It’s that time of year, yellow school buses taking kids to school. Growing up, my folks always asked, “What did you learn today?” I always said, “Nuttin,” but that wasn’t true. We are taken to school to learn lessons necessary for life.

“Now before faith came, we were held captive under the law; imprisoned until the coming faith would be revealed. So then, the law was our guardian until Christ came, in order that we might be justified by faith” (Galatians 3:23-24). The Greek word translated “guardian” actually was a slave who led the master’s son to school, like a school bus today. It’s a great illustration of what the holy Law of God does. The Law is all the “Thou shalts” and “Thou shalt nots” of the Bible, and there are hundreds and hundreds of them. Try as we might, we can’t get passing marks from the One who is grading us. I need help! That’s how the Law of God is like a school bus. It brings us to a place where we get off the bus of ourselves and are welcomed into the school where the Holy Spirit teaches us God’s forgiveness, help, and hope in Jesus. In this school of the Gospel, we learn so much! We are justified, acceptable to God, by His gift in Jesus, received through faith, just as Paul says.

Think of group trips you’ve taken as an adult on a yellow school bus. Not comfortable for our stiff old bones! Living only by the Law is like that, even worse. Missions is the teacher standing on the curb greeting people who know only the demands of the Law. “Get off the Law trip and come into the Good News of Jesus!” That happens when a child tells a parent about a problem at school, and the parent responds with love and hope planted in us by the Spirit of God. Mission happens when you give help and hope to a neighbor in need. God’s mission happens when a missionary you support shares Jesus with someone burdened by all the “Thou shalts” and “Thou shalt nots” of life. So, next time you see a yellow school bus, remember the Law is like that, bringing hurting people to us so they can be schooled in the Good News of Jesus. Jesus’ mission is central!