

## VIII. WHY HAVE YOU FORSAKEN ME?

2.18.20

*"Now, the first thing we need to understand **is how magnificent Jesus truly is!** He was **without sin.** That is an amazing thing! One time **I was dealing with a person—I** was witnessing to them—and they were a part of a religion that claimed to be Christian, but **he believed that he hadn't sinned in eleven years.**" Paul Washer*

*"**I have lived for 12 years without looking lustfully** at a woman. Ever. In 12 years. And people are like, 'Well that's not possible, you're wrong.' **I live with me.**" Todd White*

1. What is it called when someone believes they are without sin (like the Savior)? What is the heresy it is associated with called? What is the scripture which clearly identifies this belief as a sin?
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*"The first commandment **is to love God with all your Heart,** with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind. If you wake up in love with Jesus, if you go to sleep in love with Jesus, if you wake up in the middle of the night in love with Jesus, **you will fulfill the first command!**" Todd White*

*"...**of all the billions of people** who have walked this earth, **there has never been,** of all that mass, **not one person, who for one fraction of a second, loved the Lord their God with all their heart,** soul, mind and strength!" Paul Washer*

2. What is the verse which states the greatest commandment and was shown in the film? Why would Paul Washer say that no man that has walked this earth, with the exception of Jesus Christ, has ever kept this commandment?

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*“He came and **gave me this blank canvas**, He came and gave me this **pure heart**, and **I’ve never violated it** with anything.” Todd White*

*“Now, **the moment** a person believes in Jesus **they are not transformed into a perfectly righteous being** that never sins again. They’re **not infused with some special grace** so as to be sinless, and through their sinlessness **earn their salvation**.” Paul Washer*

3. Paul Washer asked the question, drawn from 2 Corinthians 5:21, “What does it mean that He (Jesus) became sin on our behalf?” What does Paul Washer say is the (short) answer to this question?

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4. What were the three important points Paul Washer gave about 2 Corinthians 5:21 to help you understand the exchange that took place on the cross? What is the doctrine Paul Washer is describing?

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5. What are the key texts in scripture which were given that describe, on the one hand, the imputed righteousness of Christ for you, and, on the other, your sin imputed to Jesus on the cross—what Mike Abendroth calls “penalty” substitution?

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*“Now are you going to tell me that **the followers of Jesus Christ** boldly and bravely **embraced the cross** without complaint **while the Captain of their salvation cries out** three times, ‘**Let this cup pass from me**’? What was in the cup?” Paul Washer*

6. Emilio Ramos gave the answer to Paul Washer’s question, “What was in the cup?” Where does the idea of a cup that Jesus had to drink come from and what was the verse specifically given?

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*“And God **plunges the world into darkness while Christ is being crucified**, indicating the turning off of the light of His countenance.” R. C. Sproul*

*“**The Father has withdrawn his favorable presence** and now the Father **is pouring out His active wrath upon His Son**.” Paul Washer*

7. Finish the verse and provide the citation: Christ redeemed us from the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Law, having become a \_\_\_\_\_ for us, for it is written, “\_\_\_\_\_ is ev-

everyone who hangs on a tree” Describe in your own words what the above verse means when it is saying Jesus bore that “for us.”

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ISAIAH 53:10, “But the Lord was pleased to \_\_\_\_\_ Him, putting Him to grief.”

*“That **doesn't mean** that **God got some delight out of seeing His Son suffer**, but it meant that **the will of God was accomplished in the redemption of God's people through the suffering** of His Son under the wrath of God.” Paul Washer*

*“I mean **you cannot read the gospels and think that!** If you read just the gospels, **you would not come out of it thinking**, ‘Oh, **Christ's life was to fulfill the righteousness** so that God could kill Him and we could have a perfect sacrifice.’” Tony Jones*

8. What is the verse that Steven Lawson provides from the gospels that demonstrates Jesus desiring to attain a righteousness for you? How did Lawson describe Christ attaining that righteousness? Was it an inherent divine righteousness?

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9. Finish the quote by Mike Abendroth: “Jesus is fully God so that he can be our \_\_\_\_\_ and He is fully Man so that He can be our \_\_\_\_\_.”  
What is the verse that he reads?

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*"I did kind of have a problem with the fact that **there was this incongruency**. If we're Trinitarian, and there is this... kind of problem, **where Jesus**, who is the second member of the Trinity, **needs to be cut-off from divine communion**."*

The Deconstructionists Podcast

*"But I think that one of the things **we couldn't say** is that somehow or another that **it was a sham**. That Christ was not experiencing the wrath of the father upon Himself." Alistair Begg*

**10.** Answering the difficulty of Christ bearing sin upon the cross, Stephen Wellum says that you must have a proper view of what? What important distinctions do both Stephen Wellum and Alistair Begg make when speaking of Christ's experience on the cross. Was the unity of the Trinity broken?

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*"It would **be wrong for us to diminish the reality of that dereliction in any way**. It takes me into a realm which is almost unfathomable." Alistair Begg*

*"You say, 'well how in the world could He bare **for three hours** all the punishment from God **for all the sins of all who would ever believe**, when all those people, if they didn't believe, **couldn't bare the weight of their own punishment** throughout all eternity?'" John MacArthur*

**11.** In the film, Paul Washer answers the question that Pastor John MacArthur poses above. What is the answer that Paul gives?

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**12.** Justin Peters asks the question, “Did God kill Jesus or did man kill Jesus?” What is his answer to this question and what verse is provided?

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*“And I’m telling you that sets up a system that **makes God the author of a terribly unjust system!** God set it all up, created it this way—knowing He would have to kill His Son as the only way to pay for this! **At the heart of that theory is justice. Not love, not mercy, not grace. Justice.**” Tony Jones*

*“The storyline of the bible **brings all of us to our knees.** An incomprehensible, sovereign and mighty King **who can be both-and unto His own glory.**” Anthony Wood*

**13.** Earlier in the film Tony Jones expressly says, in his view, that God doesn’t need to be “beholden to” (meaning having duty toward) any attributes, specifically in the atonement to God’s attribute of justice. Yet, at the end of this chapter Tony states plainly that he has a huge problem with God killing His Son, namely that it “makes God the author of a terribly unjust system!” What is the logical problem with Tony’s objection and what does it reveal about his view of God?

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## WHAT IS IMPUTATION?

### Double Imputation

The word impute means “to credit to a person or a cause,” and is drawn from the Greek word *logizomai* and the Latin word *imputare*.<sup>1</sup> Genesis 15:6 speaks of the patriarch Abraham saying, “Then he believed in the Lord; and He reckoned it to him as righteousness.” The Hebrew word can mean impute or reckon, and it overlaps with the Greek word listed above which the apostle Paul uses in Romans when he cites this same Genesis passage (4:3, 9). Paul makes clear that righteousness is imputed apart from works of the law, but he also states that sin is imputed (4:6; 5:13). Death was a consequence that spread to all men because of Adam’s sin, “even over those who had not sinned in the likeness of the offense of Adam” (5:14). At the very least, the curse of Adam was imputed, which means that every man already has a curse credited to him that not only orients him to sin but confirms that he is spiritually dead (Ephesians 2:1). Once someone is regenerated by the Holy Spirit and believes in Christ as their Lord and Savior, there is a double imputation that occurs—the imputation of your sin to Christ and the imputation of Christ’s righteousness to you. Imputation is a legal crediting that is given so that sinners can be reconciled to God, both by our debt being paid and our account being filled with righteousness not our own (Colossians 2:14; Philippians 3:9).

### Imputed Sin

One of the most difficult doctrines that Christians struggle with is the doctrine of the imputation of original sin, noted above. It is not difficult because the doctrine is unclear in scripture, but because it is a hard pill to swallow. Romans 5 is the apex of this doctrine where it says “as through one transgression there resulted condemnation to all men, even so through one act of righteousness there resulted justification of life to all men. For as through the one man’s disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the One the many will be made righteous” (vv. 18-19). The important aspect of the parallel between Adam and Jesus Christ in Romans 5 is that both are legal representatives. The difference is that Adam is every person’s representative whether they like it or not, but Christ does not become a person’s representative except by the grace of God (5:15). Adam’s imputation is “spread to all men, because all sinned” (*all means everyone who ever lived or will live*) whereas Christ’s imputa-

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1. Inc Merriam-Webster, *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*. (Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster, Inc., 2003). Cross, F. L., and Elizabeth A. Livingstone, eds. *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*. (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 879.



tion is only for “the many” who receive “the free gift” (vv. 14-16).

## Christ’s Imputed Righteousness

The imputed righteousness of Christ is important to understand rightly in our present age where theological confusion and misinformation is common. In order to think rightly about the righteousness that has been legally imputed to you, we urge you to study the following doctrinal clarifications that the saints in the body of Christ established in early church history.

In the history of the Church, there was an extremely important ecumenical council that met called the Council of Chalcedon in 451 AD. This council met to establish the orthodoxy established at the Nicene council and sought to add a statement about the divine and human natures of Christ. This became especially important later when dealing with the heresies called Monothelitism and Monophysitism. Monothelitism (*mono* meaning “alone” and *thelein* meaning “to will”) claimed that Jesus had one will instead of the orthodox position that He shared His divine will with the Father and the Spirit but added a human will to Himself, so that the one person of Christ had two wills.<sup>2</sup> Monophysitism (*mono*, again, meaning “alone,” and *physis* meaning “nature”) taught that Christ “had only a single, divine nature, clad in human flesh.”<sup>3</sup> This second heresy relates to in the imputed righteousness of Christ. Monophysitism is a heretical step-child of Apollinarianism, which was a much earlier heresy erroneously stressing “the fusion of the divine and human” natures.<sup>4</sup> This ran in the face of the doctrine of impassability, which was later developed but followed logically from the Chalcedonian creed. The Chalcedonian creed confessed the *separateness* alongside the *union* of the two natures of Christ (one person with two natures)—also known as the hypostatic union. The creed states,

We, then, following the holy Fathers, all with one consent, teach men to confess one and the same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, the same perfect in Godhead and also perfect in manhood; truly God and truly man, of a reasonable [rational] soul and body; consubstantial [coessential] with us according to the manhood; in all things like unto us, without sin; begotten before all ages of the Father according to the Godhead, and in these latter days, for us and for our salvation, born of the Virgin Mary, the mother of God, according to the Manhood; one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, On-

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2. W. N. Kerr, “Monothelitism,” in *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, 2nd ed., ed. Walter A. Elwell (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2001), 789; Christ having one will means that he must have a separate will from the Father and the Spirit, resulting in three wills within the Godhead (or at the least, a separate will from the Father and the Spirit who share a single will).

3. D. A. Hubbard, “Monophysitism,” in *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, 2nd ed., ed. Walter A. Elwell (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2001), 788.

4. *Ibid.*



ly-begotten, to be acknowledged in two natures, *inconfusedly, unchangeably, indivisibly, inseparably*; the distinction of natures being by no means taken away by the union, but rather the property of each nature being preserved, and concurring in one person and one Subsistence, not parted or divided into two persons, but one and the same Son, and only begotten, God the Word, the Lord Jesus Christ. as the prophets from the beginning [have declared] concerning him, and the Lord Jesus Christ Himself has taught us, and the Creed of the holy Fathers has handed down to us.<sup>5</sup>

In short, if God's nature is somehow fused with a new nature (a human nature in this case), then that implies that God had to change. But God is unchangeable or immutable (as discussed earlier in the film; see also James 1:17), and this is especially in regard to His divine *essence* or *being*. If Christ does not have to attain any sort of righteousness as a man when He was on earth, then the only righteousness He has is His *divine* righteousness. But, *God does not give away parts of Himself*, because He is unchangeable in His essence. Therefore, it follows that the righteousness that was given had to be from Christ's perfect record of keeping God's law while He was on earth. His perfect law-keeping provided additional righteousness that Christ did not need and which He could give away to every believer, including you. This truth is implied from several places in scripture, with Matthew 3:15 and Romans 5:18-19 being at the center. In Romans 5:18 the fact of Christ's righteousness resulting from His works is made clearer when one realizes that "act of" is not in the original Greek, rather it is more literally translated "through the one's righteousness" (δι' ἐνὸς δικαιώματος) which aligns very well with verse 19, "through the obedience of the one" (διὰ τῆς ὑπακοῆς τοῦ ἐνὸς). Christ's righteousness was attained through obedience from both His life and His death, a righteousness that only the perfect God-Man could attain. He then takes that righteousness and gives it to you in exchange for your sin. This righteousness reconciles you before a Holy God and grants you access to eternal life.

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5. *Historic Creeds and Confessions*, electronic ed. (Oak Harbor: Lexham Press, 1997), emphasis mine.

## 2 CORINTHIANS 5:21 ILLUSTRATION

### 2 CORINTHIANS 5:21

*Jesus Christ is declared guilty*

He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf,  
so that we might become the righteousness of God in  
Him.

*We are legally declared righteous  
and are treated as righteous.*