

# Imputed Righteousness

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[ 0 : 0 0 ] Welcome to our services today, and as we come together around the Word of God, let us seek his blessing upon his Word.

Eternal and ever-blessed Lord, we give thanks unto thee for the great privilege that is ours this day anew, when we come once again around thine own Word.

And we seek thy blessing to be upon thy Word, that thou would open our hearts to receive thy Word, that it may be applied to us by thy Holy Spirit, that it may find lodgment in our heart, that it may bring forth fruit in our lives, to the glory of thine own name.

And we acknowledge, O Lord, that there are times that we come before thee, not knowing what to ask for.

But we bless thee, O Lord, that thou hast given to us the spirit of adoption, whereby we can come before thee and cry unto thee, Abba, Father, knowing that thou art the one who knoweth our needs, even better than we know ourselves, and that thou art the one who is able to meet with our needs.

[ 1 : 4 0 ] out of the riches of thy grace, through Jesus Christ. And so we come before thee at this morning hour, and we pray, O Lord, that thou would indeed help us, that thou would guide us, and open our hearts and our understanding to thine own Word.

O that it may indeed be a living Word for us. We come and we lay our petitions before thee.

And yet, O Lord, we know as the psalmist of old has written for us, when he said, For in my tongue before I speak, not any word can be.

But altogether, O Lord, it is well known to thee. We give thanks that thou art the all-knowing God, that thou art the one who knows, that our desire is after thee, that we can say like the psalmist, also who uttered these words, Whom have I in the heavens high, but thee, O Lord, alone?

And in the earth whom I desire, besides thee there is none. And we acknowledge indeed that so often that our flesh and heart doth faint and fail, but God doth fail me never.

[ 3 : 1 8 ] And so we ask that it may please thee to bless each one of us, that meet together today in accordance with our individual needs, that thou would bless our homes and our families, that thou would bless our communities, that thou, O Lord, would bless those who are ill.

May thy healing hand be upon them and those who mourn the passing of loved ones. O may thou fill their hearts, their emptiness today, through the presence of thine own spirit.

We give thanks unto thee, O Lord, for the great promises of thine own word, that they have been sealed for all those who put their trust in Jesus Christ.

and although our friends may forsake us, that thou hast promised that thou would never forsake us. And we give thanks that whatever circumstances or situations we may find ourselves in today or may confront us in this world, that if we have our trust in thee, that thou art ever with us.

That as we go through the storms of life, that thou art there. Whether we go through the rivers or the floods, that they will not overwhelm us.

[ 4 : 46 ] When we go through the fire, that it shall not burn us up, because thou art there with us. O we give thanks unto thee, that thou art a covenant God, and that the covenant thou hast made with thy people shall never be broken.

That we are thine, and that thou art our God. O how precious are thy thoughts, O gracious God, to me.

And in their sum, how passing great, and numberless they be. If I should count them, then the sand they more, and number be.

O we give thanks. And to thee, O Lord, for thy thoughts towards us. And we pray, O Lord, that it may please thee to bless thy word throughout our communities and our nations today, or to the ends of the earth.

And that thy word would go forth in the demonstration of thy spirit in convicting and converting, and drawing souls to see their great need of that salvation which thou art offering to us in the gospel, through thy Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

[ 6 : 06 ] We pray, Lord, that thou would bless all thy servants who have gone forth with thy word today. O may they go forth in the power and demonstration with all boldness and confidence that thy word shall not return unto the void, that it shall accomplish that for which thou has sent it forth.

we give thanks that it is still the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth. We pray, O Lord, that thou would continue with us as we wait upon thee.

And all that we ask with the forgiveness of our many sins is in Jesus' name and for his sake. Amen. Let us now read the word of God as we find it in the New Testament in Paul's letter to the Romans and chapter 3.

What advantage then hath a Jew or what profit is there of circumcision? Much every way, chiefly because that unto them were committed the oracles of God.

For what, if some did not believe, shall their unbelief make their faith of God without effect? God forbid. Yea, let God be true, but every man a liar, as it is written that thou mightest be justified in thy sayings and mightest overcome when thou art judged.

[ 7 : 49 ] But if our unrighteousness commend the righteousness of God, what shall we say? Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance? I speak as a man.

God forbid. For then, how shall God judge the world? For if the truth of God hath more abounded through my lie and to his glory, why yet am I also judged as a sinner?

And not rather, as we be slanderously reported and as some affirm that we say, let us do evil that good may come whose damnation is just. What then?

Are we better than they? No, in no wise, for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles that they are all under sin. As it is written, there is none righteous, no, not one.

There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable. There is none that doeth good, no, not one.

[ 8 : 52 ] Their throat is an open sepulcher. With their tongues they have used deceit, the poisonous asps are 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 have they not known. There is no fear of God before their eyes. Now we know that what thingso have they not known.

It says, it says to them who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped and all the world may become guilty before God. 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.

But now, the righteousness of God without the laws manifested been witnessed by the law and the prophets. Even the righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ and to all and upon all them that believe.

For there is no difference. For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, been justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are passed through the forbearance of God, to declare, I say, at this time his righteousness, that he might be just and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.

[ 10 : 25 ] Where is boasting, then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? Nay, but by the law of faith. Therefore, we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.

Is he the God of the Jews only? Is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also. Seeing it is one God which shall justify the circumcision by faith and uncircumcision through faith, do we then make void the law through faith?

God forbid. Yea, we establish the law. May the Lord bless unto us the reading of that portion of his word. Now, seeking the Lord's help and blessing, let us turn to verse 21.

But now the righteousness of God without the laws manifested, been witnessed by the law and the prophets, even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe, for there is no difference, for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.

Over the past few weeks we have been looking at Romans chapter 7 at a subject that Paul has frequently spoken of which is the law.

[ 12 : 00 ] In Romans chapter 7 Paul speaks about the law and its function and the relationship of the Christian to the law. As we saw that Christians are in an entirely new relationship to the law and that this new relationship is essential so that the Christian may bring forth fruit unto God and serve God in newness of spirit and not in the oldness of the letter.

the law is quite clear and just in its demands and is just as clear and just in its deserved punishment for breaking the law.

The soul that sinneth it shall die. There the law leaves the sinner and of forgiveness or mercy there is not the least intimation.

the law became useless as to the salvation of our soul. It cannot bring us to God not because of any weakness that belongs to the law.

The weakness was through the flesh that is the weakness was by the entrance of sin. It was weak because of our state because of our condition as sinners.

[ 13 : 30 ] So because of our sin this holy good and just law becomes unprofitable to us as a means of salvation.

However we noted that the law brings a person to realise their standing before God as sinners. To use the words of Paul that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful.

The law reveals to us the holiness of God. What the law says to us it says to us in the name and authority of God.

So because the law speaks to us in the name and authority of God it must be believed or else we make God a liar. John says to us if we say that we have no sin we deceive ourselves.

Guilt and punishment according to the law are inseparable twins. Where there is guilt there must be punishment. as Paul says here in chapter 3 and verse 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.

[ 15 : 09 ] The law brings us to the judgment of God and pronounces its sentence of guilty. Now up to this point in his letter of Romans Paul has been looking at the sad story of sinful mankind and how sinful man is under the wrath and condemnation of God.

Paul says there is none righteous no not one there is none that understand there is none that seek after God they are all gone out of the way they are all together become unprofitable there is none that doeth good no not one Paul brings before us the hopelessness state of sinful man Paul has established beyond any doubt that no man has ever been or be able to justify themselves before God no man ever has provided or ever will provide a righteousness that will satisfy God's justice no man has or ever will be able to provide a righteousness that will meet the demands of God's most holy law so you may say well is there any hope now maybe you are saying to yourself is all this talk about the law and sin necessary maybe you are beginning to close the ear for you have heard enough about the law and sin the

Puritans to which we are so much indebted lived in a golden age of the Christian faith and they always engaged in presenting the gospel with what they called law work that is they started with a presentation of the law because they knew for a person to understand salvation in Christ a person would have to understand the true nature of sin and of themselves as sinners to truly understand why we need a saviour we must understand what we need to be saved from why did Christ have to die on the cross of Golgotha what was happening at Golgotha how do we understand the grace of

God to understand the love of God demonstrated at Golgotha we have to understand the words of the prophet who says he laid on him that is Christ his own son he laid on him the iniquity of us all that is why we want to talk about the law and sin for unless we have some understanding of the law and of sin therefore we will be blind as to our need of a saviour we will be blind as to what was actually happening on the cross of Golgotha we will be blind actually to the grace of God now in Paul's letter to the Galatians as we have noted on several occasions Paul says the law was our school master to lead us to

Christ in verse 21 Paul says but now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested it is clear that he is contrasting this with his earlier declaration in chapter 1 verse 18 where he says for the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men but here he says but now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested he is saying now the righteousness of God is made known the righteousness that was required by the law and which we could not obtain through the law because of sin God has made it known Martin Luther called verses 1 to 26 of this chapter the chief point and the very central place of the epistle and of the whole

[ 20 : 14 ] Bible now we notice here that in this passage the phrase righteousness of God stands out we have it here in verse 21 then we have it in verse 22 and if we go down further we have it in verse 25 and verse 26 and of course this is something that Paul has already hinted at in the first chapter and verse 16 he says for I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ for it is the power of God into salvation to everyone that believeth to the Jew first and also to the Greek for therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith as it is written that just shall live by faith now Paul is going to elaborate upon it and show how the righteousness of

God empowers the gospel to give hope of salvation to sinful man that he can be delivered from the consequences of his sin oh how precious is the gospel and here the apostle brings before us a turning point and he begins by saying but now the righteousness of God is manifested therein verse 20 he says 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 leaving man as it were in a hopeless condition but then he says but now the righteousness of God without the laws manifested been witnessed by the law and the prophets the law leaves us guilty before

God the law leaves us in a hopeless condition it leaves us under the sentence of death that is why we must be delivered from being under the law this is the deliverance that is achieved by faith for the Christian is not under the law but under grace those who are not Christians those who have not put their trust in Christ those who have not put their faith in Christ are still under the law and the law speaks the very truth it speaks in the name of God it speaks with the authority of God and his testimony is to be received it says there is no forgiveness to God to them that are under the law because you cannot provide a righteousness that can satisfy its demands however hard you may try it will always fall short oh is there any hope yes says

Paul but now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ and to all and upon all them that believe for there is no difference for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God all this is the gospel this is the good news that there is a righteousness that satisfies the law but it is not a righteousness that is achieved by us but a righteousness that is provided by God but now says Paul the righteousness of God Paul is speaking of something that God has done to provide for the salvation of sinful man if God had not done this man's position would be hopeless man would be as

Paul puts it in his letter to the Ephesians without hope and without God in the world but Paul says but now things are different there is hope because of what God has done and what God has revealed this is why he is not ashamed of the gospel for therein is a righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith a righteousness provided by God a righteousness prepared by God a righteousness that is made available available by God but now he says the righteousness of God what man and especially the Jews had been trying to do was to produce a righteousness that would satisfy

[ 25 : 29 ] God a righteousness that would satisfy the law and the Jews thought they were doing it with morality and law keeping as we have seen Paul himself was of the same mindset but when he came to realize that it was all in vain although it took him some time to see it and believe it nevertheless once he came to understand and believe it as he saw the risen Jesus on the road to Damascus all his own righteousness all his own achievements all his own works faded into insignificance a realization of this was what brought an end to Martin Luther's spiritual struggle when he discovered that the righteousness of God could mean not only the righteousness by which God is righteous in himself but also the righteousness by which we are made righteous by

God it is important for us to remember that in our salvation or redemption that the entire action is from God he has provided righteousness through his son the Lord Jesus Christ we read in the Bible that God was in Christ reconciling the world and to himself we read those famous words that we find in the gospel of John that it was God who so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son in this very letter we are reminded that it is God who delivered him up that is Jesus and spared him not on the cross of Golgotha Peter in his first epistle reminds us that the whole object of the work of Jesus

Christ was to bring us to God for Christ also hath once suffered for sins that just for the unjust that he might bring us to God so Paul reminds us that it is a God provided righteousness that is now available to us available to Jew and Gentile available to all for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God here in verse 21 he says but now and these words as we have them here has reference to time for what Paul is emphasising here is that something has taken place recently that has changed everything

Paul has been bringing before us the sad story of man's helplessness to escape God's wrath and how sinful man is justly condemned but now says Paul but now God has intervened and Paul used this change from the standpoint of history or standpoint of time with reference yes with reference to the coming of Jesus Christ to his incarnation his life his death his resurrection his ascension everything he says but now he says but now he says something has happened that has brought about hope for the hopeless and that is why he is not ashamed of the gospel of Christ because he says we were in a hopeless and a hopeless condition we were in a hopeless and hopeless state but

God has intervened and God has brought hope for the hopeless he has brought help for those who were helpless he has brought salvation to the sinner he has brought a way of deliverance for the sinner you know in the Christian experience there has to be a but now Paul writing to the Ephesians says that at that time ye were without Christ been aliens from the common world of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise having no hope and without God in the world but now he says but now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ for ye were sometimes darkness but now are ye light in the

[ 30 : 42 ] Lord in 1 Peter chapter 2 we read which in time past were not a people but are now the people of God which had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy well my dear friend has it been about now in your own experience now Paul says that this righteousness that God has provided has been manifested without the law what does Paul mean when he says but now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested well some people say that God has done away with the law altogether and that Jesus came into the world and therefore the law has ceased to be of any significance they say that until Jesus came and died on the cross and rose again that man was judged according to the law but that is no longer the case they say that what judges man now is not the law of God but his response to the Lord Jesus Christ they say that because man failed to keep the law of God that God as it were brought in something much easier and that judgment is now wholly based on whether we believe on the Lord Jesus Christ now as we have seen from our studies that is not correct the law has not been abolished the law has not disappeared the law has not been cast aside the law is still the basis of judgment see verse 31 of this chapter where he says do we then make void the law through faith God forbid what then does it mean it means that our attempting to keep the law perfectly ourselves as the means of salvation has been entirely set aside not because the law no longer applies but because another has rendered this perfect obedience to the law on our behalf

God's righteousness is now attained without any contribution from us in keeping the law in our studies on Paul's letter so far he has been making it clear that the law has failed to rescue from the power of sin because compliance to the law that was necessary for a person to be justified before God has not and cannot be made by mankind our inability to attain the righteousness that is necessary for us to be justified before God by keeping the law God himself by his grace has now provided this righteousness for us he has intervened to deliver us from the condemnation that the law justly had upon us the law of

God is still there and it is still the means of judgment and there is no conceivable standing in the presence of God without a righteousness that answers its demands righteousness he says that this righteousness was been witnessed by the law and the prophets here Paul relates it to the Old Testament he hastens to add that the Old Testament as a whole anticipated and predicted this work of God that this righteousness of God is witnessed by the law and the prophets well you find it in Genesis 3 15 was a promise about the seed of the woman that was to bruise the serpent's head you find it in the call of Abraham in Genesis 12 where God promised Abraham in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed and again in the event that took place on

Mount Moriah in Genesis 22 in the offering of Isaac Jesus said that Abraham rejoiced to see his day whether in the promise or on Mount Moriah perhaps in both he saw the day of Christ again it is found in the ceremonial law in all the sacrifices and the offerings and rituals that Israel was commanded to keep the writer to the Hebrew says for the law having a shadow of good things to come yes there were shadows of the Lord Jesus Christ and all that he has done throughout the Psalms and the prophets you will find them witnessing to what God has done once and for all in the person of the Son the Lord Jesus Christ there are messianic Psalms for instance like Psalm 22 where one would think that they were at Golgotha sitting below the cross then there is Isaiah chapter 53 which speaks of the suffering servant now that was witnessed by the law and the prophets has now been revealed that which was witnessed by the law and the prophets has been revealed in

[ 36 : 23 ] Jesus Christ what was before in promises and in types and shadows have now been made clear and how is this righteousness to be obtained well he says even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ and to all and upon all them that believe Paul highlights faith as a means by which God's righteousness become applicable to individuals God's righteousness is available only through faith in Christ but it is available to anyone who has faith in Christ remember what Paul said to the Philippians in chapter 3 when he said that his desire was to be found in him that is in Christ not having mine own righteousness which is of the law but that which is through the faith of

Christ the righteousness which is of God by faith I am not sure if you have been aware of the connections that we have been making between our study on Philippians and our study in Romans Romans and it is important for us to see how the Bible links together well what does faith mean there are three elements in faith a knowledge of truth an ascent to truth and a trust in the truth it is a real trusting in what Jesus has done on our behalf and for our salvation what is faith it is a looking away from self and looking exclusively to the Lord Jesus Christ alone for salvation again

Paul lays emphasis that this righteousness that we need is provided by God even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe for there is no difference for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God God has provided a righteousness he had promised it before and all the Old Testament saints believed that promise but now he has revealed it the promise has been fulfilled in the person and work of Jesus Christ and as they exercise faith in the promise so we exercise faith in its fulfillment the promise and the fulfillment are all centered on the person and work of Jesus Christ even the righteousness of

God which is by faith of Jesus Christ and to all and upon all them that believe for there is no difference for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God the Old and the New Testament saints are saved in Christ and in Christ alone yes their faith looked to the promise and our faith looks to the fulfillment but it's all centered both promise and fulfillment in Jesus Christ they were saved in Christ the same way as I and you are saved in Christ salvation for the Old Testament saints was in Christ salvation for the New Testament saints is in Christ Paul focuses on the way in which all human beings equal in their sin have equal access also to

God's righteousness through faith for he says there is no difference for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God we are all equal in our sin and we all equally have access to God's righteousness through faith Paul tells us why this righteousness is available to all and why all need this righteousness for there is no distinction or basic difference among people with respect to their standing before God all have sinned and come short of the glory of God we are all sinners before God for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God it can be translated all sinned and are falling short of the glory of God the way that

[ 41 : 32 ] Paul writes this word sin for all have sinned he writes it in a way that means an act done once and for all and you ask well when did all sin well Paul is bringing us to the fall of Adam as we can see later on in this chapter sorry in this letter in chapter 5 I think where Paul explains and says where for us by one man sin entered into the world and death by sin and so death passed upon all men for that all have sinned well what a wonderful thing salvation is what a wonderful thing salvation is it gives me a righteousness with which I can appear before God it gives you a righteousness with which you can appear before God because if we have faith in

Jesus Christ and his perfect will then we are clothed with his righteousness or we can say his righteousness is imputed to us and with his righteousness imputed to us we can with all boldness with all confidence appear in that in that righteousness must he stand forever in the presence of our righteous

God well have you experienced that but now in your own life can you say there was a time when I was walking in darkness but now I am walking as light in the Lord I am now trusting not to my own works or to my own achievements for salvation but on the finished work of Jesus Christ on the cross of Golgotha can you say like Paul that your desire is that you be found in him that is in Christ not having mine own righteousness which is of the law but that which is through the faith of Christ the righteousness which is of God by faith have you experienced a but now in your own life do you see the preciousness of the grace of

God revealed to us in the gospel whereby there is a way provided for us by God himself wherein we can have confidence and boldness through the righteousness of Christ imputed to us to appear at the judgment seat of Christ may the Lord bless these thoughts to us let us pray eternal and ever blessed Lord we give thanks unto thee that as we find ourselves in our natural state as those who are helpless and hopeless as those who are under the condemnation of the law and as such are guilty creatures that are bound over to the wrath of God we give thanks that thou in thy grace did intervene and that thou has provided a righteousness for us through thy son by which we can stand in thy presence a righteousness that can be imputed to each and every one of us by faith giving us that confidence and boldness to appear before thee at the day of judgment a righteousness as another hath said to which our eye must ever be directed a righteousness on which we must rest and live a righteousness which we must die in a righteousness that will be our confidence and our boldness before the judgment seat a righteousness in which we shall forever stand in thine own presence so we give thee thanks for the manifestation of thy grace in

Jesus Christ now may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all now and forever more Amen