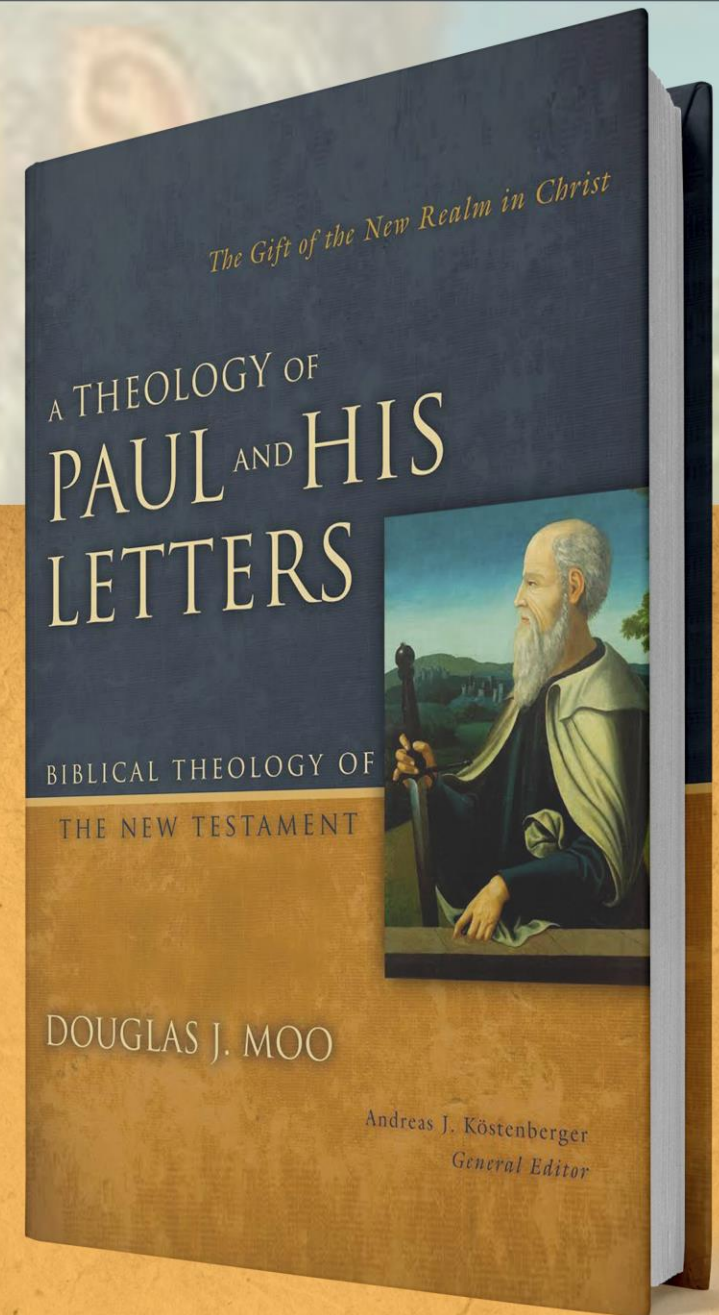


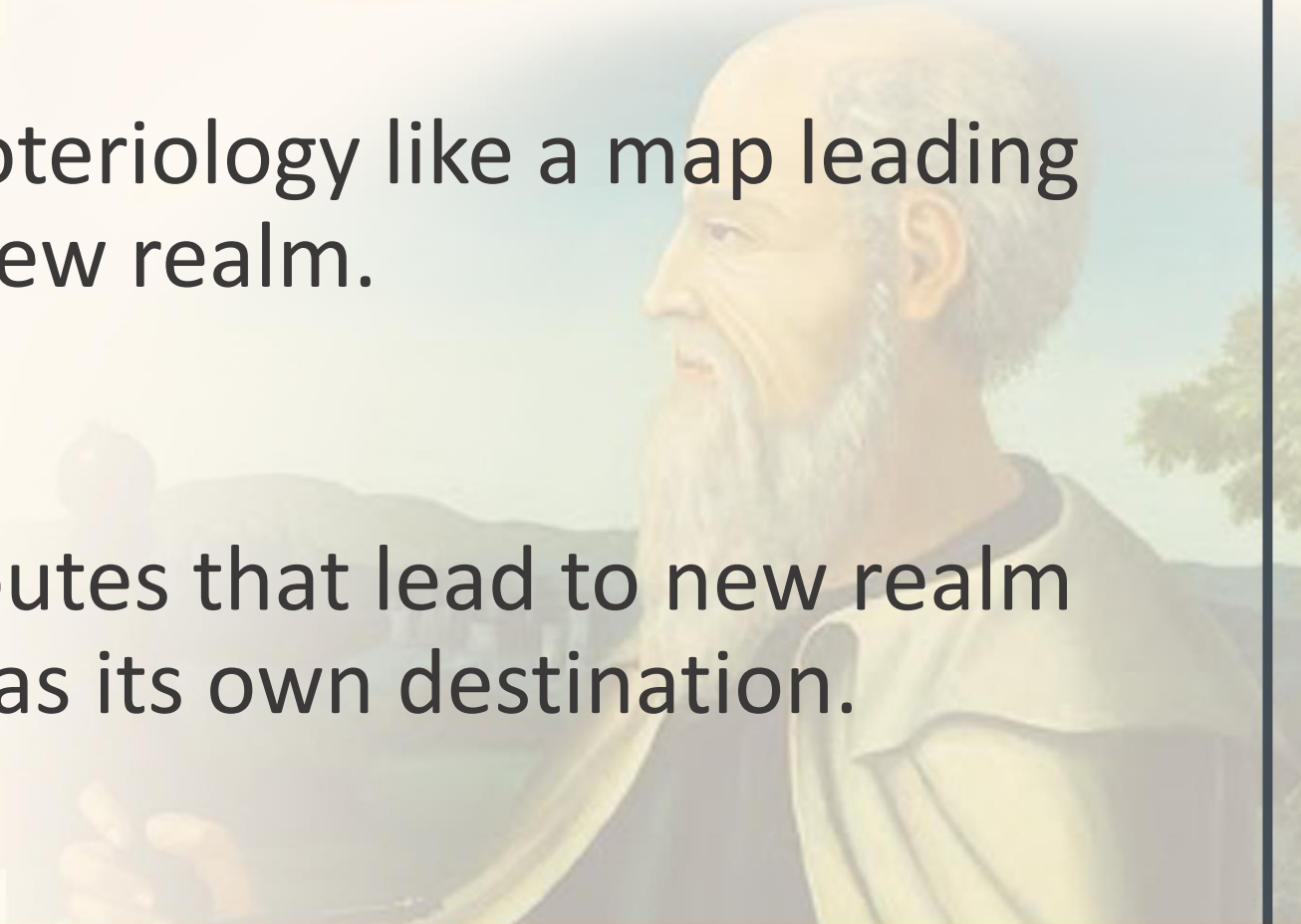
CHAPTER 20

The Blessings of the New Realm



Approach and Perspective

- The author viewed Paul's soteriology like a map leading from the old realm to the new realm.
- He used the term "route."
- There are many different routes that lead to new realm blessings, and each route has its own destination.



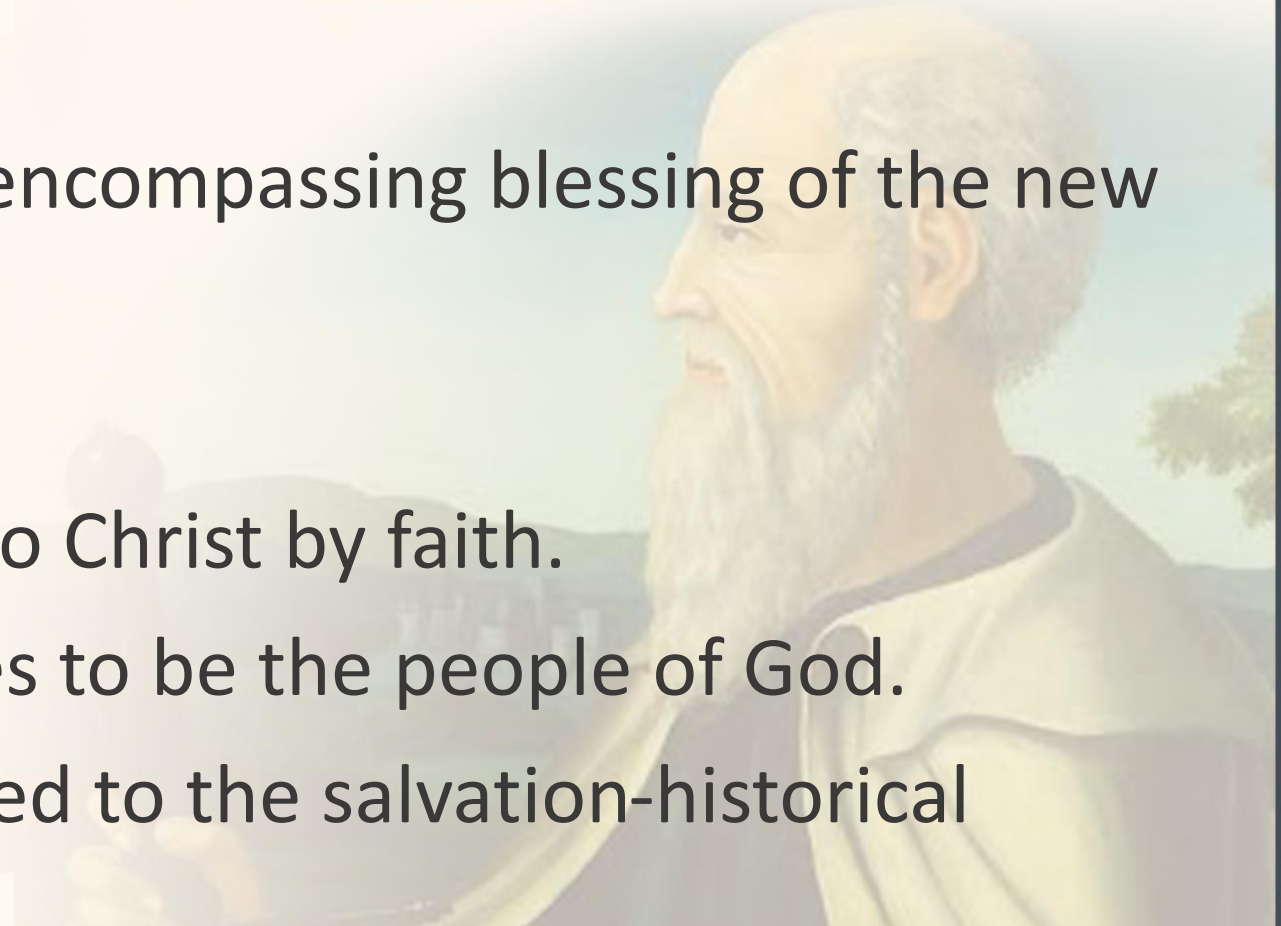
A Flyover of the New Realm

- Christ

- Union with Christ is the all-encompassing blessing of the new realm.

- Inclusive

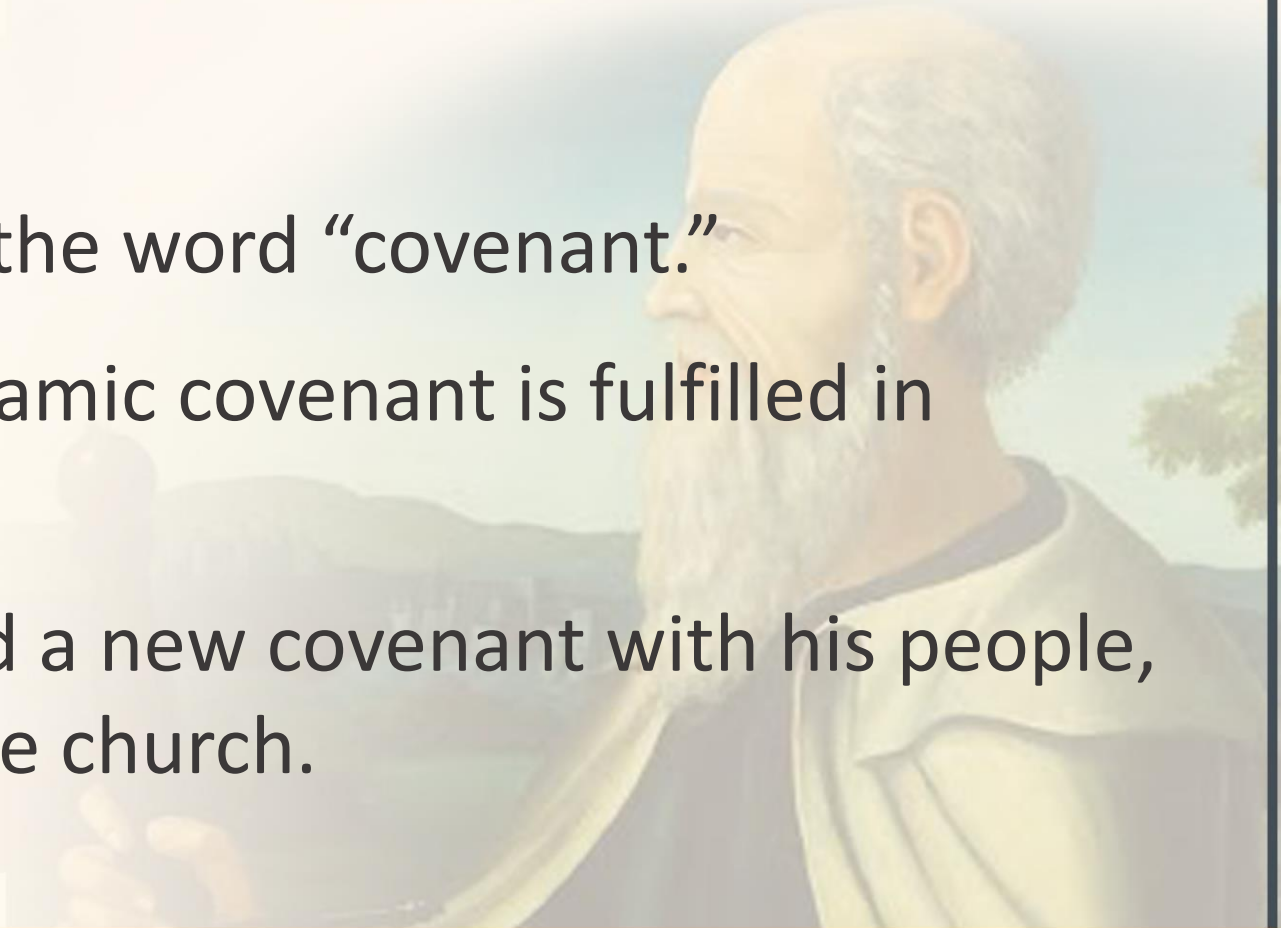
- All are invited to be joined to Christ by faith.
- This allows Jews and gentiles to be the people of God.
- The blessing of gentiles is tied to the salvation-historical purposes in and for Israel.



Basic Contours of the New Realm

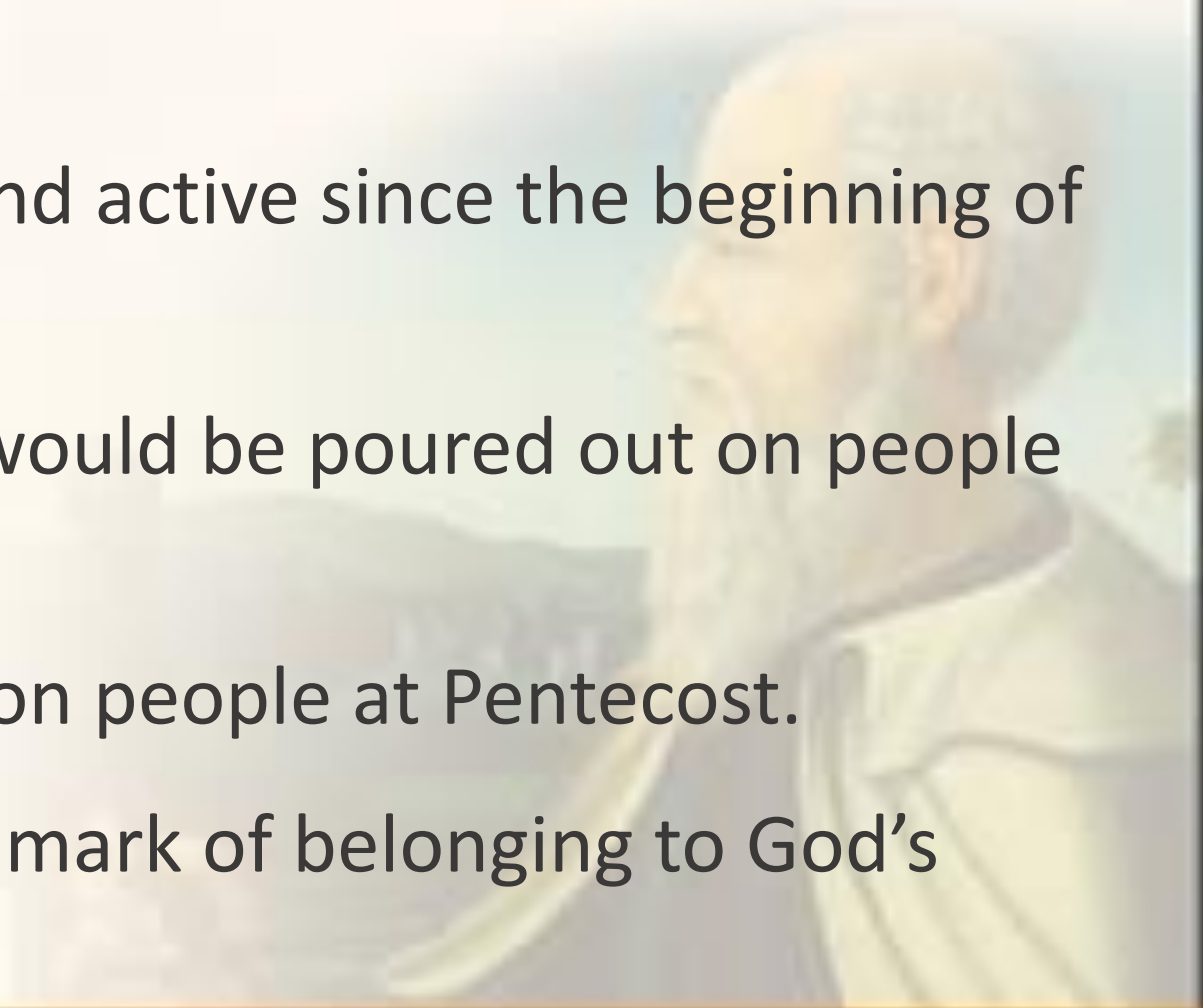
- New Covenant

- Paul did not frequently use the word “covenant.”
- He did teach that the Abrahamic covenant is fulfilled in Christ.
- Through Christ, God entered a new covenant with his people, which is being enacted in the church.



• The Spirit

- The author viewed the Spirit as the “most important general contour of the new realm.”
- The Spirit has been present and active since the beginning of time.
- Prophets said that the Spirit would be poured out on people during the last days.
- The gift of the Spirit came upon people at Pentecost.
- Possession of the Spirit is the mark of belonging to God’s people.



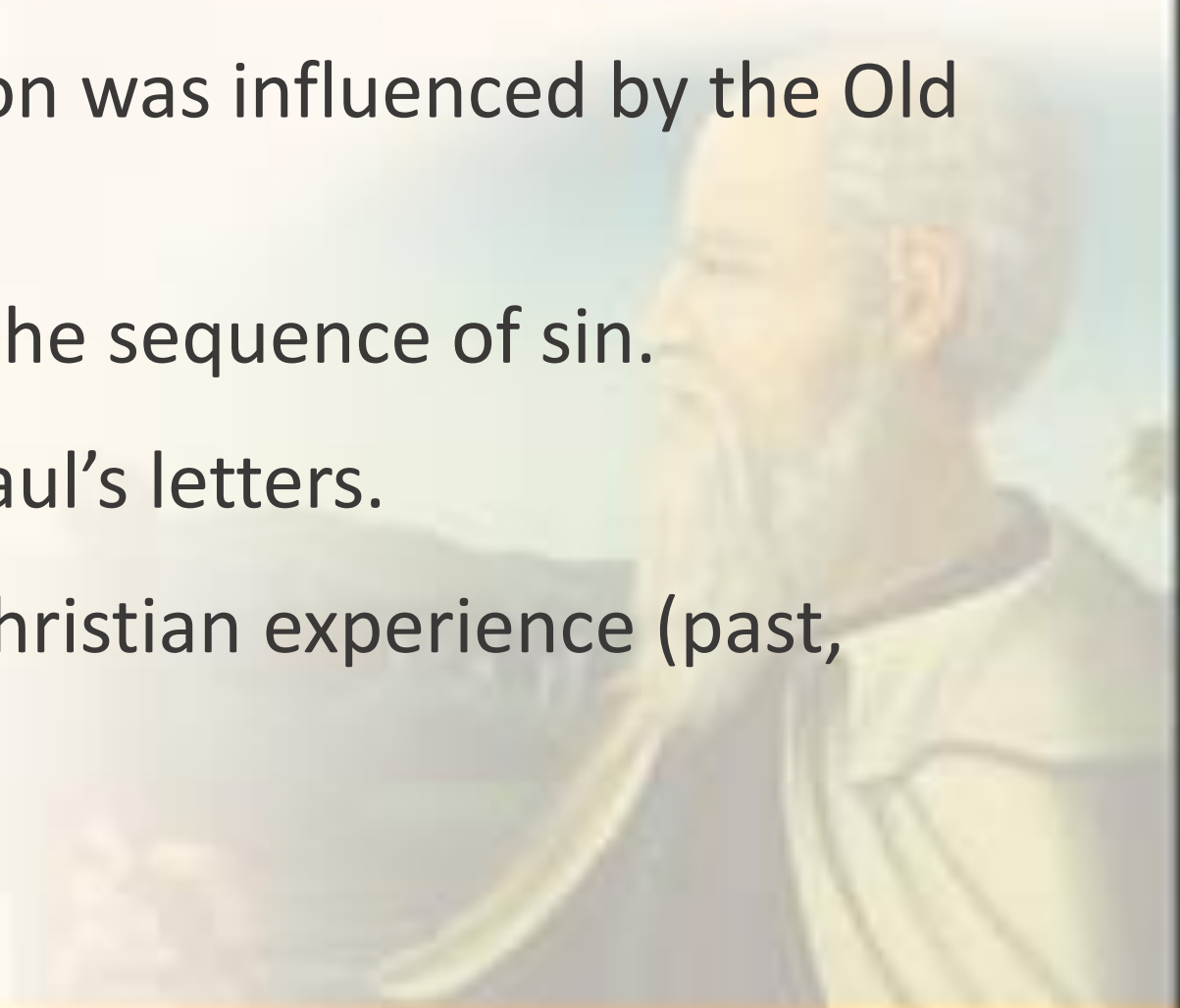


- New Creation

- The author believed Paul used the term “new creation” to refer to God’s redemptive work through Christ.
- Paul believed that the new realm embraces the entire universe.

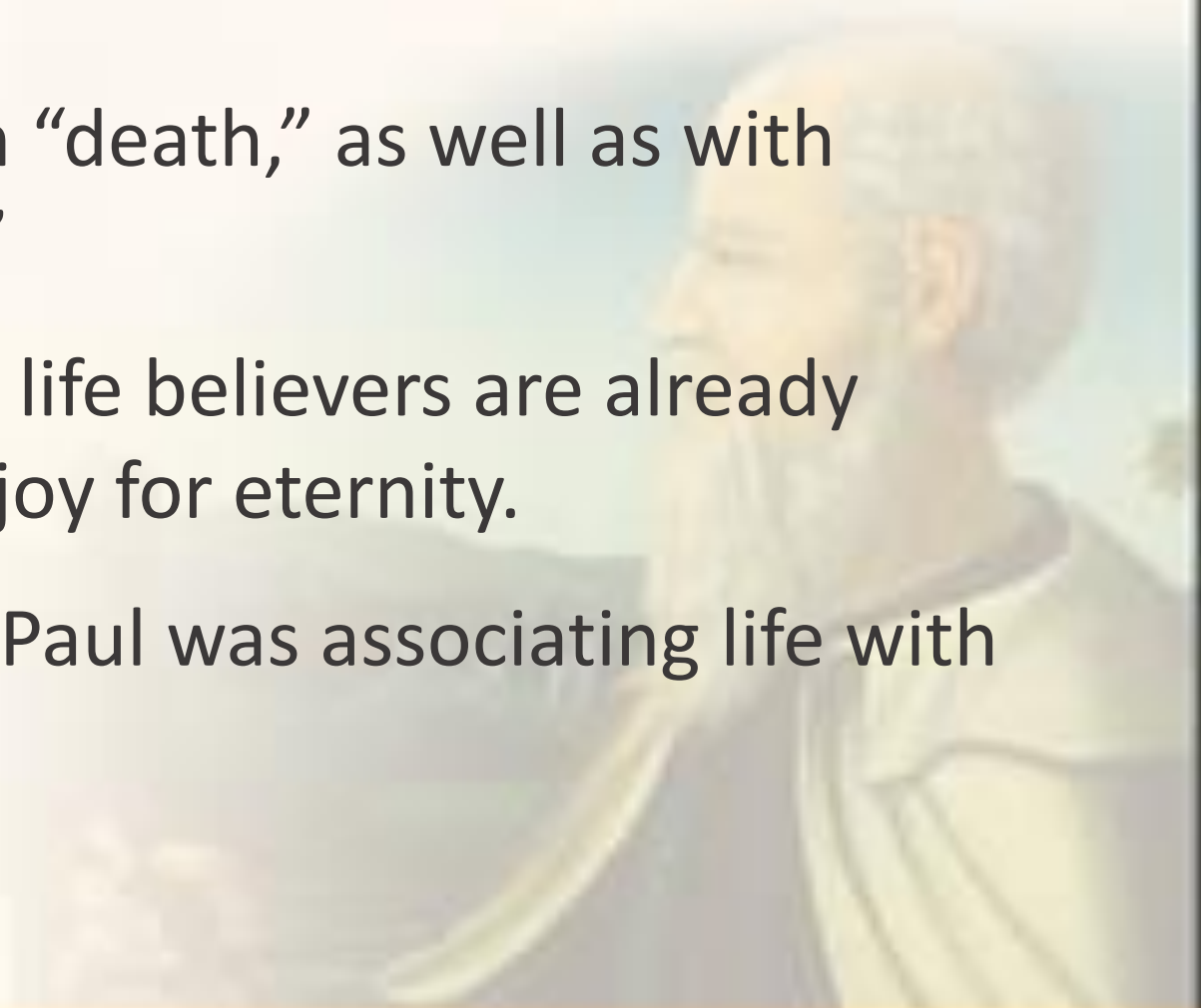
- Salvation

- Paul's language about salvation was influenced by the Old Testament.
- Salvation language occurs in the sequence of sin.
- It is an umbrella concept in Paul's letters.
- It covers the entirety of the Christian experience (past, present, and future).



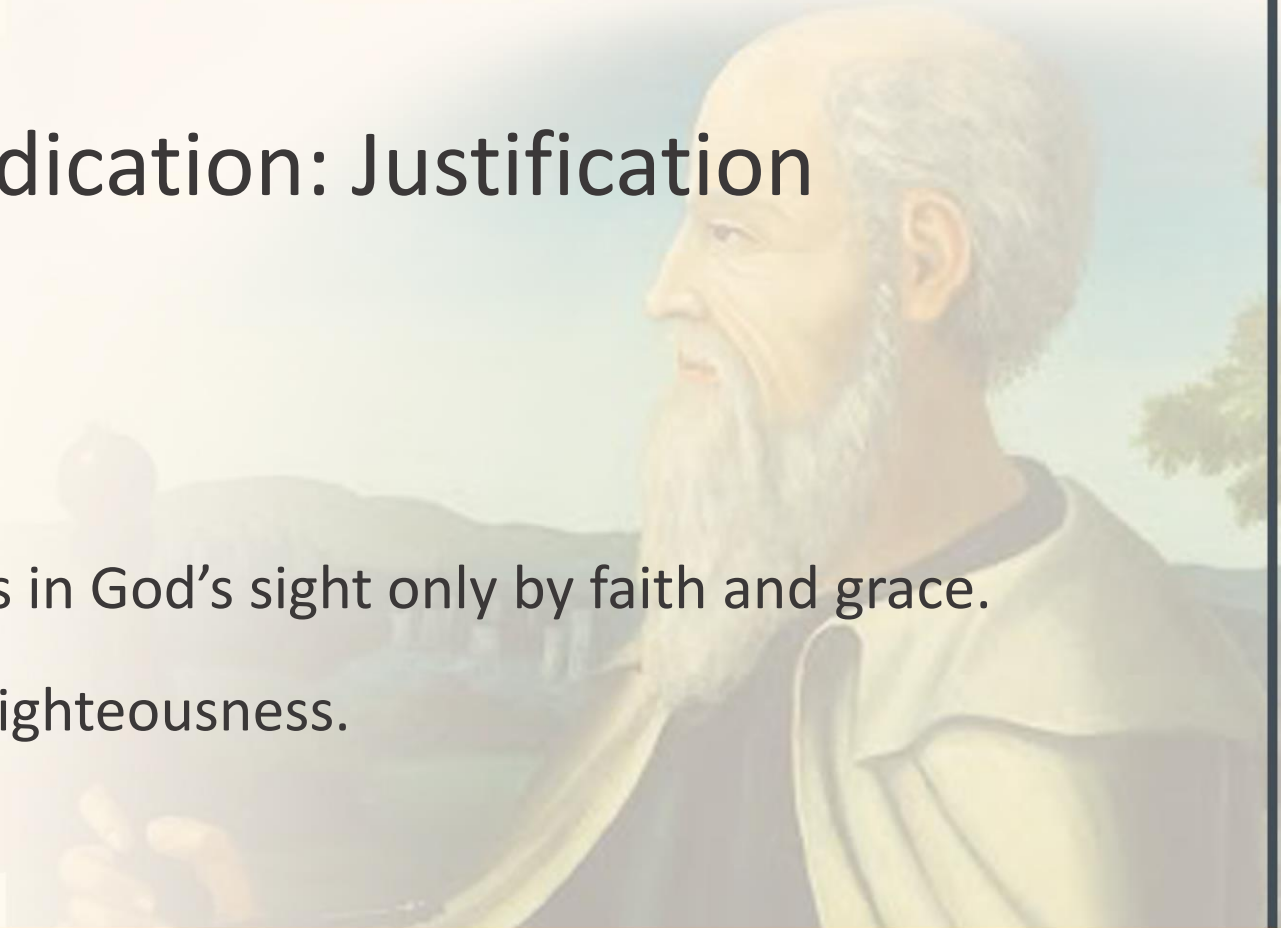
- Life

- “Life” is often contrasted with “death,” as well as with “wrath” and “condemnation.”
- Paul referred to it as both the life believers are already enjoying and the one they enjoy for eternity.
- When referring to future life, Paul was associating life with resurrection.



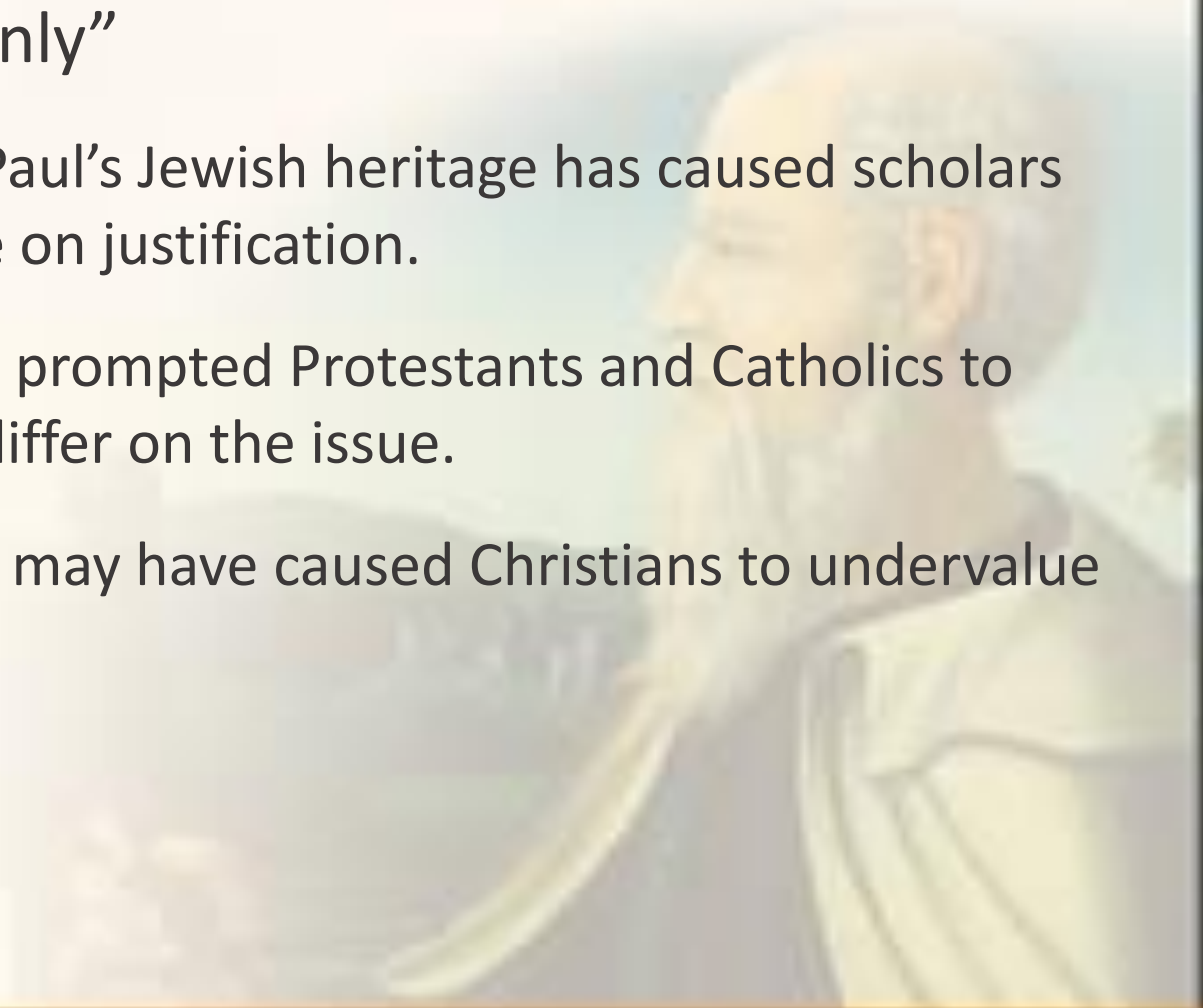
Specific Landforms of the New Realm

- From Condemnation to Vindication: Justification
 - Preliminary Remarks
 - “Forensic only”
 - Sinners are declared righteous in God’s sight only by faith and grace.
 - Justification preceded moral righteousness.



- Arguments against “forensic only”

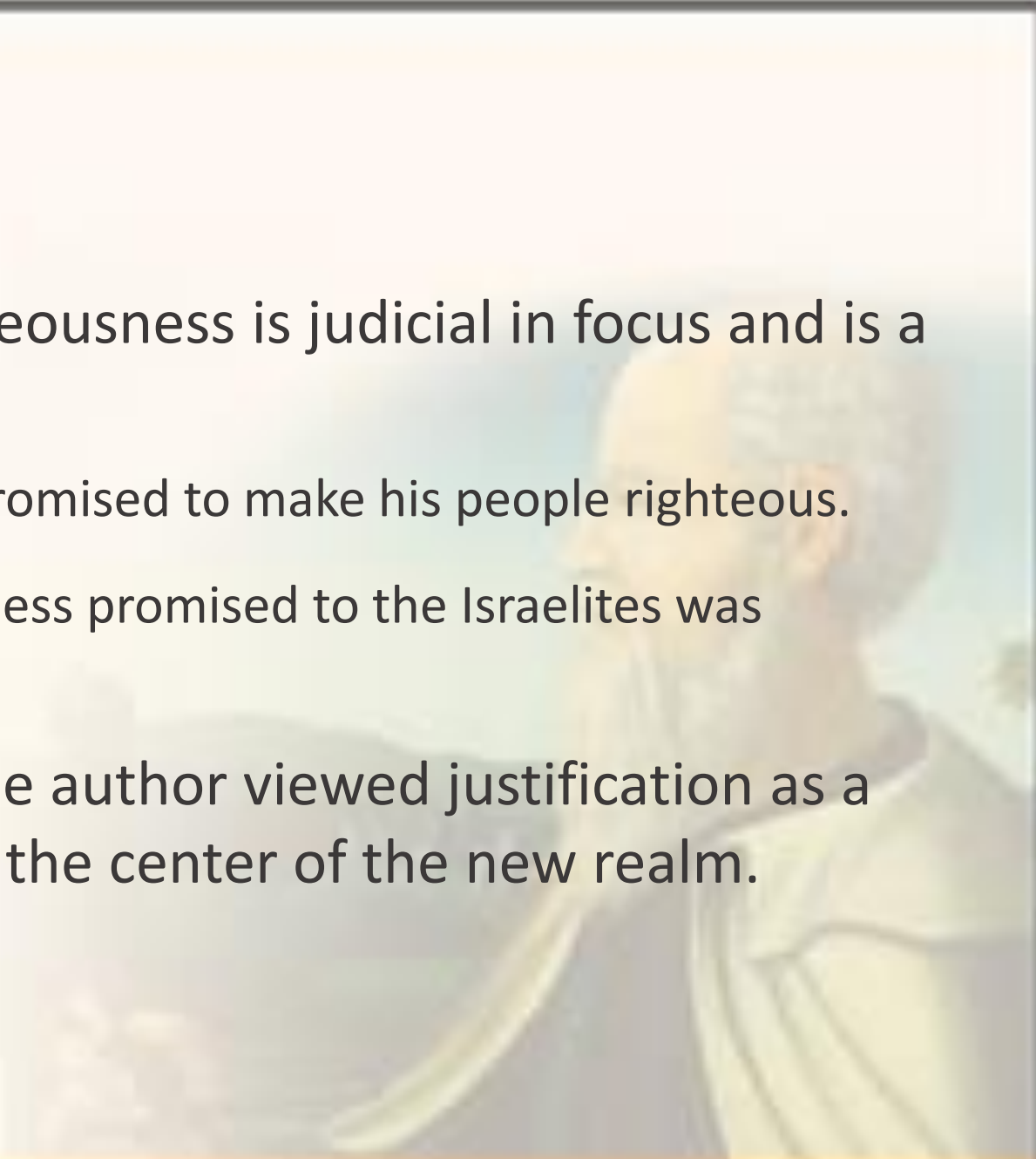
- The New Perspective focus on Paul’s Jewish heritage has caused scholars to reevaluate Paul’s perspective on justification.
- Ecumenical rapprochement has prompted Protestants and Catholics to reconsider whether they truly differ on the issue.
- The “forensic only” perspective may have caused Christians to undervalue the demands of discipleship.





- The Status of Justification in Paul's Theology

- The author did not endorse the belief that justification is at the center of Pauline theology.
- Some scholars argue that Paul used justification to confront Judaism.
 - Traditional “justification” language does not appear in Paul's letters.
 - Paul addressed justification in the context of the Torah and Jewish viewpoints.

- 
- The author believed that righteousness is judicial in focus and is a central part of Israel's story.
 - While Israel was in exile, God promised to make his people righteous.
 - Paul argued that the righteousness promised to the Israelites was revealed in the gospel.
 - While extremely important, the author viewed justification as a new realm blessing but not as the center of the new realm.

- Methodology

- The definition of “justification” varies.

- Some believe it could refer to the entire spectrum of soteriology.

- Others believe it only refers to certain words with the root *dikaio-*.

- The author believed this is the most accurate definition.

- Scholars must therefore identify key occurrences of *dikaio* language.

- It is also considered a general term for the “status-oriented aspect of Paul’s soteriology.”

- “Righteousness” Language

- There are three key words from the root *dikaio*:

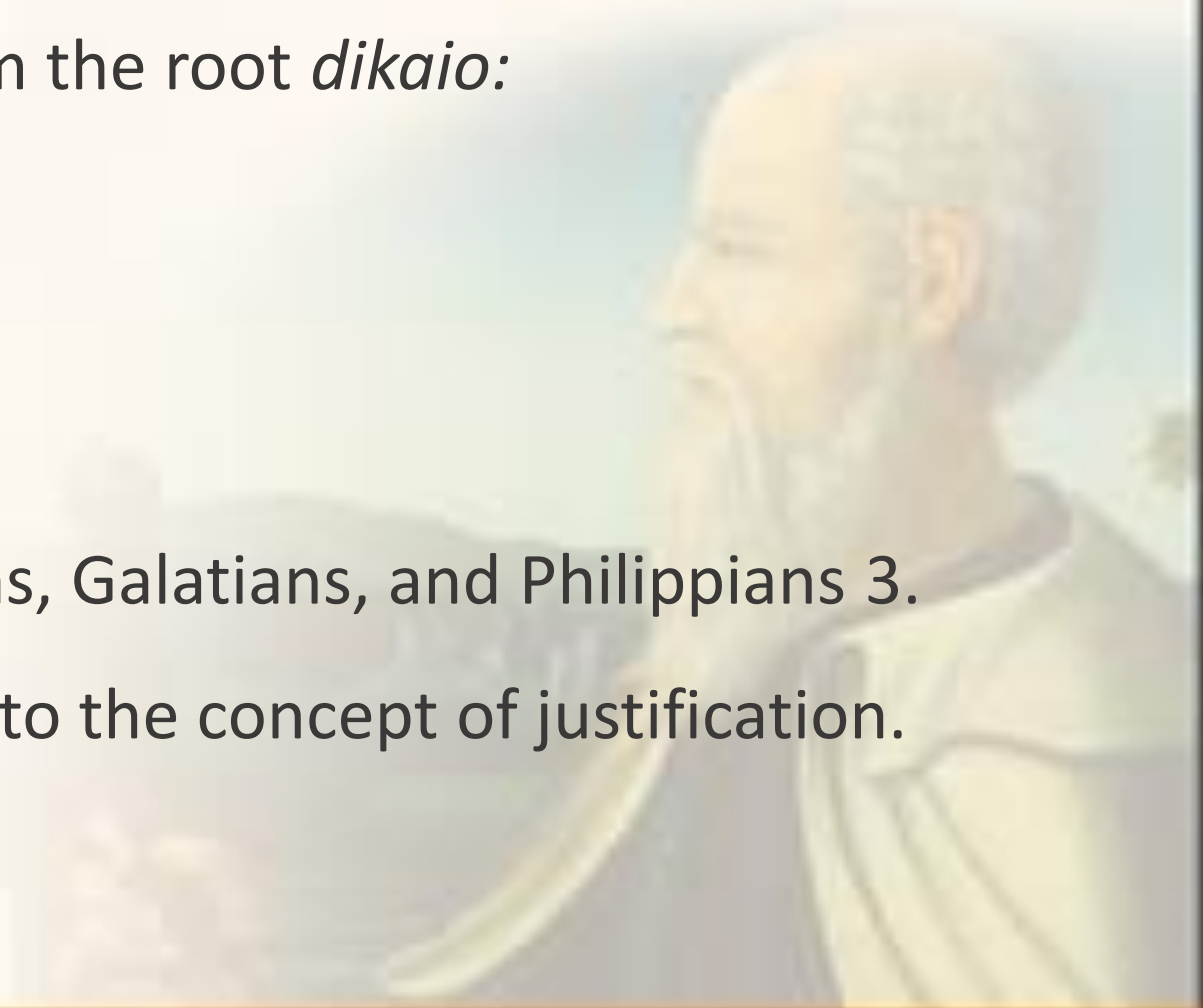
1. *Dikaiosynē* – righteousness

2. *Dikaioō* – justify

3. *Dikaios* – righteous, just

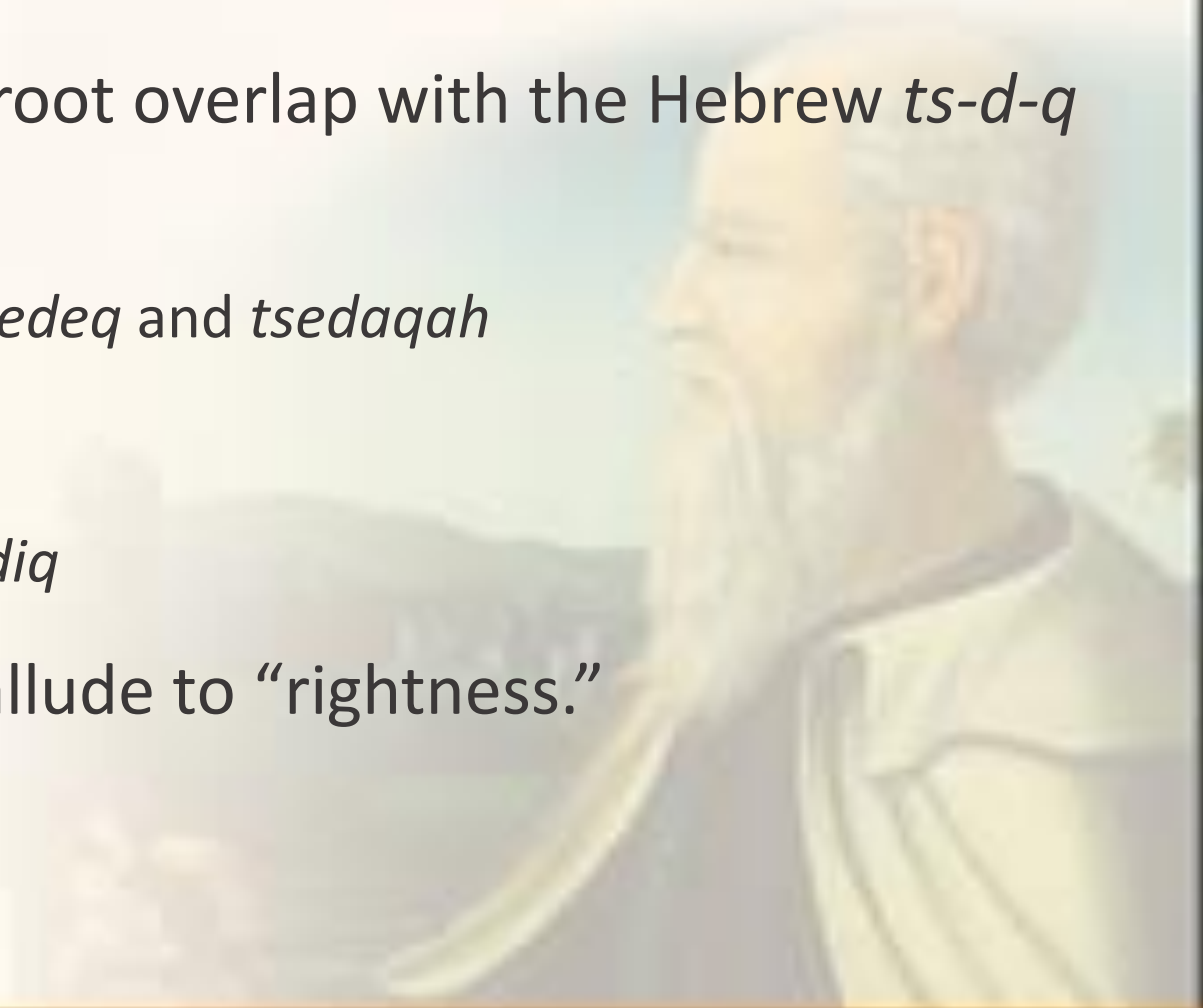
- These mainly appear in Romans, Galatians, and Philippians 3.

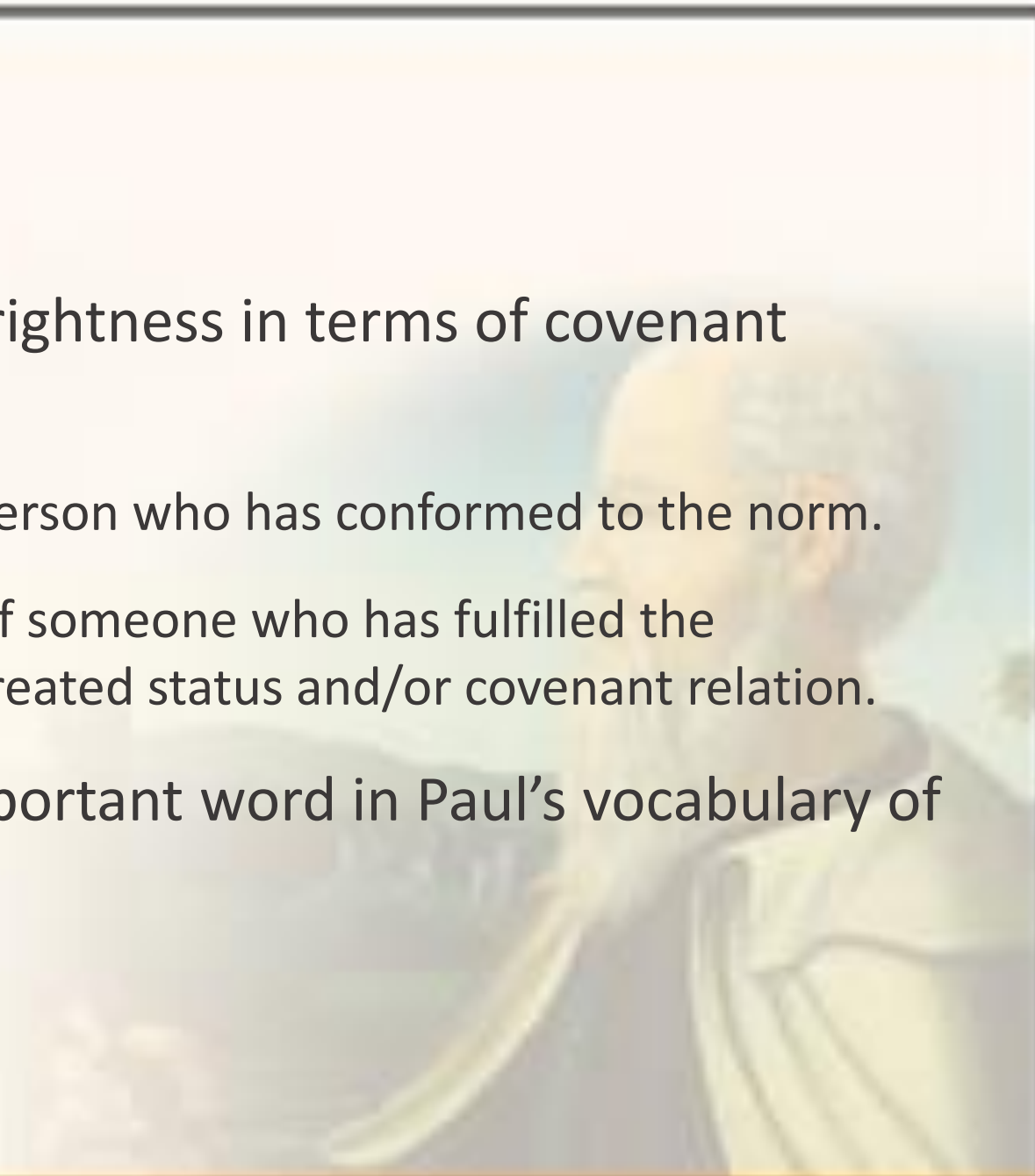
- Not all three terms contribute to the concept of justification.



- The Old Testament

- Words from the Greek *dikaio-* root overlap with the Hebrew *ts-d-q* root (but not always).
 - *Dikaiosynē* (righteousness) — *tsedeq* and *tsedaqah*
 - *Dikaioō* (justify) — *tsadaq*
 - *Dikaios* (righteous, just) — *tsaddiq*
- The author believed these all allude to “rightness.”

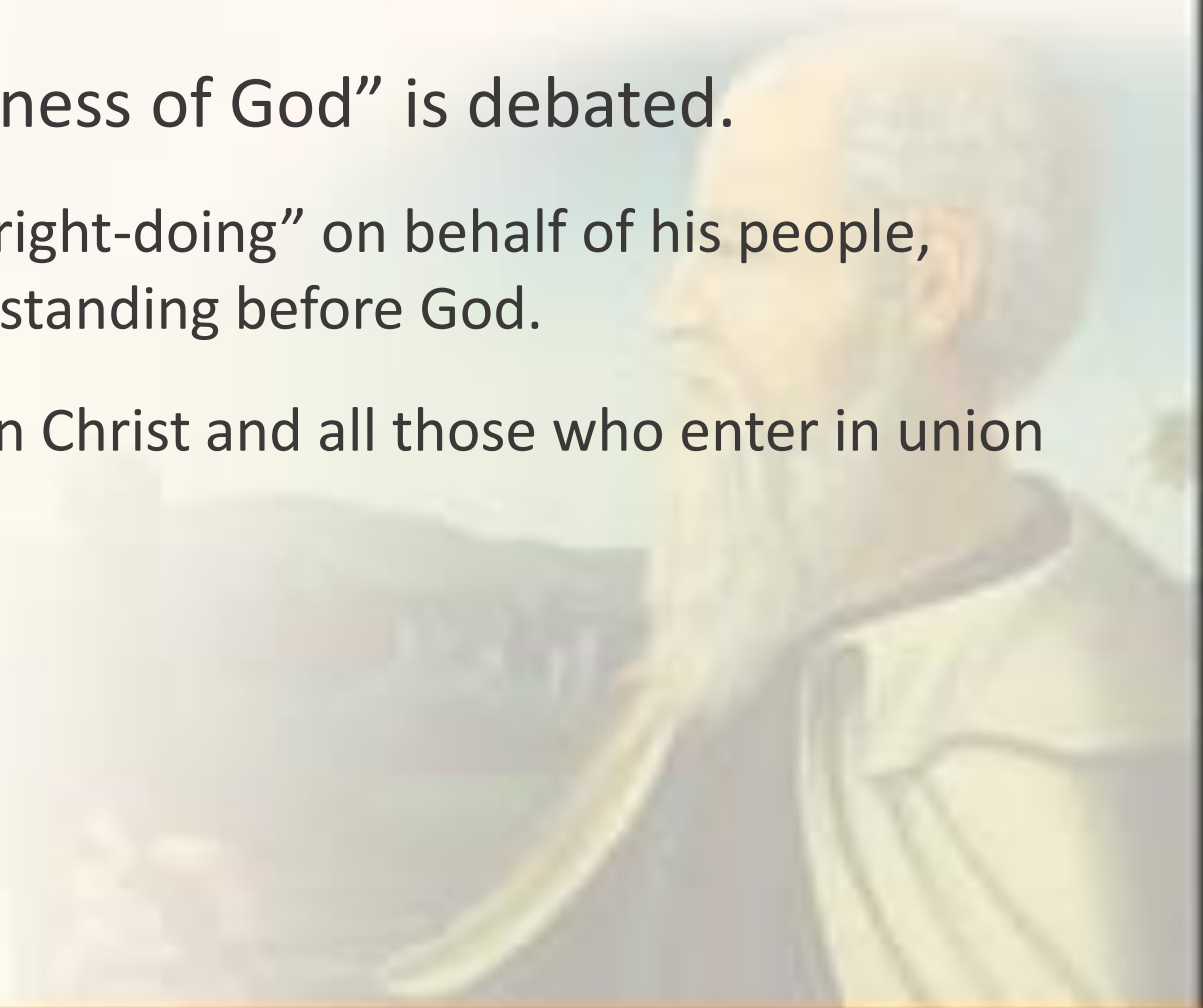


- The *ts-d-q* root often defines rightness in terms of covenant structure.
 - It may refer to the status of a person who has conformed to the norm.
 - It may also refer to the status of someone who has fulfilled the expectations of their divinely created status and/or covenant relation.
 - “Justify” is the single most important word in Paul’s vocabulary of righteousness.
- 

- Paul

- Righteousness is a status bestowed on someone. It cannot be achieved.
- Paul used words that indicate that righteousness is a judicial status given by God to sinners by faith.
- He also used *dikaiosynē* as it would be used in the Old Testament as a reflection of someone's behavior or to denote that behavior.
 - The author believes these words should be excluded when analyzing Paul's concept of justification.

- The meaning of the “righteousness of God” is debated.
 - The author defined it as God’s “right-doing” on behalf of his people, which then brings them in right standing before God.
 - This righteousness is displayed in Christ and all those who enter in union with Christ by faith.

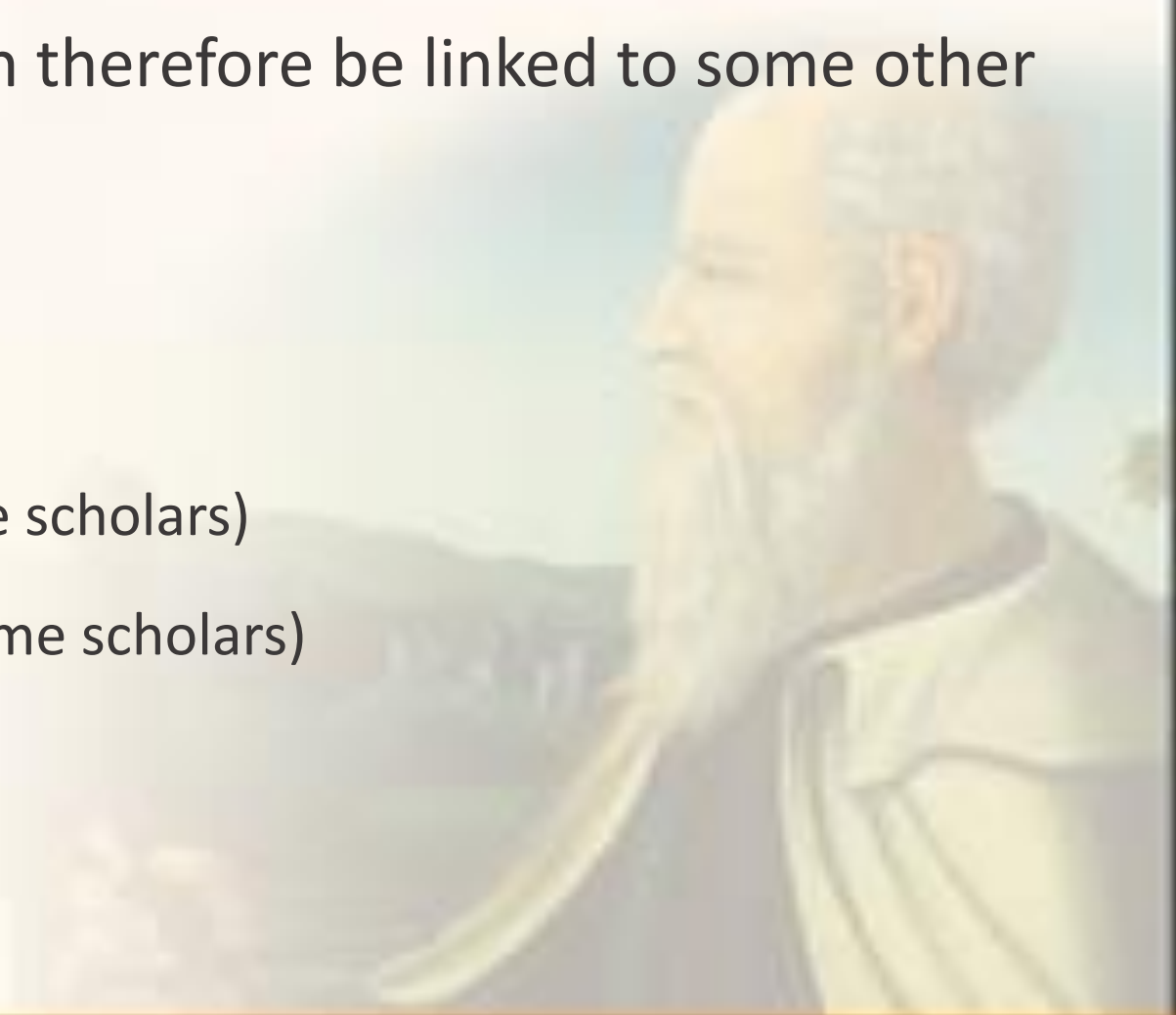




- Justification as Forensic

- Paul's use of the verb *dikaioō* reflects the Old Testament verb *tsadaq*, which means “to declare righteous” (not “*make* righteous”).
- Many of Paul's uses of the verb also retain their forensic nature in context.
- He viewed justification as parallel to reconciliation, both of which come from restored relationship rather than transformation.

- The concept of justification can therefore be linked to some other concepts:
 - Forgiveness
 - Being found blameless
 - Covenant membership (by some scholars)
 - Liberation or deliverance (by some scholars)



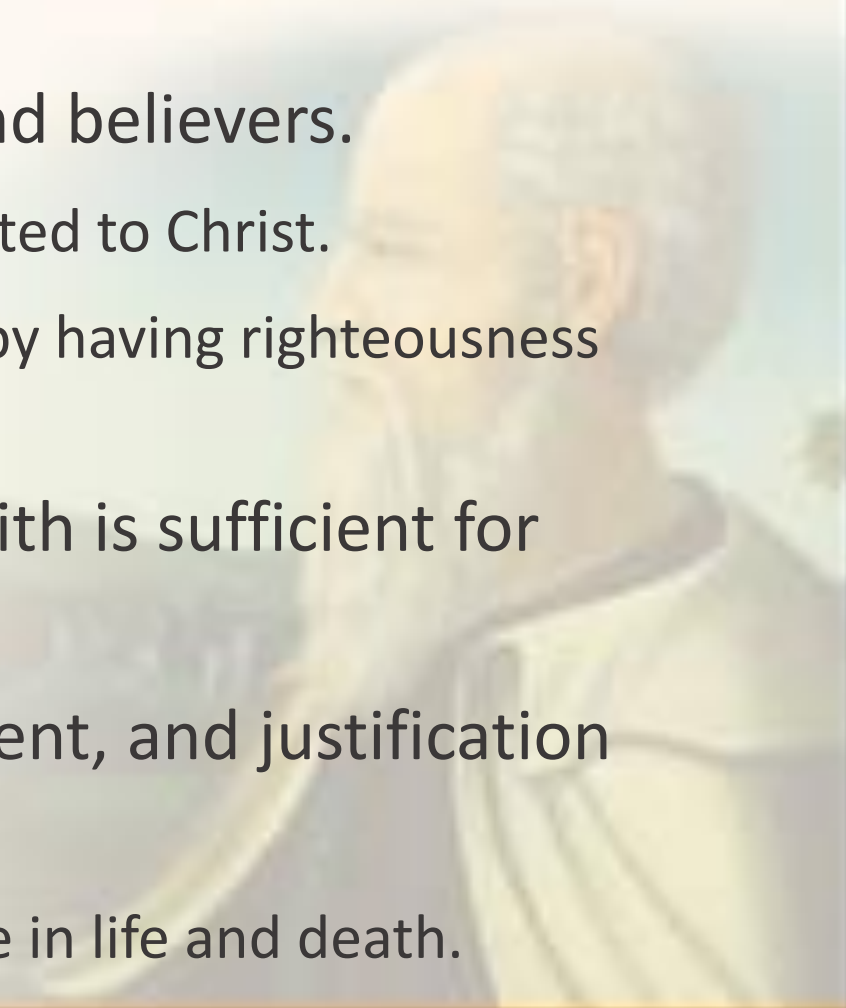
- Forensic Only?

- Arguments for a “more-than-forensic” definition of justification:

- In order for a “forensic-only” view to be maintained, one must ignore many relevant words in Paul’s letters.
- However, these occurrences might need to be considered separate from justification because of their context.
- It fails to do justice to the powerful effects of God’s justifying word.
 - The author argued that God’s “word” as “justified” creates a new reality that gives sinners bound in death a new relationship with God.
- The author believed that justification should be connected with transformation.
 - However, they must be kept separate because they are both products of being “in Christ.”

- Justification “in Christ”

- Jesus’s resurrection was also the justification/vindication of believers.
- There is an interchange between Christ and believers.
 - “Christ became sin” means that sin was credited to Christ.
 - Sinners “become” the righteousness of God by having righteousness credited to them.
- Some believe that Paul also taught that faith is sufficient for righteousness.
- Others argue that faith alone is not sufficient, and justification must be based on Christ’s righteousness.
 - Believers are credited with Christ’s obedience in life and death.

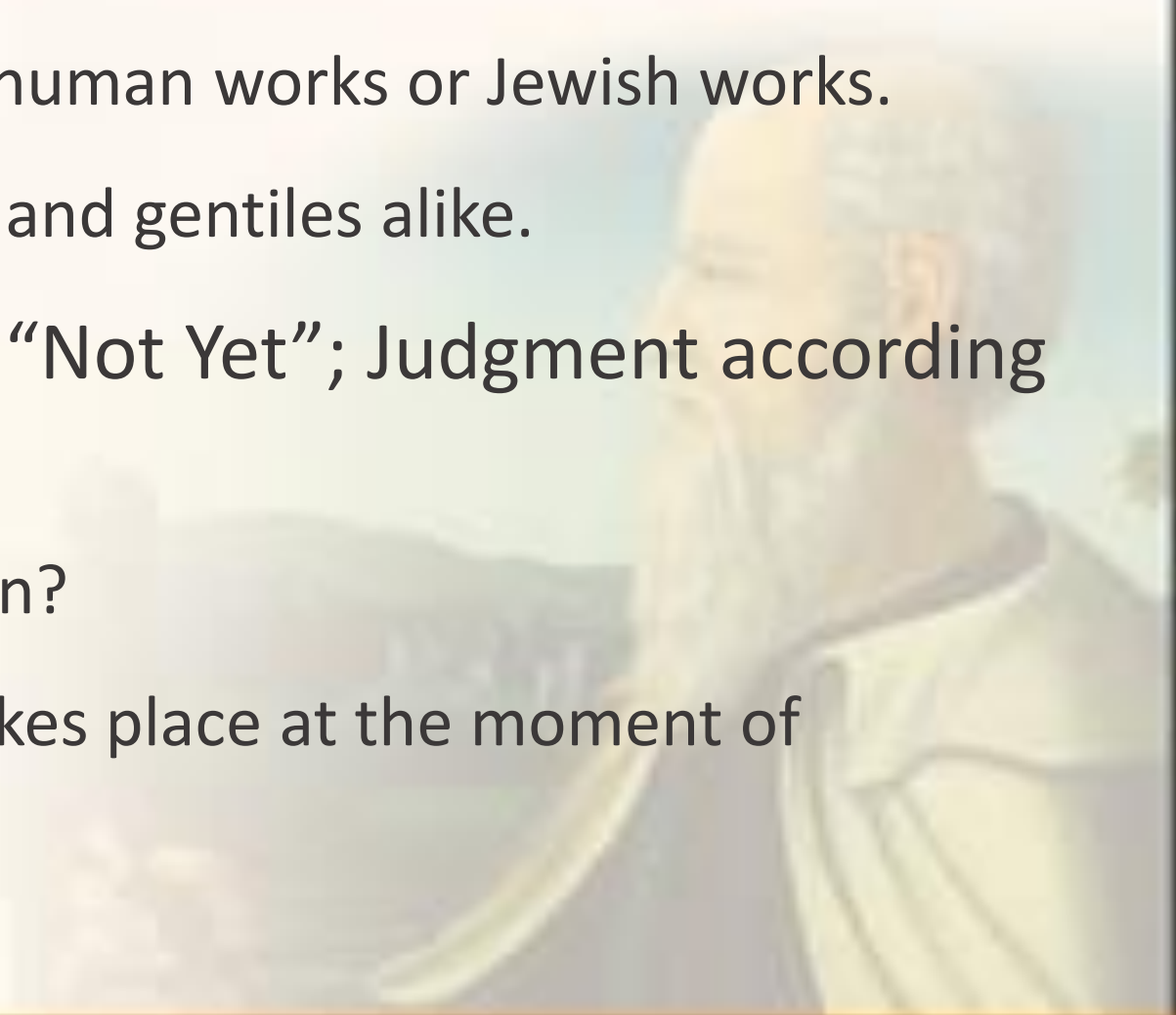


- Justification by Faith Alone

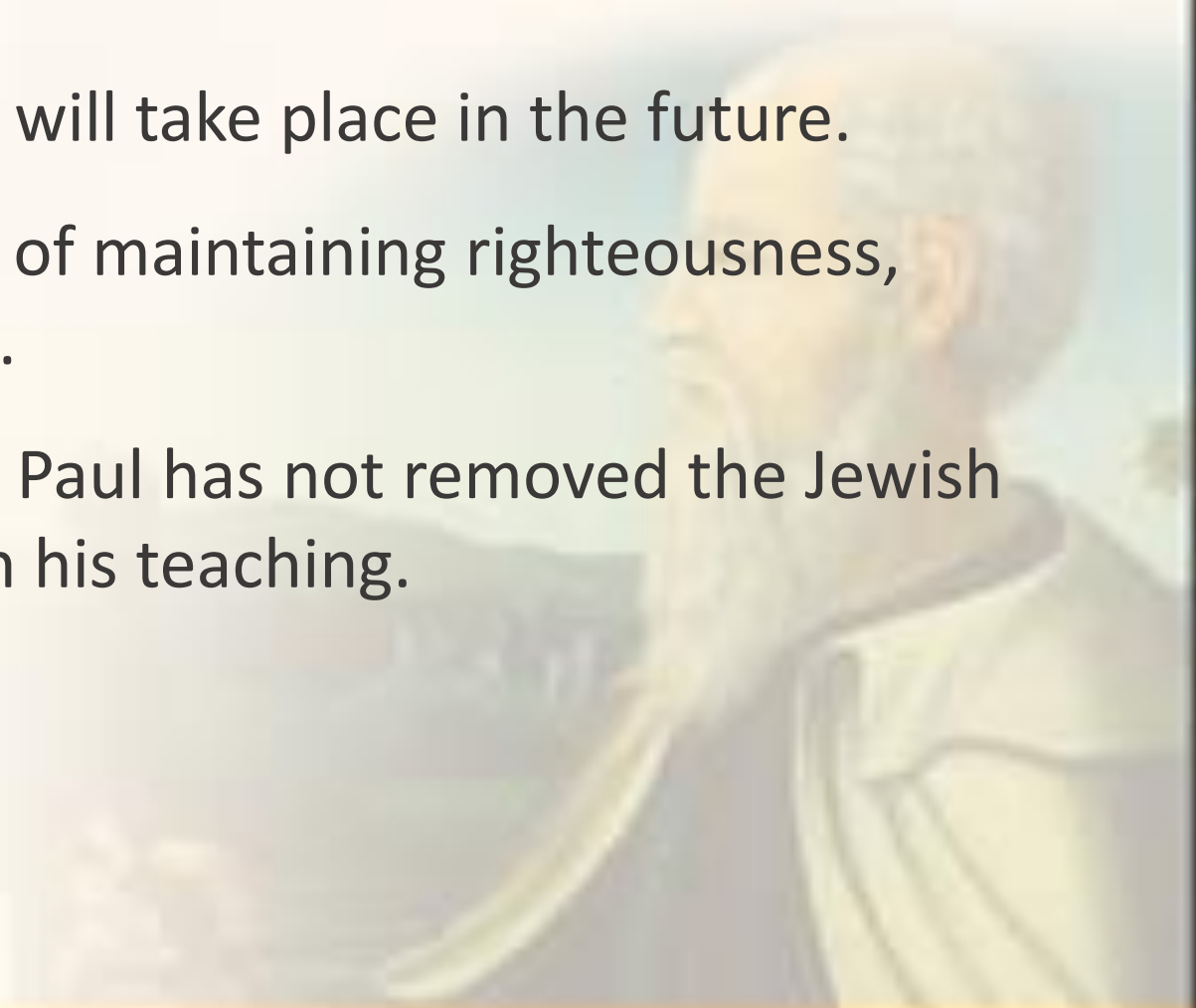
- Justification is by faith, not by human works or Jewish works.
- Faith can be exercised by Jews and gentiles alike.

- Justification as “Already” and “Not Yet”; Judgment according to Works

- When does justification happen?
- Romans 5:9 indicates that it takes place at the moment of conversion.

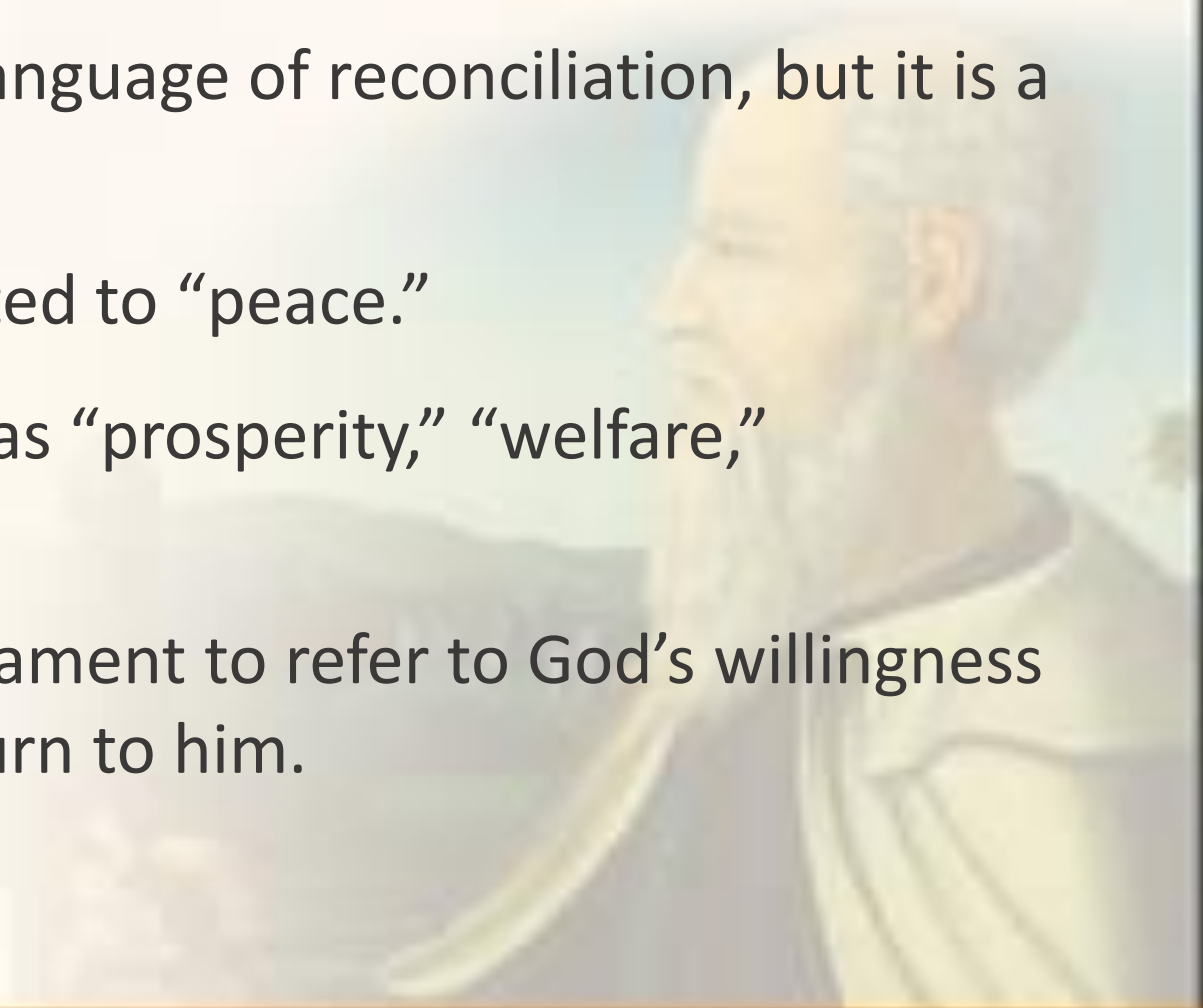


- Other locations indicate that it will take place in the future.
- Paul emphasized the necessity of maintaining righteousness, which points to final judgment.
- The revelation of the gospel to Paul has not removed the Jewish concept of final judgment from his teaching.

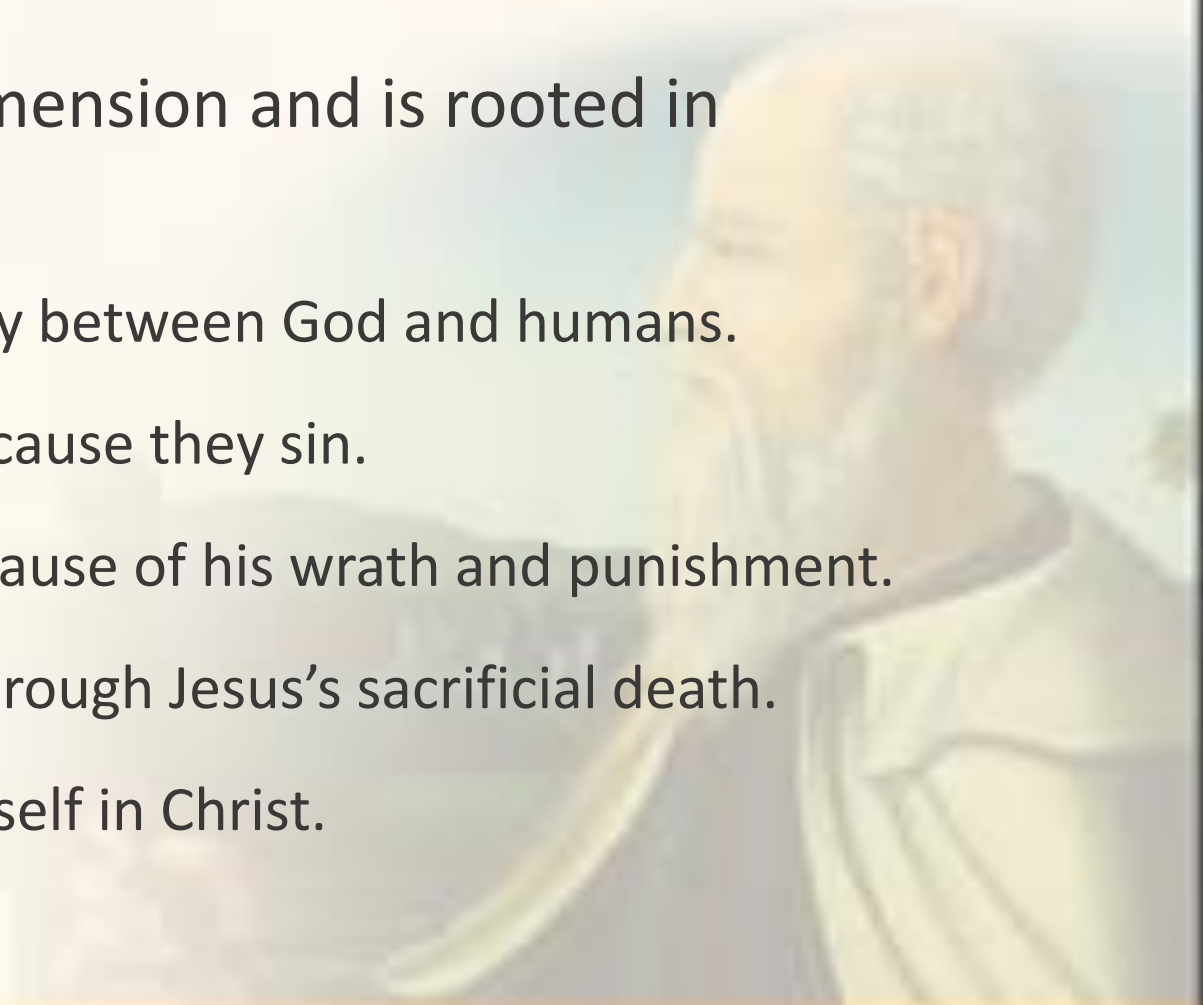


- From Enmity to Peace: Reconciliation

- Paul does not frequently use language of reconciliation, but it is a blessing of the new realm.
- “Reconciliation” is closely related to “peace.”
- “Peace” was often translated as “prosperity,” “welfare,” “securely,” and “health.”
- “Peace” is used in the Old Testament to refer to God’s willingness to allow wayward Israel to return to him.



- “Reconcile” does not appear as often as “peace,” and it may have a Greco-Roman origin.
- Reconciliation has a cosmic dimension and is rooted in relationship with God.
 - Sin has brought a state of enmity between God and humans.
 - Humans are enemies of God because they sin.
 - God is an enemy of humans because of his wrath and punishment.
 - Sinners are reconciled to God through Jesus’s sacrificial death.
 - God reconciled believers to himself in Christ.



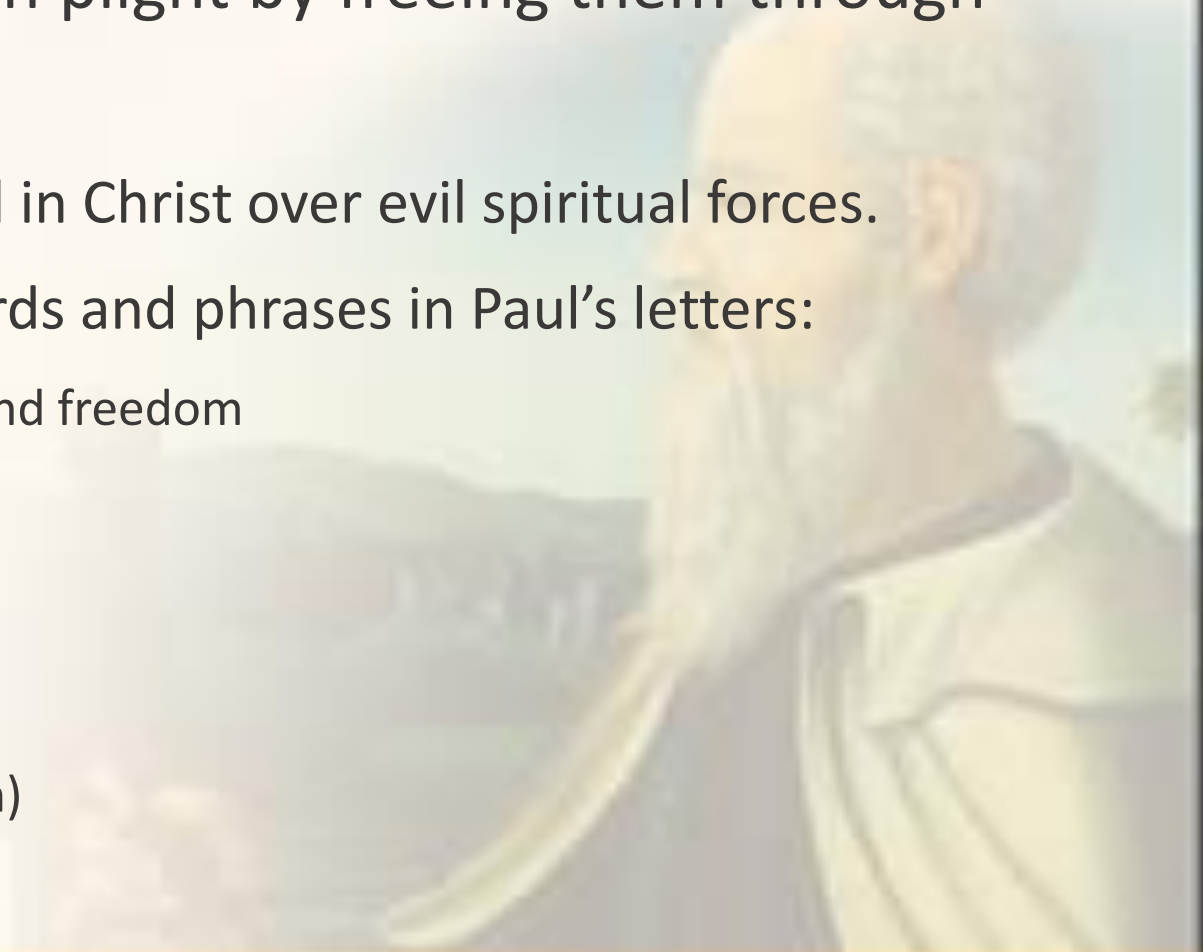
- From Slavery to Freedom: Redemption and Victory

- The “Apocalyptic Paul” movement states that Paul taught that God provided the solution to human plight by freeing them through exercising his power in Christ.

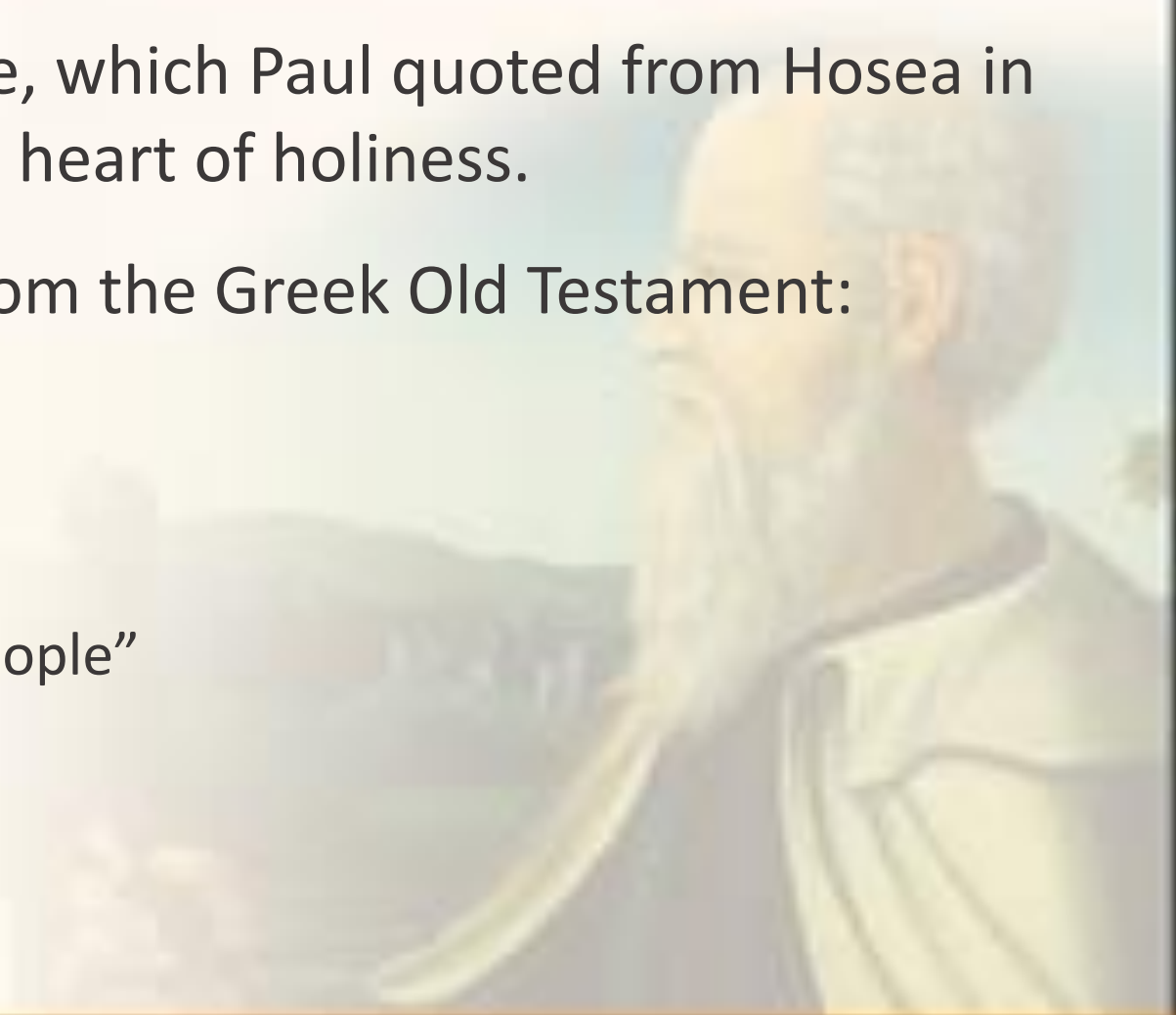
- Atonement is the victory of God in Christ over evil spiritual forces.

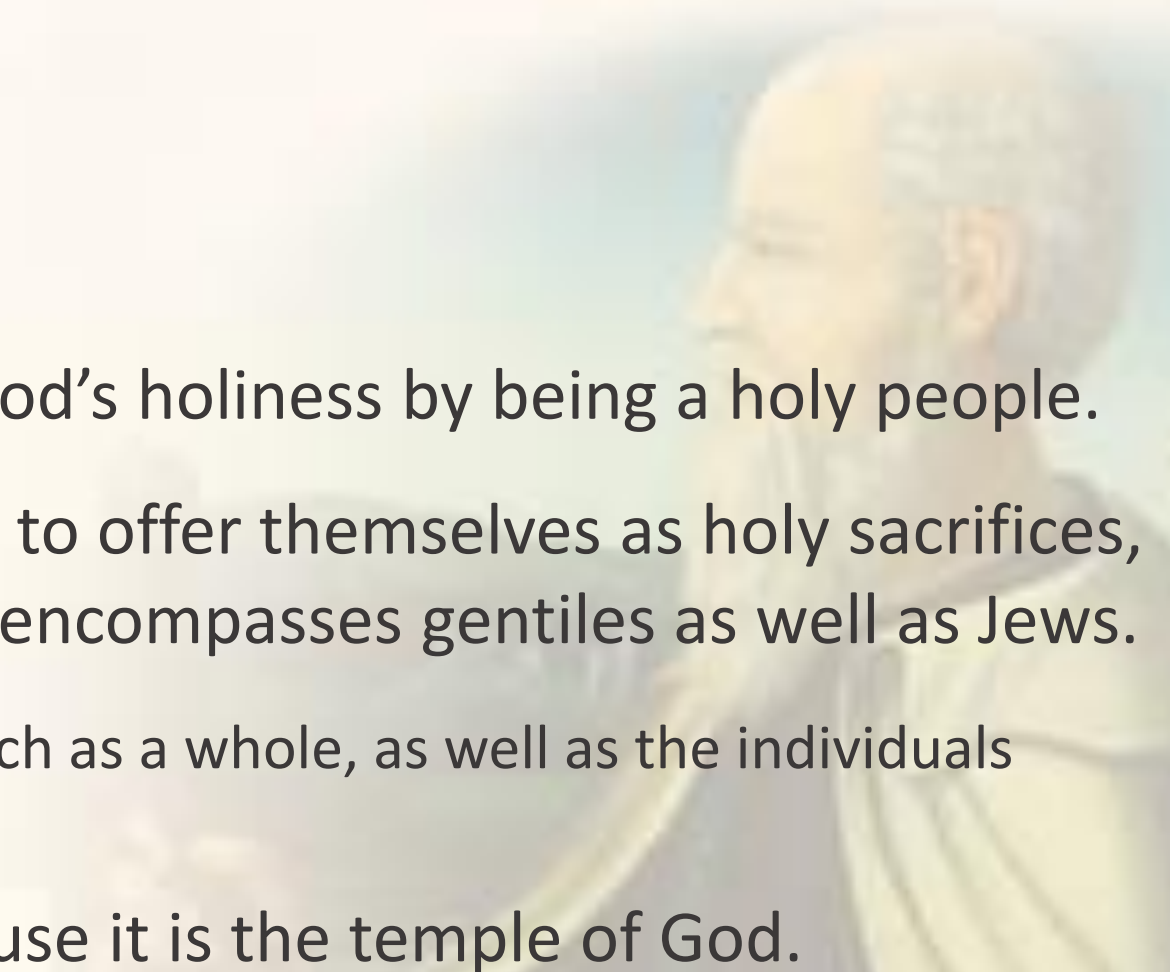
- This is supported by several words and phrases in Paul’s letters:

- Paul’s contrast between slavery and freedom
- “Put to death”
- “Die to sin”
- “Dying to”
- “Deliverance”
- “Forgiveness of sins” (redemption)
- “Victory over”



- From “Not My People” to “God’s Own People”: Holiness
 - The author chose this language, which Paul quoted from Hosea in Romans, because it gets to the heart of holiness.
 - Paul used holiness language from the Greek Old Testament:
 - “Sanctify”
 - “Sanctification”/“Holiness”
 - “Saint”/“Holy one(s)”/“God’s people”
 - “Holy”/“Pure”/“Innocent”



- Other words that might contribute to this concept:
 - “Clean”
 - “Purify”
 - “Without blemish”
 - “Blameless”
 - Israel was called to imitate God’s holiness by being a holy people.
 - Paul commanded the church to offer themselves as holy sacrifices, indicating that holiness now encompasses gentiles as well as Jews.
 - Paul was referring to the church as a whole, as well as the individuals within the church.
 - The church is now holy because it is the temple of God.
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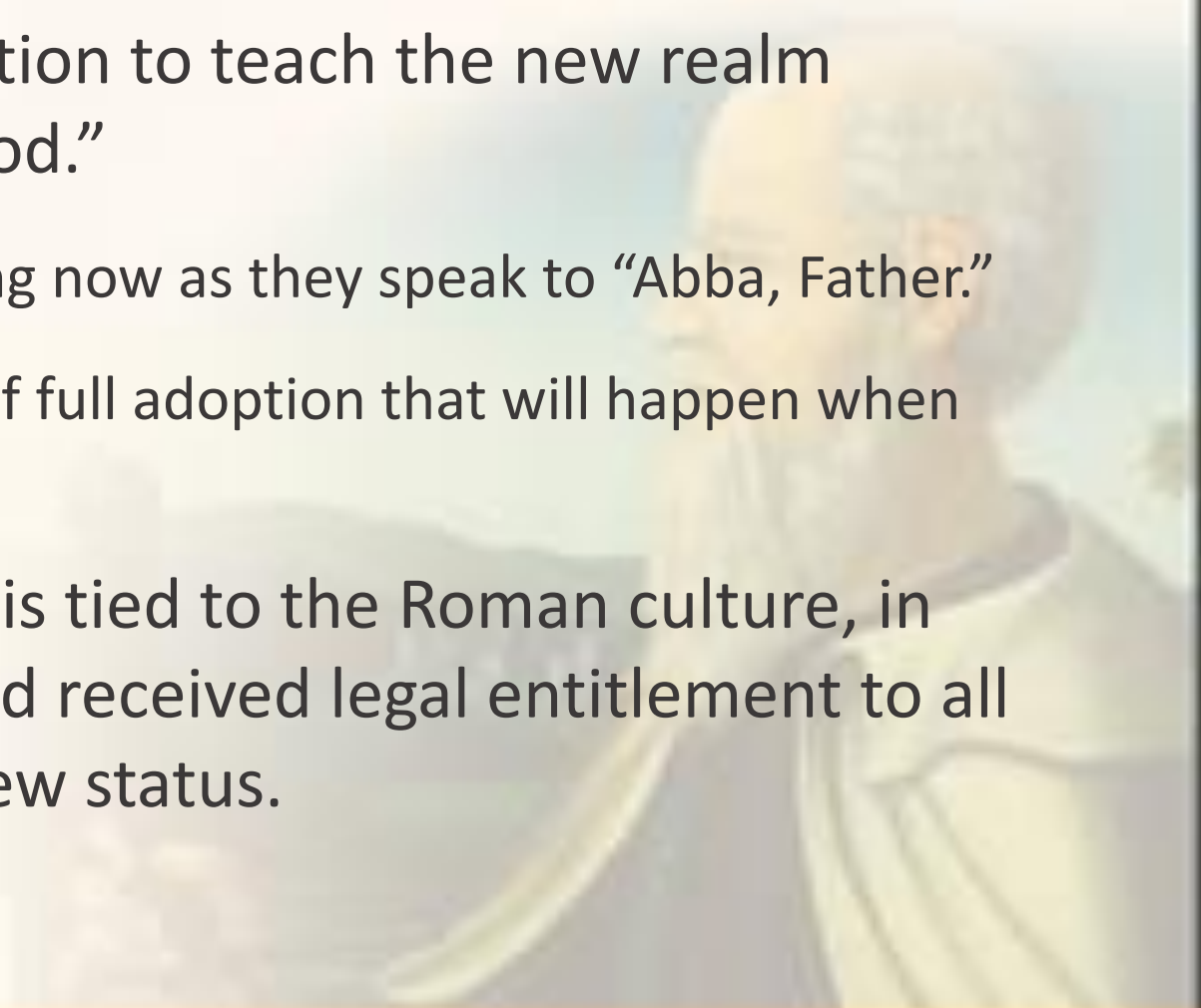
- From Homelessness to Belonging: Adoption

- Paul used the concept of adoption to teach the new realm blessing as living as “sons of God.”

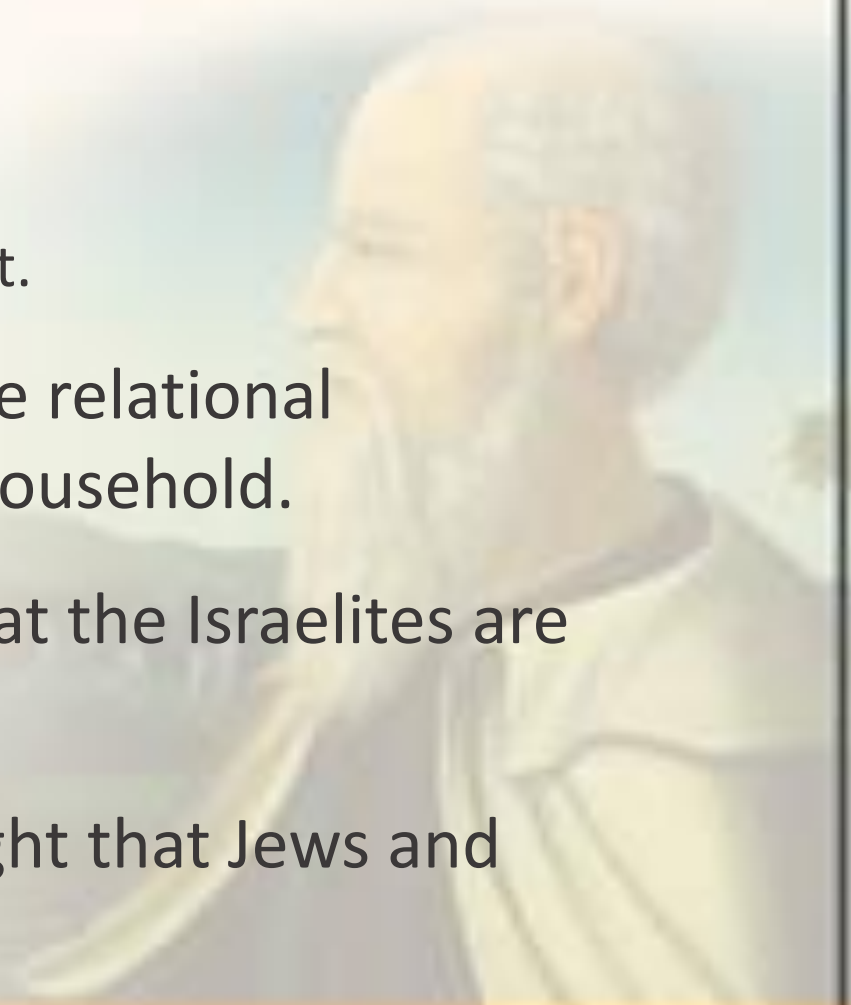
- Believers experience this blessing now as they speak to “Abba, Father.”

- They also wait for the blessing of full adoption that will happen when their bodies are redeemed.

- Paul’s perspective of adoption is tied to the Roman culture, in which males who were adopted received legal entitlement to all rights and privileges of their new status.



- Paul also drew from the Old Testament theme of humans being created in the image of God.
 - Christ is the image of God.
 - We are called to share in that image.
 - God is restoring humans to the image of Christ.
- Adoption language unites the legal and the relational perspectives of being members of God's household.
- A central theme in the Old Testament is that the Israelites are people of God.
- Paul extended this to the gentiles and taught that Jews and gentiles would receive an inheritance.



- From the Image of the Earthly Man to the Image of the Heavenly Man: Transformation

- Paul contrasted Adam and Christ.

- He taught that believers are transformed in order to conform to Christ.

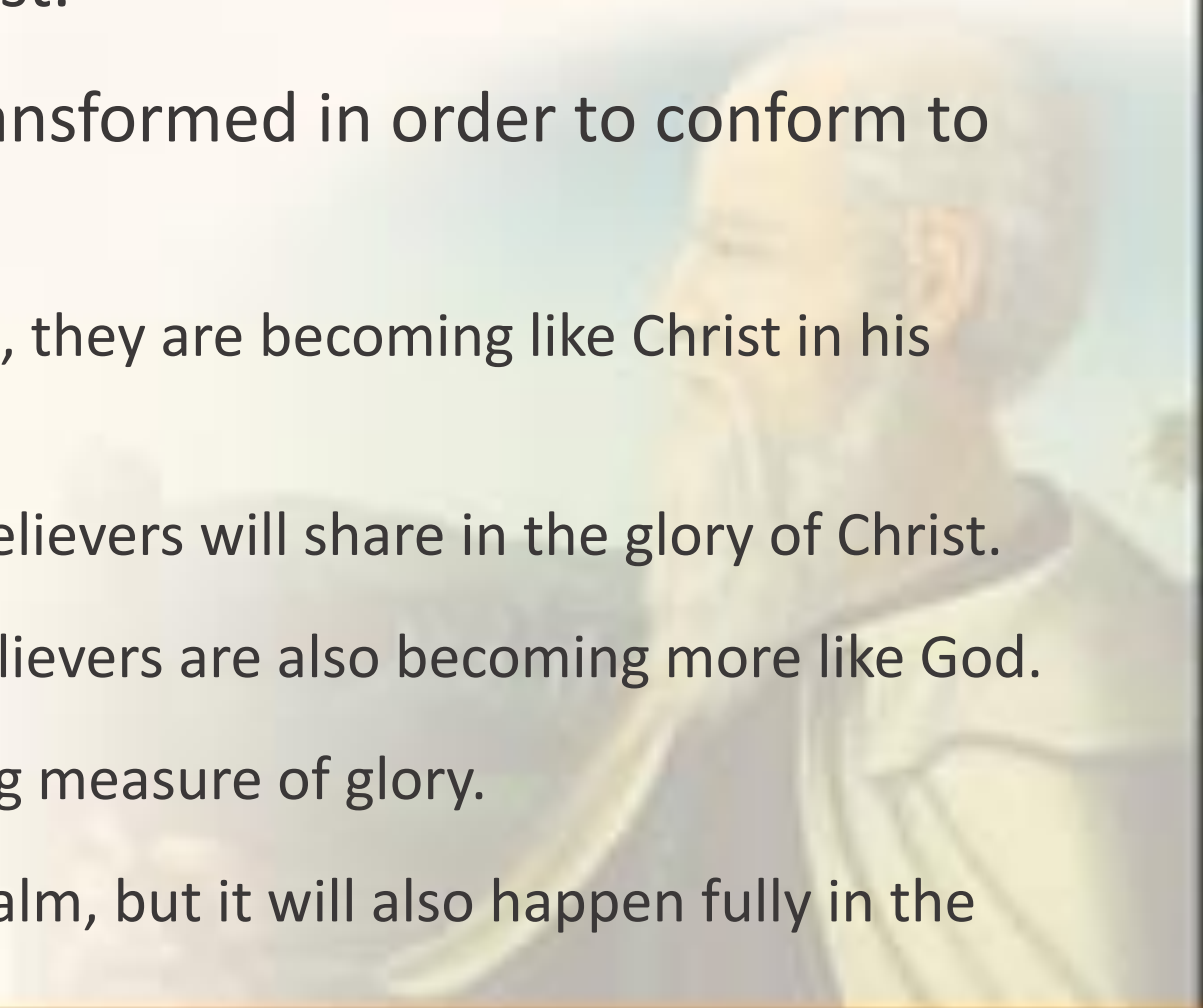
- When believers are transformed, they are becoming like Christ in his death.

- Through their transformation, believers will share in the glory of Christ.

- In becoming more like Christ, believers are also becoming more like God.

- They will also enjoy an increasing measure of glory.

- This happens now in the new realm, but it will also happen fully in the future.



Conclusion

- It is possible to distort Paul's teachings when breaking down the blessings of the new realm.
- It is important to appreciate the full extent of those blessings as a community rather than focusing on individual believers.

