

Philippians 3 [Will Groben / 09.28.08]

Terms

Imputed Righteousness: God takes Christ's righteousness and accounts [imputes] it to believers.

Inherited Sin: People inherit from parents the corrupted human nature that resulted from the original sin.

Imputed Sin: God accounts [imputes] the guilt of Adam to all of Adam's descendents.

Sanctify: To separate out to be holy for God.

Positional Sanctification: Believers have a position of righteousness before God because God accounts [imputes] the righteousness of Christ to them. This is called "Justification" also.

Progressive Sanctification: The Holy Spirit transforms believers over their lifetimes to be more like Christ so they can better live up to the righteousness God already has accounted to them through Christ.

Glorification: At death, Christ finishes the work of sanctification so believers are fully righteous in being as well as in God's sight.

Summary

Point 1: Without Christ we have no righteousness, we are worthless to God. We are considered righteous by God only because he attributes to us the righteousness of Christ. Nothing we do can make us more righteous in God's sight; our mistakes do not make us less so. This is true after salvation as well as before.

Point 2: Understanding that our value to God comes from Christ alone, we should adjust our attitudes to value the things of the world less and the things of Christ more. We should see our worldly blessings as tools to serve Christ, not as inducements to wallow in worldly pleasure. We should aspire to give all of ourselves to Christ and his work, even if it means sacrifice and suffering.

Point 3: If we value Christ and his gift of righteousness correctly, we will be transformed by God's grace progressively over our lifetimes to better live up to this righteousness.

Point 4: We should accept these truths because we have a right vision of what it is all about: not eighty years on earth, but eternity with God and Christ's return to judge, bless, and resurrect.

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Application

1. Allow the theology of this chapter to change the way you think, to renew your mind so you will be transformed by grace. Pray about, think about, and meditate on the true source of your righteousness, of your value to God. Allow your attitude about what gives you value to change.
2. Assess your goals and what you live for. None of us are at the Paul level yet, but we can check our sense of purpose and seek to make Christ and his work greater priorities in our lives.
3. Assess your willingness to sacrifice and suffer for the gospel of Christ. 2 Timothy 3:12!
4. Cooperate in your “progressive sanctification” [spiritual growth]: press on by praying, studying the Bible, worshipping, participating in biblical community, serving on the ministry team, sharing your faith with others, adopting biblical attitudes, and trying to be obedient.
5. Keep your eyes on Christ and heaven as the right perspective for this life.
6. Beware of teachers today who are like Paul’s opponents in Philippians.
 - † Legalists who insist on following the Mosaic Law or their own man-made rules in order to be righteous or accepted by God;
 - † Prosperity doctrine churches that teach God’s will for Christians is worldly blessing;
 - † Churches that teach “name it and claim it” and if you don’t get it, it is because of your lack of faith or lack of righteousness.
7. **Understand where the deliverance is!** Paul had been delivered from sin, death, Satan... he knew he was going to be resurrected and spend eternity with Christ. He had been delivered, no matter how much he was suffering in this life. Even when you are suffering or struggling, rejoice even amidst the adversity [the command with which Paul began this chapter], for God remains sovereign and the gospel continues... In 1:13 Paul said that his arrest had led to the whole guard hearing the gospel, and in 4:22 he said *All the saints greet you, especially those of Caesar’s household...!* Despite his confinement, Paul still reached into the palace and led people to Christ! God will use your times of struggle for good purposes also. Praise the Lord!

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