

What is Imputed Righteousness? I

God gives the seal of righteousness for your belief

Fred R. Coulter—April 7, 2018

Greetings, everyone! Welcome to Sabbath services!

- What does it mean to have righteousness imputed to you?
- What does it mean when Paul said—even after he talks about the righteousness imputed—that he was carnal and sold unto sin? *Even as an apostle!*

Let's work at this from several angles.

2-Corinthians 5:21: "For He... [God the Father] ...made Him... [Jesus Christ] ...Who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, **so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.**" How is that accomplished? *We're going to cover that today!*

2-Corinthians 6:1: "We then, working together *with Him*, are also exhorting you not to receive the grace of God in vain." *So, this comes through the grace of God!*

1-John 1:3: "That which we have seen and have heard we are reporting to you in order that you also may have fellowship with us; for the fellowship—indeed, our fellowship—*is* with the Father and with His own Son Jesus Christ. These things we are also writing to you, so that your joy may be completely full. And this is the message that we have heard from Him and are declaring to you: that God is Light, and there is no darkness at all in Him. If we proclaim that we have fellowship with Him, but we are walking in the darkness, we are lying to ourselves, and we are not practicing the Truth. However, if we walk in the Light, as He is in the Light, *then* we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, His own Son, cleanses us from all sin" (vs 3-7). *This is showing that there is repentance and forgiveness.*

Verse 8: "**If** we say that we do not have sin... [that we don't have a sinful nature, that we don't have 'the law of sin and death' within us] ...**we are deceiving ourselves, and the Truth is not in us.**" *There are plenty of people that way!*

Verse 9: "**If** we confess our own sins..." You can only confess sins *if you've sinned*. We can't go to God and say, 'God, here's another day, forgive all the sins that I'm going to do today.' You don't even know what you're going to do today in the way of sinning or whatever.

"...**He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins** and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. **If** we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His Word is not in us" (vs

9-10).

1-John 2:1: "My little children, I am writing these things to you **so that you may not sin....**"

- Can we avoid sin?
- Can we expel a temptation from us so that we don't sin?
- *Yes!*

"...And *yet*, if anyone does sin... [John is writing to those who are converted] ...we have an Advocate with the Father; Jesus Christ *the* Righteous; and He is *the* propitiation for our sins; and not for our sins only, but also for *the sins of* the whole world" (vs 1-2).

If you're free from sin, as the translation in Rom. 6 & 7 says, or in 1-John 3_[transcriber's correction] that you cannot sin

1-John 5:16: "If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin *that is* not unto death..."

- Have you observed people sinning?
- Have you been a victim of maybe their sin against you?
- *Yes, indeed!*

"...he shall ask, and He [God] will give him life for those who do not sin unto death.... [the unpardonable sin; for that there is no forgiveness] ...There is a sin unto death; concerning that *sin*, I do not say that he should make *any* supplication *to God*. All unrighteousness is sin, and there is a sin **not unto death**" (vs 16-17).

What kind of sin is that? *A sin that you can repent of, because Jesus is the propitiation of our sins!* Col. 3—all of the sins that are to be put out, all the things that are sins and offenses.

Verse 18: "We know that anyone who is begotten by God does not *practice* sin; for the one who has been begotten by God keeps himself *by the power of God*, and the wicked one does not touch him."

- we still live in the world
- Satan the devil is still here
- the demons are still here

What is the *unpardonable* sin? *Some say that it's an unrepented sin!* That's not quite correct. *It is a refusal to repent of sin!* There's a vast difference. You may sin and you may not repent until it strikes your conscience because of the Spirit of God in you. Then you repent of it. An

unpardonable sin is the *refusal* to repent! Let's see what God does with our sins when we repent.

Psalm 103:1: "Bless the LORD, O my soul; and all that is within me..." Does that sound like loving God with all your heart, mind, soul and being?

"...bless His Holy name. Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits" (vs 1-2).

Deut. 8—when you're all 'fat and sassy' in sealed houses and you forget God, you're going to get in trouble. That's just a modern paraphrase.

Verse 3: "Who forgives all your iniquities... [What is required to have forgiveness? *Repentance! Acknowledgement!*] ...Who heals all your diseases."

When you repent—and you can't fake the repentance; it's got to be from the heart and true—it says:

Verse 12: "**As far as the east is from the west**, so far has He removed our transgressions from us." In that sense, at that instant, you could say that you are free from sin. *But you have not had 'the law of sin and death' removed from you!*

Notice why God does all of this, v 14: "for He knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust. As for man, his days are as grass; as a flower of the field, so he flourishes, for the wind passes over it, and it is gone; and its place shall know it no more. But the steadfast love of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting upon those who fear Him, and His righteousness is unto children's children, **to those who keep His covenant**, and **to those who remember His precepts to do them**" (vs 14-18).

When it says to *remember the covenant*, what are we to remember? *When we were baptized and received the Holy Spirit we entered into covenant with God!* That is for the rest of our lives. With that covenant, God uses the sacrifice of Jesus Christ as the perfect sacrifice, that He became sin for us so that the righteousness of God might be in us. That righteousness has to come from God; we can't work it up anymore than we can work it up so that we have eternal life! *No way!*

Let's see what it means to have the righteousness of God imputed to you, and why you need that. Rom. 1:17 is a statement that runs through all the first eight chapters of Romans. Just like anything else, what is your mission statement? *You write it down!* Everything you do from there reflects back to that mission statement. Here is the mission statement of the Gospel:

Romans 1:17: "For therein *the* righteousness of God is revealed from faith unto faith..." That's very interesting in the Greek, because *unto* comes from the Greek 'eis' that means *into*. So, *you have*

your faith: Just like Jesus told the woman who was healed of the 'issue of blood for 12 years,' *'Your faith has healed you!'* **We have our faith!** Our faith is *belief!*

God has His faith, the faith of Christ and God, that They impute to us as well, through the power of the Holy Spirit.

"...from faith unto faith..." show a relationship, and exactly what John was writing about in the 1-John 1.

"...according as it is written: **'The just shall live by faith'**" (v 17). Then Paul goes on to show what's wrong with the world. After that he shows a very interesting thing: How do you come from sin back to God?

Romans 2:4: "Or do you despise the riches of His kindness and forbearance and long-suffering, not knowing that **the graciousness of God leads you to repentance?**" *That's how it starts!*

What is the verse in John 6 that tells us this? *John 6:44, the Father draws! No one can come to Jesus unless the Father draws them!* So, you see how all the Bible ties together.

Verse 5—the unpardonable sin: "But you, **according to your own hardness and unrepentant heart**, are storing up wrath for yourself against *the* day of wrath and revelation of God's righteous judgment, **who will render to each one according to his own works**" (vs 5-6).

Let's just establish something right here: **If** you're doing the works of God, *you're not doing your own works*. The works of God start with loving God with all your heart, mind, soul and being. Then keeping the rest of His commandments:

- loving God
- loving neighbor
- loving the brethren

Verse 7: "On the one hand, to those who with patient endurance in good works... [the works of God] ...are seeking glory and honor and immortality—eternal life."

There again is the goal. Notice how that ties back into Rom. 1:17 as far as the stated mission of this epistle.

Verse 8: "On the other hand, to those who are contentious and who disobey the Truth..." This is why we need to know the Word of God. What is Truth?

- Christ is Truth
- the Word of God is Truth
- His commandments are true

- His statues are true
- His precepts are true

It's impossible for God to lie!

“...but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish—upon every soul of man who works out evil, both of *the Jew* first, and of *the Greek*” (vs 8-9).

We'll see in just a bit that God doesn't respect persons. All the way through the first eight chapters of Romans are the contrast:

- sin/righteousness
- faith/unbelief

Verse 10: “But glory and honor and peace to everyone who works good...” It's interesting that the Protestants say that ‘by faith and faith alone.’

- Why does it say that God is going to judge us according to our works?
- If you have faith, will you have faithful works? *Yes!*
- If you don't have faith, will you have unfaithful works? *Yes!*

“...both to *the Jew* first, and to *the Greek*, **because there is no respect of persons with God**” (vs 10-11). This comes as a revelation to the Jews.

Verse 12: “For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law; and as many as have sinned within *the Law* shall be judged by *the Law*, because the hearers of the Law *are* not just before God, but the doers of the Law shall be justified” (vs 12-13). *Those are the good works!*

As I've mention on several occasions, everybody is wondering why there is so much evil and sin in the world. Well, if you go into a small town or a large city and stand there and say:

Everyone needs to repent! Tomorrow is the day you're going to destroy every idol that you have! All the ministers today are going to proclaim that everybody is going to keep the Sabbath, and no other religion is allowed.

Keep the first four commandments!

Furthermore, all children are going honor father and mother. And for all of those who have children out of wedlock, we're going to setup special counseling and we're going to have a ‘marriage-in.’ You're going to get married, and the men are going to take care of their families. No adultery! No murder! No stealing! No lying!

Guess what would happen? You would have such a wonderful town. You wouldn't need any locks or safes.

- Don't you think it's quite crazy the way that the world is today?
- How are we going to protect our children in the schools? *Arm the school guards! Arm the teachers!*
- What are you going to do when the teacher goes crazy and comes into his class and starts shooting his class when they all sitting there waiting to be taught?

Every solution of man apart from God and His laws is doomed to failure! The closer they are to the Laws of God the less severe will be the failure. Just keep that in mind. God is no respect of persons! “...not just before God, but the doers of the Law...” (v 13).

Notice what comes after repentance; it's right there: *you do the Law!* If you repent of sin, you determine not to sin anymore. If God gives repentance—He grants it—and He says that “...the doers of the Law shall be justified” (v 13), what do you do after you have repented? *You start keeping the Law!*

- What follows after that? *Rom. 6, baptism!*
- What follows after that? *We'll get to it!*

When you're baptized, because you believe God, you ‘repent and are baptized for the remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.’ ***You walk in newness of life, which is God's way!*** After you repent, you keep the Law. Notice how important it is. “...the doers of the Law shall be justified.”

Reverse that; every time you come to something like this, reverse it. Those who *don't do the Law* will not be justified. What does that do for Protestants and Catholics, Sunday-keepers? *They think that they're justified, but they're not!*

Here Paul insults the Jews; v 14: “For when *the Gentiles...*”

Remember, it was 12 years into preaching the Gospel before Peter went to Cornelius' house. They thought, and even the apostles did at that time, that Jesus was coming back to the earth real soon and He was going to take over the nation of Judea and get rid of the Romans. So, when Peter was asked to come to Cornelius' house, God had to give him a special vision before he went. So, when he got there he said, ‘You know that it unlawful for a Jew to come into contact with a Gentile, but God has shown me that I should call no man *common or unclean.*’

Then Cornelius bowed down to the ground on his knees and kissed the ring on his finger and said, ‘Papa!’ ***NO he didn't!***

Because the Jews were so against the

Gentiles, do you think they would have ever baptized them willingly of their own accord? *No!* So, God sent the Holy Spirit to that whole group of believers in Cornelius' house to prove that God was giving the Holy Spirit to the Gentiles as well as the Jews. Then they were baptized. Peter said, 'Who could refuse water.' When Peter got back to Jerusalem, the elders of Jerusalem said, 'Hey, we heard that you went into the house of a Gentile.'

So, here when Paul talks about the Gentiles, this is an insult to the Jews, because they say that the Law was only for the Jews. They claim 'Jews' all the way back to Adam. There's a whole lot of history in this in between! Abraham was never a Jew.

Verse 14: "For when *the* Gentiles, which do not have *the* Law... [it wasn't given to them by God] ...practice by nature the things contained in the Law... [God's Law] ...these who do not have *the* Law are a law unto themselves." *God recognizes it! Why? Because God is not respecter of persons!*

Verse 15: "Who show **the** work of **the** Law..." This is the only place in the Greek in the New Testament where the definite article is used. Every other place it is *works of law! Completely different meaning!*

If you keep the Sabbath, is that a work? *Yes!* That's not a labor to earn, but it's a work! You have to get out of bed, wake up, eat, get dressed and come to services. All of that requires energy. So, keeping the Sabbath is a good work.

"...written in their own hearts, their consciences bearing witness, and their reasonings also as they accuse or defend one another; **in a day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ**, according to my Gospel" (vs 15-16).

What day is God going to judge? *When Christ returns there will be that judgment at that time.* Then there will be the second resurrection after the Millennium.

Verse 17: "Behold, you are called a Jew, and you yourself rest in the Law, and boast in God." Paul accuses them of Law-breaking and 'what good does it do to break the Law and say you are a Jew?'

Verse 25: "For on the one hand, circumcision profits if you are observing *the* Law; on the other hand, if you are a transgressor of *the* Law, your circumcision has become uncircumcision."

Now Paul is talking about not just the circumcision in the flesh, but the circumcision of the heart and mind that comes with baptism. "...**if you are a transgressor of the Law, your circumcision has become uncircumcision.**" That's astonishing

for a Jew! Paul is saying that they are no different than the sinning Gentiles out there bowing down before idols. *That's astonishing!*

Verse 26: "Therefore, if the uncircumcised is keeping the requirements of the Law..." Did Paul do away with the Law? *NO! He did not!*

"...shall not his uncircumcision be reckoned for circumcision? And shall not the uncircumcised, who by nature is fulfilling the Law, judge you, who, with *the* letter and circumcision, *are* a transgressor of *the* Law? For he is not a Jew who is *one* outwardly, neither *is* that circumcision, which *is* external in *the* flesh; rather, **he is a Jew who is one inwardly, and circumcision is of the heart, in the spirit and not in the letter;** whose praise *is* not from men but from God" (vs 26-29). *That's astonishing new doctrine for the Jews!*

Rom 3 starts out by bringing up all the sins of the world. Especially so after talking about the Jews, because they have felt that if they keep the Laws of God they're not sinning. In a sense, in the letter, they may not be sinning greatly. **But when they take their own traditions and superimpose them on the Laws of God, they're sinning horrendously!**

Romans 3:1: "What then *is* the advantage of the Jew, or what *is* the profit of circumcision?" Today there is none! We have the Bible, the New Testament. Back when Paul was writing the only Scripture they had was the Old Testament. God made sure that it was faithfully preserved. So back then:

Verse 2: "Much in every way. Primarily in that they were entrusted with the oracles of God. For what if some did not believe?..." (vs 2-3).

This is a good question for everyone in the world. The greatest number of atheists today are amongst the Jews. Is that going to change God? Yet, they keep claiming that *they were the chosen people.* Well, history shows that they have yet to be chosen again because they were rejected and scattered into the world.

"...Shall their unbelief nullify the faithfulness of God? **MAY IT NEVER BE!**..." (vs 3-4). No! You're never going to change God. It doesn't matter what you do, or what you say, you're not going to change God!

"...Rather, let God be true but every man a liar, exactly as it is written..." (v 4). What is the human heart? *Desperately wicked and deceitful above all things, and men do not know the way to go!*

Look at the world today: there is hardly a thing out there being done correctly. The tidal wave

of satanism through media, television, movies, music, games, sports and all of this is overwhelming! Now with the idiocy of Facebook, *sin, sin, sin* down to the lowest level possible can come into the mind of any child anywhere, right in the palm of their hands.

And there are a lot of studies showing now that YouTube makes you less sociable, not more. That it separates you from people more, not less. Everything becomes distant. It's a picture on the phone far, far away. Then add to it the terrible education that people have given to their children today in public schools.

I advocate that everyone home school. Right in your own home you can go from kindergarten to PhD and use the Internet properly in a right way and have a better education. Furthermore, your children will not be brainwashed in all the ways of Satan the devil, which is called progressivism. Here's the answer to that: You cannot "...nullify the faithfulness of God..."

- No one can change God!
- No one can change His Word!
- No one is going to make any difference at all concerning anything about God and His Being!

We are the created, and we cannot look at God and say, 'God, what are you making?'

Verse 4: "MAY IT NEVER BE! Rather, let God be true but every man a liar, exactly as it is written... [here is the proper translation of this verse and it's missed by most translations]: ...'That You might be justified in Your words, and might overcome when You are being judged *by men*'"—present tense passive. They are judging God! Does everybody have a judgment concerning God? *Yes! Everyone!*

Then Paul shows where all of that leads to, and he ends up in, v 12: "They have all gone out of the way... [the way of God] ...together they have all become depraved...."

Isn't that true? Doesn't that describe what Matt. 24 says that *lawlessness shall be multiplied and the love of many shall grow cold? Yes! Depraved!*

Sidebar: Everyone is all excited about getting rid of guns because of the shooting at Parkland, Florida. They should have caught him, but they didn't. Now all the students are rising up. (speculation): I think what is happening is the progressives are trying to enforce Hillary's agenda. Trying to get rid of guns.

In the Millennium there won't be any guns, but there also won't be any crooks or criminals. But

as long as you have crooks, and as long as you need protection, you better have some guns, especially in this world.

Now then, Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, FL, has 3,000 students. They're all upset because their fellow students were killed. How many girls in that same period of time had abortions, which is murder? Anyone upset about that? Anyone marching on that? *No!*

Men do not have the way to go! Very few realize that only God's way is the way to go. You can go Satan's way if you want. He'll even bless you and prosper you and give you everything that you want, as long as you reject God. But then the day is going to come...

Bill Bennett wrote a book on 'pot.' He said that it's the first step into drugs. It certainly is! *Every solution of man apart from God will not work!* The closer it is to God's way, the better it will work.

"...There is not *even* one who is practicing kindness. No, there is not so much as one! Their throats *are* like an open grave; with their tongues they have used deceit; *the* venom of asps *is* under their lips, whose mouths are full of cursing and bitterness; their feet *are* swift to shed blood; destruction and misery *are* in their ways; and *the* way of peace they have not known. There is no fear of God before their eyes" (vs 12-18).

That describes the whole world! Does this not go back to Rom. 1 about all the evil because they left God? *Yes!* So, we see this going all the way through this part of the book of Romans.

Verse 19: "Now then, we know that whatever the Law says, **it speaks to those who are under the Law...**" Here is a phrase that everybody gets all upset about. The Protestants yell and scream and jump up and down saying, 'If you try to keep the commandments of God, you are *under law*. And that you're trying to work out your own salvation. *Not true!*

The truth is that this is a phrase of your relationship with God. Those who have God's Spirit are under grace. Those who do not have God's Spirit are under law.

Romans 7:1: "Are you ignorant, brethren, (for I am speaking to those who know law) that **the Law...** [God's Law] **...rules...** [the base word here comes from lord; lords it]: **...over a man for as long a time as he may live?**"

Every man and every woman *is under law to God!* For blessing or cursing, whether they know the Law or don't know the Law. Do people still suffer who have never heard of the law that you should not murder when they have murder in their

community? *Yes, they do!*

Romans 14:64: “For sin shall not rule over you because you are not under law, but under grace.”

They look at that and say that if you keep the commandments of God, you’re under law. *No, you are not!* That’s the relationship of people to God. Is everyone subject to the blessings and cursings of God in the letter of the Law in their lives, whether they know God or not? *That’s under law!*
Under grace is that:

- you have God’s Spirit
- you have direct access to God the Father in heaven above
- you have God there to forgive you for your sins
- you have God’s Spirit within you to lead you and guide you
- you have God’s mercy and strength and understanding. You have the understanding of the Word of God
- you live by every Word of God

(go to the next track)

We’re talking about what it means to be under law. Let’s see what it tells us in:

Romans 3:19: Now then, we know that whatever the Law says, it speaks to those who are under the Law... [Who are those who are under law?] ...so that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.” Who are those who are under law? *Every human being in the world!*

Are they all trying to work out their salvation by keeping the commandments? *No!* It’s a complete misunderstanding of the term *under law*.

“...all the world may become guilty before God.” Sin is the transgression of the Law!

- Is the world full of sinners? *Yes, it is!*
- What does that mean? *They’re transgressing the Law!*
- Are those who are transgressing the Law not out doing violent things? *Yes!*
 - ✓ they’re called hackers
 - ✓ they’re called con-men
 - ✓ they’re called thieves
 - ✓ they’re called liars
 - ✓ they’re called politicians

It’s still sin! Politicians tell a lie so that it sounds like the truth. Therefore, being under law has nothing to do with trying to work out your own salvation by commandment-keeping. If you read the rest of 1-John you will see that commandment-keeping is required!

Here’s one of the most difficult verses in the book of Romans and I’m going to read it in the King James.

When I was early in the Church I couldn’t understand this, because we were all focused on keeping the commandments of God.

Romans 3:20 (KJV): “Therefore, by **the deeds [works] of the law** there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.” The definite articles *the* were added by the translators, and it’s not there in the Greek. The Greek is exactly how we have it in the *Faithful Version*:

(FV): “Therefore, **by works of law...**” That’s any law seeking to be justified: ritual, sacrifice, and so forth. The best way to answer this question is that this tells you what sin is, ***but it doesn’t forgive!*** What can be substituted for the sacrifice of Christ to forgive your sins?

The Catholics have confession and rosary trips. The Protestants have the Lord’s Supper and repentance. They’re about half right. The Lord’s Supper is wrong, repentance is correct. They repent, but they don’t start keeping the commandments of God the way that they should. They keep some of them. But some is not all.

That’s like if Jonathan drew plans for a house and half of it was anchored to a big rock and the other half was just put out over the sand. The rains came and the wind blew and half the house went away, because it was on the sand. You have to do things correctly; you have to do it right.

“...there shall no flesh be **justified** before Him...” (v 20).

- What does justified mean?
- If you’re a sinner, are you at odds with God? *Yes!*

Justified means that your sins have been forgiven!

- How are they forgiven?
- By what law?

If you see this program *I Almost Got Away with It*, one I was watching, he escaped from jail and he stayed out of jail for 20 years. He did everything right, kept the law. But did that do away with the warrant for his arrest? *No!* Same thing if you commit murder or steal.

For those who come to God, what takes place to be justified? *We saw the first part of it, you repent!* The second part of it that ***you are a doer of the Law!*** Have you yet been forgiven? *No!* That’s what Paul was getting to here. Now you have to have your sins justified and forgiven. Then we’ll see what takes place after that.

Know that this is the truth: the only sacrifice to pay for your sins *is the sacrifice of Jesus Christ and His shed blood! Nothing else can do it!* Not animal sacrifices, not doing trips around the rosary, not going on a pilgrimage, none of that will do it.

It tells us that God says, ‘to this one will I look, the one who has a broken heart and has a contrite spirit and trembles at My Word’ (Isa. 66). That’s repentance, and the willingness to obey!

Here Paul shows what justifies: no work of any kind, of any law can replace the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. That’s why Paul said that if ‘forgiveness came by law, then the sacrifice of Christ is in vain.’

Verse 21: “But now *the* righteousness of God...” God is *righteous, Holy, true and perfect!* This righteousness is referring to *forgiveness of sin upon repentance* so that the person is justified. If God were unrighteous He wouldn’t forgive your sins even though you pleaded and cried out to God to forgive you. Wouldn’t that make Him unrighteous? *Yes, indeed!*

“...that is separate from law...” (v 21). Does Law contain the sacrifice of Christ? *No!* it’s in addition to the Law.

“...has been revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets” (v 21). They all foretold the coming of Christ and His suffering and His sacrifice. Even their witnessing didn’t justify, it just prophesied.

Verse 22: “Even *the* righteousness of God *that is* through *the* faith of Jesus Christ...”—through Jesus’ own faith.

- What kind of faith did Jesus have? *Perfect faith!*
- What did He die for? *The sin of the whole world!*

The only way that we have His shed blood applied to us was because He was faithful unto death! This is how we tackle some of these difficult Scriptures.

I’ll tell you that the books of Romans and Galatians are two most difficult of the whole Bible to understand.

“...toward all and upon all those who believe... [unto repentance, because there must be repentance] ...for there is no difference.... [between Jew and Gentile] ...For **all**...” (vs 22-23).

Verse 9: “...For we have already charged both Jews and Gentiles—ALL—with being under sin.”

Verse 23: “For **all** have sinned...”—everyone, even little kiddies. What happens if you leave kids alone to play? *There are not enough toys, or they’re the wrong ones! You’re going to have a fight!* Then you’re going to hear, ‘Mommy, he’s got mine!’ that’s ‘the law of sin and death’ active in children.

“...and come short of the glory of God; *but* are being justified **freely** by His grace...” (vs 23-24). There is nothing you can give except your life!

“...through the redemption that *is* in Christ Jesus... [there is no other redemption] ...Whom God has openly manifested... [that’s why we have the history of it, the Gospel and all the accounts] ...*to be* a propitiation through faith in His blood...” (vs 24-25).

You believe the words of God when He says, ‘By His blood you shall be forgiven.’ You believe that He died for your sins, because *the wages of sin is death!*

“...in order to demonstrate His righteousness, in respect to the remission of sins that are past” (v 25).

- What are past sins?
- What sins are you going to do as soon as you leave this building? *You don’t know!*

There is no such thing as ‘indulgences’ for the future forgiveness of future sin. When you sin in a moment of time, that sin is now past. *All sins are past sins!* If you repent of them, you can have remission of them, provided that you believe God and everything He says about what you need to do, and everything He says about what you need to do to repent.

Verse 24: “*But* are being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that *is* in Christ Jesus; Whom God has openly manifested *to be* a propitiation through faith in His blood, **in order to demonstrate His righteousness**... [in forgiving sin. That’s the righteousness unto justification] ...in respect to the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; *yes*, to publicly declare His righteousness in the present time, that He might be just, and the One Who justifies the one who *is* of *the* faith of Jesus” (vs 24-26).

So, this righteousness of God is that righteousness that leads to justification. Justification is that ***you are in a state of forgiveness!*** Your sins have been forgiven; they have been removed ‘as far as the east is from the west.’

Verse 27: “Therefore, where *is* boasting?...” Think what it would be if it was something you could do, a work of law you could do, and you achieve that work of law. There would be great celebrations! Boasting! ‘Look, I did it!’

Look at on the other hand. What if it were, 'I'm going to forgive your sins if you keep the Sabbath 100 times perfectly.' You keep it 99 times, but you never get to a hundred. The last one you botched it up. So, you go to God and say, 'Look what I did, I did 99.' *It says 100!* 'Lord, I did 99.' *It says 100!* 'After all that effort and everything and I did 99.' *It says 100!*

There's no law that can forgive! Only God can! Why? *Because sin is against God primarily!* Yes, it can be against other people you know, but it's against God primarily, because you're breaking His Law, and 'the wages of sin is death.' So, Christ's death paid it for you.

"...It is excluded. Through what law? *The law of works?* By no means! Rather, *it is* through a law of faith" (v 27)—***that you believe God!*** Then what does God do after that? How does God view you? *That's what we get into with imputed righteousness!* "...Rather, *it is* through a law of faith"—that you:

- confess your sins
- place them under the blood of Jesus Christ
- believe what God has said to forgive your sins

As Jesus said, 'Go and sin no more!'

Luke 11:1: "Now, it came to pass *that* as He was praying in a certain place, when He finished, one of His disciples said to Him, 'Lord, teach us how to pray... [note sermon series: *How to Pray*] ...as John also taught his disciples.' And He said to them, 'When you pray, say, "Our Father Who *is* in heaven... [direct connection to God the Father] ...hallowed be Your name; Your kingdom come...'" (vs 1-2).

Under whose jurisdiction are you if you have God's Spirit? *God the Father and Jesus Christ! That's the Kingdom!* You're not in it, because it's not here on earth, but you are *under it*.

"...**Your will be done**... [notice the quality of how it's to be done] ...**as in heaven**, so also upon the earth.... [in our lives] ...Give us our bread as needed day by day; and forgive us our sins, as we ourselves also forgive everyone who is indebted to us; and lead us not into temptation, but rescue us from the evil one" (vs 2-4).

What do we have here? *Daily repentance of sin!* Remember what we said about sin: In the instant that you sin, the next instant it is *past*. Therefore, you can be forgiven. You cannot ask God to forgive you because in an hour you're going to go and hold up the grocery store and take all their money. *No way!*

Maybe after you get caught you do that, and you're in jail and you have great remorse, and the judge gives you a two-year sentence, and in staying in jail you make up your mind that you're going to repent to God. He'll answer that prayer. Don't go out when you get out of jail and steal anymore.

The law of faith is that you believe God, you repent of your sins, the blood of Jesus Christ covers your sins.

Romans 3:28: "Consequently, we reckon that a man is justified by faith..."—because:

- he believes God
- he believes the sacrifice of Christ
- he believes the teachings of Jesus
- he believes what God inspired in the Bible

"...separate from works of law" (v 28). All traditions of men are works of law. That's what they have in all religions, every single one of them!

- What is the work of law that the Protestants do all the time, separate from what the Catholics do with trips around the rosary?
- What work of law do they have that they do all the time?

And they think they are justified!

- *Sunday-keeping!*
- Is that not a tradition of men?
- Didn't Cardinal Gibbons write—and I'll just say it in the vernacular:

You Protestants are a bunch of stupid jerks. The Roman Catholic Church instituted Sunday and there's no place in the Bible, which you claim that you follow, that authorizes Sunday-keeping. It's an institution of the Roman Catholic Church. Why don't you quit all of your saying that you live by every Scripture of God, when you don't, and come and stand on Catholic ground. You're standing on Sunday ground on your own, separate from us, and you're just lying to yourself.

The Protestants wouldn't like that!

Verse 29: "*Is He* the God of the Jews only?... [or Catholics and Protestants] ...*Is He* not also *the God of the Gentiles?* YES! *He is* also God of the Gentiles... [He made them in His image] ...since *it is* indeed one God Who will justify *the* circumcision by faith, and *the* uncircumcision through faith. Are we, then, abolishing *the* Law through faith? MAY IT NEVER BE! Rather, we are establishing *the* Law" (vs 29-31).

Why? *Because it's being written in the heart and mind!* All the law out here doesn't come from the heart and mind. It's just like you come up to a

stop sign. You see the stop sign and you choose to stop. If you don't stop and you drive through, maybe you'll get away with it. But maybe there's a policeman just around the corner waiting for you to go through. Then you'll get a ticket.

So then, you'll have to go down to the ticket agency and pay a fine. If you don't pay the fine you won't be justified back to the community. They can even issue a warrant for your arrest. Same way with sin. You get the payment for your sins from Christ Who died for you through His shed blood, and that's through God's grace, and that's free. What happens after that?

Romans 4:1: "What then shall we say *that* our father Abraham has found with respect to *the* flesh?" Abraham was blessed *because he kept the laws, the commandment, the statues, precepts and obeyed the voice of God!*

- Did Abraham still have 'the law of sin and death' in him? *Yes, he did!*
- Did he love God and keep His commandments? *Yes, he did!*
- Was the promise given to him above and beyond that? *Yes, because he believed God!*

Verse 2: "For if Abraham was justified by works, he has a basis for boasting, but not before God. For what does the Scripture say? 'And Abraham believed God, and **it was imputed to him for righteousness**' (vs 2-3).

What was it that God told him? *After God told him that he would have a son from his own loins, 'Come out here and look at the stars and so shall your seed be!'* Abraham believed God! That was counted as righteousness, **imputed!** What does it mean to believe God? *That's different than believing that there is a God!*

- **If** you believe God you will do what He says!
- **If** you believe God you will do what he tells you, because He cannot lie!

You can have absolute faith that that Word is true! This is what Abraham did. Did he still have 'the law of sin and death' in him? *Yes, he did!* Look at what Sarah did. She said, 'Let's help God fulfill the prophecy of having a son. Here's my handmaid Hagar, have a child by her, and you'll have your son.'

Did that help fulfill the prophecy of God? *No! That complicated the whole world for centuries! How far reaching was that? It's still the battle today!* Finally, Isaac was born; **imputed to Abraham for righteousness!**

What does imputed mean? **You are given**

the seal of righteousness for your belief! That doesn't mean that you can go out and sin.

Obedience and belief go hand-in-hand. Just like faith and obedience go hand-in-hand. Repentance, believe and the sacrifice of Christ go hand-in-hand. **There is no other way for the forgiveness of sin! And it is imputed to you!**

Verse 6: "Even as David also declares the blessedness of the man to whom God **imputes righteousness** separate from works: 'Blessed are *those* whose transgressions are forgiven, and whose sins are covered'" (vs 6-7).

If your sins are covered, you are justified, and if you are justified, **God imputes righteousness to you!** Whose righteousness? *The righteousness of Christ, because you believe in His sacrifice!* That's a deep theological question that we're going to answer. We obviously can't answer it in one sermon here.

Verse 9: "Now then, *does* this blessedness come upon the circumcision *only*, or also upon the uncircumcision? For we are saying that faith was imputed to Abraham for righteousness. In what condition, therefore was it imputed? When he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision" (vs 9-10).

God gave the promise to Abraham, and he was circumcised almost 14 years later. Was Abraham righteous when he believed God, and God was going to make his seed like the stars of heaven (Gen. 15)? *Yes!*

That was saved for this time when God would call the Gentiles!

Verse 11: "And *afterwards* he received the sign... [of the covenant] ...of circumcision..."

Verse 19: "And he, not being weak in the faith, considered not his own body, already having become dead, being about one hundred years old, nor *did he consider* the deadness of Sarah's womb." **God did the impossible thing!**

That's why Sarah even laughed. 'Can a 90-year-old woman breastfeed a baby?' *The Lord said she laughed!* 'O Lord, I didn't laugh.' *Yes, you laughed!*

Go into a nursing home or rest home today and here's a whole circle of 80-90-year-old women sitting around talking. You walk in and say, 'How's your new baby and your breastfeeding going?' *They would laugh you out of the building!*

God did the impossible! What did He do when Jesus was conceived? **The impossible!**

Verse 18: "And who against hope believed

in hope, in order that he might become a father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, ‘So shall your seed be.’ And he, not being weak in the faith, considered not his own body, already having become dead, being about one hundred years old, nor *did he consider* the deadness of Sarah’s womb; and he did not doubt the promise of God through unbelief...” (vs 18-20).

Verse 17: “Exactly as it is written: ‘I have made you a father of many nations.’ before God in Whom he believed, Who gives life to the dead, and calls the things that are not as though they are.” ***That is the basis of imputed righteousness!***

God imputes the righteousness to us. Does that remove ‘the law of sin and death’? *No!* But that’s our standing before God. Do we maintain that standing? *Yes!* Through:

- belief
- faith
- prayer
- study
- repentance
- living God’s way of life

He continues to impute righteousness to us, and He is viewing us as we will be in the resurrection because of our faith and belief.

- We’re not there, yet, are we? *No!*
 - Are we going to be there? *God says we’re going to be, so it’s going to happen!*
- Hasn’t yet happened, but it’s going to happen!*
- Are we all going to get old, weak, tired and run down? *Every Christian that has been faithful to the end has gone through that!*
 - Did that take away the imputed righteousness to them? *No!*

They died in the faith and now when the resurrection and change comes they’re going to be what God imputed at that instant.

Verse 20: “And he did not doubt the promise of God through unbelief; rather, he was strengthened in the faith, giving glory to God.” Imagine that! Every year God is going to do it. Didn’t work with Ishmael, but God is going to do it!

Verse 21: “For he was fully persuaded that what He has promised, He is also able... [Greek ‘*dunamis*’—*has the power*] ...to do. As a result, it was also **imputed to him for righteousness**. But it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; rather, *it was also written* for our sakes, to whom it shall be imputed—to those who believe in Him Who raised Jesus our Lord from *the* dead; Who was delivered for our offenses and was raised for our justification” (vs 21-25).

Look how that trails from Rom. 1 all the way down to here. It goes on even further, with more explanation through the end of Rom. 8. Romans 1-8 are dealing with:

- the righteousness of God
- the imputed righteousness of God
- the forgiveness of sin
- our covenant relationship with God

all accomplished through the grace of God! That’s a magnificent thing! You can’t earn the imputed grace.

- that comes because God loves you and wants you
- that comes because you believe God
- that comes because you believe the Word of God and want to live by the Word of God
- that comes when you repent of your sins and they are forgiven

We don’t go around saying we’re righteous before God, and all the rest of you out there are nothing! *That’s not true!*

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version* (except where noted)

Scriptural References:

- 1) 2-Corinthians 5:21
- 2) 2 Corinthians 6:1
- 3) 1 John 1:3-10
- 4) 1 John 2:1-2
- 5) 1 John 5:16-18
- 6) Psalm 103:1-3, 12, 14-18
- 7) Romans 1:17
- 8) Romans 2:4-17, 25-29
- 9) Romans 3:1-4, 12-19
- 10) Romans 7:1
- 11) Romans 14:6
- 12) Romans 3:19-23, 9, 23-25, 24-27
- 13) Luke 11:1-4
- 14) Romans 3:28-31
- 15) Romans 4:1-3, 6-7, 9-11, 19, 18-20, 17, 20-25

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Romans 6; 8
- 1 John 3
- Colossians 3
- Deuteronomy 8
- John 6:44
- Isaiah 66
- Genesis 15

Also referenced: Sermon Series: *How to Pray*

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