

# Answering The Religious Errors Of Our Family, Friends, and Neighbors 1

## “The Righteousness Of Christ Is Imputed To A Christian!”

### Lesson 19

#### INTRO:

- A. "Imputed righteousness of Christ" is the belief that the personal righteousness of Jesus Christ is transferred to a sinner. Jesus perfectly obeyed and fulfilled all righteousness (Matthew 3:15). His righteousness is, allegedly, assigned to the personal account of the believer.
- B. It, too, is a part of the belief system of Calvinism we have been studying and it comes out of the first premise of the “**TULIP**”, “**T**otal Hereditary Depravity.”
1. If mankind inherits the sin of Adam and is thus born into this world totally depraved, incapable of doing nothing but sin, then mankind must have the perfect righteousness of Christ imputed to him to be saved.
  2. If it's possible to have someone else's sin imputed to mankind, it's possible to have someone else's righteousness imputed to mankind.

#### C. QUOTES:

“I reply that ‘accepting grace,’ as they call it, is nothing else than his free goodness, with which the Father embraces us in Christ **when he clothes us with the innocence of Christ and accepts it as ours** that by the benefit of it he may hold us as holy, pure, and innocent. For Christ's righteousness, which as it alone is perfect alone can bear the sight of God, must appear in court on our behalf, and stand surety in judgment. Furnished with this righteousness, we obtain continual forgiveness of sins in faith. Covered with this purity, the sordidness and uncleanness of our imperfection are not ascribed to us but are hidden as if buried...”

(John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Book III, Chap. 14, No. 12”)

"Imputed Righteousness. For Christ took upon himself and bore the sins of the world, and satisfied divine justice. Therefore, solely on account of Christ's sufferings and resurrection God is propitious with respect to our sins and does not impute them to us, but imputes Christ's righteousness to us as our own (2 Cor. 5:19ff; Rom. 4:25), so that now we are not only cleansed and purged from sins or are holy, but also, granted the righteousness of Christ, and so absolved from sin, death and condemnation, are at last righteous and heirs of eternal life. Properly speaking, therefore, God alone justifies, and justifies only on account of Christ, not imputing sins to us but imputing his righteousness to us."

(**The Second Helvetic Confession**, 5.108”

(NOTE: The Helvetic Confessions are two documents expressing the common belief of the Reformed churches of Switzerland which are recognized in the U.S.A., for the most part, as Presbyterian or Congregationalist.)

Justification is "solely through faith in Christ; by means of which faith His perfect righteousness is freely imputed to us by God" (**The Standard Manual For Baptist Churches**, Edward T. Hiscox, pg. 62).

# Answering The Religious Errors Of Our Family, Friends, and Neighbors 2

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### Lesson 19

"My soul sin? No. Has Brother Bogard ever sinned? In my soul I do not. I am as perfect as God himself, as far as my soul is concerned. Then what about my body? It does sin." (Statement made by Baptist preacher Ben Bogard, **Hardeman - Bogard Debate**, pp. 309-310)

"The grounds for our righteousness is the righteousness of Jesus Himself bestowed on us through our faith in him, which puts us IN HIM, i.e., his righteous body. This is God's righteousness IMPUTED to all those belonging to the spiritual body of Christ, the church. **His righteousness is our righteousness.** We become His perfection when we are baptized into his body (Rom. 6:3,4; 1 Cor. 12:13; Gal. 3:26,27). He is the head of the body (Col. 1:18) and stands before God as RIGHTEOUS. We, in Him, occupy the same standing before God as does Jesus because his death on the cross perpetually atones for our sins. (1Jn. 2:2)." (Gospel preacher, R.L. Kirkpatrick)

#### I. WHAT DO THE SCRIPTURES TEACH CONCERNING ‘THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF CHRIST BEING IMPUTED TO A CHRISTIAN’?

A. **Romans 4:6** “*Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God **imputeth** righteousness without works,*”

**Romans 4:8** “*Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not **impute** sin.*”

**Romans 4:11** “*And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be **imputed** unto them also.*”

**Romans 4:22** “*And therefore it was **imputed** to him for righteousness.*”

**Romans 4:23** “*Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was **imputed** to him;*”

**Romans 4:24** “*But for us also, to whom it shall be **imputed**, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead;*”

**Romans 5:13** “*(For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not **imputed** when there is no law.*”

**James 2:23** “*And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was **imputed** unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God.*”

1. Not one passage anywhere in the Bible teaches that the personal righteousness of Jesus is transferred to anyone. If so, where is the passage?
2. The Bible does say “*If you know that He is righteous, you know that everyone who practices righteousness is born of Him*” (**I John 2:29**).

3

**Answering The Religious Errors Of Our Family, Friends, and Neighbors**  
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- B. **“IMPUTE”** defined...
1. ”to reckon, count, compute, calculate, count over” (**Thayer**, p. 379)
  2. “to reckon, take into account, or, metaphorically, to put down to a person’s account,...” (**Vine’s Expository Dictionary Of New Testament Words**, Vol. II, pg. 252)
  3. ”I have examined all the passages...There is not one in which the word is used in the sense of reckoning or imputing to a man that which does not strictly belong to him, or of charging on him that which ought not to be charged on him as a matter of personal right...No doctrine of transferring, or setting over to a man what does not properly belong to him, be it sin or holiness, can be derived, therefore, from this word.” (**Barnes Notes, Commentary on Romans**, p. 102)
  4. Present day application: The bank will only impute/put into the account the amount of money to the person/account number that is on the deposit ticket.
    - a. It must not to be imputed to someone else!
- C. A Christian is imputed/accounted by God as being righteous because his sins have been remitted (blotted out), and his record is now one of righteousness.
1. Righteousness is doing the Will of God. (**Psalms 119:172; 1 John 3:7**).
  2. Our faith and obedience to God is imputed/accounted to us for righteousness just as Abraham’s was to him (**Romans 4:6-24; James 2:21-24**).
    - a. Abraham's faith was an obedient faith made perfect by his works of obedience (**James 2:21-23**).
    - b. Therefore God said, "*And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; **because thou hast obeyed My voice.***" (**Genesis 22:18**).
    - c. Paul explains that those who follow in the steps of the faith which Abraham had will have their faith imputed for righteousness also. (**Romans 4:9-12,16-25**)
  3. Christians maintain a record of righteousness by living “*soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age*” (**Titus 2:11-14**), and by being cleansed from all unrighteousness (**1 John 1:7-9**).
  4. When we stand before Christ in the Judgment, we will be judged:
    - a. by our deeds. (**Romans 2:5-11; 2 Corinthians 5:10**)
    - a. according to truth. (**Romans 2:2**),
    - b. according to our works. (**Revelation 20:12**)

**Answering The Religious Errors Of Our Family, Friends, and Neighbors 4**  
**“The Righteousness Of Christ Is Imputed To A Christian!”**

**Lesson 19**

5. If our sins have been blotted out through forgiveness, then our record will be clean. (**Psalms 32:1,2** "*Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord does not impute iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile*".)

**CONCLUSION:**

- A. This doctrine, like so many, offers false security.
  1. If the personal righteousness of Christ is credited to the Christian, then we would not be personally accountable.
    - a. The Bible teaches personal accountability. (**Ezekiel 18:20; Colossians 3:25**)
  2. It leads people to think they can live any way they want because God is only going to see the perfect life of Christ that has been imputed to them.

**QUESTION:**

1. What does the Bible's teaching about church discipline like in 1 Corinthians 5 do to this doctrine?

**ANSWER:**

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