antecedent to and contemporary with Paul was not dissimilar to his own. Most pointedly, one cannot read such passages as 2 Macc 1:3; Sus 35, 56; *Pss. Sol.* 1:3, 7; 2:14-15; 3:7-8, 12; 4:5, 8; 8:9 without some recognition of the internal factor in Jewish religion. As for the later tannaitic literature, Longenecker's treatment of "The Piety of Hebraic Judaism"⁷⁰ is a model of balanced scholarship. He demonstrates, in the words of I. Abrahams, that there were both "weeds" and "flowers" in the garden of Judaism, and that the elements of nomism and spirituality must be kept in proper proportion to one other.⁷¹ On the one side, an obedience rooted in faith is in evidence; on the other, the "weeds" of Judaism were its tendency toward "externalism," of which Buber, among other Jewish writers, was aware.⁷²

However, "externalism" has to be defined. It is here that Longenecker recognizes: "the essential tension of predestruction Hebraic Judaism . . . was not primarily that of legalism versus love, or externalism versus inwardness, but fundamentally that of promise and fulfillment."⁷³ In other words, "externalism" is not to be conceived of as a disregard of inward motivation or internal purity, but as an undue emphasis on those factors which marked out Israel as a distinct society.

Such an understanding of the covenant and of the law inevitably puts too much weight on physical and national factors, on outward and visible enactments, and gives too little weight to the Spirit, to faith and love from the heart. Such an understanding of the people of God inevitably results in a false set of priorities. On such an understanding of the law, fulfilment of the law will inevitably be judged in terms of these priorities.⁷⁴

Paul's real polemic then is to be taken as a protest against a misplaced accent on the boundary markers. This very adequately accounts for passages such as Romans 2 and Paul's insistence elsewhere in Romans that believers have become obedient "from the heart" (6:17) and that the law is

⁷⁰ Longenecker, *Paul*, 65-85.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 82-83. Sanders' *Paul* has shown repeatedly how rabbinic authors (especially in their prayers) long for internal purity and personal intercourse with God. Likewise the Qumran hymns exhibit this clearly, not surprisingly in light of O. Betz's findings that in the Scrolls the righteousness of God takes absolute priority over human activity ("Rechtfertigung in Qumran," in *Rechtfertigung. Festschrift für Ernst Käsemann zum 70. Geburtstag* [eds. J. Friedrich et al.; Tübingen: Mohr, 1976] 34). As Betz concludes, the issue at Qumran (and I would say in all the pre-Christian texts) is not merit but a consciousness of Israel's election stemming from membership in the community of salvation (p. 36).

⁷² Buber, *Two Types of Faith*, 58-59. Cf. R. Banks, *Jesus and the Law in the Synoptic Tradition* (SNTSMS 28; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975) 180.

⁷³ Longenecker, *Paul*, 84.

⁷⁴ Dunn, "Works," 534. Cf. *id.*, *Romans* 2.582-83, 593.

fulfilled "in" them (8:4), though, as we have said, the external factor in Judaism is not to be absolutized.

It is here that "the obedience of faith" enters the picture; its significance may be considered under three headings: (1) the hearing of faith, (2) the primacy of the love command, and (3) perseverance.

1. *The Hearing of Faith*

When Paul wished to impress upon his Galatian converts the irreducible minimum of his gospel as opposed to that of his adversaries, he asked them if they received the Spirit ἐξ ἔργων νόμου or ἐξ ἀκοῆς πίστεως (Gal 3:2). As noted in the first article, hearing and faith in OT and later Jewish thinking are virtually synonymous: to hear rightly *is* to obey.⁷⁵ Consequently "the obedience of faith" and "the hearing of faith" depict the same activity, i.e., believing response to the gospel. In fact, the resemblance of the two phrases would be even clearer were we to translate the latter as "the response of faith."⁷⁶ Nevertheless Paul here juxtaposes "the hearing of faith" (Christianity) and "works of the law" (Judaism/Judaistic Christianity). But in what sense can this be meaningful, given the common heritage of both? The answer is bound up with an earlier observation, viz., that in Rom 2:13 Paul, in a very un-Jewish manner, pits "hearing" against "doing" for the purpose of remonstrating with Israel that *her particular hearing and doing* are unacceptable to God in final judgment. Similarly, in context, Gal 3:2 is sufficiently clear that the hearing of faith is directed toward the gospel (= "the faith," 3:25), as opposed to the "other gospel" (= "works of the law," 1:6, 8) of the circumcision party. What one finds in this more or less seminal form in Gal 3:2 is expounded at greater length in Rom 10:14-21.

The lead-in to 10:14-21 is 9:30-10:13: Israel has preferred to maintain her own righteousness, i.e., a righteousness peculiar to herself (= national righteousness) as defined by the Sinai covenant (τὴν ἰδίαν [δικαιοσύνην] ζητοῦντες στήσαι, 10:3),⁷⁷ instead of submitting to the righteousness of God *in Christ*, who is the τέλος of the law. For this reason Israel is ashamed to confess Christ as Lord (10:9-13). It is in particular Israel's failure to confess Christ which gives rise to the assertions of 10:14-21 that Israel's nonconfession is the result of her nonhearing of the gospel. To be sure, the nation has heard in one sense: preachers have been sent (vv. 14-17), and the word has gone forth to "the ends of the earth" (v. 18). In the most meaningful sense, however, God continues to hold out his hands to "a disobedient [= nonlistening] and contrary people" (v. 21).

⁷⁵ F. W. Young, "Obedience," *IDB* 3.580; Käsemann, "Righteousness," 177.

⁷⁶ Dunn, *Romans* 1.17.

⁷⁷ Dunn, *Romans* 2.587-88; id., "Works," 530; Sanders, *Law*, 38; G. Howard, "Christ the End of the Law: The Meaning of Romans 10.4," *JBL* 88 (1969) 336.

Israel then has heard--but she has not heard. Because she has not heard with "the hearing of faith," i.e., faith directed toward the gospel, she is incapable of "the obedience of faith," which grows out of the gospel. Because "faith comes from hearing" the word of God, i.e., the gospel (10:17), Israel's "doing" is unacceptable because it is not ἐκ πίστεως in the specifically Christian sense. Since Israel's faith is not *in Christ*, it must be condemned as insufficient, because it is only in Christ that one becomes the righteousness of God (2 Cor 5:21); *God's* righteousness (Rom 10:3) is available exclusively in Christ. Because, in the final analysis, the doing in question is the extension of Christ's doing, the starting point must be Christ. *Israel's* "doing" is unacceptable because *her* "hearing" is defective; it is, as a result, content with performance on the nationalistic level. Starting from the eternity of the law,⁷⁸ the Jewish position was that the Torah was sufficient in and of itself to produce obedience. Yet the force of Paul's polemic is that Israel has misjudged the intention of the law, i.e., she has not seen it as a παιδαγωγὸς εἰς Χριστόν (Gal 3:24)⁷⁹ and has consequently settled for an obedience which fails to measure up to the demands of the gospel. This brings us to consider both the primacy of the love command and perseverance in Paul.

2. *The Primacy of the Love Command*⁸⁰

Galatians is the most intense of Paul's controversial letters, and because of its decidedly polemical character, it pinpoints concisely the bone of contention between the apostle and his opponents. In a sense, it is to be read backwards as well as forwards, inasmuch as the practical consequences of the Judaizers' position is brought to the fore in the paraenesis of chaps. 5 and 6.⁸¹

⁷⁸ E.g., Sir 24:9, 33; Bar 4:1; Wis 18:4; *T. Naph.* 3:1-2. The same is at least implicit throughout *Jubilees* with its doctrine of the preexistence of the law on heavenly tablets. See Banks, *Law*, 50-64, 67-85; id., "The Eschatological Role of Law in Pre- and Post-Christian Jewish Thought," in *Reconciliation and Hope: New Testament Essays on Atonement and Eschatology presented to L. L. Morris on His 60th Birthday* (ed. R. Banks; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974) 175-77; W. D. Davies, *Torah in the Messianic Age and/or the Age to Come* (Philadelphia: SBL, 1952) 84.

⁷⁹ See the studies of D. J. Lull, "'The Law was our Pedagogue': A Study in Galatians 3.19-25," *JBL* 105 (1986) 481-98; T. D. Gordon, "A Note on παιδαγωγὸς in Galatians 3.24-25," *NTS* 35 (1989) 150-54.

⁸⁰ The love theme in Paul has been treated many times, e.g., C. Spicq, *Agapé dans le Nouveau Testament: Analyse des Textes* (Ebib; 3 vols.; Paris: Gabalda, 1958-59) 1.208-314; 2.9-305; H. N. Ridderbos, *Paul: An Outline of His Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975) 293-301; V. P. Furnish, *Theology and Ethics in Paul* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1968) 181-206; id., *The Love Command in the New Testament* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1972) 91-131; W. Schrage, *The Ethics of the New Testament* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988) 211-17; J. Piper, "Love Your Enemies": *Jesus' Love Command in the Synoptic Gospels and the Early Christian Paraenesis* (SNTSMS 38; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979) 102-19.

⁸¹ The approach of J. M. G. Barclay's recent volume, *Obeying the Truth: A Study of Paul's Ethics in Galatians* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1988).

One of the conspicuous themes of this section of the epistle is Paul's depiction of Christianity as a religion of love. According to Paul's portrait, the false teachers in Galatia "bite and devour one another" (5:15); in spite of their claims, they do not abide by "*all things* written in the book of the law" because they have neglected the principal part—love. Over against them, "the whole law" for the believer "is fulfilled in one word, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself' (5:14). For the Judaizers circumcision was the acid test of one's loyalty to the God of Israel. However, for the Christian circumcision now counts for nothing: what matters in the new creation is *faith working through love* (5:6; cf. 6:15) and serving one another through love (5:13). For this reason love heads the list of the fruit of the Spirit (5:20). If one walks by the Spirit (5:25), instead of being conceited and provoking others (5:26), one will bear the brother's burden and so fulfill the law of Christ (6:1-2). Even this sketch of the love motif in Galatians informs us that the theology of the new creation was important to Paul because *the lovelessness of the Judaizers was the product of their exclusivistic theology*.

The same perspective is evident in Romans, particularly in chaps. 12-15. Having laid the salvation-historical basis for the mutual reception of Jew and Gentile in chaps. 1-11, Paul comes in the final chapters to speak directly of the social ramifications of believers in one church. Therefore the practical directives of these chapters bring to the fore the very genius of the Christian church as it consists of peoples of divergent backgrounds inseparably joined in the one body of Christ. In the words of H. Strohl:

They are the charter of the new humanity. They indicate the relations which love has created among the different members of the body of Christ. Everywhere the dominant idea is that the [individual] man forms part of a whole; he never lives alone in the world, but is joined by the lines of a close solidarity to others with whom he shares in responsibilities and blessings.⁸²

Paul speaks explicitly of love in 13:8-10. Instead of being overcome with evil (i.e., the evil of seeking vengeance, 12:21), the Christian is to leave the debt of love outstanding, thus fulfilling the law. (That such a reminder was necessary for the Romans becomes evident in chaps. 14-15.) V. 8a is written directly in view of vv. 6-7. In other words, although there are debts which are never to be left outstanding, there is one debt which is always to be left outstanding—the debt of love: we are always to owe our brethren this debt which can never be fully paid. But almost paradoxically, v. 8b explains that the unpaid debt of love is the fulfillment of the law: what from one point of view is an outstanding debt is, from another, a full payment to the law. Note how 8b is answered by 10b: the two in combination give us the essence of this phase of Paul's paraenesis. We are reminded again (from Gal 5:6, 14-15, 20, 22; 6:1-2) that love characterizes the community of the new

⁰ Quoted by A. Feuillet, "Le plan salvifique de Dieu d'après l'Épître aux Romains," *RB* 57 (1950) 508.

creation⁸³ and is the outgrowth of the obedience of faith, which alone satisfies the demands of the law. Both interesting and significant is the fact that the "works of the flesh" in Gal 5:19-21 are mainly attitudes and activities which are disruptive of the life of love and fellowship. As such, they find an important point of contact with Rom 2:8; 16:17: the ἐριθεία and διχοστασία characteristic of those who "disobey the truth" represent a return to chaos, a reversal of God's creation plan for his people.

It is in contrast to Paul's characterization of the new covenant as a community of love that we are to understand one of the NT's most fundamental complaints against then contemporary Judaism. More adequately to understand the issue at stake, it is necessary to take into account the "theology of zeal" which originated in the Hasmonean period. In lieu of a full discussion of the matter, we simply note that the Maccabean "zealots," the forerunners of the first-century group bearing the actual name, are consistently marked out as defenders of the Jewish way of life as embodied in the Torah. They were ready not only to die for the purity of the covenant but to kill for it as well—and they did just that.⁸⁴ Philo (*Spec. Laws* 2.253) tells us the ζηλωταὶ νόμου were merciless to any who would subvert the ancestral ways, and 1QS 9.22 characterizes the righteous man as one who is "to bear unremitting hatred towards all men of ill repute."⁸⁵ (Cf. Jose-

⁸³ Note particularly Furnish's treatment of love and the new creation, *Love Command*, 91-95. "Paul's preaching of love does not just stand alongside his emphasis on justification by faith but is vitally related to it. To believe in Christ means to belong to him, and to belong to him means to share in his death and in the power of his resurrection. Thereby one's whole life is radically reoriented from sin to righteousness as he is freed from bondage to himself and placed under the truly liberating dominion of God's grace" (p. 92).

⁸⁴ See 1 Macc 2:23-28, along with 1 Macc 2:54; 4 Macc 18:12; Sir 45:23-24; 1QS 4.4; 9.23; 1QH 14.14; *T Ash.* 4.5. "Zeal for the law" recurs in vv. 27, 50, 58 of 1 Macc 2. Dunn rightly characterizes the "zealots" of the ilk of Mattathias as "heroes of the faith who had been willing to use the sword to defend and maintain Israel's distinctiveness as God's covenant people" ("Righteousness from the Law' and 'Righteousness from Faith': Paul's Interpretation of Scripture in Romans 10:1-10," in *Tradition and Interpretation in the New Testament: Essays in Honor of E. Earle Ellis for His 60th Birthday* [eds. G. F. Hawthorne and O. Betz; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987] 221). See further the discussions of W F. Farmer, *Maccabees, Zealots, and Josephus* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1956) 60f.; id., "Zealot," IDB 4.937; M. Hengel, *The Zealots* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1989) 146-228. Commenting on the first-century scene, Hengel says that "In every case of serious threat to Israel's sacred blessings, either from within Israel or from outside, the use of violence became a sacred duty" (*ibid.*, 225).

⁸⁵ Regarding the Pharisees, E. Bickerman comments that "Early Pharisaism was a belligerent movement that knew how to hate" (*From Ezra to the Last of the Maccabees: Foundations of Post-Biblical Judaism* [New York: Schocken, 1962] 103). Cf. J. Neusner, *From Politics to Piety: The Emergence of Pharisaic Judaism* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1973) 51-52. Of many examples which could be cited from intertestamental literature, hatred toward the Gentiles in particular surfaces in Jdt 16:17 and throughout the LXX's additions to Esther. Along these lines, P. Benoit, "Qumran and the New Testament," in *Paul and the Dead Sea Scrolls* (eds. J. Murphy-O'Connor and J. H. Charlesworth; New York: Crossroad, 1990) 13, distinguishes Jesus and the Dead Sea community precisely in terms of the former's love of sinners. In the

phus, *Ag. Ap.* 2.37 §§271-72; 2.41 §292.) Paul himself was once such a "zealot" (Gal 1:13-14; Phil 3:6).⁸⁶ To those "zealous for the law" Christianity appeared to subvert loyalty to Judaism and was consequently rejected by the mass of first-century Jews. "That it was misunderstood from the Jewish side at that time as a new sect urging apostasy from the law and assimilation is indirectly the last and most grievous legacy of those Jewish renegades who, between 175 and 164 BC, attempted to do away with the law and 'make a covenant with the people round about'."⁸⁷

It is in opposition to such zeal for the law, and its by-product of hatred for anyone not belonging to Israel (or even specific groups within Israel), that the NT sets forth love not only as the ideal of the new creation but the actual fulfillment of the law. Hence if we ask what is the obedience of faith that results in eschatological justification, the answer is love, which fulfills the law. As Dunn aptly remarks (on Rom 9:32), "The obedience God looked for was the obedience of faith, obedience from the heart (6:17), that is, from a commitment and a lifestyle which penetrate far below matters of race and ritual and which could be sustained and maintained independently of either."⁸⁸

3. *Perseverance*

Without entering into the rich complex of Paul's teaching on perseverance, we recall that the goal of glory, honor, peace, and eternal life is to be attained *καθ' ὑπομονὴν ἔργου ἀγαθοῦ* (2:7). The design of Adam's testing was that he would persevere in obedience until he would enter an eschatological state commensurate with the assumption of what Paul calls elsewhere the "spiritual body" (1 Cor 15:44). Adam failed the test and became the first apostate from the living God; but it is the creation program, commenced in the first man, which is still operative for all his descendants, notwithstanding the disadvantages which Adam has passed on to his posterity (Rom 5:12-18). Hence in Paul the renewal of the creation mandate is embodied in the obedience of faith, i.e., *the work of endurance consequent upon entrance into Christ*. Of particular note is Rom 5:1-5, and especially the conjunction of justification and the *ὑπομονή* which produces *δοκιμή* (v. 4). In the words of James, "Blessed is the man who *endures* trial, for when he

same volume, cf. W. Grundmann, "The Teacher of Righteousness of Qumran and the Question of Justification by Faith in the Theology of the Apostle Paul," 95.

⁸⁶ See further Longenecker, *Paul*, 101-3; Grundmann, "Justification by Faith," 102-3; A. J. Hultgren, "Paul's Pre-Christian Persecutions of the Church: Their Purpose, Locale, and Nature," *JBL* 95 (1976) 97-111; cf. S. G. F. Brandon, *The Zealots* (New York: Scribner's, 1967) 146-220. Of course, "zealot" is being used in a nontechnical (nonfactional) sense to denote the Mattathias-type of attitude toward the violators of the law, an attitude which cut across party boundaries.

⁸⁷ M. Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism* (2 vols.; London: SCM, 1974) 1.314. See Hengel's important discussion of "Zeal as a Typical Element of Piety in Late Judaism," *Zealots*, 177-83.

⁸⁸ Dunn, *Romans* 2.593.

has stood the test he will receive the crown of life which God has promised to those who love him" (1:12). Conspicuous here is the combination of perseverance and love as the preconditions of eternal life. The bottom line then is that *the obedience of faith which finally justifies is perseverance, motivated by love*.⁸⁹ Indeed, it is when Paul's doctrine of the obedience of faith is allowed to speak for itself that any superficial tension between him and James dissipates immediately.⁹⁰

Cambier has assembled some illuminating parallels between Romans and the other Paulines.⁹¹ Like Rom 2:7, Col 1:10-11 link **ὑπομονή** with **ἔργον ἀγαθόν**, thus placing the terms in a distinctively Christian context. We might say that the believer's "good work" (cf. 2 Thess 2:17; 2 Cor 9:8) depends on his "perseverance"; this reproduces the creation pattern evident in Romans 2. Cambier himself notes that **ὑπομονή** designates the Christian life in a manner very characteristic of Paul. In 1 Thess 1:3 the term is joined with the triad **πίστις-ἀγάπη-ἐλπίς** in Paul's praise of his readers' "*work of faith, labor of love and endurance of hope*" (cf. 2 Thess 1:4). Likewise 2 Thess 3:5 is Paul's prayer that God would direct their hearts into the love of God and into the endurance of Christ: "The love of God in the hearts of believers is concretely the **ὑπομονή** of Christ which the believer lives in a gentle and humble service for the benefit of his brethren."⁹² Paul can epitomize his own life and ministry as existence **ἐν ὑπομονῇ πολλῇ**; his acceptance of obstacles and difficulties "with endurance" is his faith in action.⁹³ Hence the **ὑπομονή ἔργου ἀγαθοῦ** of Rom 2:7 for Paul is nothing but "the work of faith" (1 Thess 1:3) or "faith working through love" (Gal 5:6). "For every Christian the . . . endurance (**ὑπομονή**) of trials and of the

⁸⁹ Stendahl states it so well: "The danger is not to get a little worse, and the hope is not to get a little better (ethically, or in terms of faith). It is sharpened in the simplified black and white of all eschatological situations: the dangers of apostasy" (quoted by Donfried, "Justification," 102 n. 52). Mattern then justifiably underscores the primacy of faith as opposed to unbelief in Romans 2 (*Verständnis*, 138).

⁹⁰ Instead of an obstacle to be surmounted, James 2 is actually an invaluable aid in closing the gap between Paul's apparently conflicting statements within Romans (2:13 as compared with 3:28, etc.). J. B. Adamson's discussion of faith and perseverance in James has equal applicability to Paul (*James: The Man and His Message* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989] 266-345). See his discussion of James and Paul on justification (pp. 203-10). James' essential point (2:21-26) is that Genesis 22 represents the fulfillment (complement) of Abraham's justifying faith in Gen 15:6. Consequently he has in view periodic vindications in testing subsequent to initial justification by faith alone, as confirmed by "the perseverance of Job" (5:11). See R. C. H. Lenski (a Lutheran!), *The Interpretation of the Epistle to the Hebrews and the Epistle of James* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1946) 589, and D. J. Moo, *The Letter of James: Introduction and Commentary* (Leicester: Inter-Varsity, 1985) 109-10.

⁹¹ Cambier, "Judgement," 190-93.

⁹² *Ibid.*, 191. This runs counter to Sanders' claim that it is "un-Pauline to require good works" (*Law*, 129).

⁹³ Cambier, "Judgement," 191.

limitations of our human condition is an expression of solid faith, of hope and the love which has been given to him by the Holy Spirit."⁹⁴

Of course, the idea of perseverance is hardly unique to Paul. Even a passing acquaintance with pre-Christian Jewish literature is sufficient to inform one that *the* issue before its authors was precisely loyalty to the Mosaic standards in the face of widespread apostasy. It is against this backdrop that Paul's argumentation in 2 Corinthians 3 is seen to be so radical. The old covenant for him was predominantly one of "death" and "condemnation" (vv. 7, 9); it was only a killing letter (v. 6). The reason is that the old was provisional, its glory was fading (vv. 7-11). The new covenant, however, gives life because it is the era of the Spirit and of the Lord who is the Spirit (vv. 6, 8, 16-18). This makes Paul's contrast of old and new eschatological (as in Rom 2:29),⁹⁵ as is his dichotomy of flesh/Spirit (e.g., Rom 8:1-17; Gal 5:16-26).⁹⁶ Therefore the Jewish teachers in Corinth, as Israel generally, insist on remaining on the wrong side of the eschatological divide. They believe that they possess the "commandments of life" (Bar 3:9, 14), but in reality they are the implement of death. In and of themselves the commandments are only a killing letter; only the Spirit (= the Lord who is the Spirit) can make alive. Instead of obeying the Torah, Christians now have become obedient to the form of teaching, i.e., the Pauline gospel concerning God's Son, to which they have been committed (Rom 6:17 in connection with 1:1-3a; 2:16). Thus perseverance for Paul is bound up with one's inclusion in Christ (= new covenant/new creation); only in him is there no condemnation (Rom 8:1). In the words of Heb 7:22, Christ is the surety of *a better covenant*; it is he who insures the perseverance of his people.

From the entire foregoing discussion we may conclude that the passage from present justification by faith alone to future justification by the obedience of faith is both natural and to be expected, given the broader purview—and especially the creation character—of Paul's theology of faith and obedience. However, this conclusion' is of sufficient practical importance that something more must be said. As Sanders⁹⁷ and Snodgrass⁹⁸ acknowledge concerning the Jewish doctrine of judgment, this is not justification by works (in any meritorious sense) but *an extension of the righteousness of God*. Snodgrass in particular speaks of the apparent incongruity, for modern readers, of joining judgment according to works with God's mercy.

⁹⁴ Ibid., 191-92. Sanders criticizes Mattern (see above n. 89) for making the principal issue in Romans 2 faith as opposed to unbelief. Yet he has missed the significance of "the obedience of faith" as providing the conceptual framework for everything Paul writes in Romans. No wonder then he thinks that 1:18-2:29 is beset with numerous internal inconsistencies and is atypical of Paul (*Law*, 123, 132).

⁹⁵ Snodgrass rightly identifies "glory," "honor," and "immortality" in 2:7 as "eschatological gifts" ("Justification," 81).

⁹⁶ See Barclay, *Obeying the Truth*, 178-215.

⁹⁷ Sanders, *Paul*, 128.

⁹⁸ Snodgrass, "Justification," 78.

He notes that although there were abuses of both ideas in ancient Judaism, neither the OT nor Jewish literature sensed any anomaly between the two. Indeed, Ps 62:12, which is normally considered to be the source of Rom 2:6, actually says: "To thee, O Lord, belongs *steadfast love*. For thou dost requite a man *according to his work*."

When both themes are kept together, there is no problem. When the two are separated, an over-emphasis on either could and did lead to perversion. Over-emphasis on judgment according to works could lead to casuistry and a strict doctrine of weighing. Over-emphasis on God's mercy could lead to presumption of his mercy and neglect of obedience.⁹⁹

In light of the possible (and actual!) alarm of many Christians at such ideas it is necessary to stress that although the obedience in question entails specific and concrete acts of a lifestyle pleasing to God (e.g., Matt 25:31-46), it is equally important that we are not to miss the wood for the trees. That is to say, the future justification of God's people is not made to hinge on, say, 51% (or more!) of law-keeping,¹⁰⁰ because *obedience itself is the product of faith; and where true faith and love exist, there must be ultimate vindication*.¹⁰¹ When cause and effect are thus kept in proper sequence, our initial anxiety at the notion of justification by "doing" should be ameliorated if not quelled altogether. If we may hear Snodgrass again:

It is not necessary to recoil from this idea in fear of some theory of "works righteousness" or in fear of diminishing the role of Christ in the purposes of God. Nor is there any idea of a 'natural theology' in the pejorative sense of the term. The witness of all the Biblical traditions and much of Judaism is that none stands before God in *his or her own righteousness*. There is no thought in Romans 2 of a person being granted life because he or she was a moral human being, independent of God. The whole context of 1:18f. assumes the necessity of recognizing God as God and honouring him with one's life. The description of those who work the good in 2:7, 14-15, and 29 shows that the obedience is a direct result of the activity of God.¹⁰²

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ In keeping with the Jewish model, perfection is not required for salvation (Snodgrass, "Justification," 79; see n. 53 for refs.).

¹⁰¹ "The final criterion at the last judgment is, for Paul, not how many good works man has performed—this is irrelevant since it is the Spirit which enables man to do those deeds of love—but whether man has held fast and remained obedient to this new life in Christ. It is the criterion of the obedience of faith . . . which will enable us to understand many of the Pauline last judgment texts" (Donfried, "Justification," 102-13). We may add to this N. M. Watson's observation that Paul's warnings of judgment are directed at those who are "puffed up", guilty of presumption, living in a state of illusion" ("Justified by Faith, Judged by Works," 216).

¹⁰² Snodgrass, "Justification," 80-81 (italics mine). "Judgment according to works is not the contradiction of justification by faith, but its presupposition. The significance of faith and participation in Christ for obedience are assumed for Paul" (ibid., 86).

Though requiring a study in itself, it is precisely the Christian's union with Christ and the gift of his Spirit which are the fountainhead of the obedience of faith: it is *in Christ* that one becomes a doer of the law, not in the sense of sinless perfection but in one's commitment to God's (new) covenant, whose surety and mediator is Christ (Heb 7:22; 8:6).¹⁰³ As in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive (1 Cor 15:22): it is because of the obedience of Christ, the Last Adam, that the people of God have become obedient in him, as once they were disobedient in the first Adam (Rom 5:12-19).¹⁰⁴ In the comprehensive sense, Christ is the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him (Heb 5:9), as they are enabled to do so by "the Spirit of Christ" (Rom 8:9), who is the ἀρραβών of their inheritance in him (2 Cor 1:22; 5:5; Eph 1:14).¹⁰⁵ With these important Christological qualifications, "doing the law" in Rom 2:13 is no different in kind than the OT's classic statement of "covenantal nomism," Lev 18:5: one continues to live within the covenant relationship by compliance with its terms, i.e., perseverance.

Otherwise put, in Christ we have become the righteousness of God (2 Cor 5:21). This succinct statement of the believer's mode of existence gains in relevance when viewed in connection with the preceding declaration that "if anyone is in Christ, behold, the new creation!" (v. 18). The very burden of the above exposition has been that Paul depicts the obedience of faith issuing in eschatological justification as a new creation: what man in Adam has failed to obtain, i.e., glory, honor, and immortality, man in Christ has. The whole of created reality has been subjected to Christ, and in Christ man once more will be crowned with glory and honor (Heb 2:5-9). This leads us to agree with Käsemann that the righteousness of God is his sovereign power effecting a new creation.¹⁰⁶ "The faithful *are* the world as it has been recalled to the sovereignty of God, the company of those who live

¹⁰³ Sanders is wrong in relegating Rom 2:13 to a category distinct from Rom 14:10; 2 Cor 5:10, in that it refers to all humanity who are judged by one standard, the law (*Law*, 126). He does not allow for the fact that when Paul pens the words of 2:13 he has in mind what he will say from 3:21 onward, viz., that men are justified and become obedient *in Christ*. Man in Christ becomes a doer of the law, i.e., one who perseveres in the covenant, and is enabled to achieve what Israel and the nations could not.

¹⁰⁴ "Christ is the new Adam, because as the bearer of human destiny, he brings in the world of obedience" (Käsemann, "Righteousness," 180; cf. Snodgrass, "Justification," 81-82). Note how Phil 2:8's assertion that Christ was "obedient unto death" is evocative of the Adam motif (as it intersects with that of the Servant of Yahweh). The conjunction of v. 8 with vv. 12-13 demonstrates that for Paul Christian obedience is linked inextricably to Christ in his role as Adam/Servant, the obedient one who is to be obeyed.

¹⁰⁵ The "downpayment" of the Spirit in Eph 1:14 is paralleled by the "sealing" of the same Spirit in the preceding verse. In turn the Spirit's sealing (with a view to the day of redemption) in 4:30 becomes the basis of the unity of the body of Christ, a preventive against the chaos of lovelessness (vv. 31-32).

¹⁰⁶ Käsemann, "Righteousness," 180: "δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ is for Paul God's sovereignty over the world revealing itself eschatologically in Jesus."

under the eschatological justice of God, in which company, according to II Cor 5:21, God's righteousness becomes manifest on earth."¹⁰⁷

We close with a pastoral corollary. Because the judgment of God "according to truth" envisages the obedience of faith, it is of primary importance that *preaching minister to the upbuilding of faith: faith and its growth must receive the primacy*. As Christ preeminently was the man of faith, so believers in him are of οἱ ἐκ πίστεως (Gal 3:9); everything they do in service to God proceeds ἐκ πίστεως (Rom 14:23). Thus in warning the Corinthians against possible falling-away, Paul exhorts them to examine themselves to see whether they are holding to their *faith* (2 Cor 13:5). It is to this end that he refuses to be lord of their *faith* but rather the helper of their joy, because they stand by *faith* (2 Cor 1:24). It would be fair to depict *the* problem of the Christian life as temptation to apostasy, particularly in the face of the on-going flesh/Spirit conflict (Rom 7:14-25; 8:1-16; Gal 5:16-26).¹⁰⁸ Yet when ministers lose sight of the importance of faith and its nurture, preaching inevitably bears the character of intimidation and threatening and proves counter-productive, in the end, because perseverance, i.e., true inward perseverance, is contingent on the things which make for faith and joy. So appropriate is V. A. Shepherd's observation on Calvin's doctrine of faith and sanctification:

Faith is the Christ-engendered means of Christ "forming himself" in man... while Christ really is the believer's sanctification (that is, *coram Deo* the man of faith is a new creature and is advancing in holiness) he must ever remain such. ... Faith, then, is not a channel by which Christ's holiness is transfused into believers until a point of sufficiency is reached. Faith is, rather, that fellowship with Christ in which the believer is given such an anticipation of the full renewal of the day of the Lord that he is moved presently to aspire zealously after it.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁷ Ibid. 181 (italics his). We recall that Kertelge similarly defines the righteousness of God as his redemptive power offsetting the sway of the old aeon ("*Rechtfertigung*," 104).

¹⁰⁸ Barclay concludes that the flesh and Spirit antithesis takes us to the heart of Paul's ethics in a particularly direct way: "It reveals the situation of believers transformed by the power of the new age and enlisted in the service of the Lord and yet required to live out that service in the midst of the lures and temptations of the old age by a constant renewal of their obedience to the truth in faith" (*Obeying the Truth*, 215). Cf. the likewise excellent remarks of Dunn, *Jesus and the Spirit* (London: SPCK, 1975) 308-18; id., "Rom 7:14-25 in the Theology of Paul," *TZ* 31 (1975) 272-73.

¹⁰⁹ V. A. Shepherd, *The Nature and Function of Faith in the Theology of John Calvin* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1983) 38.

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