

The Forgotten Gospel

Philippians 3:8–9

Philippians 3:8–9 (NKJV)

⁸ Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ ⁹ and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which *is* from the law, but that which *is* through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith;

Introduction

This passage is part of a detailed testimony of the Apostle Paul regarding his understanding that all the years of righteous living and right heritage would never bring him into a right standing before God. He says that as far as man can attain, he had it all. If anyone could be made saved by human effort, religious involvement or affiliation and zeal for his religion, he had it all.

Philippians 3:4–6 (NKJV)

⁴ though I also might have confidence in the flesh. If anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the

flesh, I more so: ⁵ circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, *of* the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee; ⁶ concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.

All of this, that a man could do and attain, he concludes is useless.

Philippians 3:7–8 (NKJV)

⁷ But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. ⁸ Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ

He says, I had to let it all go, so that I could have the only source of Righteousness that could make him right with God.

Philippians 3:9 (NKJV)

⁹ and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which *is* from the law, but that which *is* through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith;

What I find interesting about this text, is that there is not one mention of sin.

That does not mean that Paul did not teach the doctrine of Sin...he did. But here he says nothing of it. Its all about righteousness, and having the right kind of Righteousness.

Paul understood that the Gospel was more than just the forgiveness of Sin. It was more that being kept out of Hell. It was that which met the critical need for Holiness that one needs to go to Heaven.

Forgiveness of sin keeps you from Hell

Holiness allows you entrance into Heaven.

NO one will see God without Holiness.

I am convinced that today this is the Forgotten Gospel. We are to often only preaching half the message. Half the truth. Half the need.

There is a gospel being preached but it is not the full gospel.

This gospel forgives sin but does not make you holy.

This gospel removes guilt but not not make you righteous.

This Gospel removes my stain, but does not make me white as snow.

This gospel pardons but does not make me a saint.

There is as subtle deception with this half truth that is being preached today.

It has the potential to create false converts or shallow christians at best.

If we tell the world that Jesus came only to die on a cross and forgive your sins and that is all that we communicate about the saving message of the Gospel then we are less likely to see the sinner driven to despair.

The sinner may be willing to recognize his sin and hardily and happily receive forgiveness for his sin and to have his guilt removed but will still be missing a critical point. That you need to be perfect to enter heaven. You need absolute Holiness. The problem the sinner faces is greater than the sin problem, it is a righteousness problem also.

This is the point of the Sermon on the Mount in Mathew 5-7

Matthew 5:3–8 (NKJV)

- 3 “Blessed *are* the poor in spirit,
For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
- 4 Blessed *are* those who mourn,
For they shall be comforted.
- 5 Blessed *are* the meek,

- For they shall inherit the earth.
- 6 Blessed *are* those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
For they shall be filled.
- 7 Blessed *are* the merciful,
For they shall obtain mercy.
- 8 Blessed *are* the pure in heart,
For they shall see God.

Matthew 5:48 (NKJV)

48 Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.

Men and women need to be brought to the point that they see they need perfect righteousness to get to Heaven and they don't have it. IT is only then that they can cry out to God who alone can solve this problem.

This is why it is critical that we understand the the great doctrine of Justification through imputation in needed again to be emphasized.

On September 11 2001 the twin towers in New York were attacked by islamic terrorist in an attempt to bring the United States to her knees.

But few knew that early that same year an attack on the twin doctrines of Justification and Imputation had taken place, by our own home grown doctrinal terrorist.

“In two successive issues of Books and Culture (January/February 2001, March/April 2001, Vol. 7, Nos. 1 and 2),⁵ Robert Gundry, scholar-in-residence at Westmont College, argued that “the doctrine that Christ’s righteousness is imputed to believing sinners needs to be abandoned” (I, 9).⁶ “That doctrine of imputation is not even biblical. Still less is it ‘essential’ to the Gospel” (I, 9). “The notion is passé, neither because of Roman Catholic influence nor because of theological liberalism, but because of fidelity to the relevant biblical texts” (I, 9).”

Piper, John. *Counted Righteous in Christ?* (Kindle Locations 664-669). Crossway. Kindle Edition.

“But he is not alone, and he makes that plain by saying, I join the growing number of biblical theologians, evangelical and non-evangelical alike, who deny that Paul or any other New Testament author speaks of a righteousness of Christ (whatever it might include or exclude) that is imputed to believing sinners, and find instead a doctrine of God’s righteousness as his salvific activity in a covenantal framework,⁷ not in terms of

an imputation of Christ's righteousness in a bookkeeping framework. (II, 15)8”

Piper, John. Counted Righteous in Christ? (Kindle Locations 671-676). Crossway. Kindle Edition.

“The Gospel must be defended in every generation. Today, as in the sixteenth century, the central issue is the imputation of Christ's righteousness. The church must say “No!” to those who declare that imputation is passé. If imputation is passé, then so is the Gospel.”

R.C. Sproul, Founder, Ligonier Ministries

While evangelicals sleep, people we once trusted have been sowing seeds of false doctrine in the church. they have abandoned the pivotal doctrine of the imputation of Christ's righteousness. What is at stake here is nothing less than the integrity of the Gospel.

Ronald H. Nash

No doctrine is more basic to God's salvation plan and hence more central in understanding the

Christian's new identity; yet today these truths are widely ignored or misunderstood.

Bruce Ware, Professor, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

The church has become shallow and superficial and the once tested doctrines of Justification and Imputation are rarely discussed and never taught. It is assumed that great doctrines of the Bible are only for the Theologians and that the average church attender can't grasp them. Have we forgotten the promise of scripture, that the greatest teacher of all lives inside of us.

As one author states.

Raking is easy, but all you get is leaves. Digging is hard, but you might find gold.

Piper, John. *Counted Righteous in Christ?* (Kindle Locations 198-199). Crossway. Kindle Edition.

John Piper wrote regarding the great doctrine of Justication by imputation

“Church-planting specialists generally downplay biblical doctrine in the core values of what makes a church “successful.” The long-term effect of this ethos is a weakening of the church that is concealed as long as the crowds are large, the band is loud, the tragedies are few, and persecution is still

at the level of preferences. But more and more this doctrinally-diluted brew of music, drama, life-tips, and marketing seems out of touch with real life in this world—not to mention the next. It tastes like watered-down gruel, not a nourishing meal. It simply isn't serious enough. It's too playful and chatty and casual. Its joy just doesn't feel deep enough or heartbroken or well-rooted. The injustice and persecution and suffering and hellish realities in the world today are so many and so large and so close that I can't help but think that, deep inside, people are longing for something weighty and massive and rooted and stable and eternal. So it seems to me that the trifling with silly little sketches and breezy welcome-to-the-den styles on Sunday morning are just out of touch with what matters in life”

Piper, John. *Counted Righteous in Christ?* (Kindle Locations 322-324). Crossway. Kindle Edition.

Martin Luther wrote

“[Justification is] the chief article of Christian doctrine. To him who understands how great its usefulness and majesty are, everything else will seem slight and turn to nothing. ...For if we know this article, we are in the clearest light; if we do not know it, we dwell in the densest darkness.” 1

Piper, John. Counted Righteous in Christ? (Kindle Locations 182-187). Crossway. Kindle Edition.¹ From his exposition of Galatians 2:11 in *What Luther Says: An Anthology*, Vol. 2, ed. Ewald M. Plass (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1959), p. 705, entry 2200.

I. The Problem

A. The Problem of Permeation

Original Sin

Romans 5:12 (NKJV)

¹² Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned—

Romans 5:18–19 (NKJV)

¹⁸ Therefore, as through one man's offense *judgment* came to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so through one Man's righteous act *the free gift came* to all men, resulting in justification of life. ¹⁹ For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man's obedience many will be made righteous.

“First, as a result of Adam's sin we all enter the world with a fallen nature. This is *original sin*--the sinful tendencies, desires, and dispositions in our hearts with which we are all born. Thus, original sin is something *inherent in us*--it is a morally ruined character. The original sin that sin that we are all born with.”

Desiring God What Is the Difference Between Original Sin and Imputed Sin?

Article by Matt Perman
Guest Contributor

“Second, the guilt of Adam's sin is credited not just to Adam himself, but to us all. We are regarded as having sinned *in Adam*, and hence as deserving of the same punishment. This is *imputed sin*. Thus, we not only receive polluted and sinful natures because of Adam's sin (original sin), but we are also regarded as having sinned in Adam such that we are guilty of his act as well (imputed sin). Imputed sin is the ruin of our *standing* before God and is thus not an internal quality but an objective reckoning of guilt, whereas original sin is the ruin of our *character* and thus is a reference to internal qualities. Both original sin and imputed sin place us under the judgment of God.”

Desiring God What Is the Difference Between Original Sin and Imputed Sin?

Article by Matt Perman
Guest Contributor

How can we be punished for what Adam did.
 How can Christ be punished for what we did.
 How can we be rewarded for What Christ did.

Actual Sin

“The original sin that we are all born with manifests itself throughout our lives in actual sins-- the actions, thoughts, and feelings we have that violate God's moral commands. So our sinful hearts (original sin) cause us to make sinful choices, think sinful thoughts, and feel sinful feelings (actual sins). We are not sinners because we sin; rather, we sin *because we are sinners*. We are all born totally imprisoned in original sin. There is no island of goodness left in us.”

Desiring God What Is the Difference Between Original Sin and Imputed Sin?
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Romans 3:9–12 (NKJV)

⁹ What then? Are we better *than they*? Not at all. For we have previously charged both Jews and Greeks that they are all under sin.

¹⁰ As it is written:

“There is none righteous, no, not one;

¹¹ *There is none who understands;*

*There is none who seeks after God.
 12 They have all turned aside;
 They have together become unprofitable;
 There is none who does good, no, not one.”*

Romans 3:23 (NKJV)

23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

Ecclesiastes 7:20 (NKJV)

20 For *there is* not a just man on earth who does good
 And does not sin.

1 John 1:8–10 (NKJV)

8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.

A. The problem of Permeation

B. The Problem of Perfection

The Standard that God requires is absolute perfection. Perfect Holiness

Matthew 5:48 (NKJV)

⁴⁸ Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.

Matthew 5:8 (NKJV)

⁸ Blessed *are* the pure in heart,
For they shall see God.

Hebrews 12:14 (NKJV)

¹⁴ Pursue peace with all *people*, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord:

Ephesians 5:5 (NKJV)

⁵ For this you know, that no fornicator, unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.

A. The problem of Permeation

B. The problem of Perfection

C. The Problem of Prescript

In its narrow, short-term design, the law that God gave to the Israelites through Moses demanded perfect obedience of the Pentateuch's more than

600 commandments in order for the Israelites to receive eternal life

Leviticus 18:5 (NKJV)

⁵ You shall therefore keep My statutes and My judgments, which if a man does, he shall live by them: I *am* the Lord.

Romans 10:5 (NKJV)

⁵ For Moses writes about the righteousness which is of the law, *“The man who does those things shall live by them.”*

Matthew 19:16–17 (NKJV)

¹⁶ Now behold, one came and said to Him, “Good Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?”

¹⁷ So He said to him, **“Why do you call Me good? No one *is* good but One, *that is*, God. But if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments.”**

BUT man cannot keep the law,

Romans 8:6–8 (NKJV)

⁶ For to be carnally minded *is* death, but to be spiritually minded *is* life and peace. ⁷ Because the carnal mind *is* enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. ⁸ So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

Galatians 3:21 (NKJV)

²¹ Is the law then against the promises of God? Certainly not! For if there had been a law given which could have given life, truly righteousness would have been by the law.

Galatians 2:21 (NKJV)

²¹ I do not set aside the grace of God; for if righteousness *comes* through the law, then Christ died in vain.”

Galatians 3:10–12 (NKJV)

¹⁰ For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, “*Cursed is everyone who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them.*” ¹¹ But that no one is justified by the law in the sight of God *is* evident, for “*the just shall live by faith.*” ¹² Yet the law is not of

faith, but *“the man who does them shall live by them.”*

Romans 3:19–20 (NKJV)

¹⁹ Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those 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 no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law *is* the knowledge of sin.

Romans 3:21 (NKJV)

²¹ But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets,

Romans 10:3 (NKJV)

³ For they being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God.

I. The Problem

II. The Person = Jesus Christ

The solution does not come
in a religion but a redeemer

not a legalism but in the Lord
 not a prescription but a Person

What we need is

1. our sins forgiven
 - a. wrath satisfied
 - b. delivered from Hell
2. a perfect Righteousness
 - a. my life of sin removed,
 - b. a perfect life given
 - c. entrance into Heaven permitted

A. **The Pardon accomplished**

Isaiah 53:10–11 (NKJV)

- ¹⁰ Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him;
 He has put *Him* to grief.
When You make His soul an offering for sin,
 He shall see *His* seed, He shall prolong *His* days,
 And the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His
 hand.
- ¹¹ He shall see the labor of His soul, *and* be satisfied.
 By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify
 many,
For He shall bear their iniquities.

Hebrews 9:26–28 (NKJV)

²⁶ He then would have had to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now, once at the end of the ages, He has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. ²⁷ And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment, ²⁸ so Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation.

Hebrews 10:12 (NKJV)

¹² But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God,

1 Peter 3:18 (NKJV)

¹⁸ For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit,

1 John 3:5 (NKJV)

⁵ And you know that He was manifested to take away our sins, and in Him there is no sin.

Matthew 26:28 (NKJV)

28 For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.

John 1:29 (NKJV)

²⁹ The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!

1 John 1:7 (NKJV)

⁷ But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.

1 John 2:1–2 (NKJV)

2 My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.

² And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world.

Titus 2:14 (NKJV)

¹⁴ who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself *His* own special people, zealous for good works.

The Perfection Acquired

21 For He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

21 For He made Him who knew no sin *t*

Isaiah 53:9 (NKJV)

⁹ And they made His grave with the wicked—
But with the rich at His death,
Because He had done no violence,
Nor *was any* deceit in His mouth.

Luke 1:35 (NKJV)

³⁵ And the angel answered and said to her, “*The* Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God.

Hebrews 7:26 (NKJV)

²⁶ For such a High Priest was fitting for us, *who* is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens;

1 Peter 2:22–23 (NKJV)

²² *“Who committed no sin,
Nor was deceit found in His mouth”;*

²³ who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed *Himself* to Him who judges righteously;

1 John 3:5 (NKJV)

⁵ And you know that He was manifested to take away our sins, and in Him there is no sin.

John 8:46 (NKJV)

⁴⁶ *Which of you convicts Me of sin? And if I tell the truth, why do you not believe Me?*

I. The Problem

II. The Person

III. The Pertinence

A. Justice Satisfied

Romans 3:21–26 (NKJV)

²¹ But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, ²² even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference; ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, ²⁵ whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed, ²⁶ to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

Romans 5:8–9 (NKJV)

⁸ But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. ⁹ Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him.

B. Righteousness Supplied

Romans 5:19 (NKJV)

¹⁹ For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man's obedience many will be made righteous.

2 Corinthians 5:21 (NKJV)

²¹ **For He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin** for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

Romans 8:3–4 (NKJV)

³ For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God *did* by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh, ⁴ that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

Since the consequences of Adam's sin are twofold (original sin and imputed sin), the remedy of our salvation is also twofold. John Piper writes:

So we have seen two things that need a remedy. One is our sinful nature that enslaves us to sin, and the other is our original guilt and condemnation that is rooted not first in our individual sinning but in our connection with Adam in his sin. The book of Romans—indeed the whole Bible—is the story of how God has worked in history to remedy these two problems. The problem of our condemnation in Adam God remedies through justification in Christ. The problem of our corruption and depravity he remedies through sanctification by the Spirit. Or to put it another way: The problem of our legal guilt and condemnation before God is solved by his reckoning to us the righteousness Christ; and the problem of our moral defilement and habitual sinning is solved by his purifying us by the work of Spirit. The first remedy, justification, comes by imputed righteousness. The other, sanctification, comes by imparted righteousness. Justification is instantaneous; sanctification is progressive – and we will deal extensively with it in Romans 6-8, just we have dealt with justification in Romans 3-5. (John Piper,

"Adam, Christ, and Justification: Part IV")

Desiring God What Is the Difference Between Original Sin and Imputed Sin?

Article by Matt Perman

Guest Contributor

The experience of God's people through the centuries has shown what a treasure this truth is in

bringing people from the darkness of unbelief to the light of hope and joy in Christ. It has given strength and courage to the most fearful Christian to be burned alive at the stake or cut into pieces, or tortured to the point of Death. It has been the Rock on which true saving faith is built. It is the deep roots that keep the Christian from being tossed by the winds of false Religion.

One example is John Bunyan, the writer of *Pilgrim's Progress*, who struggled terribly in his 20s with doubts and lack of assurance of his stand before God. He knew facts but had not come to a settled faith in Christ until this statement

{John Bunyan, *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*, [Hertfordshire: Evangelical Press, 1978, orig. 1666], pp. 90-91)}

Here's what he wrote:

One day as I was passing into the field . . . this sentence fell upon my soul. Thy righteousness is in heaven. And methought, withal, I saw with the eyes of my soul Jesus Christ at God's right hand; there, I say, was my righteousness; so that wherever I was, or whatever I was doing, God could not say of me, he wants [lacks] my righteousness, for that was just before [in front of] him. I also saw, moreover, that it was not my good frame of heart that made my

righteousness better, nor yet my bad frame that made my righteousness worse, for my righteousness was Jesus Christ himself, "The same yesterday, today and, and forever" (Hebrews 13:8).

Now did my chains fall off my legs indeed. I was loosed from my afflictions and irons; my temptations also fled away; so that from that time those dreadful scriptures of God left off to trouble me; now went I also home rejoicing for the grace and love of God. (John Bunyan, *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*, [Hertfordshire: Evangelical Press, 1978, orig. 1666], pp. 90-91)

1 Corinthians 1:30 (NKJV)

³⁰ But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God—and righteousness and sanctification and redemption—consider 1 Corinthians 1:30.

John Bunyan said that, after that experience in the field where the imputed righteousness of Christ hit him so powerfully, he went home and looked for Biblical support. He hit upon 1 Corinthians 1:30. "But by His [God's] doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption." "By this scripture," Bunyan said, "I saw that the man Christ Jesus . . . is our righteousness and sanctification before God. Here

therefore I lived for some time very sweetly at peace with God, through Christ" (Grace Abounding, p. 91).