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All words spoken by Jesus Christ are in **red text**.

(Hyperlinks are surrounded by parenthesis and are underlined.)

Faith in Christ =

Salvation
Justification
Righteousness
Sanctification

Our faith in Jesus Christ provides more benefits than we realize. Most understand we receive salvation from an eternal death (spiritual immortality) because we believe in Him. However, God imputes additional spiritual benefits because of our faith in His Son: including justification and righteousness—which facilitates our sanctification (the process of becoming more like Jesus and less like ourselves).

Martin Luther, a 16th century German theologian, wrote the following (paraphrased) instructional truths. *“Learn of Christ and him crucified. Learn to pray, ‘Lord Jesus, you are my righteousness, but I am your sin. You have taken upon yourself what is mine, and have given me what is yours. You have taken upon yourself what you were not, and have given to me what I am not.’”*

John Calvin, a 16th century French theologian, explained the spiritual magnitude of what Jesus did for those who believe in Him. *“By his own descent to the earth he has prepared our ascent to heaven. Having received our mortality, he has bestowed on us his immortality. Having undertaken our weakness, he has made us strong in his strength. Having submitted to our poverty, he has transferred to us his riches. Having taken upon himself the burden of unrighteousness with which we were oppressed, he has clothed us with his righteousness.”*

Salvation

Our sin causes internal and eternal spiritual death because it separates us from the life of God. However, God has given us a free gift and a means to establish a relationship with Him—by believing in His Son, Jesus Christ.

- “Your iniquities have separated you from your God; and your sins have hidden His face from you.” Isaiah 59:2
- “For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Romans 6:23
- “He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world.” 1 John 2:2

Jesus declared about Himself, *“Whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.”* John 3:15-17

Those who have transitioned from spiritual death unto spiritual life can relate to the following truths—for we:

- Developed a disdain for our unrighteous deeds and hoped for something more in life.
- Realized we were under the bondage of sin and lost in darkness.
- Were unable to change ourselves from within, and the cycle and control of sin continued.
- Humbled ourselves and prayed to God for help.

“And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others. But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.” Ephesians 2:1-10

Imputation

Imputation is a critical spiritual component of salvation, justification, righteousness, and sanctification—because we still have a sinful nature which “unqualifies” us for a relationship with God and an eternal life. Every Christian will attest they have a multitude of flaws—but continually seek with a heart-felt desire to overcome our unrighteousness and become more like Jesus. Therefore, because God is more interested in the desires of our heart and not our shortcomings, God imputes justification (no eternal judgement and condemnation for our sin). But in addition (and even more important), God also imputes to us (sees us as having) the righteousness of Jesus.

From a biblical perspective, imputation is defined as God’s assignment of an attribute (an inherent quality or trait)—even though the attribute does not exist. For example, Abraham lied about his wife when he feared for his life. ([Genesis 12:10-20](#); [Genesis 20](#)) In addition, Abraham disbelieved God’s promise of a child and had a child with his wife’s servant. ([Genesis 16](#)) However, God imputed (assigned) the attribute of righteousness to Abraham because he believed God. “[Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.](#)” Gen. 15:6; Rom. 4:3

Even though Abraham demonstrated sinful weakness (like us)...God did much more than just impute Abraham’s righteousness. God also made an unconditional covenant with Abraham ([Genesis 15](#)), and to all of Abraham’s seed (Israelites)—which continues today and for eternity.

Even though we are unworthy and flawed (like Abraham)—it is because of our faith in His Son, and because of God’s love, grace, mercy, and His promises...we are forgiven, justified, and are viewed as having the righteousness of Jesus. It is “[God, who gives life to the dead and calls those things which do not exist as though they did.](#)” Rom.4:17

Now take some time to read and “mentally chew” upon the following spiritual truths of imputation that occurs when one places their faith in Jesus Christ.

The sins of the redeemed are inputted to Christ, and the righteousness of Christ is imputed to the redeemed.

In other words, because of our faith...our sins are exchanged for the righteousness of Christ. Although we may see all of our faults and all of our failures—it does not matter—because we are eternally forgiven by the blood that Jesus shed when He willingly gave His life for us as an atonement (paid the price) for our sins.

[“In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace.”](#)
Ephesians 1:7

[“To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever.”](#) Revelation 1:5-6

Imagine you broke a law, undeniable evidence proves you are guilty of breaking the law, and you are now standing before the judge waiting to hear what your punishment will be. Meanwhile, someone enters the courtroom, stands beside you, and declares He already received the punishment for your wrongdoing, and declares the charges should be dropped. The judge knows who this person is; fully understands the punishment He received and the price He had paid; and recognizes His authority to make His declaration regarding your situation. Therefore, the judge has only one choice by responding “You are not guilty and are free to go.” Now correlate the amount of gratitude you would have toward the judge (God) and the one who paid the price (Jesus) for what you have done.

[“But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness, just as David also describes the blessedness of the man to whom God imputes righteousness apart from works: blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, and whose sins are covered; blessed is the man to whom the Lord shall not impute sin.”](#) Romans 4:5-8

Take a few moments to self-reflect and determine the depths of your sinfulness and unrighteousness. It is when we recognize how we transgress against the will of God...it will cause us to:

- Humbly question how could God continually forgive us.
- Gain a greater understanding of the depth, breadth and height of God's love, and His desire for us to grow closer to Him.
- Reciprocate God's love by loving Him with all of our heart, soul, mind, and strength. (Mark 12:28-31)
 - "We love Him because He first loved us." 1 John 4:19
 - It is "...the goodness of God leads you to repentance." Romans 2:4

Justification

Justification is an imputed benefit of our faith because of the atoning sacrificial death of Jesus. A simple way to understand justification is "just-as-if-I-never-sinned." In effect, justification is God's act of forgiveness for our sins (past, present and future)—for God is more interested in the desires of our heart than our behavior.

"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, 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, 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 3:23-26

"My righteous Servant shall justify many, for He shall bear their iniquities." Isaiah 53:11

"As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us." Psalm 103:12

"It shall be imputed to us who believe in Him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was delivered up because of our offenses, and was raised because of our justification." Romans 4:24-25

"There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit." Romans 8:1

"Having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him." Romans 5:9

Righteousness

"But we are all like an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are like filthy rags." Isaiah 64:6

"There is none righteous, no, not one; there is none who understands; there is none who seeks after God. They have all turned aside; they have together become unprofitable; there is none who does good, no, not one. Their throat is an open tomb; with their tongues they have practiced deceit; The poison of asps is under their lips; whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness. Their feet are swift to shed blood; destruction and misery are in their ways; and the way of peace they have not known." Romans 3:11-17

"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it? I, the Lord, search the heart, I test the mind, even to give every man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his doings." Jeremiah 17:9-10

All religions (apart from Christianity) are based upon a works-based theology—which is comprised of a belief that one must perform good deeds (works) to gain favor with God and be rewarded by Him. However, a religion that is

based upon works appeals to our sinful nature—especially our pride. For it is only God’s love that can reach the depths of our heart and soul and transform us into a mirror image of His Son—and not by works.

“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.” Ephesians 2:8-9

There is nothing we can do and nothing we can offer to God that He does not already have—except our free will choice to offer Him our faith, our obedience, our heart, and our love—for this is what He desires. Thereafter, any demonstrated righteousness on our part is because of the workings of the Holy Spirit and His influence in our life.

Paul explained our imputed righteousness is from God because of our faith and not by our works. In other words, there is nothing we can do to earn a right standing with God—other than by our faith 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.” Philippians 3:9

God is the only one who should receive recognition and glory for any good that comes through us. For it is He who saved us, equipped us, and prepares us to live for eternity with Him—all because of our faith in His Son.

“For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.” Ephesians 2:9

“But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness, just as David also describes the blessedness of the man to whom God imputes righteousness apart from works: blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, and whose sins are covered; blessed is the man to whom the Lord shall not impute sin.” Romans 4:5-8

“By one Man’s obedience many will be made righteous.” Romans 5:19

“The righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe.” Romans 3:22

Excerpts from Romans 5:17-21

- “Those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.”
- “Through one Man’s righteous act the free gift came to all men, resulting in justification of life.”
- “By one Man’s obedience many will be made righteous.”
- “But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more, so that as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

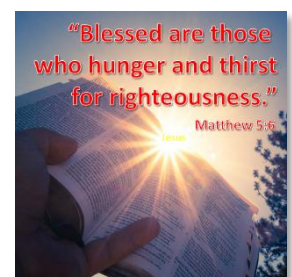
For more information on righteousness, read “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness” on UniqueBibleStudies.com.

Sanctification

Sanctification is defined as a process of:

- Being set apart for God’s purpose.
- A continual transformation of the desires of our heart.
- Becoming the righteousness of Christ, as our behavior reflects less of ourselves and more of Him.

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.” 2 Corinthians 5:17



“For this is the will of God, your sanctification.” 1 Thessalonians 4:3

“For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified.” Hebrews 10:12-14

“He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ.” Philippians 1:6

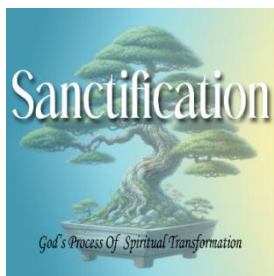
“For it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.” Philippians 2:13

“Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful, who also will do it.”

1 Thessalonians 5:23-24

Jesus declared to Paul, “...to open their eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me.” Acts 26:18

Jesus prayed to the Father, “They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth. As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth.” John 17:16-19



For more information read “Sanctification” on UniqueBibleStudies.com.

Summary

Through self-reflection and analysis our conscience will accuse us of our sins. However, because of our faith in Jesus (and not our works), our sin is imputed to Christ; and the righteousness of Christ is imputed to us. The understanding of these spiritual truths:

- Magnifies our love for God.
- Motivates us to:
 - Be obedient to His will for our lives.
 - Serve Him with a humble and willing heart.

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

All for His Glory!
Harold D. Thomas