

I. ITS BACKGROUND

A. Man's Natural Condition (Gen. 1:27-31)

B. The Covenant of Works (Gen. 2; Rom. 5; Rev. 2:7)

C. The Imputation of Sin (Rom. 5:12, 18-19)

II. ITS NATURE

A. Legal (Rom. 8:33-34; Luke 7:29; Rom. 3:4; 5:19)

B. Lawful (Rom. 3:23-26; Heb. 9:22 Mt. 19:17; Rom. 2:13; 10:5)

C. Vicarious (1Pet. 3:18; Heb. 2:14-17)

D. Gracious (Rom. 3:24)

E. Comprehensive (1Jn. 1:7-9; Jn. 5:24)

F. Final (Rom. 5:1; 8:30)

III. ITS BASIS

A. Christ's Penal Satisfaction (Isa. 53:3-7; Gal. 3:10-13)

B. Christ's Preceptive Obedience (Jer. 23:6; Jn. 12:49f; Rom. 5:17-19; 2Cor. 5:21; Phil. 2:5f)

IV. ITS RECEPTION

A. Faith in Christ (Rom. 5:1; 8:1; Gen. 15:6; Hab. 2:4)

B. Faith Alone Apart from Works (Rom. 3:19-28; Gal. 2:16; 3:11-12; Tit. 3:3-7)¹

C. Genuine Faith (Gal. 5:6; Jm. 2:17)

D. Instrument vs. Virtue (Rom. 4:1-8; Phil. 3:7-9)

V. ITS VINDICATION (or Visible Demonstration)

A. In This Life (Rom. 8:1; Gal. 5:18; Jm. 2:14-16; Gen. 22:10-12)

B. At the Last Day (Mt. 25:31-46; Rom. 14:10; Rev. 20:11-15)

VI. COMMON OBJECTIONS

A. Paul’s treatment of “justification” addresses the question of “Who is in the covenant community?” not “Who is individually saved by God?” (Acts 15:1, 5, 11; Rom. 10:1-5)

B. Paul’s treatment of “justification apart from works of the law” refers to *ceremonial* works, not *moral* works. (Lk. 18:9-13; Mt. 23:23; Tit. 3:3-7; Gal. 3:10-11; Dt. 27:14-26)

C. This doctrine leads to scandalous and immoral living. (Rom. 3:8; Gal. 2:17-20; Ps. 130:4)

D. Even if this doctrine is true, it is not essential to a credible profession of faith. (Gal. 1:6-9)

¹ The Greek phrase ἐὰν μὴ in Galatians 2:16 is often translated with the mere adversative: “but” (i.e. “but by faith in Jesus Christ”). Based upon the ordinary usage of this phrase, however, such a translation must be regarded as exceptional (at best) or (at worst) entirely unprecedented. A woodenly literal rendering of these two words would amount to “if not” (i.e. “if not by faith in Jesus Christ”). In most contexts, however, it carries the notion of negation and often of exclusivity. For this reason, it is often translated as “except” (E.g. Rev. 2:22). From a logical and grammatical standpoint, the closest parallel to Galatians 2:16 is found in John 5:19, where the ESV rightly renders ἐὰν μὴ as “but only”. As such, it is exegetically warranted (not to mention contextually demanded) to translate our phrase in Galatians 2:16 in this way: “but only by faith in Jesus Christ”. [Cf. Herman Witsius, *Economy of the Covenants Between God and Man: Comprehending a Complete Body of Divinity*, Vol. 1 (Phillipsburg: P&R, 1990) pp. 409-410]