

Title: The Blessedness of Grace

Text: Rom 4: 4-8

Date: March 07, 2024

Place: SGBC, NJ

I ran out of time Sunday so I want to go back and look at the remaining verses of my text in Romans 4.

Subject: The Blessedness of Grace

We saw how in Romans 3, Paul declared that Christ alone made his elect righteous by his obedience. The righteousness of Christ is imputed to his elect through God-given faith.

Romans 3: 28 Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.

Then he answered the accusation men charge us with--that we are anti-nomian.

Romans 3: 31: Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.
[through faith]

We only establish the law through faith in Christ. We are justified by the faithful obedience of Christ. Christ's righteousness is imputed to us through faith. It is only through faith that we establish the law. To show us this, the Spirit of God holds up Abraham as the example.

Romans 4: 1: What shall we say then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found? 2: For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath *whereof* to glory; but not before God. 3: For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.

It is evident we establish the law only through faith in Christ because it is how Abraham was justified. And Abraham lived four hundred and thirty years before God gave the ten commandments at Sinai. Abraham was made righteous by Christ's obedience. By grace, God gave him faith to believe on Christ and by grace God imputed the righteousness of Christ to him.

Subject: The Blessedness of Grace

Proposition: It is by the grace of God that God's people are made righteous by the obedience of Christ.

Romans 4: 4: Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. 5: But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. 6: Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, 7: *Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. 8: Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.*

IF OF WORKS THEN NOT OF GRACE

Romans 4: 4: Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. 5: But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.

This is another verse that shows God only imputes what a man has been made by a prior act. If a man could keep the law then the reward would not be reckoned (imputed) of grace, but of debt.

Salvation--everything included--*election, redemption, regeneration, justification, sanctification, preservation*--is all by God's grace, not by the sinner's works. No part of salvation is a co-effort between God and the sinner--"*Salvation is of the Lord.*"

Psalm 100:3: Know ye that the LORD he *is* God: he hath made us, and not we ourselves; *we are* his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

Romans 11: 35: who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? 36: For of him, and through him, and to him, *are* all things: to whom *be* glory for ever. Amen.

Ephesians 1: 3: Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly *places* in Christ: 4: According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: 5: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, 6: To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. 7: In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;

Therefore, grace and works are mutually exclusive.

Romans 11: 6: And if by grace, then *is it* no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if *it be* of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.

Is there a difference between a paycheck and a gift? When payday comes and you receive your paycheck, you worked for that. But when someone buys you a gift and gives it to you, you did nothing. It was freely given. If you worked for it then it is not a gift.

If person works for righteousness then righteousness would be imputed to him but it cannot be of grace but of debt. "*Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned [imputed] of grace, but of debt.*" God only imputes to a man what he really is. If a man could establish the law by his works God would impute to him that he is righteous. But the reward of eternal life would not be of grace, it would be a debt owed to the man due to his works.

Only Christ established the law by his works. Only Christ earned the reward. He did it for all God's elect BY THE GRACE OF GOD.

2 Corinthians 8:9: For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.

Romans 3: 24: Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: 25: Whom God hath set forth *to be* a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness...

Let's talk about motive. The motive of our heart is vital. All God's saints do good works. But a true work of faith involves knowing two things in the heart. One, we are unable to establish the law. Two, Christ alone is able; Christ alone established the law; Christ alone justified his people.

By grace, the Holy Spirit has taught God's saints that we are unable to establish the law, unable to justify ourselves by our works. And the Spirit has taught us Christ was able and Christ has accomplished our justification on behalf of his people.

So the new motive God has put in our new heart in the works we do is faith in Christ, which works by love. We believe that by the grace of God, Christ has made us righteous by his obedience. It is finished! So our works are from the motive of gratitude and love to God our Father and his Son, Christ Jesus, who has made us righteous by grace. But if a man's motive in his works is to make himself righteous then he is totally out of the realm of grace. He is seeking to indebt God to himself.

Let's go back to our illustration of a gift. Someone gives you a gift. But you refuse it. You insist on giving them money. You insulted the giver. Now, it ceases to be a gift. You paid for it. If a man's motive is to make himself righteous by his works then he is totally out of the realm of grace. He is seeking to indebt God to pay him what he earned.

It is what Paul told the Galatians. The legalists told the Galatian believers that it was ok to believe on Christ. But they said it was "necessary" that they be circumcised and keep the law of Sinai or they could not be saved.

Be sure to get this. Whether men say works of the law are "necessary" for justification OR for sanctification, when the motive of a man's heart is to make himself something before God [or even to contribute to Christ's work] then he is totally out of the realm of grace. He is under the law, under works. It is what Paul told the Galatians.

Galatians 5: 2: Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. 3: For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. 4: Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.

Galatians 2:21: I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness *come* by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.

Our text deals with justification. But when applied to us, justification and sanctification are inseparable. Religious folks say they are not working to be made righteous but for sanctification. They say that sanctification is partly by God's work and partly by the sinner. Not so! If the motive of the heart in any work is to make ourselves anything before God then we are fallen from grace. Christ profits us nothing. We are debtors to keep the whole law of God ourselves.

What is the difference in justification and sanctification? Justification is what Christ did to free his people from guilt before the law of God. Sanctification is holiness. Christ worked the works of God from a holy heart on our behalf so that by Christ performing God's will, God's elect are sanctified by his one offering.

Hebrews 10: 9: Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. 10: By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once *for all*.

When applied to us then to those truly sanctified, Christ is sanctification. By God's grace in regeneration, Christ enters us in Spirit. He is the holiness of the new man created within us. Our new man is holy by Christ's presence.

By this sanctifying work in us, he makes us know that we are unable to justify or sanctify ourselves. Also, God makes Christ unto us, both our Righteousness and our Sanctification. So we look out of ourselves to Christ alone.

But any man who is working to make himself justified or sanctified is entirely out of the realm of God's grace. He is under the law. In our city government who does the law condemn. The man who has broken the law. Well, the law of God only condemns those who are under the law, those who have broken the law. The man trying to work to makes himself righteous or holy is under the law, under the curse.

Romans 3: 19: Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. 20: Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law *is* the knowledge of sin.

THE REWARD

Romans 4: 4: Now to him that worketh is THE REWARD not reckoned of grace, but of debt. 5: But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.

Notice the word "the reward." In our text the reward is righteousness which is eternal life. For God's elect, through faith, the reward is Christ and his righteousness, which is eternal life. But to him that worketh, if he could keep the law, then righteousness is not imputed of grace but of debt.

For those sanctified in heart by the Holy Spirit, we believe on Christ and the reward is that God imputes the righteousness of Christ to us. The reward is God gives us eternal life in his Son. But for the believer, in ALL THINGS the Reward is Christ.

The Reward is Wisdom--Christ is Wisdom to God's saints. The Reward is Righteousness--Christ is Righteousness to God's saints. The Reward is Sanctification--Christ is Holiness to God's saints. The Reward is Redemption--Christ is Redemption to God's saints. The Reward is Eternal Life--Christ is Eternal Life to God's saints. The Reward is Salvation--Christ is Salvation to God's saints. The Reward is Heaven--Christ is Heaven to God's saints. Christ is the Reward in All and all is of God's grace alone! We earn nothing. All is by Christ alone and all is freely given us by God's grace!

THE BLESSEDNESS OF GRACE

Romans 4: 5: But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. 6: Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, 7: *Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. 8: Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.*

The blessedness of grace is that God imputes the righteousness of Christ to us through faith, without our works. By God's grace we believe on Christ that justifieth the ungodly. Are you the ungodly? Did you sin in Adam? Is your sin-nature ungodly? By God's grace, he makes us believe we are ungodly. But God's grace, makes us willing to believe on Christ that justifieth the ungodly.

All is by God's grace, not by our works. God chose his people by grace. Christ redeemed his people by grace. The Spirit regenerates us and sanctifies us through faith by grace. All is without our works. God imputes the righteousness of Christ to us freely by grace through faith.

David knew this great blessedness as all God's saints do. *"Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin."*

The blessedness is that God imputes Christ's righteousness to the believer without our works. *"Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven."* Through faith in Christ, God declares all our iniquities--past, present and future--are forgiven.

Hebrews 8:12: For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I **remember no** more.

It is God continually forgiving us though we have sinned, that humbles us, chastens us and keeps us believing on Christ and obeying him.

Psalms 130:3: If thou, LORD, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? 4: But *there is* forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared.

"Blessed are they whose sins are covered."

Isaiah 44: 22: I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee.

Psalms 85:2: Thou hast forgiven the iniquity of thy people, thou hast covered all their sin. Selah.

"Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin." God only imputes what is fact. God will not impute sin to you who believe because by Christ putting our sin away, before God, before the all-seeing just Judge, before the law of God, we have no sin to impute, only the righteousness of Christ.

Psalms 103:12: As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.

Jeremiah 50:20: In those days, and in that time, saith the LORD, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and *there shall be* none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found: for I will pardon them whom I reserve.

Does that mean some of my sins or all of my sins? All! Read Romans 5: 15-17. This is the blessedness of grace that far, far abounds over our fall in Adam.

Romans 5:15: But not as the offence, so also *is* the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, *which is* by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many. 16: And not as *it was* by one that sinned, *so is* the gift: for the judgment *was* by one [offense] to condemnation, but the free gift *is* of many offences unto justification. 17: For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.)

Amen!