

UNDERSTANDING MISSION: THE COVENANTAL CONTEXT
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Romans 9:30-10:18
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9:30-10:7 **I. The covenant relationship – faith alone.**

- A. Those in relationship by faith.
- B. Those out of relationship by law.
- C. Christ is the stumbling block. cf. I Corinthians 1:18-25; I Peter 2:7-10; Psalm 18:22
- D. Turn from our good works. cf. Titus 3:3-8
- E. Turn to righteousness in faith. cf. Genesis 15:6; Joshua 2:24; Romans 4:1-11

A case study in mission: David Brainerd's Diary

from Part I, emphasis added

“When I was about twenty years of age I was engaged more than ever in the duties of religion. I became strict and watchful over my thoughts, words, and actions; and thought I must be very seriously religious, because I considered entering the ministry. I spent much time every day reading my Bible and praying, and I gave great attention to Sunday sermons. In short, I had a very good *outside*, and trusted entirely in my religious duties, though I was not then aware of what I was doing wrong. Though I often confessed to God that I, of course, *deserved nothing*, yet still I harbored a secret hope of recommending myself to God by all these duties and all this morality. When I prayed affectionately, and felt some melting of my heart in love to him, I hoped God would thereby be moved to care for me. So I thought that through my repenting and praising him and seeking him, I could make good steps toward heaven. When my heart seemed full of love and faith, I felt that God would be affected by that, and would hear my prayers for their sincerity. In other words, I *healed myself with my duties*. I told myself, "God must accept you, because look at how whole-heartedly you serve and seek him."

Now here was the problem. The more I tried love God with all my soul, the more I saw how little I really loved him. The more I sought a *soft* heart, the more I felt how *hard* my heart was, and I supposed it must be softened before Christ would accept of me. One night I remember in particular, when I was walking alone, and I had opened such a view of my sin that I feared the ground would cleave asunder under my feet and become my grave. I saw it was impossible for me, after the utmost pains, to answer the demands of God's law. I saw it condemned me for selfish and angry and fearful and envious and lustful thoughts, which I could not possibly prevent.

Then, after a considerable time spent in such distresses, one morning I was alone and I saw that all my contrivances and projects to effect or procure salvation were utterly in vain. I had thought many times that the difficulties were *very great*, but now I saw them in a different light-- that it was totally impossible to do anything toward delivering myself. The tumult that had been in my mind now quieted. I saw that all my prayers and repentances and feelings and obediences had not laid the least obligation upon God to bestow his salvation on me.

Then I realized *why* they were of no avail. When I had been fasting, praying, obeying, I thought I was aiming at the glory of God, but I was doing it all for my own glory--to feel I was *worthy*. As long as I was doing all this to earn my salvation, I was doing *nothing* for God, all for me! I realized that all my struggling to become worthy was an exercise in *self-worship*. I was actually trying to *avoid* God as savior, and to be my own savior. i.e. I was not worshipping him, but using him. Then, at that time, the true way of salvation opened to my mind. I saw so much of its wisdom and suitableness and excellence that I wondered how I ever was blind to it. I wondered why everyone did not see this way of salvation--not by my own contrivances, *but entirely by the righteousness of Christ*. I felt myself in a new world, and everything about me appeared with a different aspect from before.”

Martin Luther: “In order for a pure and lasting work of spiritual renewal to take place within the church, multitudes within it must be led to build their lives on this foundation. This means that they must be conducted into the light of a full conscious awareness of God's holiness, the depth of their sin and the sufficiency of the atoning work of Christ for their acceptance with God, not just at the outset of their Christian lives but in every succeeding day. ”
- Dynamics of Spiritual Life, p. 101-2

Heidelberg Catechism Q. 60: How are you right with God?

A. Only by true faith in Jesus Christ. Even though my conscience accuses me of having grievously sinned against all God's commandments and of never having kept any of them, and even though I am still inclined toward all evil, nevertheless, without my deserving it at all, out of sheer grace, God grants and credits to me the perfect satisfaction, righteousness, and holiness of Christ, as if I had never sinned nor been a sinner, as if I had been as perfectly obedient as Christ was obedient for me. All I need to do is to accept this gift of God with a believing heart.

:8-13

II. The covenant reality – from the heart.

- A. The heart believes in faith. cf. Deuteronomy 10:12-22; 30:14; Proverbs 4:23
 - 1. The direction of a man's life. cf. Matthew 15:18
 - 2. The substance of speech. cf. Luke 6:45
- B. The heart justifies all who believe.
- C. Mission as a heart diagnostic.
 - “If you are not willing to go, then you are not fit to stay.” - Dan Iverson

:14-18

III. The covenant response – for the nations.

- A. Who will hear if no one speaks?
- B. Whose heart will be changed if no one goes?
 - 1. Beautiful feet: saved from judgment. cf. Nahum 1-3
 - 2. Beautiful feet: saved for restoration. cf. Isaiah 52
 - 3. Beautiful feet: the good news for the nations.
 - ◆ The Cross
 - ◆ Good news of judgment and restoration