

Righteousness by Christ Alone

PERFECT IN CHRIST

The believer is perfect in Christ; but in himself he is a poor, feeble creature, ever liable to fall. Oh, the unspeakable blessedness of having One who can manage all his affairs for him at the right hand of the majesty in the heavens; One who upholds him always by His right hand; One who will never let him go; One who is "the same yesterday, today, and forever." One who will bear him through all the difficulties and dangers that surround him, and finally present him FAULTLESS before the presence of His glory with great joy. Blessed forever be the grace that has made such provision for all our needs in the blood of a spotless Victim and the intercession of a Divine High Priest.

Pastor Scott Richardson

Absolutely Contradictory

Grace and works of any kind, in the point of acceptance with God, are mentioned by the apostle not only as opposites, or as contraries, but as absolutely contradictory to each other, like fire and water, light and darkness; so that the affirmation of the one is the denial of the other (Rom. 4:5; I I:5, 6). God justifies freely, justifies the ungodly, and him that worketh not.

John Newton

WOULD YOU BE JUSTIFIED BEFORE GOD?

Then learn one thing! Jesus Christ is ALL in justification before God! Only through Christ can a sinner have peace with the Holy God. Only by Christ alone can a sinner be accepted and admitted into God's presence. HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS is the only robe which will cover us. HIS BLOOD is the only mark that will save us from eternal death. HIS NAME is the only name by which we shall obtain an entrance through the gate of eternal glory. I pity those who try to obtain God's favor by their works; and I sound a clear warning -- you are building on sand; you are spending money for that which is not bread; you will hear Him say, "Depart from me, ye that work iniquity." But this I know -- not one person has ever entered heaven's courts with any testimony but this: "Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood -- to Him be the glory." (Rev. 1:5,6)

Henry Mahan

"Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do you not hear the law?" (Gal. 4:21)

The life of the Old Testament Jew, under the law, was so difficult. He was hedged in by a thousand commandments and prohibitions. The forms, laws, ceremonies, and sacrifices were many, and every detail minutely arranged. He was always in danger of becoming unclean. If he sat on a certain stool, drank from a certain pitcher, ate a certain food, touched a leper, or did a certain deed, he was defiled. A thousand sins of ignorance were like hidden pits before him. He must be in constant fear of being cut off. No Jew ever talked of a finished work. A lamb was slain, but there must be another; the High Priest went into the holy of holies, but he must go in again next year. The law with its types and shadows can never put away sin! "But this man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever sat down on the right hand of God."

Look at our priest -- "A priest forever."

Look at his atonement -- "It is finished."

Look at our position in Him -- "Complete."

Look at our rest -- "We have entered His rest."

"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." Horatius Bonar said it well in these verses:

In Him is only good; in me is only ill;
My ill but draws His goodness forth,
And me He loveth still!
'Tis Christ who saves me and pardon freely gives;
I love Him because He loves me,
I live because He lives.

Pastor Henry Mahan

THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF CHRIST

As Christ's righteousness is the only merit that can exalt us to the presence and to the kingdom of God; so that doctrine alone is to be considered as evangelical which depresses the righteousness of man, and exalts the righteousness of Christ: leading us to trust, not on what we do, but singly on what He has done and suffered for us. The business of the Law is to knock us down from the pedestal of self-confidence, and to grind us small; as Moses ground to power, and dispersed, the materials of the Israelitish idol. The business of Grace is to lift us from the dust, to settle us upon Christ the rock of ages, to put a new song of free salvation into our mouths.

Augustus Toplady

SUBSTITUTION -- THE BASIS OF OUR SALVATION

God is Holy and therefore He will not look upon sin. God is Just and therefore He judges sin wherever it is found. But God is Love as well: God delighteth in mercy, and therefore infinite wisdom devised a way whereby Justice might be satisfied and mercy left free to flow out to guilty sinners. This way was the way of substitution, the Just suffering for the unjust. The Son of God Himself was the one selected to be the Substitute, for none other would suffice. Through Nahum, the question had been asked, "Who can stand before His indignation?" (Nahum 1:6). This question received its answer in the adorable person of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. He alone could "stand." One only could bear the curse and yet rise a victor above it. One only could endure all the avenging wrath and yet magnify the law and make it honorable. One only could suffer His heel to be bruised by Satan and yet in that bruising destroy Him that had the power of death. God laid hold upon One that was "mighty" (Psa. 89:19), One who was no less than the Fellow of Jehovah, the Radiance of His glory, the exact Impress of His person. Thus we see that boundless love, inflexible justice and omnipotent power all combined to make possible the salvation of those who believe.

Arthur W. Pink

That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. (Rom 8:4)

The works of the law, and the righteousness of the law, are synonymous terms. By the former, we are expressly told, no flesh can be justified: nor consequently, by the latter, as performed by us. Why? Because every man is a fallen creature; and to the corruption of his nature, is hourly adding the accumulated iniquity of actual transgressions. Therefore, by such a partial, imperfect, and polluted conformity to the moral law, no person can possibly be accepted unto life. And yet, without justification, man must be lost forever. He must, therefore, either give up all hope of salvation, or seek for a justifying righteousness at the hand of Christ. Now Christ came for this very end, to fulfill all righteousness; not for himself, who was and is the source and center of all holiness; but for us, who had lost our original rectitude (good), and are become the degenerate plants of a strange vine. The Son of God left his glory, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled for us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. This must certainly be the genuine import of the text under consideration, the exact sense of which according to the genius of the original, stands thus: "That the righteousness required by the law might be fulfilled for us," i.e. in our stead, or on our account. What the law was desirous of but through weakness, could not obtain: that did Christ perform for us.

Augustus Toplady

Justification does not merely mean forgiveness. It includes forgiveness, but it is much bigger than forgiveness. It means in addition that God declares us to be entirely

guiltless; He regards us as if we had never sinned at all; He pronounces us to be just and to be righteous. In doing so, He is answering any declaration that the law may make with respect to us. It is the judge upon the bench not merely saying that the prisoner at the bar is forgiven, but that he pronounces him to be a JUST AND RIGHTEOUS PERSON. In justifying us God tells us that He has taken our sins and our guilt and has "imputed" them to, "put them to the account of," the Lord Jesus Christ and punished them in Him. He announces also that, having done that, He now puts to our account, or "imputes" to us, the perfect righteousness of His own dear Son. The Lord Jesus Christ obeyed the law perfectly; He never broke it in any respect; He gave a full and a perfect satisfaction to all its demands. That full obedience constitutes His righteousness. What God does is to put to our account, to put upon us, the righteousness of Jesus Christ. In declaring us to be justified, God proclaims that He now looks on us, not as we are, but as clothed with the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. A hymn by the Moravian Count Zenzendorf and translated by John Wesley, expresses it thus:

Jesus, Thy robe of righteousness
My beauty is, my glorious dress;
Midst flaming worlds, in this arrayed,
With joy shall I lift up my head.

Martyn Lloyd-Jones

None Other But Christ

Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. (John 6:68)

As it was with Peter and the rest of the disciples, so it is with all sensible sinners, and true believers, who see there is no other to go to for life and salvation, but Christ; not to the law of Moses, which accuses, curses, and condemns, and by which there is neither life nor righteousness; nor to any creature, or creature-performance, for there is a curse on him that trusts in man, and makes flesh his arm; nor to their own righteousness, which is impure and imperfect, and cannot justify before God, nor answer for them in a time to come; nor to their tears of repentance, which will not satisfy the law, atone for sins, or wash them away; nor to carnal descent, birth-privileges, a religious education, sobriety and civility, to trust to which is to have confidence in the flesh, which will be of no avail; nor to ceremonial services, or moral duties, or even evangelical ordinances, neither of which can take away sin. There is no other saviour but Christ to look to; no other mediator between God and men to make use of; no other physician of value for diseased and sin-sick souls to apply unto; no other fountain but His blood for polluted souls to wash in and be cleansed; no other city of refuge, or stronghold, for souls sensible of danger to flee unto and be safe; no other to come to as the bread of life where hungry souls may be fed; no other place of rest for those that are weary and heavy laden; nor is there any other where there is plenty of all grace and security from every enemy, as in Him; and therefore, to whom can they have recourse, but unto Him?

John Gill

Christ Is the Terminator of the Law

Christ is the terminator of the law, for we are no longer under its curse. The law cannot curse a believer, it does not know how to do it; it blesses him, yea, and he shall be blessed; for as the law demands righteousness and looks at the believer in Christ, and sees that Jesus has given him all the righteousness it demands, the law is bound to pronounce him blessed. "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile." Oh, the joy of being redeemed from the curse of the law by Christ, who was "made a curse for us," as it is written, "Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." Do ye, my brethren, understand the sweet mystery of salvation? Have you ever seen Jesus standing in your place that you may stand in his place? Christ accused and Christ condemned, and Christ led out to die, and Christ smitten of the Father, even to the death, and then you cleared, justified, delivered from the curse, because the curse has spent itself on your Redeemer. You are admitted to enjoy the blessing because the righteousness which was his is now transferred to you that you may be blessed of the Lord world without end.

Charles Spurgeon