

Hebrews 5.1-4

In My Place...

We left off last week with the idea of God's required justice. We looked at [Proverbs 17:15](#) – “He who justifies the wicked, and he who condemns the just, Both of them alike *are* an abomination to the Lord.” And we established the fact that this creates a real problem for us, because since God is righteous and just, He:

- Cannot simply declare it away
- Cannot overlook it
- Cannot change His nature to accept it
- And most importantly God CANNOT fail to punish...

Herein lies our greatest problem; God CANNOT simply forgive sin in the sense that He were to say "doesn't matter, I forgive you"... because God is just and good and holy, the required punishment for our sin MUST be exacted. But punishment for our sin would destroy us. Jesus came to bear the punishment for our sin. When John the Baptist first saw Jesus coming he declared

"Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1.29)

He came to:

- Atonement for sin –
 - Isaiah 53.10-11
 - 2 Corinthians 5.21
- Make actual payment
- Remove the curse of sin
- Appease the wrath of God
- Establish a ground of mercy and grace

And all of this was done through the medium of sacrifice, but more; all of this was done because of the principle of substitutionary atonement. Jesus came to do more than pay our debt, He came to stand in our place and to lift us up to stand in His.

I. WHY SACRIFICE?

a. Wage of sin is death

Romans 6:23

For the wages of sin *is* death, but the gift of God *is* eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

b. Blood is the life

Leviticus 17:11

For the life of the flesh *is* in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it *is* the blood *that* makes atonement for the soul.'

c. Without blood there is no forgiveness –

Hebrews 9:22

And according to the law almost all things are purified with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no remission.

d. Thus in order to pay for sin, someone righteous had to die, someone without their own debt to pay - our blood could not atone, could not appease, could not remove. Else our mere death would satisfy and we would all go to heaven when we die.

II. IMPUTATION –

to ascribe to, to reckon to, to lay to one's charge...

a. it is important to note that imputation does not, *by itself*, **change** the actual NATURE of the person in question.

- I don't want to get too far out in the weeds here but imputation has to do with justification, the forensic act of our being pronounced righteous in the sight of God – the change of our nature is the work of the Holy Spirit's indwelling power and is the part of Sanctification.

b. So we do not, by imputation infuse the righteousness of Christ into the one who believes.

c. However, they do receive credit as if they actually were...

d. This action on the part of God has been the backbone of His own reconciliation with His rebellious creation since the garden itself.

- i. When Adam and Eve sinned God provided a sacrifice,
 - ii. He gave them skins with which to cover them. He did not weave fabric, He slew an animal and covered them with its life in their stead.
- e. Thus the sacrificial system was inaugurated by God Himself. It is this **consistent** manner of God's redemption that grants us great confidence in the death of Christ on our behalf.

III. IMPUTATION OF SIN

Romans 5.6- 21

- a. Adam was a TYPE (a picture, a foreshadowing, a symbol, a demonstration) of Christ - he was our representative and his actions were to be taken as representing ours in every way.
- b. Adam sinned as our Federal head, our public and acknowledged representative. His actions were counted as the actions of all who he represented. Even to the whole of creation itself.

Romans 8.20-22

- c. His fallen nature was passed to all of his posterity, because that was all the nature he had to give. He died spiritually in the moment he sinned and he took death as a disease to pass on to us.

- d. The penalty of death was thus attributed and made real in all of us, but also the guilt of his transgression was counted to our credit. Imputed to us. This may sound unfair to us, but consider that it was this very imputation of sin that opened the way for the imputation of righteousness

IV. IMPUTATION OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

- a. In the same manner as Adam, only with greater effect, Christ stood and stands in our place.

- b. His death is counted as payment for our sin (v9)

- c. His righteousness is counted as our obedience unto the Law
- d. His resurrection Life is also accounted as our inheritance since He lives to make intercession for us and grant us His life. (v10)
- e. In the same manner as Adam passed death on to his posterity, so we as the born-again children of God through Christ receive His life. This is why regeneration precedes every other part of salvation. It is the first work, to make us part of the posterity of Christ.

Isaiah 53.8-12

This is why Jesus told Nicodemus at the very outset of His conversation with him that he must be born again. (John 3.3)

V. UTTERLY OF FAITH

- a. The very nature of imputation requires that it be done IN OUR STEAD

- i. You can have no part in something imputed or you are no longer speaking of imputation
 - ii. You are included in the imputation because of your inclusion in the representative
 - iii. As a child of Adam, you were dead. As a child of Christ you are made alive.
- b. We have NO part in this great work of salvation. Our works are all sinful and only bring us the wage they deserve. Death.
- c. God saves us because He chose to, Because He loves us, Because He wanted to love us. There is nothing in us; past present or future that would make God love us and choose us. To ascribe that merit to us makes that merit a work –
- d. We are all commanded to repent of sin, to run to the cross and to trust in the death of Christ as our only hope. –

Acts 17.30-31