

**“By Faith, Not By Sight”: The Order of Salvation in Pauline Theology**  
**Holy Trinity Presbyterian Church (PCA)**  
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**Part I**

**Objective**

To identify the key aspects of Paul's theology

**Overview remarks**

Biblical Theology

- Distinctive character of each of the writers within redemptive history. Each writer is the instrument of God's revelation.
- Hebrews 1:1-2
  - 1) Revelation as progressive/historical
  - 2) Diversity (genres)
  - 3) Christ as endpoint – Eschatological
- Our interest is not Paul, but Christ!
  - Not Paul's genius or experience
  - Paul the Apostle – instrument of Christ
  - Our concern is to accept the message of Christ from Paul
    - 1 Thess 2:13 – Paul is not the primary author
- Our sources: 13 letters and portions of acts (affirm authorship and reliability)

Systematic Theology:

- Should be non-speculative
- Dependent on sound exegesis
- Presentation of topics show unified teaching of whole Bible

Systematic and Biblical theology must be connected to one another.

**By Faith, Not By Sight**

2 Corinthians 5:7

- in context of the bodily resurrection
  - future hope

**Center of Paul's Theology**

Does Paul have a center? Yes, there are concentric circles of interest in Paul's theology.

What are they?

Reformational school holds that justification (sola fide) was the center.

- Justification as forensic/legal

Historical/critical school holds that justification was not the center.

- Paul's primary concern was sin as an enslaving power
- Emphasized personal communion or “participatory” involvement with God

Debate about “personal salvation”

- ordo salutis – order of salvation

**Eschatology**

The center of Paul's theology is Christ's death and resurrection.

- most agree on this point (see Vos & Ridderbos)

What place does justification have in Paul's theology?

- Relationship between history of salvation and order of salvation
  - historia salutis or ordo salutis
  -

Ordo Salutis can mean either:

- A pattern or sequence of events of salvific events
- ongoing application of salvation (this is what Dr. Gaffin will be primarily referring to)

Dr. Gaffin wants to show that Paul is in fact concerned with "how one gets saved"

- 2 Thes 3:2
- 1 Thes 4:13
- Salvation can only occur where there is faith

There is no redemption without ordo salutis

1 Cor 15:3-4 - "3 For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, 4 that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures"

- "among first things" - of first importance
  - center is death and resurrection – center of Gospel
- Paul's theology is "gospel-theology"
- Death and Resurrection
  - According to scriptures (Fulfillment)
  - For our sins (Human relationship/Sin)
- Fulfillment
  - Absolute – final
  - Eschatological (final consummation)
    - future
    - first coming
      - Gal 1:4 - "who gave himself for our sins to deliver us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father"
        - Present evil age vs age to come
        - Deliverance of church from world order
        - Both personal and corporate (cosmic)
      - Gal 6:14 - "But far be it from me to boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world."
        - already a present reality
      - 2 Cor 5:17 - "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come."
        - New creation order
- Sin
  - In all its facets (not just guilt)
  - Comprehensive deliverance
    - 1 Cor 15:17
    - Under sin totally
  - In Paul, sin is rebellion, disobedience
    - legal
    - relational
  - Consequences
    - Guilty before God (inexorably guilty) – our status

- Slaves to sin (utterly helpless) - our constitution
- Death and resurrection is forensic and transformative
  - both justification and sanctification
    - Rom 4:25 & 2 Cor 5:15
  - Paul does not separate these two aspects!

### **Union**

Christ's death is efficacious for humans only as they are with (or in) Him

- Eph 2:5-6

Reconcile Christ for us/we in Him

- Christ is one *for* many
- Christ is more than one *among* many
  - He is firstborn among brothers
  - He is our substitute
    - representative vs. substitutionary
      - 1 Cor 1:13

Forensic and union (participatory) are not in tension

- participatory involves legal
- forensic always functions within participatory

### **Corporate**

The elect are with Him at death, in Him by faith

There is a corporate aspect

- called into a body – 1 Cor 12:13
- Cosmic aspect cannot be ignored

### **Conclusion**

Center of Paul's Theology:

Order:

- Union with Christ by faith – First importance

Neither justification or sanctification alone

Justification is not primarily ecclesiological, but is also soteriological

## Part II

The groundwork has now been laid to explore Eschatology and the Ordo Salutis

### Eschatology and Anthropology

2 Cor 4:16 - "So we do not lose heart. Though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed day by day."

How does Paul view the constitution of a Christian between the resurrection and the return?

- Inner man/Outer man – two aspects of one whole
  - not a dual personality
  - two ways of viewing a person as a whole
  - outer man= body, members
  - inner man= heart, spirit
- Outer Man
  - not merely physical
  - who I am as a functioning person
- Inner Man
  - who I am at my core
  - pre-functional disposition

What is true for the believer is not yet true for the body

- Not the same as old man/new man
  - Rom 6:6
  - Gal 3:28
  - Gal 3:9-10
- Outer man and inner man are presently antithetical

How does this relate to union with Christ?

- already/not yet distinction
- 1 Cor 5:1-10
  - by faith – inner man
  - by sight – outer man

For the present, our union is by faith, not yet by sight

### Sanctification

Renovative or Sanctification

- I. Unity between Christ's Resurrection and the resurrection of believers
  - Christ is firstfruits (1 Cor 15:20)
  - Paul sees it as future – but also part of history
    - harvest of resurrection
      - harvest has begun – with Christ
  - Eph 2:5-6
  - Three Factors
    - 1) Resurrection of Christ

- 2) What takes place in the life of a believer
- 3) What is the future – bodily resurrection

- “Episodes of resurrection”
  - inner man has been raised
  - outer man will be raised
    - you will never be more resurrected in your inner being
  - language that is used is not figurative
    - inner man has been raised
    - Phillipians 1:6 – good work that is begun is resurrection

II. Christian life is resurrection life  
- already/not yet

- Paul's exhortations to the church – Paul's ethics
  - indicative and imperative
- Col 3:1-4 “If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.”
  - Indicative – conditional – you have been
  - Imperative –consequential - seek the things...set your mind
- Resurrection life as *possession* and *goal*
  - *set your mind on what you already have*
  - because you *have* resurrection life, *seek* after it!
- The problem of Indicative/Imperative in Paul
  - not really a problem
  - is a pattern
  - other passages: Gal 5:25, Gal 5:1, Eph 5:8, 1 Cor 5:7, Gal 3:27/Rom 13:14, Gal 3:9-10/Eph 4:22-24, Rom 6:2/Rom 6:12
- Paul's exhortation – become what you already are (in Christ)
- Relationship of Indicative/Imperative
  - Paul is covenantal theologian
  - exist in a positive relationship – not in tension
  - Indicative is Christ and His salvation
  - Imperative is Law of God (Ten commands as center)
  - is irreversible
    - indicative is first, foundational
    - imperative is fruit of indicative
      - what we are is not based on what we do
    - is inseparable
      - mystic vs. moralistic
      - indicative always precedes imperative
- Phil 2:12-13 “Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his

good pleasure.”

- our activity is dependent on God's
  - we work just because He is working
  - mysterious math of God's covenant – not 50/50
    - 100% work of God
    - 100% activity of Christian
  
- Rom 6:12-15 “Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal bodies, to make you obey their passions. Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness. For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.”
  - If you are alive from the dead, present yourselves for righteousness
  - “alive from the dead”
    - present indicative (already)
    - basis for obeying the imperative
  - “in your mortal bodies”
    - the future indicative (not yet)
    - basis for need and scope of imperative

### III. Historical and Theological Reflections

Has the reformed tradition properly emphasized the resurrection of the inner man?

- preaching power of indwelling spirit
- down-payment on future inheritance
  
- Sanctification is not a response of gratitude
  - this leads to moralism
  
- Sanctification is not just a process
  - also a definitive reality

### Part III

Dr. Gaffin did not have enough time to develop the third part of his lectures. Question and Answer time followed.

### Eschatology and Justification

How should we view Justification in view of the already/not yet dynamic?

Eschatological “already” of Justification

- Rom 8:1 “There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.”
- Verdict has been brought forward and applied

Eschatological “not yet” of Justification

- We have been justified once and for allegorical
- References to future justification (minimal)
  - Rom 2:13
  - Rom 5:19
  - Gal 5:5
  - 2 Tim 4:8
- the case for future aspect of salvation and justification
  - 1) presumptive considerations
  - 2) forensic significance
  - 3) adoption
  - 4) final judgment
- The WCF - “openly acknowledged and acquitted” on day of judgment
  - Christians will be judged and acquitted (future)
- Acquittal and Justification
  - overlapping meaning
  - not synonymous
  - justification contains acquittal
- 1) presumptive considerations
  - justification must be in union
  - justification must occur in already/not yet context
  - justification must occur in inner/outer man
- 3) Adoption
  - a forensic reality
  - we are not naturally God's sons (Eph 2:5)
  - Rom 8:12-17, 25
    - adoption as present and future
    - what is still future?
      - revelation of the sons of God
      - redemption of our bodies
  - 2 Cor 5:7 – adoption by faith, not by sight
  - 1 John 3:2