

Can there be salvation from the penalty of sin, without an accompanying salvation from the guilt of sin?

Can someone be saved from the guilt and penalty of sin, and fail to be saved from the power of sin, at least in some sense or to some degree?

Can salvation really be complete without salvation from the very presence of sin?

Can there be stages or phases in the application of salvation from sin? Is it possible to be saved initially, saved progressively, and saved finally and completely?

If it is possible to speak of salvation in past, present, and future tenses, is the gospel the power of God to salvation in all three tenses?

Furthermore, we have been speaking of salvation as deliverance from the guilt of sin, from the penalty of sin, from the power of sin, and from the presence of sin. Is salvation also a deliverance to something? And if so, what?

- (3) The third key word in this theme is "the righteousness of God." What does this term mean?

Is this speaking of God's attribute or characteristic of righteousness, that quality or perfection of His nature which speaks of His justice or uprightness of character and actions?

Or is this speaking of God's standard of righteousness, His Law, which defines righteousness and unrighteousness for human beings, and reflects His characteristic of righteousness?

How is God's attribute of righteousness or God's standard of righteousness revealed in the gospel?

Are there yet other meanings of the term, "the righteousness of God," which Paul is going to use and develop?

- (4) The fourth key word in this theme is the word faith. What is faith?

Verse 16 says that the gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believes. Verse 17 says that in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith.

One who believes is one who exercises faith. Is this faith simply "trust in God as He is revealed in His Word"? Or is it something more?

In the context faith is connected with salvation; and thus this faith would seem to mean "trust in Christ and His redemptive work as revealed in the gospel."

The phrase "from (or by) faith to faith" is difficult, but the meaning in context of the quotation from Habakkuk 2:4 may help us. The quotation says that "the righteous shall live by faith."

In Habakkuk 2:4 the unrighteous man lives by self-sufficient pride, whereas the righteous man lives by faith. The righteous man lives a life of righteousness by faith. He begins this life by faith, and he continues to live this life by faith. Perhaps the NIV translation captures this idea when it translates Romans 1:17 "for in the gospel a righteousness from God