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## Justified by Faith, Judged According to Works

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## JUSTIFIED BY FAITH, JUDGED ACCORDING TO WORKS: ANOTHER LOOK AT A PAULINE PARADOX

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Nigel Watson articulates in blunt terms the perennial friction between the twin Pauline themes of justification by faith and judgment according to works: “either justification is emptied of its meaning or judgment by works is rendered harmless.”<sup>1</sup> The challenge is how to fully and impartially affirm both Pauline teachings. For understandable (and at times necessary) reasons, the Protestant branch of the church has conscientiously shone its theological spotlight on justification by faith while, in light of perceived Roman imbalances, begrudgingly putting up with the prodigal son of judgment according to deeds. Yet unless Protestantism is prepared to domesticate the judgment motif to the point of signifying little more than “the seriousness of the moral struggle in the Christian life,”<sup>2</sup> we must continue to grapple with this thorny issue—lest we promote either presumptuousness (neglecting the judgment/works motif) or equally dangerous moralism (neglecting the justification/faith motif).

The tension is neither new nor limited to the rarified air of esoteric academia.<sup>3</sup> This essay, moreover, does not proceed under the illusion that the light of consensus can be seen at the end of the scholarly tunnel. Still less does it attempt an exhaustive analysis of this “jungle full of traps and temptations.”<sup>4</sup> It does attempt, however, to create a taxonomy of ways in which scholars reconcile justification by faith and judgment according to works in Paul before suggesting a way forward in light of a few neglected factors in the discussion. In this way we hope to spur on a discussion which “has still a long way to run.”<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Nigel M. Watson, “Justified by Faith, Judged by Works—An Antinomy?” *NTS* 29 (1983) 217. The statement comes in an explication of the thought of Wilfried Joest (see below).

<sup>2</sup> Alan Richardson, *An Introduction to the Theology of the New Testament* (New York: Harper, 1958) 342; similarly Michael J. Gorman, *Reading Paul* (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2008) 171.

<sup>3</sup> On the latter, witness the intense sallies exchanged a generation ago between John MacArthur (*The Gospel according to Jesus: What Does Jesus Mean When He Says, “Follow Me”?* [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1988]) and Zane Hodges (*Absolutely Free! A Biblical Reply to Lordship Salvation* [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1989]; idem, *The Gospel Under Siege: A Study on Faith and Works* [2d ed.; Dallas: Rendención Viva, 1991]).

<sup>4</sup> Michael Bird, *The Saving Righteousness of God: Studies on Paul, Justification, and the New Perspective* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2007) 172.

<sup>5</sup> James D. G. Dunn, *The New Perspective on Paul* (rev. ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008) 97.

## I. PROPOSED RECONCILIATIONS

We begin by noting fourteen ways scholars have sought to square Paul's teaching on justification by faith with that of judgment according to works. The goal is to provide more specificity than normally afforded—the usual breakdown consists of three to five options<sup>6</sup>—while recognizing that the number of scholars examined, no matter how many, will be only slightly greater than the number of distinct attempts to reconcile these two Pauline teachings, since almost no one expresses their own resolution exactly as others do. In what follows, then, we attempt to land somewhere between limiting the taxonomy to three or four (and thereby missing significant nuance among scholars who would be unhappily lumped together) and delineating each individual view with such specificity that it eventually stands alone. Having too many categories is unhelpful to the reader of this essay; too few is unfaithful to the scholars of this taxonomy.

Throughout, we are asking how Pauline statements which refuse to give works a role in justifying sinners (Rom 3:20, 28; 4:1–8; Gal 2:16; 3:2–5; Phil 3:9) cohere theologically with statements which equally clearly ascribe a critical role to obedience in final judgment (Rom 2:13; 14:10–12; 1 Cor 3:10–15; 4:5; 2 Cor 5:10; 11:15; Gal 6:7–8).

## 1. Irreconcilable

- a. Paul is inconsistent and contradictory (Wrede,<sup>7</sup> Kuula<sup>8</sup>);
- b. Paul's judgment according to works motif is an unfortunate Jewish retention not adequately jettisoned by the former Pharisee (Weiss,<sup>9</sup> Pfeleiderer,<sup>10</sup> Braun<sup>11</sup>);

<sup>6</sup> E.g. Klyne R. Snodgrass, "Justification by Grace—to the Doers: An Analysis of the Place of Romans 2 in the Theology of Paul," *NTS* 32 (1986) 73; Leon Morris, *The Epistle to the Romans* (PNTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988) 148; Thomas Schreiner, "Did Paul Believe in Justification by Works? Another Look at Romans 2," *BBR* 3 (1993) 132–39; and the sources listed in Terence Donaldson, *Paul and the Gentiles: Remapping the Apostle's Convictional World* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1997) 327, n. 26.

<sup>7</sup> William Wrede, *Paul* (trans. Edward Lummis; London: Philip Green, 1907) 77–78.

<sup>8</sup> Kari Kuula, *The Law, the Covenant, and God's Plan: Paul's Treatment of the Law* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2003) 136–37. Maurice Goguel, too, sees Paul as inconsistent, but, unlike Wrede and Kuula, does not see this as detracting at all from Paul's overall coherence. Consistency, he believes, is an unfair expectation of the apostle in light of his varied contexts ("La caractère, à la fois actuel et futur, du salut dans la théologie paulinienne," in *The Background of the New Testament and Its Eschatology: In Honour of Charles Harold Dodd* [ed. William D. Davies and David Daube; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1956] 336). Calvin J. Roetzel simply believes that "any attempt to reconcile these motifs may be more of a concern of the western theologian for consistency than a concern of Paul's" (*Judgement in the Community: A Study of the Relationship between Eschatology and Ecclesiology in Paul* [Leiden: Brill, 1972] 178). Some place Heikki Räisänen in this category (e.g. Snodgrass, "Justification by Grace—to the Doers" 88, n. 12; Bird, *Saving Righteousness* 158; Jean-Noël Aletti, "Review of Heikki Räisänen, Paul and the Law (WUNT 29)," *Bib* 66 [1985] 428–29), but this is incorrect; Räisänen understands Paul's view of the law to be inconsistent, but not the more narrow question of Paul's integration of justification by faith and judgment according to works (see Räisänen, *Paul and the Law* [2d ed.; WUNT 29; Tübingen: Mohr/Siebeck, 1987] 184–85).

<sup>9</sup> Johannes Weiss, *Der Erste Korintherbrief* (KEK; ed. Heinrich A. Meyer; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1886) 113–14.

2. Reconcilable if Justification is Given Interpretive Authority
- c. Justification is by faith, and the concept of one being judged and granted eternal life based upon obedience is hypothetical (Turretin,<sup>12</sup> Ritschl,<sup>13</sup> Lietzmann,<sup>14</sup> Longenecker,<sup>15</sup> Wilckens,<sup>16</sup> Thielman,<sup>17</sup> Waters,<sup>18</sup> Westerholm<sup>19</sup>);
- d. The “judgment according to works” motif serves Paul’s rhetorical purposes, unsettling the ethically complacent (Wetter,<sup>20</sup> Joest,<sup>21</sup> Conzelmann,<sup>22</sup> Synofzik,<sup>23</sup> N. Watson,<sup>24</sup> Elliot,<sup>25</sup> van Spanje<sup>26</sup>);

<sup>10</sup> Otto Pfeleiderer, *Der Paulinismus: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der urchristlichen Theologie* (2d ed.; Leipzig: Reisland, 1890) 280–83.

<sup>11</sup> Herbert Braun, *Gerichtsgedanke und Rechtfertigungslehre bei Paulus* (UNT 19; Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs’sche, 1930) 96–97. For a fuller (though dated) list of those who hold to this view, see Watson, “Justified by Faith,” 220, n. 8. Charles H. Cosgrove erroneously attributes this view to Rudolf Bultmann (“Justification in Paul: A Linguistic and Theological Reflection,” *JBL* 106 [1987] 653, n. 3; citing Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament* [2 vols.; trans. Kendrick Grobel; New York: Scribner’s, 1951, 1955] 1:75); based on Bultmann’s comments at 1:261–62, he may fit better in the “hypothetical” category. Jürgen Becker does understand Romans 2 to be evidence of Paul’s pharisaical past, but sees Paul as employing these Jewish traditions purposefully, not blindly (*Paul: Apostle to the Gentiles* [trans. O. C. Dean, Jr.; Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1993] 46–51).

<sup>12</sup> Francis Turretin, *Institutes of Elenctic Theology* (3 vols.; ed. James T. Dennison; trans. George Musgrave Giger; Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian & Reformed, 1992–97) 2:637.

<sup>13</sup> Albrecht Ritschl, *Die christliche Lehre von der Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung* (3 vols.; 2d ed.; Bonn: Marcus, 1895–1903) 2:316–18.

<sup>14</sup> Hans Lietzmann, *Die Briefe des Apostels Paulus I: Die vier Hauptbriefe* (HNT 3; Tübingen: Mohr/Siebeck, 1910) 13–15.

<sup>15</sup> Richard N. Longenecker, *Paul, Apostle of Liberty: The Origin and Nature of Paul’s Christianity* (New York: Harper & Row, 1964) 121–22 (though note the attempt to distance himself from Lietzmann); and more tentatively in his later “The Focus of Romans: The Central Role of 5:1–8:39 in the Argument of the Letter,” in *Romans and the People of God* (ed. Sven K. Soderlund and N. T. Wright; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999) 54–56.

<sup>16</sup> Ulrich Wilckens, *Der Brief an die Römer* (3 vols.; EKK; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 1978–2003) 1:132–33.

<sup>17</sup> Frank Thielman, *Paul and the Law: A Contextual Approach* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1994) 172–74.

<sup>18</sup> Guy Prentiss Waters, *Justification and the New Perspectives on Paul: A Review and Response* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian & Reformed, 2004) 175–77; cf. 209–10.

<sup>19</sup> Stephen Westerholm, *Perspectives Old and New on Paul: The “Lutheran” Paul and His Critics* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004) 328–29, 387–88; though see 283; idem, “Paul’s Anthropological ‘Pessimism’ in Its Jewish Context,” in *Divine and Human Agency in Paul and His Cultural Environment* (ed. John M. G. Barclay and Simon J. Gathercole; LNTS 335; Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2006) 74–76. Be it noted that a general theological understanding of works-based judgment as hypothetical is not equivalent to seeing, more specifically, “the doers of the law” in Rom 2:13 as hypothetical; the first group would be smaller than the second. For a list of those who take Rom 2:13 hypothetically, see Bird, *Saving Righteousness* 159, n. 13.

<sup>20</sup> Gillis P. Wetter, *Der Vergeltungsgedanke bei Paulus: Eine Studie zur Religion des Apostels* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1912) 75–85. Wetter argues that Paul no longer believes in an actual final judgment; references to God’s wrath and judgment, emerging from Greek concepts, merely denote impersonal forces.

<sup>21</sup> Wilfried Joest, *Gesetz und Freiheit: Das Problem des Tertius Usus Legis bei Luther und die neuteamentliche Parainese* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1968) 177–90.

<sup>22</sup> Hans Conzelmann, *An Outline of the Theology of the New Testament* (trans. John Bowden; London: SCM, 1969) 247–48. Conzelmann argues specifically that judgment according to works, though not hypothetical, serves mainly to awaken sinners to moral hopelessness in final judgment apart from grace. Cf. idem, *A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians* (Hermeneia);

- e. Judgment according to works is an event subsequent to a final, works-free justification, and this judgment is the meting out of relative degrees of reward (Filson,<sup>27</sup> Devor,<sup>28</sup> Mattern,<sup>29</sup> Vos,<sup>30</sup> Morris,<sup>31</sup> Ladd,<sup>32</sup> Barnett,<sup>33</sup> Reymond,<sup>34</sup> Stettler<sup>35</sup>);
3. Reconcilable if Judgment/Obedience is Given Interpretive Authority
- f. Justification by faith excludes legalistic/self-righteous obedience from playing a role in one's final verdict; it is indeed the "doers of the law"—albeit imperfectly, and only by divine grace—who will be justified (Cambier,<sup>36</sup> Snodgrass,<sup>37</sup> Fuller<sup>38</sup>);

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Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975) 83–84; idem, "Gericht Gottes III," in *Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart: Handwörterbuch für Theologie und Religionswissenschaft* (ed. Kurt Galling; 7 vols.; Tübingen: Mohr/Siebeck, 1959; repr., 1986) 2:1419–21.

<sup>23</sup> Ernst Synofzik, *Die Gerichts- und Vergeltungsaussagen bei Paulus: Eine traditionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung* (Göttingen: Vandenhoech & Ruprecht, 1977). Synofzik calls Paul's rhetorical use of the judgment motif an "Argumentationsmittel" (p. 105) and emphasizes Paul's use of pre-existing materials.

<sup>24</sup> Watson, "Justified by Faith" 214–21. Watson and Joest emphasize that the relationship between the two motifs is dialectical and need not be conceptually integrated.

<sup>25</sup> Neil Elliot, *The Rhetoric of Romans: Argumentative Constraint and Strategy and Paul's Dialogue with Judaism* (JSNTSup 45; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1990) 120–27. Elliot nears Bassler (on whom see below) in seeing divine impartiality as the dominant note but does not follow Bassler all the way (ibid. 122, n. 2).

<sup>26</sup> Teunis E. van Spanje, *Inconsistency in Paul? A Critique of the Work of Heikki Räisänen* (WUNT 2/110; Tübingen: Mohr/Siebeck, 1999) 180–89.

<sup>27</sup> Floyd W. Filson, *St. Paul's Conception of Recompense* (UNT 21; Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche, 1931) 115.

<sup>28</sup> Richard Devor, "The Concept of Judgment in the Epistles of Paul" (PhD diss., Drew University, 1959).

<sup>29</sup> Lieselotte Mattern, *Das Verständnis des Gerichtes bei Paulus* (ATANT 47; Zürich: Zwingli, 1966) 177–78.

<sup>30</sup> Geerhardus Vos, *The Pauline Eschatology* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1930; repr., Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979) 270–77.

<sup>31</sup> Leon Morris, *The Biblical Doctrine of Judgment* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1960) 67; idem, *New Testament Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990) 64. In his Romans commentary, however, Morris asserts that the solution is probably either that the works according to which one is judged are those which issue forth from faith or that justification inevitably brings with it an accompanying transformative power (*Romans* 148–49).

<sup>32</sup> George Eldon Ladd, *A Theology of the New Testament* (rev. Donald A. Hagner; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993) 611–12.

<sup>33</sup> Paul Barnett, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997) 273–77.

<sup>34</sup> Robert L. Reymond, *A New Systematic Theology of the Christian Faith* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1998) 748–54.

<sup>35</sup> Christian Stettler, "Paul, the Law and Judgement by Works," *EQ* 76 (2004) 195–96.

<sup>36</sup> J.-M. Cambier, "Le jugement de tous les hommes par Dieu seul, selon la vérité dans Rom 2.1–3.20," *ZNW* 67 (1976) 187–213; see esp. 210.

<sup>37</sup> Snodgrass, "Justification by Grace—to the Doers" 86. Akio Ito ("Romans 2: A Deuteronomistic Reading," *JSNT* 18 [1996] 22, n. 7) and Schreiner ("Justification by Works" 138, n. 22) align Glenn N. Davies with Snodgrass at this point, but this is not quite fair. Davies argues that obedience is crucial to the life of the people of God in both Old Testament and New, yet in both instances obedience must be rooted in faith (*Faith and Obedience in Romans: A Study in Romans 1–4* [JSNTSup 39; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1990] 173–75). Davies does not see doing as leading to justification in the same way Snodgrass does; rather (commenting on Rom 2:13), "The doing of the

- g. Justification by faith refers only or mainly to salvation's<sup>39</sup> inauguration; final, eternity-determining judgment depends upon works produced thereafter (Godet,<sup>40</sup> Wernle,<sup>41</sup> Donfried,<sup>42</sup> Sanders,<sup>43</sup> Garlington,<sup>44</sup> Yinger,<sup>45</sup> Rainbow<sup>46</sup>);
- h. Final acquittal is based squarely on works; the  $\delta\iota\kappa$ -lexeme in Paul (as in "justification by faith") refers not to a forensic declaration but an ethically qualitative righteousness (Gore,<sup>47</sup> Van Landingham<sup>48</sup>);

law by these Gentiles *witnesses* to their justification" (66; emphasis added). Cf. Jewett's endorsement of Snodgrass in *Romans: A Commentary* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007) 212.

<sup>38</sup> Daniel P. Fuller, *Gospel and Law, Contrast or Continuum: The Hermeneutics of Dispensationalism and Covenant Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980) 105–20. Cf. Scott J. Hafemann, *The God of Promise and the Life of Faith: Understanding the Heart of the Bible* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2001), though Hafemann does at points distinguish himself from Fuller (e.g. 244–46).

<sup>39</sup> Here and throughout this paper "salvation" refers to the entire soteriological package—not in distinction from, but including, justification.

<sup>40</sup> Frederic L. Godet, *Commentary on Romans* (Kregel Reprint Library Series; Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1977) 117–18.

<sup>41</sup> Paul Wernle, *Der Christ und die Sünde bei Paulus* (Freiburg: Mohr/Siebeck, 1897) 22, 100–102.

<sup>42</sup> Karl P. Donfried, "Justification and Last Judgment in Paul," *ZNW* 67 (1976) 90–110. Donfried proposes a schema in which Paul speaks of justification as past, sanctification as present, and salvation as future (e.g. 99). See also his "Justification and Last Judgment in Paul—Twenty-Five Years Later," in *Paul, Thessalonica, and Early Christianity* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002) 279–92.

<sup>43</sup> E. P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1977) 515–18; idem, *Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983) 105–13. In an appendix to the latter work, however, Sanders treats Romans 2 as a compilation of homiletical material from the diaspora (pp. 123–32).

<sup>44</sup> Don B. Garlington, "The Obedience of Faith in the Letter to the Romans, Part I: The Meaning of *hupakoe pisteos* (Rom 1:5; 16:26)," *WTJ* 52 (1990) 222–23; idem, "The Obedience of Faith in the Letter to the Romans, Part II: The Obedience of Faith and Judgment by Works," *WTJ* 53 (1991) 71–72; idem, *Faith, Obedience, and Perseverance: Aspects of Paul's Letter to the Romans* (WUNT 79; Tübingen: Mohr/Siebeck, 1994) 1, 49, 55, 59–60, 67–71; idem, "The New Perspective on Paul: Two Decades On," in *Studies in the New Perspective on Paul: Essays and Reviews* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2008) 15–16. Bird rightly glosses Garlington's attempt to reconcile justification and judgment in Paul by appealing to the necessity of perseverance (*Saving Righteousness* 164–65)—by which Thomas Aquinas, too, has been understood to reconcile these two didactic poles of Paul's thought (D. C. Fink, "The Doers of the Law Will Be Justified': The Exegetical Origins of Martin Bucer's *Triplex Iustificatio*," *JTS* 58 [2007] 500). Peter T. O'Brien helpfully analyzes Garlington's position ("Was Paul a Covenantal Nomist?" in *Justification and Variegated Nomism*, Vol. 2: *The Paradoxes of Paul* [ed. D. A. Carson, Mark A. Seifrid, and Peter T. O'Brien; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2004] 269, n. 78).

<sup>45</sup> Kent L. Yinger, *Paul, Judaism, and Judgment according to Deeds* (SNTSMS 105; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999) 160, 202, 284. Yinger's framework appropriates Sanders' covenantal nomism, yet the former's specific emphasis is that judgment according to works refers not to divine retribution respecting each individual deed but to a judgment rendered on the basis of the consistent pattern of life (e.g. 16, 160, 181, 284).

<sup>46</sup> Paul A. Rainbow, *The Way of Salvation: The Role of Christian Obedience in Justification* (Carlisle: Paternoster, 2005) 88, 187, 193–203. D. H. Williams attributes a similar view (namely, it is "on the basis of" post-justification works that believers are finally judged) to Origen ("Justification by Faith: A Patristic Doctrine," *JEH* 57 [2006] 655).

<sup>47</sup> Charles Gore, *St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans* (2 vols.; London: Murray, 1900) 1:106–7.

<sup>48</sup> Chris Van Landingham, *Judgment and Justification in Early Judaism and the Apostle Paul* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2006); on the meaning of the  $\delta\iota\kappa$ -word group, see 242–332. Christoph

- i. Justification by faith, emerging in the context of deconstructing ethnocentric tendencies in young Christian communities, was never intended to exclude moral deeds (more generally conceived) from contributing to final acquittal (Dunn,<sup>49</sup> Wright,<sup>50</sup> F. Watson<sup>51</sup>);
  - j. In light of the Christ-event, Gentiles can now be justified by faith alone, while Jews continue to be evaluated based on Torah-observance; hence justification by faith applies to Gentiles, judgment according to works to Jews (M. Barth,<sup>52</sup> Gaston,<sup>53</sup> Gager,<sup>54</sup> Wyschogrod<sup>55</sup>);
4. Reconcilable if both Justification and Judgment Emerge from a More Fundamental Reality<sup>56</sup>
- k. The key is a robust appropriation of the new covenant reality of the empowering, indwelling *Spirit* to all those who have been freely justified solely on the basis of Christ's atoning work (Schreiner,<sup>57</sup> Gathercole,<sup>58</sup> Smith<sup>59</sup>);

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Haufe sees *ethnically* distinctive works excluded in justification (similar to category [i]), yet deduces from this that justification is not by faith alone: rather, God's "grace" simply denotes the way God has mercifully placed an earned salvation within reach of humans (*Die sittliche Rechtfertigungslehre des Paulus* [Halle: Max Niemeyer, 1957]).

<sup>49</sup> James D. G. Dunn, *The Theology of Paul the Apostle* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998) 365–66, 636–37; idem, *New Perspective*, 425–27, 466–67. Dunn's emphasis that justification for Paul generally refers to *initial* justification (e.g. *ibid.* 77–78) perhaps ought to place him in (g) above.

<sup>50</sup> N. T. Wright, "Romans and the Theology of Paul," in *Pauline Theology*, Vol. 3, *Romans* (ed. David M. Hay and E. Elizabeth Johnson; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995) 41; *Romans* (NIB 10; Nashville: Abingdon, 2002) 440. Wright is particularly eager to emphasize the role of the Holy Spirit in connecting justification with judgment (e.g. *Paul: In Fresh Perspective* [Minneapolis: Fortress, 2005] 148; idem, "New Perspectives on Paul," in *Justification in Perspective: Historical Developments and Contemporary Challenges* [ed. Bruce L. McCormack; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2006] 253–55), though justification itself remains a verdict rendered on the basis of an entire life of obedience (*Paul* 121, 148; "New Perspectives" 253). At times, Wright sounds as if he ought to be placed in (g) above (e.g. "The Law in Romans 2," in *Paul and the Mosaic Law* [ed. James D. G. Dunn; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001] 144).

<sup>51</sup> Francis Watson, *Paul, Judaism, and the Gentiles: Beyond the New Perspective* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007) 209–16. Specifically, Watson argues that justification by faith was a pragmatic means to legitimate the break from Judaism to form a distinctly Christian community.

<sup>52</sup> Markus Barth, *Israel and the Church: Contribution to a Dialogue Vital for Peace* (Richmond, VA: John Knox, 1969) 43–78; idem, "Die Stellung des Paulus zu Gesetz und Ordnung," *EvT* 33 (1973) 496–526; idem, "Das Volk Gottes: Juden und Christen in der Botschaft des Paulus," in *Paulus—Apostat oder Apostel? Jüdische und christliche Antworten* (Regensburg: Pustet, 1977) 45–134.

<sup>53</sup> Lloyd Gaston, *Paul and the Torah* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1987) 11–14, 23, 116–34. See also those named along with Gaston in Douglas J. Moo, "Paul and the Law in the Last Ten Years," *SJT* 40 (1987) 288.

<sup>54</sup> John G. Gager, *Reinventing Paul* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000) 43–75.

<sup>55</sup> Michael Wyschogrod, *Abraham's Promise: Judaism and Jewish-Christian Relations* (ed. R. Kendall Soulen; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004) 188–201.

<sup>56</sup> Here more than anywhere there exists considerable overlap; we are dealing not so much with disagreement between categories as diverse emphases.

<sup>57</sup> Thomas R. Schreiner, *The Law and Its Fulfillment: A Pauline Theology of Law* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1993) 179–204; idem, "Justification by Works" 153–55; idem, *Romans* (BECNT; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998) 137–45; idem, *Paul* 471. In his most recent treatment of this theme, Schreiner emphasizes faith (*a la* category [i] above) though this may be simply because it comes in a chapter explaining "faith and obedience" (*New Testament Theology: Magnifying God in Christ* [Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008] 584–85).

- l. Justification and judgment are both rooted in authentic *faith*: justifying faith is acting, laboring, loving faith, by which faith-energized actions are all evaluated (Melancthon,<sup>60</sup> Berkouwer,<sup>61</sup> Ridderbos,<sup>62</sup> Pregeant,<sup>63</sup> Seifrid<sup>64</sup>);
- m. Justification and judgment are both rooted in the lordship-inaugurating *righteousness of God*, with its twin realities of status and power (Schlatter,<sup>65</sup> Kertelge,<sup>66</sup> Käsemann,<sup>67</sup> Stuhlmacher<sup>68</sup>);
- n. Justification and judgment are both rooted in *union with Christ*, a union from which fruit organically and inevitably grows (Calvin,<sup>69</sup> Edwards,<sup>70</sup> O'Brien,<sup>71</sup> Gaffin<sup>72</sup>).

<sup>58</sup> Simon J. Gathercole, *Where Is Boasting? Early Jewish Soteriology and Paul's Response in Romans 1-5* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002) 124–35. Admittedly, Gathercole does not mention the Spirit when dealing with Rom 2:13 in a more recent essay, emphasizing instead that those who do the law are simply the same people who are also justified by faith (idem, “The Doctrine of Justification in Paul and Beyond: Some Proposals,” in *Justification in Perspective* 234–35). On the way in which justification and pneumatology are interconnected, see S. K. Williams, “Justification and the Spirit in Galatians,” *JSN* 29 (1987) 91–100.

<sup>59</sup> Barry D. Smith, *What Must I Do to Be Saved? Paul Parts Company with His Jewish Heritage* (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix, 2007) 196–226.

<sup>60</sup> See “Apology of the Augsburg Confession,” in *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church* (ed. and trans. Theodore G. Tappert; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1959) 143.

<sup>61</sup> G. C. Berkouwer, *Faith and Justification* (trans. Lewis B. Smedes; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1954) 103–12.

<sup>62</sup> Herman Ridderbos, *Paul: An Outline of His Theology* (trans. John Richard de Witt; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975) 178–81.

<sup>63</sup> Russell Pregeant, “Grace and Recompense: Reflections on a Pauline Paradox,” *JAAR* 47 (1979) 91, 93, n. 8.

<sup>64</sup> Mark A. Seifrid, *Christ, Our Righteousness: Paul's Theology of Justification* (NSBT 9; Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2000) 99–105, 147–50; idem, “Unrighteous by Faith: Apostolic Proclamation in Romans 1:18–3:20,” in *Justification and Variegated Nomism* 2:124–25. Luther might be placed here (Martin Luther, *Lectures on Romans* [trans. Wilhelm Pauck; Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 2006] 50; idem, “Preface to the Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans” in *Luther's Works* [ed. Helmut T. Lehmann; 55 vols.; Philadelphia: Muhlenberg, 1960] 35:370–71) were it not for his explicit statement that for believers, the judgment has been abolished and applies to them no more than to the angels (*D. Martin Luthers Werke: Kritische Gesamtausgabe* [ed. J. K. F. Knaake et al.; 61 vols.; Weimar: Hermann Böhlhaus Nachfolger, 1883–1983] 47:102–3).

<sup>65</sup> Adolf Schlatter, *The Theology of the Apostles* (trans. Andreas J. Köstenberger; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1999) 228–41, 279. Schlatter does, however, frequently laud the soteriological importance of union with Christ, and may fit just as neatly in (n) below (e.g. *Theology of the Apostles* 219, 229, 245, 248, 312, 320, and esp. 235–36).

<sup>66</sup> Karl Kertelge, “*Rechtfertigung bei Paulus: Studien zur Struktur und zum Bedeutungsgehalt des paulinischen Rechtfertigungsbegriffs*” (Münster: Aschendorff, 1967) 159–225.

<sup>67</sup> Ernst Käsemann, *Commentary on Romans* (trans. and ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980) 56–61.

<sup>68</sup> Peter Stuhlmacher, *Revisiting Paul's Doctrine of Justification: A Challenge to the New Perspective* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2001) 68–69. Stuhlmacher earlier suggested that the judgment according to works is a judgment of the flesh remaining in the believer (*Gerechtigkeit Gottes bei Paulus* [FRLANT 87; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1965] 51–68, 228–31).

<sup>69</sup> John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (ed. John T. McNeill; trans. Ford Lewis Battles; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1960) 3.11.10; 3.11.20; 3.14.21; 3.16.1; contra Fink, who places Calvin in the “hypothetical” camp (“Doers of the Law” 518, n. 97). According to Seifrid (“Paul's Use of Righteousness Language Against Its Hellenistic Background,” in *Justification and Variegated Nomism* 2:67–72), Luther could be placed in this camp as well; cf. Marcus Johnson, “Luther and Calvin on Union with Christ,” *Fides et Historia* 39 (2007) 59–77.

Two crucial clarifications round out this first section. First, this taxonomy seeks to be representative, not exhaustive. Excluded, for example, is the view of Martin Bucer, who, it has been argued, connected justification with judgment by appealing to predestination.<sup>73</sup> Jouette Bassler, from another viewpoint, argues that justification by faith and judgment according to works coalesce in that both lead toward the overarching concern of divine impartiality.<sup>74</sup> John O'Neill believes Romans 2 must be a later interpolation in light of the way it grates against other statements of Paul's.<sup>75</sup> Failing to see how the two themes are compatible, Richard H. Bell concludes that justification by faith refers to believers and judgment according to works to

<sup>70</sup> Jonathan Edwards, *The "Miscellanies" Entry Nos. a-z, aa-zz, 1-500* (ed. Thomas A. Schafer; New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994) 475-76, 499-500; idem, *The "Miscellanies" Entry Nos. 833-1152* (ed. Amy Plantinga Pauw; New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002) 83, 84-86; idem, *The "Miscellanies" Entry Nos. 1153-1360* (ed. Douglas A. Sweeney; New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004) 506. In another miscellany Edwards interprets the way in which one is "justified by works" by going to Jas 2, but does not interact with any Pauline texts (*Miscellanies 833-1152* 324-25). In his "Blank Bible," Edwards explains Rom 2:13 by aligning it with Jas 1:22-25, but says no more on either text (*The "Blank Bible," Part 2* [ed. Stephen J. Stein; New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006] 988-89). Garlington's passing remark, intended to support his own view, that Edwards "espoused a clear-cut theology of future justification *inclusive* of the obedience of the Christian" is too question-begging to be helpful ("A Review Article: John Piper, *The Future of Justification: A Response to N. T. Wright*," in *Studies in the New Perspective* 235; emphasis added).

<sup>71</sup> Peter T. O'Brien, "Was Paul a Covenantal Nomist?" 265; idem, "Justification in Paul and Some Crucial Issues of the Last Two Decades," in *Right with God: Justification in the Bible and the World* (ed. D. A. Carson; Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 1992) 94.

<sup>72</sup> Richard B. Gaffin, Jr., *By Faith, Not by Sight: Paul and the Order of Salvation* (Carlisle: Pater-noster, 2006) 94-99. A recurring theme within this final larger category is the evidential role of works. Here we have in mind John Owen (*Justification by Faith* [repr.; Grand Rapids: Sovereign Grace, 1971] 139, 143, 159-60); C. E. B. Cranfield (*A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* [2 vols.; ICC; Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1975, 1979] 1:151-52, 173; idem, "Giving a Dog a Bad Name: A Note on H. Räisänen's Paul and the Law," *JSNT* 38 [1990] 81); Cosgrove ("Justification in Paul" 660-61); and John Piper (*The Future of Justification: A Response to N. T. Wright* [Wheaton: Crossway, 2007] 110-11; and note Piper's emphasis on union with Christ [184-85]). Cf. Calvin, *Institutes* 3.14.18-19. In an early edition of his account of the history of justification, Alister E. McGrath aligns himself with this view, seeing works as evidencing authentic saving faith but without contributing to the verdict (*Iustitia Dei: A History of the Christian Doctrine of Justification* [2d ed.; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998] 384-85), but alters this somewhat in his most recent edition (*Iustitia Dei: A History of the Christian Doctrine of Justification* [3d ed.; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005] 30-32).

<sup>73</sup> Fink, "Doers of the Law" 522-24. Fink himself concedes that his analysis is quite tentative (p. 522). Cf. Ian Hazlett, "Bucer," in *The Cambridge Companion to Reformation Theology* (ed. David Bagchi and David C. Steinmetz; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004) 104, 109.

<sup>74</sup> Jouette M. Bassler, "Divine Impartiality in Paul's Letter to the Romans," *NouT* 26 (1984) 43-58; idem, *Divine Partiality: Paul and a Theological Axiom* (Atlanta: Scholars, 1982). Jean-Noël Aletti, similarly, places God's impartiality in the foreground and universal human sin in the background ("Romains 2: sa cohérence et sa fonction," *Bib* 77 (1996) 153-77; idem, *Israël et la loi dans la lettre aux Romains* [LD 173; Paris: Cerf, 1998] 41-69). Donaldson (*Paul and the Gentiles*, 88-91) largely follows Bassler, though with a few modifications of his own (91-93). Cf. Bird, *Saving Righteousness* 168-69. For a reading of Romans as a whole with a consistent eye toward divine impartiality in the meting out of God's grace, see Jewett's recent commentary (*Romans*; e.g. 88, 278).

<sup>75</sup> John C. O'Neill, *Paul's Letter to the Romans* (Harmondsworth, UK: Penguin, 1975) 41-42, 53-54.

unbelievers.<sup>76</sup> These and other similarly idiosyncratic proposals have been omitted.

More important is a second clarification. As already evident in comments scattered throughout preceding footnotes, *such a taxonomy is necessarily artificial due to overlap between categories and multiple emphases within individual scholars*. This cannot be overstated, and is especially true with respect to the final four subcategories mentioned above. Many of the writers cited above ought to be placed in more than one camp. For instance, Wrede not only sees Paul as inconsistent but also believes Paul “never entirely escaped from” his Jewish background;<sup>77</sup> Sanders could be added to the “inconsistent” group;<sup>78</sup> Vos and Francis Watson both at times sound as if they ought to be placed in the “hypothetical” category;<sup>79</sup> and who will dare to say Seifrid neglects the Spirit, or Schreiner faith? Moreover, one frequently finds statements in which several of the above categories are immediately coordinated.<sup>80</sup> The ideal taxonomy, therefore, would not place each scholar in (and only in) a single category, but would present a layered classification in which scholars are placed in multiple categories in varying degrees of emphasis. Such a complex arrangement, unfortunately, would prove unwieldy and perhaps counterproductive, for any gains in nuance would be mitigated by a loss of the big picture. Gaining a more precise picture of each tree, we would lose the layout of the forest. We therefore content ourselves with giving a bird’s-eye view of the woods, acknowledging that some of the individual trees will wish they had received more careful botanical analysis.

## II. NEGLECTED FACTORS

With a spectrum of options for reconciling these two Pauline emphases before us, we briefly mention two neglected factors in the discussion—one syntactical (Paul’s use of prepositions) and one exegetical (a reminder of what Paul is *not* arguing in Rom 2:13). Because the lion’s share of this essay has been devoted to the foregoing taxonomy, what follows is meant to raise, not exhaust, avenues for further exploration. After mentioning these two neglected elements, we provide synthesizing (and again painfully cursory) closing statements on justification, faith, judgment, and obedience in Paul.

<sup>76</sup> Richard H. Bell, *No One Seeks for God: An Exegetical and Theological Study of Romans 1.18–3.20* (WUNT 106; Tübingen: Mohr/Siebeck, 1998) 251–57. Bell calls in Judith M. Gundry Volf (*Paul and Perseverance: Staying In and Falling Away* [Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1990]) for support, yet selectively cites those pages in Gundry Volf that appear to support his own argument (e.g. *Paul and Perseverance* 205; cited by Bell on p. 256) while ignoring Gundry Volf’s explicit statements to the contrary (e.g. *Paul and Perseverance* 65).

<sup>77</sup> Wrede, *Paul* 137.

<sup>78</sup> So Bird, *Saving Righteousness* 158; Schreiner, “Justification by Works” 132. See Sanders, *Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People* 123–24; but note p. 103.

<sup>79</sup> Geerhardus Vos, “The Alleged Legalism in Paul’s Doctrine of Justification,” in *Redemptive History and Biblical Interpretation: The Shorter Writings of Geerhardus Vos* (ed. Richard B. Gaffin, Jr.; Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian & Reformed, 1980) 393–94; Watson, *Paul and the Hermeneutics of Faith* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2004) 352, n. 57.

<sup>80</sup> As in Bird, *Saving Righteousness* 178.

1. *Paul's use of prepositions.* Thus far we have referred to justification by faith and judgment *according to* works. Drawing attention to this pattern, a neglected component of a full-orbed understanding of the relationship between justification and judgment may be due recognition of the prepositions used to connect the two concepts of each pairing. In linking justification to faith and judgment to works, Paul consistently uses *διὰ* or *ἐκ* when relating faith to justification (Rom 3:22, 25; 5:1; Gal 2:16; cf. Eph 2:8; Col 2:12<sup>81</sup>) and *κατά* when relating works to judgment (Rom 2:6; 2 Cor 11:15; cf. Rom 2:2; 2 Tim 4:14). Justification is *through/by/from* faith; judgment is *according to* works.

This distinction points us toward understanding justification by faith as denoting contingency or instrumentality and judgment according to works as denoting congruence or correspondence.<sup>82</sup> Paul understands salvation to be through (*διὰ*) faith, and in accordance with (*κατά*) a life of obedience and fruit. Faith is a means, works a manner.<sup>83</sup> Justification is *contingent upon* faith; judgment is *congruent with* obedience. Philippians 3:9 appears to jar with this pattern, as Paul speaks of a righteousness *ἐπὶ τῇ πίστει*, “on the basis of faith.” While exceptions such as this ought to sober our prepositional observation, we should also note that this phrase comes immediately on the heels of Paul’s desire not to have a righteousness of his own but that which is *διὰ πίστεως*—moreover, the righteousness that is “on the basis of faith” is nevertheless explicitly designated as *ἐκ θεοῦ*. It is appropriate, then, for a minority of scholars to draw attention to the different prepositions used by Paul when synthesizing justification by faith with judgment according to works<sup>84</sup>—especially when we observe the clarity-impeding proliferation of imprecise wording concerning the relationship between justification and judgment.<sup>85</sup>

We hasten to issue a warning lest we give inordinate semantic weight to the prepositions used by Paul. For prepositions are, after all, just that:

<sup>81</sup> Besides those passages that speak of justification as through (*διὰ*) faith, we might also note those employing *πίστις* in a simple dative construction (*τῇ πίστει*) as a dative of means (Rom 3:28; 11:20; 2 Cor 1:24; possibly Col 1:23). Paul’s seamless transition from *ἐκ* to *διὰ* in Rom 3:30 may further indicate some degree of semantic fluidity between these two prepositions.

<sup>82</sup> On which see Murray J. Harris, “Prepositions and Theology in the Greek New Testament,” in *New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology* (4 vols.; ed. Colin Brown; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1978) 3:1200.

<sup>83</sup> See Calvin, *Institutes* 3.17.6; 3.18.4.

<sup>84</sup> Owen, *Justification by Faith* 160–61; John Murray, *The Epistle to the Romans* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997) 78–79; Cosgrove, “Justification in Paul” 656–62; Yinger, *Judgment according to Deeds* 175; Gaffin, *By Faith, Not by Sight* 98–99; idem, “Justification and Eschatology,” in *Justified in Christ: God’s Plan for Us in Justification* (ed. K. Scott Oliphint; Fearn, Scotland: Christian Focus, 2007) 20; and Bird, *Saving Righteousness* 178, n. 64. Cf. Charles Hodge, *Systematic Theology* (3 vols.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1946) 3:245.

<sup>85</sup> Morris, *Biblical Doctrine of Judgment* 67; N. Watson, “Justified by Faith” 209; Gathercole, *Where Is Boasting?* 250, 264; Bird, *Saving Righteousness* 160. Garlington puzzlingly writes that all judgment texts in the Bible “base final forensic acquittal on works,” or “the believer’s ‘fruit’” (“The New Perspective, Mediation and Justification: A Response to S. M. Baugh,” in *Studies in the New Perspective on Paul: Essays and Reviews* [Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2008] 322). Such a statement seems to speak of basis (“base . . . on”) where it should speak of congruence and justification (“forensic acquittal”) where it should speak of judgment.

prepositions. We must neither neglect the prepositions nor, in exposing such neglect, ask the prepositions to bear more theological weight than they can legitimately handle. Nevertheless, the general pattern by which Paul prepositionally connects justification with faith and judgment with works may provide one piece of the puzzle in sorting out how Paul squared these two teachings.

2. *Romans 2:13: recognizing multiple dimensions of antithesis.* A second neglected factor concerns a brief exegetical observation on Rom 2:13. A pause to glance at this text is especially appropriate in that every other Pauline text that seems to contain a tension between justification and judgment could arguably be explained away in that Paul connects judgment, not justification, to obedience. Yet here we find Paul linking obedience with justification itself: “the doers of the law will be justified.”<sup>86</sup>

What to do? Shall we simply absorb this text into the majority of Pauline references to justification?<sup>87</sup> Such textual partiality resists exegetical forthrightness. Shall we shrug off the problem by asserting that “Paul is not concerned with defining his precise doctrine of justification?”<sup>88</sup> Attributing varying levels of theological sagacity to the apostle seems a precarious way forward; and when, in light of the contingency of every Pauline document, is the apostle “concerned with defining his precise doctrine of justification”?

Perhaps some of the *Angst* over Rom 2:13 can be alleviated by recognizing precisely what is being set in antithesis. The snag is that our Protestant ears have been so deeply trained to understand human action—especially when it emerges in the context of δικ-language—to be set in antithesis to faith. Yet the contrast of Rom 2:13 is not human action and faith but human action and mere hearing. It is the ποιηταί rather than the ἀκροαταί—not the ποιηταί rather than the πιστεύοντες—who are justified. Obedience operates in Paul in multiple directions of antithesis.

Romans 2:13 teaches neither an obedience-grounded justification nor a hypothetical justification (because of v. 16<sup>89</sup>). It is a real justification, but it is a justification linked with doing *rather than hearing*.<sup>90</sup>

Some overlook this distinction and unnecessarily polarize Rom 2:13 to say something Paul does not, in fact, say. Stott, for example, argues that this

<sup>86</sup> Pointed out by Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism* 516. Contra Cosgrove (“Justification in Paul” 663), 1 Cor 4:4–5 does not equate justification with judgment.

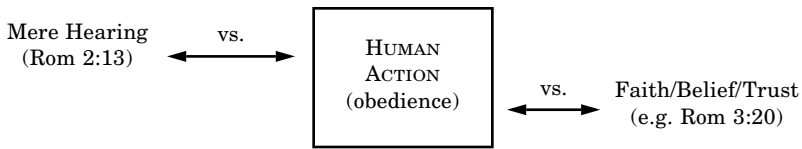
<sup>87</sup> John Wesley, “Justification by Faith,” in *Sermons on Several Occasions: Part 1* (repr.; Whitefish, MT: Kessinger, 2003) 48.

<sup>88</sup> Jeffrey S. Lamp, “Paul, the Law, Jews, and Gentiles: A Contextual and Exegetical Reading of Romans 2:12–16,” *JETS* 42 (1999) 43.

<sup>89</sup> Noted by Seifrid, *Christ, Our Righteousness* 148; Andrew T. Lincoln, “From Wrath to Justification: Tradition, Gospel, and Audience in the Theology of Romans 1:18–4:25,” in *Pauline Theology* 3:142–43.

<sup>90</sup> Noted most clearly by William Hendriksen, *Exposition of Paul's Epistle to the Romans* (2 vols.; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1980, 1981) 1:95–96; Robert Badenas, *Christ the End of the Law: Romans 10:4 in Pauline Perspective* (JSNTSup 10; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1985) 249, n. 256. Cf. Ridderbos, *Paul* 179; Klaus Haacker, *The Theology of Paul's Letter to the Romans* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003) 57–59.

## CHART 1



verse speaks of a hypothetical justification, “since no human being has ever fully obeyed the law.”<sup>91</sup> Yet Paul nowhere in this verse speaks of “fully obeying” the law. He does not use *τελέω* (as in 2:27) or *πληρώω* (as in 13:8, 10) but *ποιηταί*,<sup>92</sup> a point also overlooked by Turretin,<sup>93</sup> Räisänen,<sup>94</sup> Stettler,<sup>95</sup> Sloan,<sup>96</sup> Gathercole,<sup>97</sup> Bird,<sup>98</sup> Jewett,<sup>99</sup> and Clark.<sup>100</sup> Stott illegitimately extrapolates out from Paul’s use of *ποιηταί* to denote full obedience. We therefore endorse the quip of some that acquittal on the last day has to do with “performance, not possession.”<sup>101</sup> Regardless of how “performance” may be filled out by these scholars, the point is that they have articulated the proper antithesis. It is obedience rather than *race*, not obedience rather than *grace*, that is in view—as Luther himself observed.<sup>102</sup>

## III. TOWARD A SYNTHESIS

Much more could (and should) be said. We have largely ignored, for instance, the question of continuity and discontinuity between Paul and his

<sup>91</sup> John R. W. Stott, *The Message of Romans* (BST; Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2001) 86.

<sup>92</sup> Rightly noted by Snodgrass, “Justification by Grace—To the Doers” 75, 82–83. Luther calls “doing the works of the law” and “fulfilling the law” “two very different things” (*Commentary on Romans* [trans. J. Theodore Mueller; Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2003] xv).

<sup>93</sup> Turretin, *Institutes of Elenctic Theology* 2:637.

<sup>94</sup> Räisänen, *Paul and the Law* 103.

<sup>95</sup> Stettler, “Judgement by Works” 203.

<sup>96</sup> Robert B. Sloan, “Paul and the Law: Why the Law Cannot Save,” *NovT* 33 (1991) 41.

<sup>97</sup> Gathercole, “A Law unto Themselves: The Gentiles in Romans 2.14–15 Revisited,” *JSNT* 85 (2002) 47.

<sup>98</sup> Bird, *Saving Righteousness* 171.

<sup>99</sup> Jewett, *Romans* 212.

<sup>100</sup> R. Scott Clark, “Do This and Live: Christ’s Active Obedience as the Ground of Justification,” in *Covenant, Justification, and Pastoral Ministry: Essays by the Faculty of Westminster Seminary California* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 2007) 245; see also p. 250.

<sup>101</sup> Wright, *Romans* 440; Gorman, *Apostle of the Crucified Lord: A Theological Introduction to Paul and His Letters* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004) 355; Bassler, “Divine Impartiality” 52. See also Schreiner, “Justification by Works” 147; Watson, *Paul, Judaism, and the Gentiles* 205; Garlington, *Faith, Obedience, and Perseverance* 58.

<sup>102</sup> Luther, *Lectures on Romans* 50; so, too, Augustine, *On Faith and Works* (trans. G. J. Lombardo; ACW 48; New York: Newman, 1988) 50; Berkouwer, *Faith and Justification* 106; William Hendrickson, *Exposition of Paul’s Epistle to the Romans* (2 vols.; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1980, 1981) 1:95–96; Yinger, *Judgment according to Deeds* 150; cf. Westerholm, *Perspectives Old and New* 387. Westerholm’s intriguing suggestion that *δικαιοθήσονται* in Rom 2:13 (in accord with the adjective *δίκαιοι* employed earlier in the verse) refers to “ordinary” righteousness (one’s own, acknowledged by God), not “extraordinary” righteousness (another’s, given by God), merits further reflection (*ibid.* 267–72).

Jewish background concerning judgment.<sup>103</sup> Also important, as Nigel Watson has pointed out,<sup>104</sup> is due appreciation of the occasional nature of Paul's letters. Another fruitful line of inquiry, underscored with particular sharpness by Jüngel, is the way in which free justification and judgment may be not only compatible but mutually reinforcing, since an unearned right standing becomes meaningful only in a world the moral fabric of which distributes a justice that corresponds unerringly to desert.<sup>105</sup> Finally, a fruitful perspective on reconciling justification by faith and judgment according to works might be found in transposing the theological tension of divine sovereignty and human responsibility onto the soteriological intersection of justification by faith and judgment according to deeds.<sup>106</sup> Remembering that biblical reality is consistently multi-perspectival—coherent yet incapable of being reduced to simple, stand-alone aphorisms—might we understand justification by faith as viewing salvation from the perspective of divine sovereignty

<sup>103</sup> For a list of relevant intertestamental passages, see Barry D. Smith, *The Tension between God as Righteous Judge and as Merciful in Early Judaism* (New York: University Press of America, 2005) esp. 43–45. Braun noticed that Paul's statements of judgment are directed toward believers about three times as often as toward unbelievers—an illuminating point, he suggests, in light of the Jewish tendency toward assuming final exoneration due to divine partiality (*Gerichtsgedanke und Rechtfertigungslehre* 33–58). Cf. Roetzel (*Judgement in the Community* 179), who explores the relationship between the individual and the community vis-à-vis justification and final judgment, suggesting that corporate dimensions have been neglected and that a recognition of this assuages the perceived tension between justification and judgment (ibid. 8, 59–60, 176–78). On the Jewish background to the “doers of the law,” see Peter J. Tomson, “Die Täter des Gesetzes werden gerechtfertigt werden’ (Röm 2,13): Zu einer adäquaten Perspektive für den Römerbrief,” in *Lutherische und Neue Paulusperspektive: Beiträge zu einem Schlüsselproblem der gegenwärtigen exegetischen Diskussion* (ed. Michael Bachmann; WUNT 182; Tübingen: Mohr/Siebeck, 2005) 200–202.

<sup>104</sup> “Justified by Faith” 213–14. See also Thielman, *Paul and the Law* 10–11; Longenecker, *Apostle of Liberty* 118–20.

<sup>105</sup> Eberhard Jüngel, *Justification: The Heart of the Christian Faith* (trans. Jeffrey F. Cayzer; Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2001) 85. See also Owen, *Justification by Faith* 145–46; H. C. G. Moule, *The Epistle to the Romans* (London: Pickering & Inglis, n.d.) 63; Schlatter, *Theology of the Apostles* 237; Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, Vol. 2: *The Doctrine of God, Part 2* (ed. G. W. Bromiley and T. F. Torrance; Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1957) 563; Filson, *St. Paul's Conception of Recompense* 134; Conzelmann, *Theology of the New Testament* 248; C. K. Barrett, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians* (BNTC; Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1973) 161; Ridderbos, *Paul* 180; Pregeant, “Grace and Recompense” 77; Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *Romans: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 33; New York: Doubleday, 1993) 307; Garlington, “Obedience of Faith, Part II” 70; Westerholm, *Perspectives Old and New* 283–84.

<sup>106</sup> See Calvin, *Institutes* 3.21.14; Schlatter, *Theology of the Apostles* 234; Filson, *St. Paul's Conception of Recompense* 126–31, 133–34; Watson, *Paul, Judaism, and the Gentiles* 214; cf. 16, n. 23; idem, “Constructing an Antithesis: Pauline and Other Jewish Perspectives on Divine and Human Agency,” in *Divine and Human Agency* 99–116; Gathercole, *Where Is Boasting?* 118–21; O'Brien, “Was Paul a Covenantal Nomist?” 265; Ben Witherington III, *Paul's Letter to the Romans: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004) 81; Gaffin, *By Faith, Not by Sight* 73–74; Dunn, *New Perspective* 85. Westerholm explicates Calvin's view of divine sovereignty and human responsibility (*Perspectives Old and New* 42–46) but does not connect it to justification vis-à-vis judgment. The tension of divine sovereignty and human responsibility permeates Smith, *God as Righteous Judge*, but is restricted to the Jewish literature, omitting the NT; so too Erik Sjöberg, *Gott und die Sünder im Palästinischen Judentum* (BWANT 49; Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1938).

(though it is real human faith) and judgment according to works from the perspective of human responsibility (though it is God who judges)<sup>107</sup>

But we must break off and allow others to carry the baton. We close, then, by offering our own brief explication of the inter-relationships of justification, faith, judgment, and obedience as each relates to the tension addressed in this essay.

First, justification is not a two-staged “*doppelte Rechtfertigung*”<sup>108</sup> but the single eschatological event of a declaration of forensic acquittal and right standing proleptically brought into the present and grasped by grace-fueled faith in Christ’s work.<sup>109</sup> To posit the possibility of a person<sup>110</sup> being justified here and now and yet failing to receive final acquittal is, for Paul, nonsense.<sup>111</sup> We thus remain unconvinced of a consistent NT emphasis on a *yet-to-be-determined* future justification that consists of anything more than public manifestation. Christians “are already justified—by faith. But they are yet to be justified—by sight.”<sup>112</sup>

Second, our understanding of NT faith must avoid the twin pitfalls of mere mental assent, on one side,<sup>113</sup> and synergism on the other. If faith

<sup>107</sup> Such an integration might alleviate the concerns of some that the Protestant doctrine of justification downplays active human participation in obedience (e.g. Paul O’Callaghan, *Fides Christi: The Justification Debate* [Dublin: Four Courts, 1997] 232–33).

<sup>108</sup> The phrase is Stuhlmacher’s, who rejects it (*Gottes Gerechtigkeit* 229), as does Bell (*No One Seeks* 256); for those who espouse some kind of “double justification,” see Joachim Jeremias, “Paul and James,” *ET* 66 (1955) 370; Godet, *Romans* 118; Rainbow, *Way of Salvation* 155–74.

<sup>109</sup> See Schlatter, *Theology of the Apostles* 236; Vos, *Pauline Eschatology* 54–55; Oscar Cullmann, *Christ and Time* (trans. Floyd V. Filson; rev. ed.; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1964) 82–83; John A. Ziesler, *The Meaning of Righteousness in Paul: A Linguistic and Theological Enquiry* (SNTS 20; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972) 208–9; Morna D. Hooker, *A Preface to Paul* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980) 32–33; Seyoon Kim, *The Origin of Paul’s Gospel* (WUNT 2/4; Tübingen: Mohr/Siebeck, 1981) 286; Ladd, *Theology of the New Testament* 482–84; Victor P. Furnish, *Theology and Ethics in Paul* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1968) 147–48; Bird, *Saving Righteousness* 175; Schreiner, *New Testament Theology* 352. Stuhlmacher writes: “Wenn man die paulinische Lehre von der Rechtfertigung verstehen will, muß man als erstes bedenken, daß es bei der δικαιοσύνη um einen *endzeitlichen Gerichtsakt* geht. Die Rechtfertigung hat ihren entscheidenden Ort im Endgericht” (“Zum Thema Rechtfertigung,” in *Biblische Theologie und Evangelium: Gesammelte Aufsätze* [Tübingen: Mohr/Siebeck, 2002] 25; emphasis original). Andrie du Toit speaks of believers having been already justified and yet also experiencing an ongoing justification until the final day—a legitimate reading, so long as the definitive nature of the “already” of justification (cf. Rom 5:1) is in no way mitigated (“Faith and Obedience in Paul,” in *Focusing on Paul: Persuasion and Theological Design in Romans and Galatians* [ed. Cilliers Breytenbach and David S. du Toit; BZNW 151; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2007] 258).

<sup>110</sup> On justification as most fundamentally concerning the individual, see Stuhlmacher, *Biblische Theologie und Evangelium* 26.

<sup>111</sup> Contra Donfried, “Justification and Last Judgment” 97, 99.

<sup>112</sup> Gaffin, *By Faith, Not by Sight* 88. So also Owen, *Justification by Faith* 139, 160; Ziesler, *Righteousness in Paul* 189–90. Bultmann believes the only reference to future justification in Paul containing a genuine “zeitlichen Sinn” is Rom 5:19 (“*DIKAIOSUNH QEOU*,” *JBL* 83 [1964] 15). Dunn’s suggestion (*New Perspective*, 55–56, 389–90) that the later Pauline texts (e.g. Eph 2:8–10) spoke of an accomplished salvation while the earlier ones (e.g. Rom 5:9–10) spoke of a future or present salvation is simplistic, neglecting both the past-oriented soteriological statements of the “earlier” Paul (e.g. Rom 5:1; 8:24; 1 Cor 6:11) as well as the future-oriented statements of the “later” Paul (e.g. Eph 1:14; 2:7; 2 Tim 2:10; 4:8).

<sup>113</sup> A trap into which Jewett appears to fall when he describes faith as “assent to the gospel” (*Romans* 278; cf. 139).

is strictly cognitive, justification by faith and judgment according to works are kept dangerously distant. Conversely, if faith must be conjoined with obedience *for justification*, subjectivistic synergism necessarily ensues in which assurance is rendered elusive and Christ's cross impotent (Gal 2:21). But if the faith that renounces one's own moral resume is organically bound up with the movement of the will by which one casts oneself on God in Christ for all things (*fiducia*),<sup>114</sup> justification is protected from all human contribution while faith is protected from unbiblical reductionisms to the merely cerebral.<sup>115</sup>

Third, Paul taught a real<sup>116</sup> judgment that applies to believers and unbelievers alike<sup>117</sup> and is according to, not on the basis of, obedience. Believers will also experience various degrees of reward based on their respective lives of Spirit-ignited, faith-propelled obedience borne out of union with Christ.<sup>118</sup> The clearest support for some kind of eschatological distribution of rewards is 1 Cor 3:10–15.<sup>119</sup> In Rom 2:16 and 1 Cor 4:5, moreover, Paul refers to a judgment of that which has been “hidden” (τὰ κρυπτά).<sup>120</sup> Judgment, then, appears to be largely the revealing in the next life of what has been hidden in this one.<sup>121</sup> Ultimately, however, believers have nothing to fear on Judgment Day—every shortcoming is covered by Christ's sacrifice (Rom 8:31–34; cf. Jas 2:13).<sup>122</sup>

<sup>114</sup> Gathercole intriguingly detects an element of *worship* in authentic faith (“Justified by Faith, Justified by His Blood: The Evidence of Romans 3:21–4:25,” in *Justification and Variegated Nomism* 2:162, 163); an older writer speaks of “the moral energy of faith” (A. B. Bruce, *St. Paul's Conception of Christianity* [New York: Scribner's, 1911] 224). Cf. Edwards, “What Is Meant by Believing in Christ?” in *The Blessing of God: Previously Unpublished Sermons of Jonathan Edwards* (ed. Michael D. McMullen; Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2003) 239–41. The living nature of authentic faith is also a consistent theme of Schlatter's *Der Glaube im Neuen Testament* (Stuttgart: Calwer, 1927) e.g. 99, 367–69, 395–97.

<sup>115</sup> One might attribute the possibility of such reductionism to the Enlightenment were it not for the presence of such cognitive reductionism in the Bible itself (Jas 2:14–26; esp. v. 19).

<sup>116</sup> Contra Wetter, *Vergeltungsgedanke bei Paulus* 75–85. As Morris appropriately observes, Paul says not “would render” but “will render” in Rom 2:6 (*Romans* 148).

<sup>117</sup> So Stuhlmacher, *Gerechtigkeit Gottes bei Paulus* (FRLANT 87; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1966) 95; Beker, *Paul the Apostle* 257, 277; Gundry Volf, *Paul and Perseverance* 65; Schreiner, “Justification by Works” 142–43; contra Luther (see n. 65); Bell, *No One Seeks* 257–62; Reymond, *Systematic Theology* 751.

<sup>118</sup> See Charles H. Talbert, “Paul, Judaism, and the Revisionists,” *CBQ* 63 (2001) 21–22.

<sup>119</sup> Morris suggests that this text may be the one place where both lines of the apparent Pauline contradiction between justification and judgment converge (*Biblical Doctrine of Judgement* 67). At the same time, we must heed Räisänen's contextual warning that this passage is “concerned with the *ergon* of a missionary (Apollos) not with the moral life of believers” (*Paul and the Law* 185, n. 116). Such a reminder, salutary as it may be, ought not to be seen to render 1 Corinthians 3 irrelevant to everyday believers.

<sup>120</sup> Cf. Jer 17:9–10; 1 *Enoch* 49:4; Wis 1:6, 11; 17:3; 2 Macc 7:35–36; 12:41; Luke 8:17; 1 Tim 5:25; Rev 2:23. Cf. ἀποκαλύπτεται in 1 Cor 3:13.

<sup>121</sup> See Pregeant, “Grace and Recompense” 77; Stettler, “Judgment by Works” 208; Schreiner, *Paul* 470. Cf. Stuhlmacher, *Biblische Theologie des Neuen Testaments* Vol 1: *Grundlegung von Jesus zu Paulus* (3d ed.; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2005) 277.

<sup>122</sup> See Stuhlmacher, “Christus Jesus ist hier, der gestorben ist, ja vielmehr, der auch auferweckt ist, der zur Rechten Gottes ist und uns vertritt,” in *Auferstehung—Resurrection* (WUNT 135; Tübingen: Mohr/Siebeck, 2001) 351–61.

Fourth, obedience<sup>123</sup> is not merely evidential but is rather built into the very fabric of salvation itself, yet without contributing to justification. Justification and judgment are linked not so much in cause-and-effect or linear progression<sup>124</sup> as they are organically unified. This organic bond is union with Christ, in which one is not only declared righteous by virtue of Luther's *fröhlicher Wechsel*,<sup>125</sup> or what Hooker has described as the Pauline "interchange,"<sup>126</sup> but also indwelt by the Spirit. Justification and obedience both sprout from the seed of union with Christ.<sup>127</sup> For this reason "the category of those who are justified by faith is coextensive with those who will be justified on the final day after a whole life of perseverance."<sup>128</sup> Those who are justified will, for reasons other than any kind of earning, do the law. This is not to say, however, that faith and obedience are synonyms for Paul.<sup>129</sup> The apostle assiduously maintains a principal distinction between believing and doing. But it is also possible, at the other end of the spectrum, to overstate this difference, in hyper-Lutheranizing neglect of such odd conjunctions as "the obedience of faith" (Rom 1:5; 16:26) or "obeying the gospel" (Rom 10:16; cf. 1 Pet 4:17).<sup>130</sup> To exclude moral performance from the ground of justification is not to render such obedience soteriologically irrelevant. *Distinction* between faith and works must be maintained without sliding into *separation*. As Clowney writes, "A dead and empty faith cannot justify, but this is not because it lacks works as a supplement. It is because it lacks the living bond of trust from which works must flow."<sup>131</sup>

<sup>123</sup> The question of whether *ἔργα* refers to general obedience or to Jewish nomism is immaterial here—in 2 Cor 5:10, e.g., the verb used to describe the action according to which humans will be judged is *πράσσω*, and in Rom 14:12 Paul simply says we will give an account of ourselves (*ἐκαστος ἡμῶν περὶ ἑαυτοῦ λόγον δώσει*). In neither text does any form of *ἔργα* appear.

<sup>124</sup> The latter seems to be put forward by Augustine in "The Spirit and the Letter" (*Augustine: Later Works* [ed. John Burnaby; Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1955] 228; cited approvingly by Luther [*Lectures on Romans* 50]) though Augustine's comments in *On Faith and Works* appear to make faith and obedience organically united by virtue of love (pp. 28–29).

<sup>125</sup> See the helpful discussion of this element of Luther's teaching in Robert Kolb and Charles P. Arand, *The Genius of Luther's Theology: A Wittenberg Way of Thinking for the Contemporary Church* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008) 45–52, 165–66.

<sup>126</sup> Morna D. Hooker, "Interchange in Christ," *JTS* 22 (1971) 349–61; idem, "Interchange in Christ and Ethics," *JSNT* 25 (1985) 5–10, 14; idem, *Preface to Paul* 44–52.

<sup>127</sup> It is at this point that an overly strict adherence to an *ordo salutis* proves more unhelpful than helpful. From one perspective, one can be united to Christ only if already put right with God. Yet this could obscure the theological truth that union with Christ is the most comprehensive soteriological rubric, from which the other dimensions (justification, sanctification, etc.) emerge. See Schlatter, *Theology of the Apostles* 234, 251.

<sup>128</sup> Gathercole, "Justification in Paul" 235.

<sup>129</sup> Contra Ito, "Romans 2" 34; Kertelge, *Rechtfertigung* 225; Furnish, *Theology and Ethics* 202; Garlington, "Meaning of *upakoe pisteos*" 208, 224; idem, "Mediation and Justification" 328; Steve M. Schlissel, "A New Way of Seeing?" in *The Auburn Avenue Theology, Pros and Cons: Debating the Federal Vision* (ed. E. Calvin Beisner; Fort Lauderdale, FL: Knox Theological Seminary, 2004) 26. Snodgrass, too, unhelpfully writes that "people are incorporated into [Christ] by believing obedience" ("Justification by Grace—To the Doers" 87).

<sup>130</sup> On which texts see du Toit, "Faith and Obedience in Paul," in *Focusing on Paul* 117–27.

<sup>131</sup> Edmund P. Clowney, "The Biblical Doctrine of Justification by Faith" in *Right with God* 49. Calvin (*Institutes* 3.11.20; 3.16.1) and Schlatter (*Theology of the Apostles* 235–36) express themselves similarly.

Union with Christ inaugurates not merely external reformation but internal transformation. For one who has been justified, due not only to the justification but also to its necessary concomitants such as regeneration (with attendant new desires) and the presence of the Spirit, an awareness of divine assessment of obedience on the final day can be appropriately motivating without becoming either morally paralyzing (in ethical failure) or legalistically self-absorbing (in ethical success). By virtue of the “not yet,” one will never in this life experience infallible perfection;<sup>132</sup> yet by virtue of the “already,” there has been ignited, even now in this diseased world, an inevitable new direction (2 Cor 5:17). It is according to this new life that judgment is rendered.<sup>133</sup>

<sup>132</sup> Contra Wernle, *Der Christ und die Sünde* 90, 105, 126; Troels Engberg-Pedersen, *Paul and the Stoics* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2000) 167–73.

<sup>133</sup> I am grateful to Doug Moo and Michael Bird for their comments on an early draft of this paper.