

6. WHY IS THE SATISFACTION OF CHRIST MADE OURS, OR WHY DOES GOD IMPUTE IT UNTO US FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS?

God, out of his mercy and grace, imputes and applies unto us the righteousness of Christ, as He also predestinated us from everlasting to his grace, and freely chose us in Christ as those to whom He might apply this righteousness.

Eph 1:3 - 12 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, ⁴just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love ⁵He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, ⁶to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. ⁷In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace ⁸which He lavished on us. In all wisdom and insight ⁹He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him ¹⁰with a view to an administration suitable to the fullness of the times, that is, the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things on the earth. In Him ¹¹also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will, ¹²to the end that we who were the first to hope in Christ would be to the praise of His glory.

He has not been moved to this action by any goodness or holiness, which He foresaw, would be in us.

There can be no goodness in us, except those that God first produced in us. All thoughts of merit on our part must be abandoned as inconsistent with the grace of God, and as a denial of it, for the mercy and grace of God constitute the sole cause of each form of the application of the righteousness of Christ.

God applies and makes over unto us the merits of Christ that they may be applied unto ourselves. The cause is in God alone. It cannot be in us or be anything foreseen in us, or even the apprehension or reception of this righteousness itself. Whatever goodness there may be in us is the effect of the application of the merits of Christ.

1Co 4:7 For who regards you as superior? What do you have that you did not receive? And if you did receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it?

Eph 2:4 - 9 But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, ⁵even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), ⁶and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, ⁷so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. ⁸For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; ⁹not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.

Christ presents himself in various ways for our justification,

1. As the subject and the ground of our righteousness.
2. As the moving cause, because He obtains it.
3. As the chief and efficient cause because He, together with the Father, justifies and gives us faith by which we believe and receive it.

The order in which righteousness is imputed unto us can be represented as a full and complete circle with three causes of our justification on the perimeter thereof, of which man has no part, namely,

- a) The mercy of God is the moving cause of our justification as far as it respects God.
- b) The satisfaction of Christ is the formal cause. God accepts us in view of the obedience of Christ applied unto us and

account us as righteous seeing that we are covered with this, as with a garment.

Psa 104:1 Bless the LORD, O my soul! O LORD my God, You are very great; You are clothed with splendor and majesty,

Psa 104:2 Covering Yourself with light as with a cloak, Stretching out heaven like a tent curtain.

Isa 61:3 To grant those who mourn in Zion, Giving them a garland instead of ashes, The oil of gladness instead of mourning, The mantle of praise instead of a spirit of fainting. So they will be called oaks of righteousness, The planting of the LORD, that He may be glorified.

Eze 16:8 "Then I passed by you and saw you, and behold, you were at the time for love; so I spread My skirt over you and covered your nakedness. I also swore to you and entered into a covenant with you so that you became Mine," declares the Lord GOD.

On account of this God acquits and frees us from the condemnation of the law.

- c) Our faith is the instrumental cause, apprehending and applying to us the righteousness of Christ. This faith is a gift from God out of his mercy, which again is the moving cause, thus completing the circle. We are justified by faith as by an instrument by which we pry loose the righteousness of Christ.

We cannot be justified in the same sense by the grace of God, by the merits of Christ, and by faith. The first (a) must be understood to be the moving or initiating cause, which is God. Justification starts with God, and is not influenced by anyone or anything. The second (b) is the formal or proper cause, which is in Christ, and the third (c) is the instrumental cause, which is in us through faith but not *by* us.

Faith works correlatively to our justification, which means that we are justified by that which faith has respect to, which is the merit of Christ. Faith and the satisfaction of Christ

have a mutual relation to each other. The one is that which receives, and the other is that which is received. Faith should be understood to mean that the merit of Christ justifies us and not the faith. Faith is the instrument that brings the justification about.

It is also correct to attribute justification to faith since it is not *merely* an instrument that is totally in the hands of man, but it is a gift from God that is applied by the Holy Spirit. The effect of an efficient cause is ordinarily attributed to the instrument.

When it is said that faith is counted for righteousness (Rom 4:4, 5 Now to the one who works, his wage is not credited as a favor, but as what is due. ⁵But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is credited as righteousness) and when expressions of a similar character are used, they must necessarily be understood correlatively. Faith is the instrument by which we acquire the righteousness of Christ. We may also say that it is the hand with which we receive the righteousness of Christ.

In a similar manner, we may also see the hand of the minister handing us the bread and the wine in the Lord's Supper as a sign how we receive the blessings of Christ's merits, our justification, out of the hand of the Father.