

**SUNDAY SCHOOL  
JAMS!!!**

**This little light of mine,  
I'm goin'-a let it shine; 3x  
let it shine, let it shine,  
let it shine.**

Ev'rywhere I go, I'm  
goin'-a let it shine; 3x  
let it shine, let it shine, let  
it shine.

Jesus gave it to me, I'm  
goin'-a let it shine; 3x  
let it shine, let it  
shine, let it shine.

I've got peace like a river

I've got peace like a river

I've got peace like a river

In my soul

I've got love like an ocean

I've got love like an ocean

I've got love like an ocean

In my soul

I've got joy like a fountain

I've got joy like a fountain

I've got joy like a fountain

In my soul

Your love is deep

Your love is high

Your love is long

Your love is wide



**Your love is deeper than my  
view of grace  
Higher than this worldly place  
Longer than this road I travel  
Wider than the gap You filled**

So who shall separate us  
Who shall separate us  
from Your love  
Nothing can separate us  
Nothing can separate us  
from Your love



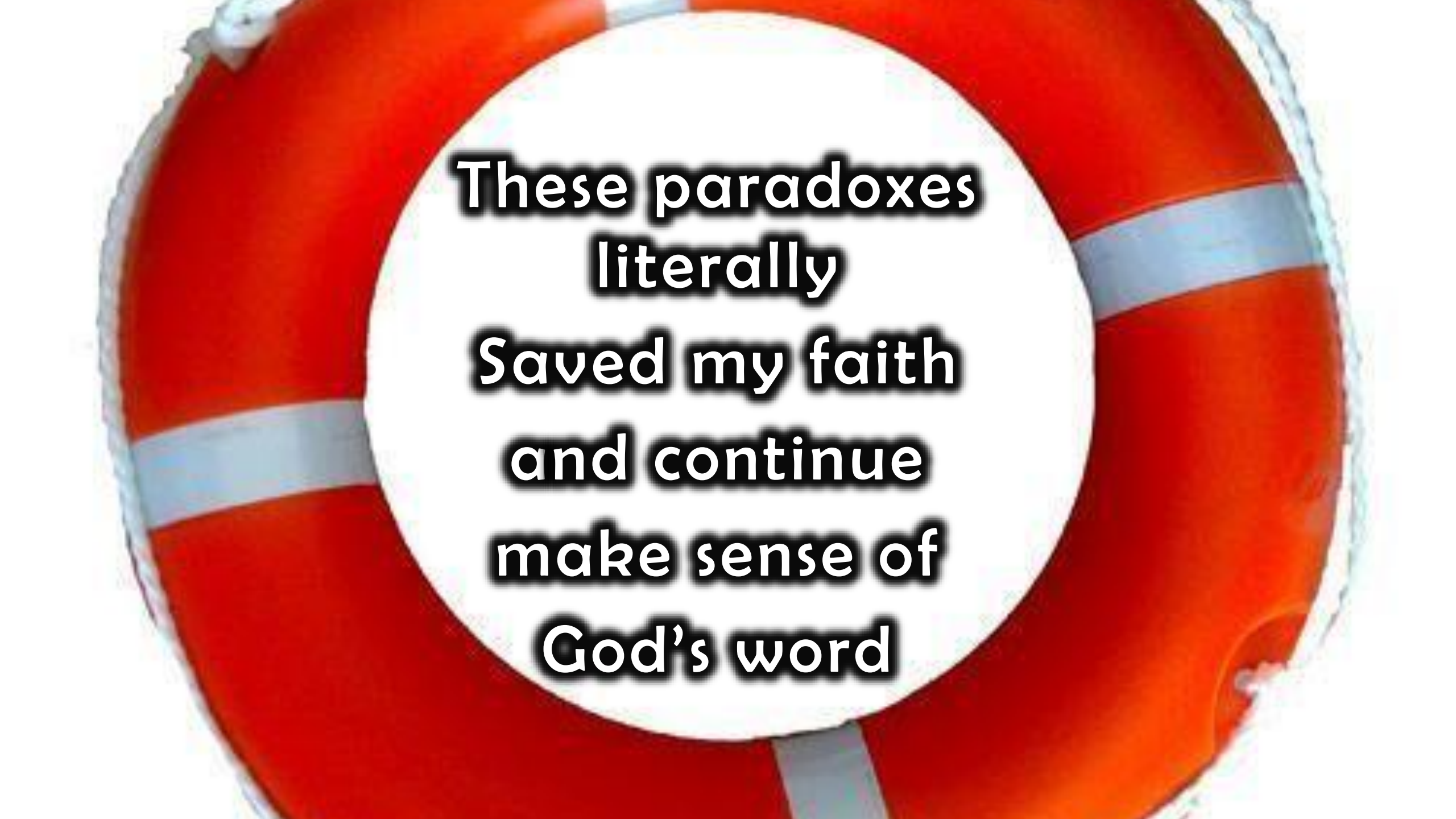
# Lutheran Paradoxes

Living in & with the  
Tension

**par·a·dox**

**/'perə,däks/ noun**

**a seemingly absurd or self-contradictory statement or proposition that when investigated or explained may prove to be well founded or true.**



**These paradoxes  
literally  
Saved my faith  
and continue  
make sense of  
God's word**

# PARADOXES

- Law / Gospel
- Our Righteousness / Alien Righteousness
- Sinner / Saint
- Slave / Free
- Finite / Infinite
- Left Hand / Right Hand Kingdoms
- Institution / Mission

A portrait of Martin Luther, a German theologian, is the background of the image. He is shown from the chest up, wearing a dark, high-collared garment. He has dark, wavy hair and is looking slightly to the right of the viewer with a serious expression. The background behind him is a textured, light greenish-yellow wall.

## LAW – GOSPEL DISTINCTION

The law says, “do this,” and it is never done. Grace says, “believe in this,” and everything is already done.

*Heidelberg Disputation 1518*







• Dr. James A. Nestingen on  
[Law/Gospel](#)



# 2 Kinds of Righteousness

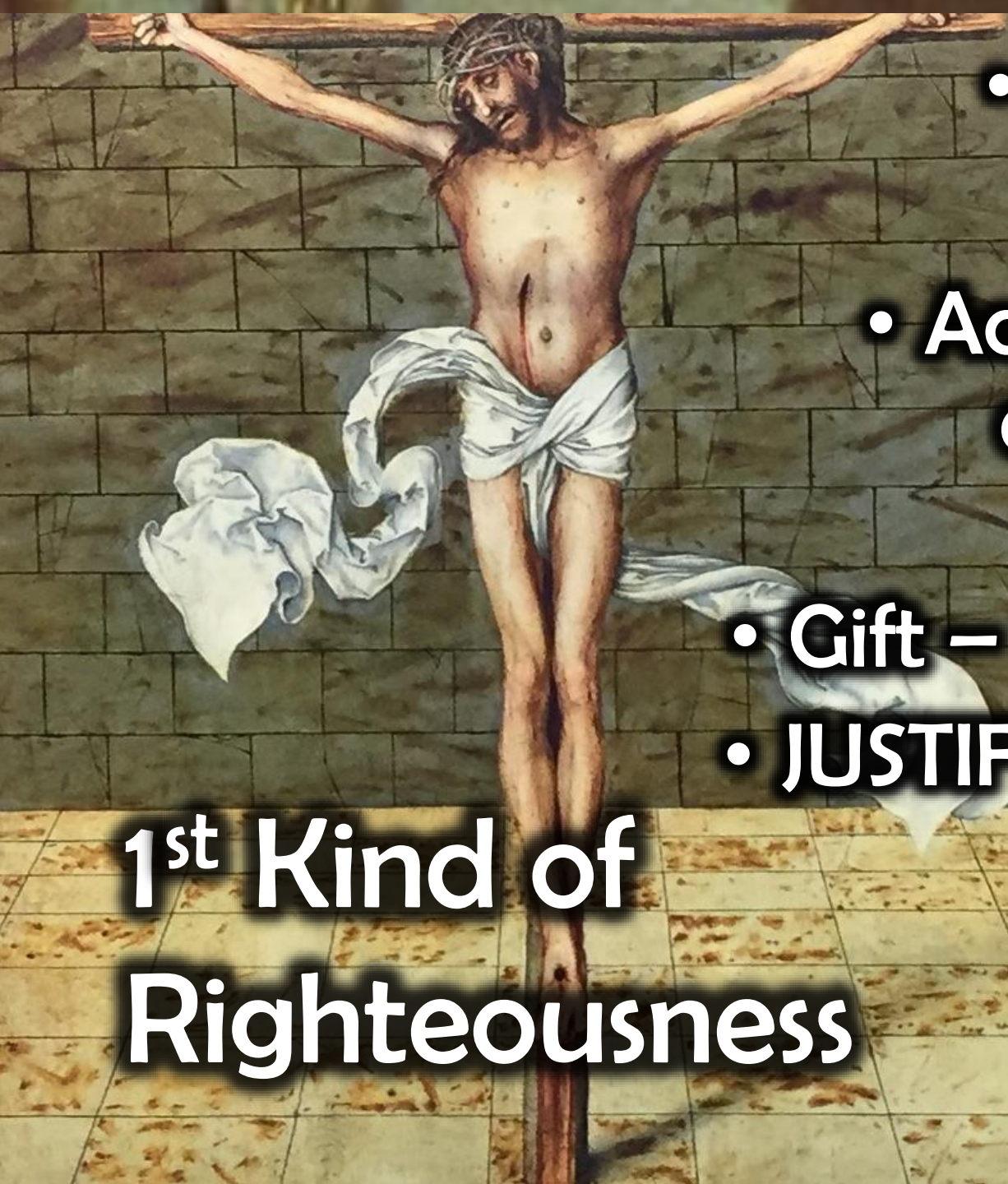
**Not a  
Separation  
They go  
together  
but must  
be  
Distin-  
guished!**

Simply put, to be righteous is to be the human person God envisioned when he created us. It has to do with meeting God's "design specifications" for being a human creature and fulfilling the purpose for which God created us.

**ROBERT KOLB; CHARLES P. ARAND**

Of course, the word “faith” was not new in Luther’s day, but Luther’s use of it was. He once wrote to his friend and colleague, Philipp Melanchthon, at the moment when the Evangelical cause was being made before the emperor and world in the form of the Augsburg Confession in June 1530. Justification of the ungodly that distinguishes two kinds of righteousness and two preaching offices, law and gospel, was put forward as the clear and universal declaration of Christian faith by Luther’s evangelical party.

**STEVEN D. PAULSON**



- Passive - Alien

- Instilled

- Accomplished for us ,  
encounters us , &  
happens to us

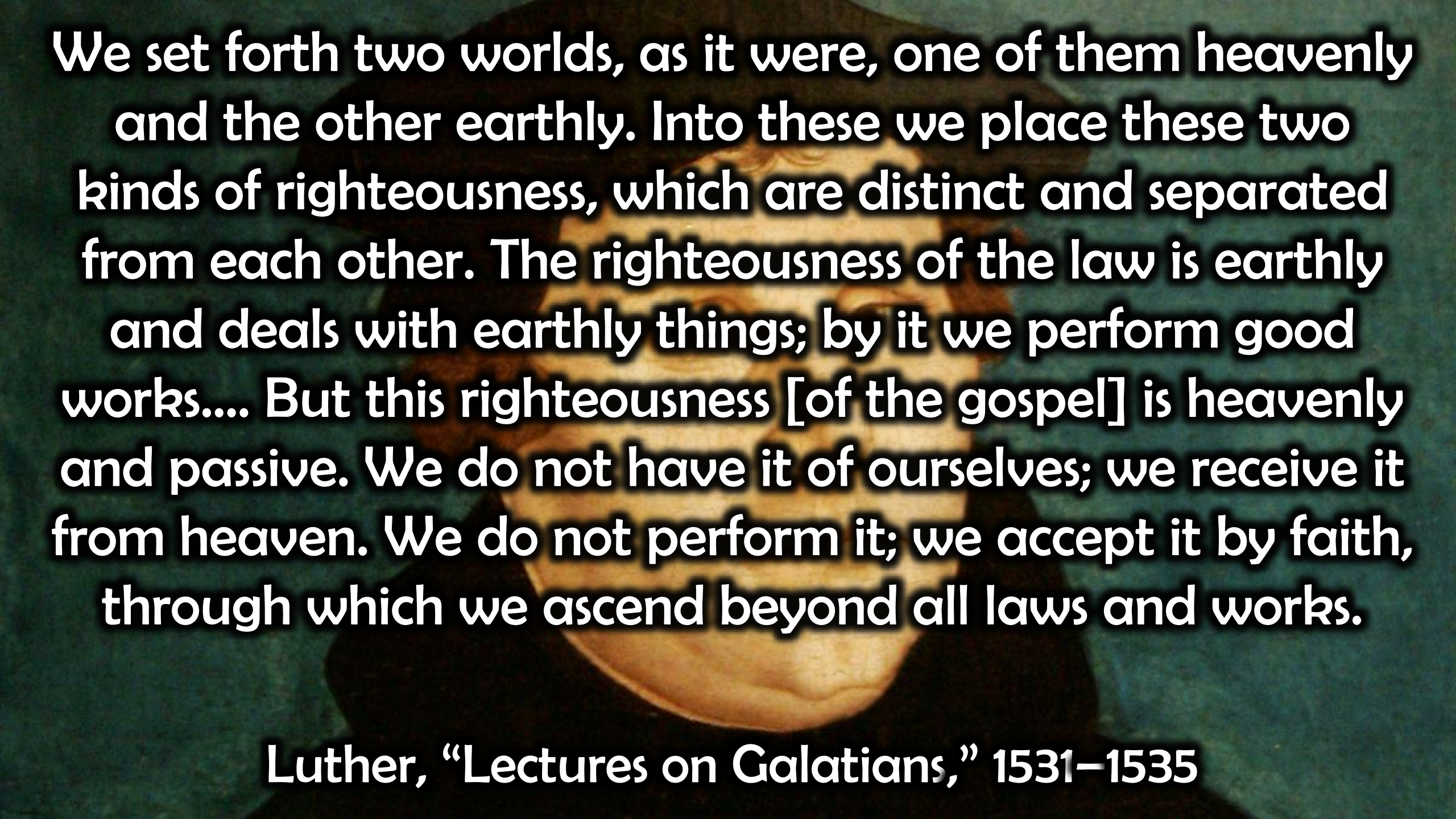
- Gift – received not achieved

- **JUSTIFIES/MAKE INNOCENT**

- Romans 3:21 ff.

- Hearing from Luther

**1<sup>st</sup> Kind of  
Righteousness**



We set forth two worlds, as it were, one of them heavenly and the other earthly. Into these we place these two kinds of righteousness, which are distinct and separated from each other. The righteousness of the law is earthly and deals with earthly things; by it we perform good works... But this righteousness [of the gospel] is heavenly and passive. We do not have it of ourselves; we receive it from heaven. We do not perform it; we accept it by faith, through which we ascend beyond all laws and works.

Luther, "Lectures on Galatians," 1531–1535

Faith in Christ's promise, not works of the law, alone saves. But we will have to be very careful, since the word "faith" is one of the most abused words in our vocabulary. It does not mean for Luther "accepting," or "deciding for," or "committing oneself to Christ," or any of the misuses this word has received. Faith is perfect passivity for Luther—being done unto by God, or simply suffering God. It is literally being put to death as a sinner and raised as a saint, which is decidedly God's own act through preached words. This is a teaching that Plato and Aristotle did not know.

**STEVEN D. PAULSON**

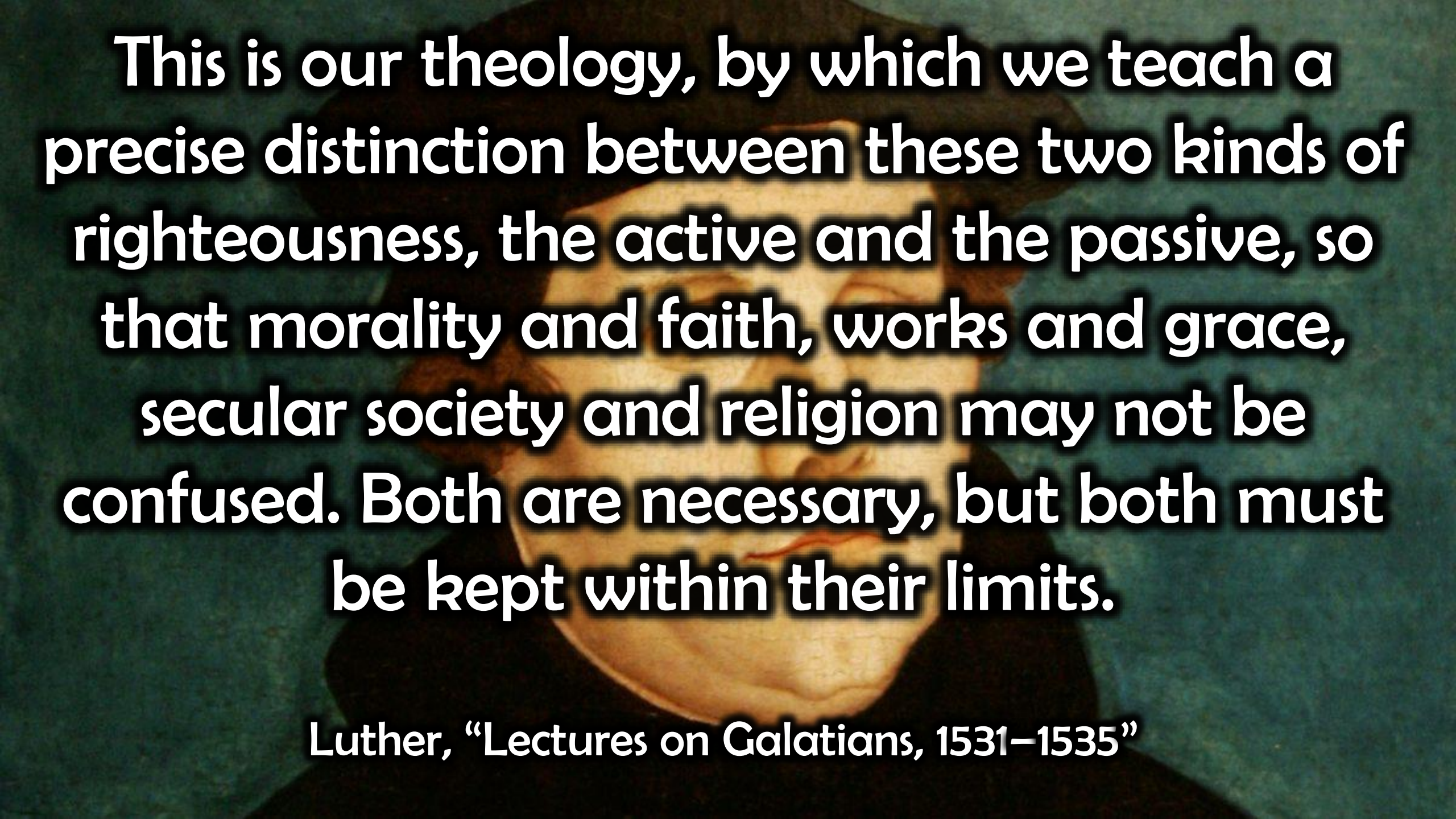


## **2<sup>nd</sup> Kind of Righteousness**

**Hearing from  
Luther**

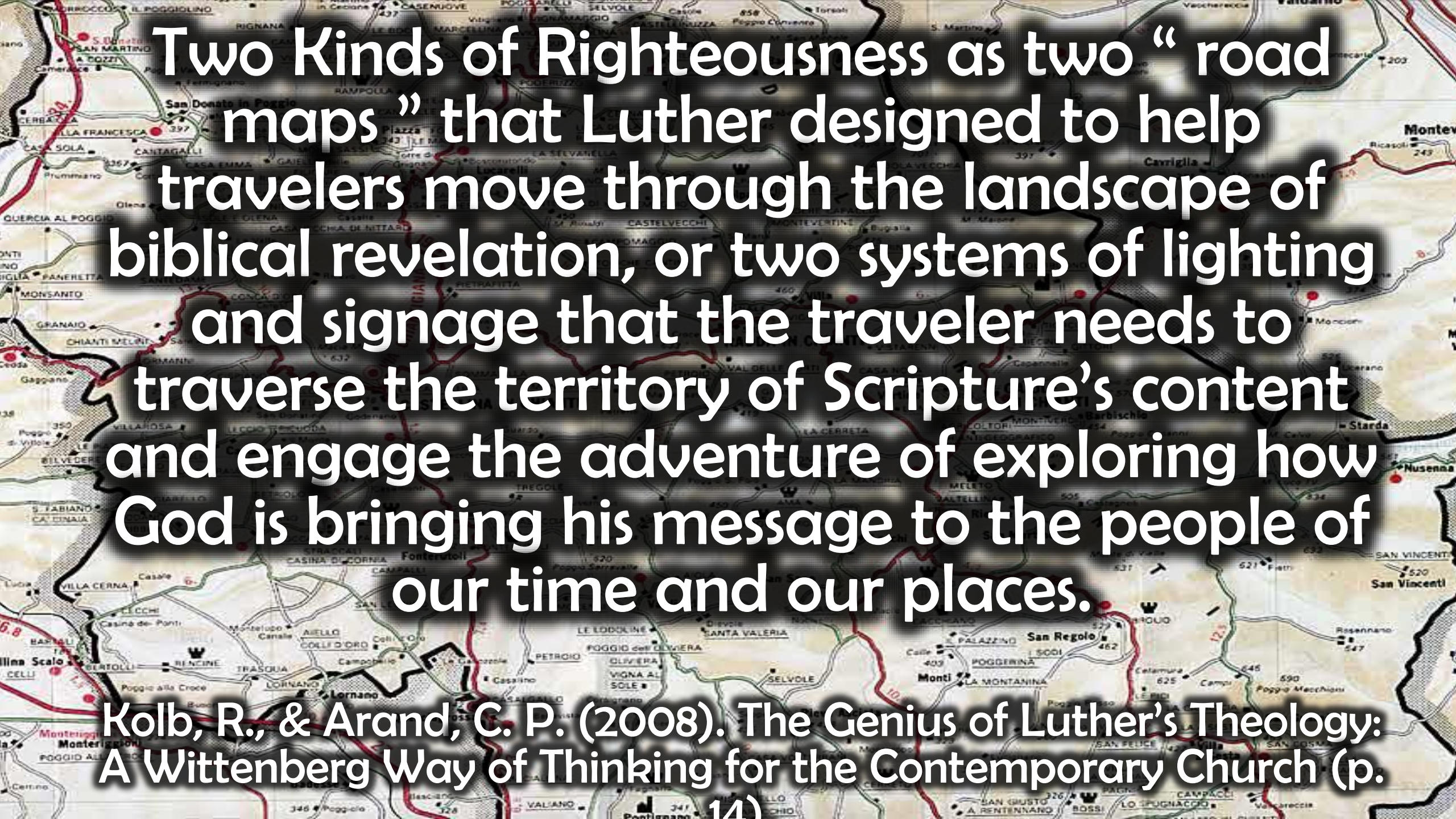
- **Our active righteousness**
- **Our holiness work - devotion**
- **Love of Neighbor**
- **Done in Response to the 1<sup>st</sup>**
- **Duty helps but now a delight**
- **Flows out of who we are**



A portrait of Martin Luther, a German theologian, is centered in the background. He is depicted from the chest up, wearing a black cap and a dark robe. His face is pale with a slight smile, and he has a small red mark on his chin. The background is a dark, textured green.

**This is our theology, by which we teach a precise distinction between these two kinds of righteousness, the active and the passive, so that morality and faith, works and grace, secular society and religion may not be confused. Both are necessary, but both must be kept within their limits.**

**Luther, “Lectures on Galatians, 1531–1535”**

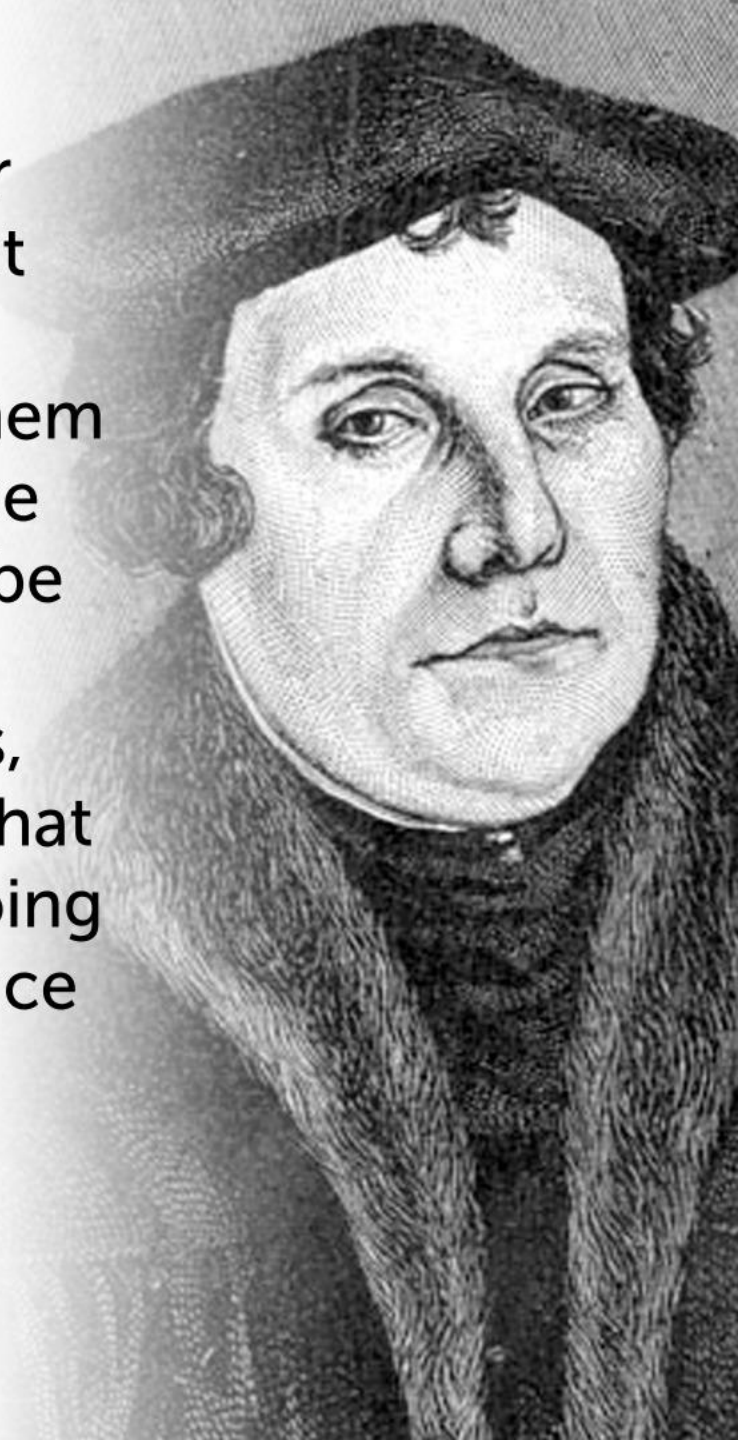


Two Kinds of Righteousness as two “road maps” that Luther designed to help travelers move through the landscape of biblical revelation, or two systems of lighting and signage that the traveler needs to traverse the territory of Scripture’s content and engage the adventure of exploring how God is bringing his message to the people of our time and our places.

Kolb, R., & Arand, C. P. (2008). *The Genius of Luther’s Theology: A Wittenberg Way of Thinking for the Contemporary Church* (p. 14)

On the other hand, the weak, who are not malicious or slanderous but good, are offended when they hear that the Law and good works do not have to be done for justification. One must go to their aid and explain to them how it is that works do not justify, how works should be done, and how they should not be done. They should be done as fruits of righteousness, not in order to bring righteousness into being. Having been made righteous, we must do them; but it is not the other way around: that when we are unrighteous, we become righteous by doing them. The tree produces fruit; the fruit does not produce the tree. ...Galatians Lectures LW 26.169

**MARTIN LUTHER**



**How does  
this  
distinction  
help you?  
Examples of  
them being  
mixedup?**



# GETTING THE TWO CONFUSED

- Religious Orders of Luther's Day ... Today?
- Anabaptist Tradition
- Pietism – Holiness Churches
- “Liberal Protestantism” – “Social Gospel”
- Christian Nationalism (more on this when we get to the 2 Kingdoms)
- Other Religions?

Instead of producing holiness at the extremities of life, Luther began to open up God's desire for what it was like to be holy in the middle of life. He became a great phenomenologist of earthly life, using God's law (the most salutary doctrine of life) to probe beneath contorted human inventions of false spirituality to find what God wanted normal life to be like. Marriage, having children, preaching, taking responsibility for the welfare of others, and resisting evil emerged as the kind of things humans are made to do in the middle of this life—not forming Christian communes or creating vows for higher forms of spiritual exercise in order to escape the world.

**STEVEN D. PAULSON**

Human reason is revolted by the thought that there are two kinds of righteousness, legal and fiduciary, and the two are not complementary. They stand in eternal and deadly opposition so that any striving for virtue ends by crucifying God when he comes to live among us. Divine righteousness destroys the goal of human righteousness through the law, and in its place raises Christ from the dead as its glory and “goal.” When the legal scheme is gone, the law ended, and virtuous people are put to death, faith is the only thing that lives by trusting what Christ promises.

**STEVEN D. PAULSON**

A portrait of a man with a serious expression, wearing a black cap and dark clothing. The background is a textured blue-green. A blue speech bubble is overlaid on the left side of the image, containing white text.

**Come back  
next week –  
invite a  
friend –  
we'll have a  
great time!**



# Scripture / Gospel

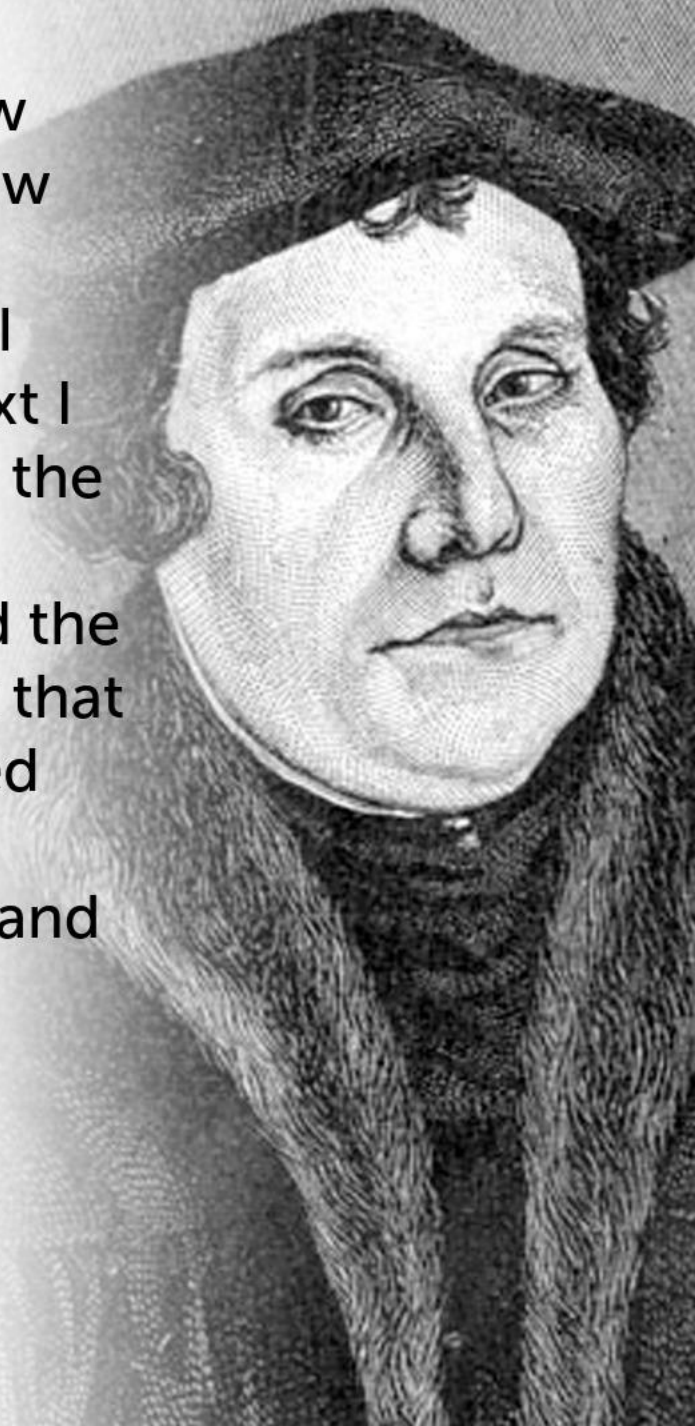
- Romans 8:31ff
- Mark 2:1 - 12
- Luke 13:10 - 17
- John 10:28 - 29

# Scripture / Law

- Romans 4 & 7
- Galatians 3:10 - 29
- Matthew 5:17-20

“For a long time I went astray [in the monastery] and didn’t know what I was about. To be sure, I knew something, but I didn’t know what it was until I came to the text in Romans 1 [:17], ‘He who through faith is righteous shall live.’ That text helped me. There I saw what righteousness Paul was talking about. Earlier in the text I read ‘righteousness.’ I related the abstract [‘righteousness’] with the concrete [‘the righteous One’] and became sure of my cause. I learned to distinguish between the righteousness of the law and the righteousness of the gospel. I lacked nothing before this except that I made no distinction between the law and the gospel. I regarded both as the same thing and held that there was no difference between Christ and Moses except the times in which they lived and their degrees of perfection. But when I discovered the proper distinction—namely, that the law is one thing and the gospel is another—I made myself free.” Table Talk / Winter of 1542-1543

**MARTIN LUTHER**



# LAW – GOSPEL DISTINCTION

- **Luke 14: 25 - 35**
- **Mark 2 : 1 - 12**
- **Matthew 5: 43 - 38**
- **John 10: 28 - 29**

**Enough  
talking –  
they  
should try  
this out –  
get some  
practice!**

**As Oswald Bayer has observed, the language of justification (and the verdict of guilty or not guilty) comes out of the courtroom, and we find ourselves in hundreds of smaller “courtrooms” in everyday life. With respect to other human creatures, we constantly encounter questions and challenges, such as “What were you thinking?” or “Why did you do that?”**

**Kolb, R., & Arand, C. P. (2008). The Genius of Luther's Theology: A Wittenberg Way of Thinking for the Contemporary Church (p. 27). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.**