

The Remnant

*“Even so then at this
present time also there
is a remnant according to
the election of grace.”
Romans 11.5*

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PREACHING FOR PAY?

The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep (John 10.13).

As far back as the Old School or Primitive Baptists can trace their history they have been guided by one rule only; they must have a “Thus saith the Lord” for any and all doctrine and practice. A doctrine or a practice without a supporting text from Scripture is as unwelcome among the old order of Baptists as Egyptian lice.

There is no scriptural support for the practice of hiring anyone to preach the gospel of free grace. It is the purpose of this article to establish that, 1) our early churches did not condone such a practice, and, 2) neither have any orderly churches of the old order since. Preaching for pay is as foreign to the church Jesus built as are all other carnal practices of men, and it is not commanded by the Word of God.

We are reminded of a sister from years past that was ask by an acquaintance if she sent her children to Sunday school since the Old School Baptist Church where she attended had no such accommodations. “Heavens no!” replied the sister; “I had sooner send my children out to steal hen eggs as to send them to a Sunday school.” Upon serious reflection we conclude the sister answered honestly, if unwisely. The old order of Baptists are no friends to these modern inventions of greedy religion.

The first recorded account in the Bible instructions relative to preaching the gospel came from the

lips of our dear Lord Himself. The tenth chapter of the book of Matthew contains the entire discourse. Jesus called His twelve disciples unto him and fully instructed them for their mission. The following is of particular interest for our topic: “And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give. Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses. Nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves: for the workman is worthy of his meat (Matthew 10.7-10).” These are the words of the Master. He has spoken! It is a violation of the worst sort to deviate from His commands for the sake of filthy lucre or for security’s sake.

See carefully these words: ***freely give! Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses.*** It would require the sagacity of the combined angelic band to reason these words to mean either more or less than their plain import. And mark well; these are the words of instruction given by our Lord to the very first ministers of the gospel in this age. No one has the right to dismiss them or treat them lightly.

Hardly three years after Jesus had endowed His disciples with these instructions He was sold for thirty pieces of silver by Judas, one of the twelve. Judas was a thief besides being a traitor (John 12.6), and he carried their bag. After His crucifixion and burial, Jesus arose on the third day. The chief priests, ringleaders in His death, alarmed at the prospects of the resurrection event being circulated, gave large

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sums of money to the soldiers, "Saying, Say ye, His disciples came by night, and stole him away while we slept. And if this come to the governor's ears, we will persuade him, and secure you. So they took the money, and did as they were taught: and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day (Matthew 28.13-15)."

Marvel at these things, readers! The leading event that delivered Jesus into the hands of His persecutors was the thirty pieces of silver for which Judas sold Him. The initial lie to suppress the truth of the resurrection of Jesus was purchased by *large money*, and *they took the money and did as they were taught!* Is it any wonder then, the church of the Living God is cautious when money and messages are

involved together? Well they should be, for there are many wolves about that had rather fleece the flock than to feed it. Hirelings, the Lord called them!

Almost at once after the Holy Ghost came down upon the waiting disciples after Jesus had ascended (Acts 1.8, 9; 2.1ff), Peter and John went up to the temple to pray. A man lame on his feet asked of them an alms. The response: "Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk (Acts 3.6)." Note well! Peter did not condemn silver and gold. Peter did, however, put the affairs of the kingdom of heaven on a non-commercial plane. This is exactly the position of the Old School, Primitive Baptists; the gospel ministry is non-commercial. (It is interesting to note that the first recorded deaths in the church came as the result of financial double-dealing by Ananias and his wife, Sapphira. See Acts 5.1-11.)

Again, in the early church there was a covetous impostor that would make merchandise of the gospel ministry, Simon, a sorcerer of the city of Samaria. Peter, having come to lay hands on the believers, swiftly rebuked the solicitous overtures of Simon thus: "But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money. Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God (Acts 8.20, 21)." Let it be repeated, today, tomorrow, and forever: the gift of God may not be purchased with money! What gift? Any gift! Preaching, praying, the laying on of hands, or whatever. These things are not commodities to be bought and sold. Men cannot be hired to sell them, for they are free to those God has chosen to receive them.

Over the course of about thirty years after, Paul, formerly Saul of Tarsus, preached throughout much of the then-known world, being sent out by the Holy Ghost from the assembly at Antioch. When he went out it was after the fashion the Lord directed the twelve at the first. In his departing discourse at Ephesus these were among his final words: "I have coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel." What is this? Did not Paul negotiate a salary before he hoofed out over the unknown regions to preach the gospel? He did not, and neither has a true God-called minister since that day!

Any man that professes to be a minister, called of God to preach the gospel, that would negotiate a salary for preaching the blessed gospel is a *hireling*.

Any church that would negotiate with a hireling minister to preach the gospel is a false church.

A Brief History

The Bible gives clear, unambiguous instructions, or qualifications, for the bishops or elders of the church. These are a portion of them: "For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not self-willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre (Titus 1.7)." Not the wildest stretch of language could prove that accepting a salary was not "being given to filthy lucre." What more could it be if one accepts a position to preach, or paint fences, for hire? They are given to it.

How then did our old brethren of years past understand these things? Moreover, how did they practice what they understood? Did the Old School, Primitive Baptist ministers, called of God to preach the gospel of free grace, bid themselves out to the churches for a stipulated sum? Did they agree with a board or committee of a church to render their services for a fee? Was a salary ever considered as a fair means of compensation for those that would toil in the doctrine and the Word? Never!

The history of the Old School Baptists in this country begins about 1700 AD. Though there were Baptists here before that, the Old School and Primitive Baptists trace the majority of their churches back through the Philadelphia and Kehukee Associations of churches. However, it was not until about 100 years later, about the early 1800s that the rumblings of discord were heard among the Baptist family. The Fullerite mission system was infecting the churches with pleas for money to convert the lost. Seminaries were being opened to teach hirelings the fine art of begging and moochery. Mission boards were being established to send the little dandies out to wilderness posts to populate heaven with converted heathens. This all took money, and hirelings will not hire out without some assurances. Salaried preaching had come of age.

Some few were opposed to it. Who were these opponents of the salary scheme? The Old School or Primitive Baptists. Not necessarily in chronological

order, we list some of their comments, remarks and objections to these novel practices of making greed for filthy lucre acceptable.

Black Rock Address of 1832

"2nd. In reference to ministerial support. The gospel order is to extend support to them who preach the gospel; but the mission plan is to hire persons to preach." "Black Rock Address," Butler, Maryland, *Feast of Fat Things*, p.16ff.

This quotation really sets the tone for the difference between the Old School, Primitive Baptists and the moneyed orders: extend *support* to those who preach the gospel versus *hiring* persons to preach. No true church will withhold their support, as they are by God enabled, from those set apart to feed the flock of God. Neither will the true church entertain the wicked practice of hiring a minister. The lines of distinction had thus been drawn. A salaried ministry would not be countenanced among the Old School churches.

Elder John Leland

"This machine is propelled by steam (money), and does not sail by the wind of Heaven. Immense donations and contributions have already been cast into the treasury; and we see no end to it, for the solicitors and mendicants are constantly crying 'Give, Give,' with an unblushing audacity that makes humble saints hold down their heads. But I forbear. The subject sickens. I close in the words of God Himself, 'Stand ye in the way, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls (Jeremiah 6.16)'" Elder John Leland, *History of the Church of God*, Hassell, p.624.

Leland, as it is well known, was probably the most influential Baptist minister of his day and was respected from the highest seats of government to the pine-planked pews of remote Baptist meeting houses. His views were held in esteem where truth was revered and his writings appeared frequently in the *Signs of the Times*, the first Old School paper in America. Thus, when he condemns the "machine propelled by steam (money)," there was no doubt in the minds of the scattered children of God that Leland was on no salary. He had not hired out to carry the

gospel to those that may afford to gain it from their purse.

London Confession of Faith-1689

“10. The work of pastors being constantly to attend the service of Christ in His churches, in the ministry of the word and prayer (Acts 6.4; Hebrews 13.17), with watching for their souls, as they that must give an account to Him, it is incumbent on the church to whom they minister not only to give them all due respect (I Timothy 5.17,18; Galatians 6.6,7), but also to communicate to them of all their good things, according to their ability, so as they may have a comfortable supply, without being themselves (II Timothy 2.4) entangled in secular affairs, and may also be capable of exercising (I Timothy 3.2) hospitality towards others....” Chapter Twenty, *London Confession of Faith*.

Regarding how the churches were to assist the work of their ministers, the key expression is, *according to their ability*. Surely, if the London brethren, and multitudes of others that after adopted this confession, had intended a fixed salary or a stipulated hireling’s sum, they would not have used such language as *according to their ability*. Rather, the language would have had to say something like, *pay that thou owest, irrespective of your ability, for the hireling is worthy of your labor*.

David Benedict

“16. They adhered to their flocks, and seldom relinquished their pastoral stations for want of support; but would devise some way to support themselves and keep on their work.

17. They had no settled income for their services.” David Benedict, “Marks of the Old Fashion Baptists,” *Hassell’s History*, p764f.

David Benedict was a New School historian, and as such, rarely spoke in flattering terms when the Old School were involved. No matter his intentions, he accurately depicted the gospel ministers of the Old School; they had no settled income for their services! Benedict bragged that his history of the Baptists would not have reached the farthest regions of the nation before the Old School were dead and gone. Perhaps he could have learned something of the God-ordained plan from those he ridiculed, for they have

stood the test of time without the moneyed schemes, and Benedict is now seldom mentioned.

Kehukee Association

“*Resolved*, That we wish it distinctly understood by all that we disown any intention in said Circular to either build up or encourage a gospel ministry by unlawful means; and that it is foreign to our design to predicate a preached gospel on a moneyed foundation; and as such seems to have been the inference drawn by some, we now frankly say to such that we intended to declare no such sentiments by the adoption of said Circular Letter.” C. B. Hassell, “Preamble to Circular Letter of 1846 for Kehukee Association,” *Hassell’s History*, p.785.

Elder Hassell and his Kehukee brethren certainly made their sentiment clear enough in 1846 no matter how matters were interpreted in 1844 when the issue of pastoral support first came up. They were correct in the first instance; they were correct in the last instance, and we believe they are yet correct. Their language was “*it is foreign to our design to predicate a preached gospel on a moneyed foundation*.” Amen!

It should not be understood, however, that the Kehukee brethren, or Old School Baptists anywhere the world over, disengaged themselves from the obvious necessities of those that labored in the word. The following query to the same Kehukee association should put that idea to rest:

Query 28. What measures shall a Deacon take who sees the necessity of the minister’s support, and his conscience binds him to do his duty, in consequence of which he frequently excites the brethren to their duty; yet after all, he finds they neglect their duty? Answer: It is our opinion that it is the members’ duty voluntarily to contribute to the minister’s support; and if the Deacon discovers any member remiss in his duty that he shall cite him to the church; and if the church finds him negligent in his duty we give it as our advice that the church should deal with him for covetousness.” Hassell, p.832.

Another query will be examined in due time.

Elder Thomas P. Dudley

“While I loathe and abhor the practice which prevails so generally, except among Old School Baptists, of professed ministers auctioning themselves off to the highest bidder, and thus assuming the character of ‘hirelings,’ I nevertheless am freely persuaded that when the church fails or neglects her duty in this matter, the ministration of God’s servants fails to afford that comfort, instruction and encouragement they would otherwise derive from their labors. In such cases the ministry becomes to such as ‘dry breasts.’ Let us bring the matter home to ourselves, and ask, would we be willing to leave the little comfort we enjoy in the bosom of our family, our domestic concerns at home, by which a competency is secured for those committed to our charge, and labor, and toil for the encouragement of others, while we are pained to witness how indifferent they are to our comfort, and the comfort of those near and dear to us?” Elder Thomas P. Dudley, “One Body,” *Signs of the Times*, 1868.

Elder Dudley’s sword cut both ways in this article, written for the general edification of the scattered saints. He *loathes* and *abhors* selling the gospel by hireling ministers. At the same time he sternly admonishes the church to her privilege of assisting the minister in his, and his family’s, needs. This is especially noteworthy since Dudley was probably held in higher esteem among the Old School Baptists than any other minister West of the Appalachians.

Kehukee Queries Answered

“Query 12: What way is thought best for a church to act in supporting their minister? Answer: That each member ought to contribute, voluntarily, according to his or her ability, and in no wise by taxation or any other compulsion.” Queries to the Kehukee Association, Hassell’s History, p.830.

It may be suggested that the Kehukee brethren did not specifically denounce salaried hirelings here in this query. True, and they did not denounce a multitude of other evils either. What they did, since obviously they did not here at once suggest a salary, is address the individual’s duty to their pastor. That duty was to *contribute, voluntarily*, not pay them a salary or stipulated sum in return for preaching.

At the time this query was written, many ministers received their support, what little they did receive, in the form of eggs, beef, chickens, a bushel of peanuts, or other such commodities the brethren might be able to afford. Hard cash was scarce then, and furthermore, the church and its ministers did not have to look over their shoulder to see if an IRS agent was peering into their transactions of love and fellowship. Religion then was a matter between man and his God; not man and his government. It must, though, be honestly admitted, that the government may not have been so hasty to become involved with the financial dealings of churches and ministers had it not been for the proliferation of huge religious machines that greased their wheels of progress with money filched from the gullible with schemes of selling prayer cloths, worthless books and tapes on how to become a “rich Christian,” and a multitude of other nefarious tools of greed.

Elder Gilbert Beebe

“Equally great is the difference between the gospel and the hireling system of antichrist. The latter is based upon the wisdom of men, without divine authority. They make merchandise of the gospel; first, by investing a certain amount of capital in qualifying themselves for the work, and then offer their services to the highest bidder. They have not freely received, therefore they cannot freely give, God has not called them, therefore they cannot trust him to provide for their support. They have their bargains arranged in dollars and dimes, as a debt and credit system, so much labor for so much money, and that money in some cases secured by the endorsement of some wealthy person or persons. While the minister of Jesus has no bargain to make, no stipulated sum to require, no bondsmen to endorse either for the Lord or for the church, if entirely neglected by his brethren, still his trust is in the Lord, and as long as he is supplied with ability, he will never shun to declare the counsel of God, to preach the word, or to feed the sheep and lambs of the flock, to the utmost of his ability.” Elder Gilbert Beebe, “The Support of the Ministry,” December 1, 1859, *Editorials, Volume 4*, p.285f.

Of Elder Beebe it may be fairly said that he rarely left room for doubt about wherein he stood on any

issue. There was certainly no ambiguity in the issue of paying preacher to preach.

Beebe believed, as do the Old School Baptists of today, that hiring preachers were of Antichrist. To fortify that opinion he says: "*They make merchandise of the gospel....*" and again, "God has not called them."

Concerning his own call to the ministry Beebe says:

In 1816 I came to the city of New York, and afterward became identified, by letter, with the Ebenezer Baptist Church, where I was called to exercise my gift, and was finally licensed to preach the gospel; this was about the year 1818. I then traveled in several States as an itinerant preacher, and supplied the Third Baptist Church in Baltimore three or four months in about 1821-2, but it suited my mind better to be traveling. I never failed to find places where I was well received, and without any support from missionary arrangement I was fully sustained, so that I could say as did the disciples whom Jesus sent out without purse or scrip, when they returned, that I had lacked nothing. (Autobiography of Elder Gilbert Beebe, *Hassell's History*, p. 934)

Such is generally the testimony of the Old School ministers wherever the Lord has cast their lot. Freely they have received, freely they give *and without any support from the missionary arrangement, they are sustained.*

Elder John Tanner

Every preacher, he [Elder Tanner] argued, should love his Lord well enough to obey Him, feeding both lambs and sheep, even if he got no money for it, nay, if it cost him all he had, and even his life beside. And the flock who were fed by him should remember that he had a right to his support from them. (Elder John Tanner, "Ordination Sermon for Elder Wilson Thompson," *Autobiography of Elder Wilson Thompson*, p.130)

There has probably never been a gospel minister that was more used of the Lord in this country than Elder Thompson. The Midwest was well stocked with churches he gathered and established during his long service to the flock of God. His life was extraordinary in usefulness and exemplary in decorum. His Autobiography is a storehouse of personal illustrations relative to serving God without following the cunning pattern of the hireling.

Thus we have presented witness after witness and all testifying the same truth; the gospel is free and cannot be bought or sold, either by hirelings or carnal professors of religion. Each of these witnesses we have set before the reader has been well known among the Old School Predestinarian Baptists and were unblemished in character. None of them, and none of their contemporaries, would have dreamed of striking a bargain for a salary from the Church of the Living God. Countless other witnesses might be produced, but sufficient has been shown for those that love the truth unvarnished and without compromise.

Each of those we have cited herein were men of standing among the Absolute Predestinarian ranks of the Old School with the exception of David Benedict. However, despite their denial of so great a truth as absolute predestination, practically all those of the Limited Predestinarian Primitive Baptists also oppose the error of a salaried preacher of the gospel. We offer, in conclusion, several of these fellows as well.

Elder Walter Cash

"The system of fixing salaries for ministers is corrupting in its influence. Instead of trying to please Christ, men endeavor to get their salaries raised; instead of being devoted to their flocks, they are always looking for a better paying position. Raising money for the salary of a preacher, with Arminian denominations, gets to be a grinding weight on their shoulders, as is evidenced by their trying to shift it on to others and resorting to all kinds of schemes, gambling included, to get money. The Primitive Baptists can never resort to paying salaries to get pastors, nor should our ministers ever stoop to sell the word of God at so much a sermon or by the year." Elder Walter Cash, *Practical Suggestions for Primitive Baptists*, p.41f.

Plain enough?

Elder W. S. Craig

“10th. That while the ministry received voluntary help from the churches, they were not salaried, but labored themselves, more or less, for their own support.” Elder W. S. Craig, “12 Marks of Apostolic Churches,” *Primitive Baptist Faith and Practice*, p.73.

Elder Craig labored on the high plains of Nebraska for many years and published numerous books and pamphlets on a variety of historical and Biblical subjects. He was highly respected for his fair manner in presenting any subject; thus his quotation here carries its due weight and influence.

We have saved our final quotation, from the pen of Elder C. H. Cayce, because we feel that he hit the nail on the head. It is not often that the Old School Predestinarians can come to terms with Cayce. When we can, we should.

Elder C. H. Cayce

“None that we know of, except some ignorant superstitious Softshell Baptists, suppose that Primitive Baptist preachers are clothed and fed in a miraculous way. They go preaching where they feel that the Lord directs; and they do this trusting in the Lord, that he will put it into the hearts of the hearers to minister of their carnal things. They go without the promise of money or support by men. This the Softshell will not do. The Softshells do not trust the Lord. The Lord promised to be with those He sends out to preach. The Softshells will not risk the promise of God. They must have a promise of a support from men before they will go. They must have men to go the Lord’s security before they will do the preaching. This is good evidence that they are not sent by the Lord. If they were sent of the Lord, they would be willing to trust Him. They would rather trust the promise of men than the promise of the Lord. They look to the party by whom they are sent for support, and for a promise of support. They have no confidence in their god. Well, we don’t blame them much, for they claim that their god can’t save people that he wants to save, because people are too covetous to give their means to send the gospel. Their poor little god is no better than Diana of the Ephesians. They have to tell the people that sinners are going to hell by the thousands every day for want of the gospel, in order

to get them to give of their hard-earned dollars. That’s the way many of these Softshell humbugs get their support.” Elder C. H. Cayce, “Ministerial Aid,” *Selected Editorials, 1896-1910*, p.354f.

We have thus set before you a broad selection of solid views respecting preachers and pay. Hirelings, in the firm opinion of the Old School, Primitive Baptists, have no place in the church of God. The man called of God to preach free grace deserves the support of the flock of God, but neither sheep or shepherd can rightly follow any course but that of the Bible.

—Elder James F Poole
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**RIGHTEOUSNESS:
LACKED,
IMPUTED, AND IMPARTED**

I am interested in learning the difference between imputed righteousness and imparted righteousness, if any. —E. in Texas

No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and their righteousness is of me, saith the LORD. Isaiah 54.17

Righteous defined is “acting in accord with divine or moral law; free from guilt or sin (Webster).” In a biblical sense, righteousness is a perfect rightness or a perfectly right standing before God. *Righteous* has to do with rectitude, being upright, being right, and being on the right hand side. “Being right,” as the equivalent of being on the right side of someone, is more than just a play on words. In other languages the word is the same: in Spanish, *derecho* means both on the right hand side, as

opposed to being on the left side; and it also means legal or moral rightness. This all comes home to us the more when we are blessed to remember the words of Jesus in Matthew 25.33: "And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left."

For sinners to be righteous before God, He must view them as being perfectly good and proper in every respect, not only conforming to His holy law in their external behavior, deeds, and doings, but they must also be perfect in all their internal thoughts, attitudes, and actions of mind, heart and soul as well.

Righteousness, we would think, would be a perfect conformity to the first and great commandment as the Lord Jesus Christ defined it. When a lawyer asked Him what was the first and great commandment (Matthew 22), He answered: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."

The lawyer who had challenged Christ was not a lawyer as we think of attorneys nowadays. He was a man well versed in the law of Moses and thoroughly familiar with it. Jesus was therefore answering the lawyer in kind, from the law as given to and by Moses: "Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God is one Lord: and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might (Deuteronomy 6.4f)." "And now, Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all His ways, and to love Him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, to keep the commandments of the Lord, and His statutes, which I command thee this day for thy good (Deuteronomy 10.12f)?" "Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart: thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbor, and not suffer sin upon him. Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself: I am the Lord (Leviticus 19.17f)."

Paul says of the gospel of Christ, "For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith (Romans 1.17)." His righteousness is revealed in the gospel

in two ways, at least: First, the Father is so perfectly holy and righteous that when the sins of His children were placed upon Jesus, He condemned that sin in the flesh of His only begotten Son in whom He is well pleased, sacrificing Him in the death of the cross. Second, as Paul hints in this verse, imputed and imparted righteousness is vitally linked with God-given faith, a theme that is developed in more detail later in the book of Romans, beginning in chapters 3 and 4.

RIGHTEOUSNESS LACKED

Although many religious people believe that they can please God by their deeds and doings, a perfect righteousness is unattainable by humankind. Yet this is exactly the righteousness the Lord God requires of the sinner. To have such a righteousness sinners must (1) negatively, have no sin to their account, being before God as though they had never sinned, and, (2) positively, have a perfect obedience and conformity to our holy God's perfect requirements. Sinners must either meet these two requirements for themselves, or, in accord with the provision made by God Himself, have these two requirements met for them by a perfect Substitute who is acceptable to the Lord God. There is no third alternative.

Suppose a man wishes to do the former and meet God's demands for himself. Jehovah's appraisal of our goodness is that we have no worthwhile righteousness of our own. We are utterly unworthy before Him. "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually (Genesis 6.5)." "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it (Jeremiah 17.9)?" "Your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear. For your hands are defiled with blood, and your fingers with iniquity; your lips have spoken lies, your tongue hath muttered perverseness... Their feet run to evil, and they make haste to shed innocent blood: their thoughts are thoughts of iniquity; wasting and destruction are in their paths. The way of peace they know not; and there is no judgment in their goings: they have made them crooked paths: whosoever goeth therein shall not know peace... For our transgressions are multi-

plied before thee, and our sins testify against us: for our transgressions are with us; and as for our iniquities, we know them; in transgressing and lying against the Lord, and departing away from our God, speaking oppression and revolt, conceiving and uttering from the heart words of falsehood (Isaiah 59.2-13).”

“The good man is perished out of the earth: and there is none upright among men: they all lie in wait for blood; they hunt every man his brother with a net. That they may do evil with both hands earnestly, the prince asketh, and the judge asketh for a reward; and the great man, he uttereth his mischievous desire: so they wrap it up. The best of them is as a brier: the most upright is sharper than a thorn hedge: the day of thy watchmen and thy visitation cometh; now shall be their perplexity (Micah 7.2ff).”

“What is man, that he should be clean? and he which is born of a woman, that he should be righteous? Behold, he putteth no trust in his saints; yea, the heavens are not clean in his sight. How much more abominable and filthy is man, which drinketh iniquity like water (Job 15.14ff)?” “For the wicked boasteth of his heart’s desire, and blesseth the covetous, whom the LORD abhorreth. The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God: God is not in all his thoughts. His ways are always grievous; thy judgments are far above out of his sight: as for all his enemies, he puffeth at them. He hath said in his heart, I shall not be moved: for I shall never be in adversity. His mouth is full of cursing and deceit and fraud: under his tongue is mischief and vanity (Psalm 10.3ff).” “The foolish shall not stand in thy sight: thou hatest all workers of iniquity (Psalm 5.5).” “The Lord trieth the righteous: but the wicked and him that loveth violence his soul hateth (Psalm 11.5).”

Such Scriptures could be multiplied, seemingly without end, from every book of the Bible.

Look again at the law of God: “And it shall be our righteousness, if we observe to do all these commandments before the LORD our God, as he hath commanded us (Deuteronomy 6.25).” Pay attention to what Moses said, word for word. Our desperately needy predicament in our fallen nature is that we can neither do **all** of God’s commandments, nor can we do them **as he has commanded** them to be per-

formed. But this is exactly what God through Moses defines as “it shall be our righteousness, **if....**”

We do indeed have a self-righteousness, but it is described as loathsome to God. Our righteousness is described as filthy rags: Isaiah 64.6-8 says, “But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.” Notice that this is what God says of our *righteousnesses*, or our good works and deeds. He is not speaking here of our sins and unrighteousnesses, that is, our bad works and deeds. When He says, “all our *righteousnesses* are as filthy rags,” He is referring to the best we do, not the worst we do. To be specific, He is not speaking of our sins and works of the flesh, “adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like (Galatians 5.19ff).” He is rather referring to our keeping the law of Moses, our Sabbath keeping, and our prayers, baptism, almsgiving, church attendance, Bible reading, and anything else thought of as “good works,” yet as they originate in the motives of our fleshly nature.

Anything a person might “offer” to God as good works, either to earn blessings and rewards or to avoid punishment, the Scriptures classify as self-righteousness or *our* righteousnesses. They are an insult to the thrice-holy God and His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ: “I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain (Galatians 2.21).”

Saul of Tarsus was as righteous as any man could ever be under the works of the Mosaic law. After God had made of him the apostle Paul, he wrote of his earlier life as a Pharisee: “If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more: Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless (Philippians 3.4ff).”

If ever there had been a man that was “good enough” as measured by the deeds of the law, it would have been Saul (who also is called Paul, Acts

13.9). Later, after he was given to see how much he lacked of the righteousness God requires, he then wrote, "But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in Him, 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 (Philippians 3.7-9)."

Isaiah describes our condition before God as this: "Ye will revolt more and more: the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment (Isaiah 1.5f)." Filthy rags, dung, running sores and injury, head to foot; this is not at all a pretty picture.

Because of our woeful, helpless situation in our fallen nature, we need, then,

RIGHTEOUSNESS IMPUTED

Imputed righteousness has to do with our account before God, as it were, in the bookkeeping sense, with debits or liabilities and credits or assets. Jehovah God, as the Divine Bookkeeper, looks on each person's account, and what does He see when the books are tallied (Revelation 20.12)? Debts and liabilities owed to Him, or only assets and credits?

Imputed righteousness is that perfect righteousness, originating in the Lord Himself, which He has placed, reckoned, counted, or written in His ledger book to the credit of His children. Since they have no righteousness of their own, this righteousness must arise from another source. That source is only the Lord Jesus Christ.

In another sense, imputation may also be charging or accusing someone, charging him with a wrong motive or action. For illustration's sake, if a person does something men call good (say he donates heavily to a worthy charity), an enemy may *impute* less than desirable motives to him, such as *charging* him with doing it for public show to gain public glory and praise. Exactly what has happened? A "good" person (as society is prone to refer to such an

individual) is bearing reproach and blame for something of which he is innocent.

That is in effect what happened in the case of our Lord Jesus: In order for Him to bear the sins of His people, their sins were imputed, reckoned, and charged against Him, the sinless, spotless, innocent Lamb of God. "He was numbered with the transgressors (Isaiah 53.12)." Thus, the prophet speaking of Jesus says of Him, "...the reproaches of them that reproached Thee are fallen upon me (Psalm 69.9)." What He suffered was for their sins and reproaches and not for His own, for He had none.

It is recorded of Abram, "And he believed in the Lord; and He counted it to him for righteousness (Genesis 15.6)." This is so important and so foundational a truth that Paul quoted it in Romans 4.3 and Galatians 3.6, and James quoted it in James 2.23. Consider how Paul developed the theme of imputed righteousness in Romans 4: "For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt (verse 3f)." He is saying, if you could earn righteousness by works, God would owe it to you.

"But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness (verse 5)." But how can faith be counted or imputed to the sinner for righteousness if all of the sinner's deeds and actions are only filthy rags counted as dung? Wouldn't this also include man's faith and belief? This question will be addressed soon. Continuing for now, in Romans 4:

"Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord **will not** impute sin (Romans 4.6-8)." Not only does God impute righteousness, then; it is also by an act of His own sovereign will that He **will not** impute sin to this select group saved by the Lord Christ.

"Cometh this blessedness then upon the circumcision [Jews] only, or upon the uncircumcision [Gentiles] also? for we say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness (verse 9)." This is another pertinent question, as Judaizers were already abroad in Paul's day, teaching, "Except ye be cir-

cumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved (Acts 15.1).” *Do* we Gentiles have to become Jews to be saved? Paul continues: “How was it [faith for righteousness] then reckoned? when he [Abram] was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision (verse 10).” Wonderful! Abraham was reckoned righteous when he was 85 years old (Genesis 15), fourteen years before he was circumcised (Genesis 17). Circumcision had nothing to do with his being declared righteous. What then?

“And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also (verse 11; see also verse 12).” It was a seal, a token, after the fact of his being declared righteous.

“For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith (verse 13),” which Paul has before said was imputed. He repeats, in verse 22: “And therefore it [his faith or belief] was imputed to him for righteousness.” Remember, this was around five hundred years before the law was given by Moses.

“Now it was not written for his [Abraham’s] sake alone, that it was imputed to him; but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead (verses 23-25).” The “if” here is not, “If you will only believe on Him...,” but it is categorical: if you, or I, or we are believers, the principle of imputed righteousness applies to us; if we are not, then it does not.

We might pause here and now to address the question, “Just why is faith or belief *imputed* or reckoned to the sinner’s account as the equivalent of divine righteousness?” It is because true faith and belief are not the product of the sinner’s own will, heart, mind, soul, decision, or attitude. As spiritual gifts and graces, His children’s faith and belief are every bit as much the direct creations of God’s Holy Spirit as is His creation of this material universe. Remember “...faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God (Ephesians 2.8)”? Likewise, Paul told the brethren at Philippi, “For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him, but

also to suffer for His sake (Philippians 1.29).” This “not-only...but-also...” construction shows there are two gifts under consideration here: belief on Christ, and suffering for His sake; the first of which, belief on Christ, is our present focus. As a gift of God produced by Him, He recognizes faith as perfect righteousness.

The Psalmist said, “In thee, O LORD, do I put my trust; let me never be ashamed: deliver me in **Thy** righteousness (Psalm 31.1).” Again, he said: “Deliver me in **Thy** righteousness, and **cause me to escape**: incline thine ear unto me, and save me. (Psalm 71.2).” And again, “My mouth shall show forth **Thy** righteousness and **Thy** salvation all the day; for I know not the numbers thereof. I will go in the strength of the Lord GOD [because we have no strength of our own—Ed.]: I will make mention of **Thy** righteousness, even of **Thine only**. (Psalm 71.15f).” Again he says, “In **Thy** name shall they rejoice all the day: and in **Thy** righteousness shall they be exalted (Psalm 89.16).” The doctrine of the Psalmist was imputed righteousness!

From God’s standpoint, He answers, as it were, “Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of **my righteousness** (Isaiah 41.10).” And again, He says, “This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and **their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord** (Isaiah 54.17).”

The New Testament is equally emphatic. Paul said, “For he hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him (2 Corinthians 5.21).”

Peter said, “Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed (1 Peter 2.24).” Not to get ahead of ourselves, but Peter here refers not only to imputed but also imparted righteousness (see below).

John recorded the gift of imputed righteousness this way: “And to her was **granted** that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints (Revelation 19.8).” A grant is a free gift that is not required to be (or cannot be) paid back. It belongs to the bride of Christ because He gave it as His wedding gift to her. “Let

Thy priests be **clothed with righteousness**; and let Thy saints shout for joy (Psalm 132.9).”

His bride’s sins were imputed to Christ because He willingly and freely joined her in her sin and death, even as Adam willingly partook of Eve’s fall into sin, ruin and death. Christ’s righteousness was in turn imputed to His bride, His elect people. The poet Kent captured this truth beautifully when he wrote:

‘Twas with an everlasting love
That God His own elect embraced,
Before He made the worlds above,
Or earth on her huge columns placed.

Long ere the sun’s refulgent ray
Primeval shades of darkness drove,
They on His sacred bosom lay,
Loved with an everlasting love.

Then, in His love and His decrees,
Christ and His bride appeared as one;
Her sin, by imputation, His,
While she in spotless splendor shone.

O love! How high thy glories swell!
How great, immutable, and free;
Ten thousand sins as black as hell
Are swallowed up, O love, by thee.

Believer, here thy comfort stands,
From first to last salvation’s free;
And everlasting love demands
An everlasting song from thee.

RIGHTEOUSNESS IMPARTED

Imparted righteousness is that righteousness which God works or produces in the lives of His children. It is indeed imputed to them, but it does not stop there. Righteousness is also given, granted, or bestowed to them in their daily actions. The people of God indeed do good works, and these good works are accepted by God the Father, but these works do not in any way originate in their fleshly will or their carnal nature. As Jesus said even of Himself and His own works: “I can of mine own self do nothing (John 5.30).” “...the Father that dwelleth in me, He doeth the works (John

14.10).” This is why the deeds are righteous, perfect, and holy works and are therefore acceptable to the Father: They are wrought in His people, but they are nevertheless God’s own works, wrought by God, and therefore perfect: “But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God (John 3.21).” The marginal version of “wrought in God” in some Bibles is quite correctly rendered *produced by God*. That his deeds may be made manifest, that they are *produced by God*.

This is not to say we know any specific work we do is perfect and acceptable. We have no such absolute knowledge. Sin is mixed with all we do. Everything we might do—praying, giving alms, reading the Scriptures, seeking God’s face in worship—can also spring from a selfish, carnal motive quite unknown to us.

And lest any presume, there is a group, designated as unbelievers and *reprobates*, who shall in no way ever come into God’s righteousness. They shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on them (John 3.36). the word *abideth* here carries the weight of abiding or staying *continually and continuously*. It shall never be removed. Instead, their sin (iniquity) will only be compounded and multiplied. The Psalmist says of them, “Add iniquity unto their iniquity: and let them not come into thy righteousness. Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, and not be written with the righteous (Psalm 69.27f).” Judas Iscariot is representative of this group. Verse 25 of this Psalm, “Let their habitation be desolate; and let none dwell in their tents,” is applied to Judas by direct New Testament quote of the same: “For it is written in the book of Psalms, Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein: and his bishopric let another take (Acts 1.20).”

We cannot judge our own motives correctly. “But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man’s judgment,” Paul says; “yea, I judge not mine own self. For I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord. Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God (1 Corinthians 4.3-5).”

Note that Paul does not here say every man shall praise God. They will, but that is not at all the subject here. *Praise of God* indicates God is the source of this praise, and the *every man* under consideration is, without exception, every one of His children. This answers to Christ's statement, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant (Matthew 25.21)." Amazing grace! How can this be? It is only because "it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure (Philippians 2.13)." It is because His saints are "Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God (Philippians 1.11)." Because God has wrought it, God can and will praise it.

This is *imparted* or *practical* righteousness; *practical* in the sense of the *practice* or routine behavior of His people. Christ does not merely save them *in* their sins; "...thou shalt call his name JESUS: for He shall save His people **from** their sins (Matthew 1.21)." When He regenerates them, they are born of His Spirit and made partakers of the divine nature: "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and Godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust (2 Peter 1.4)." The saints are not partakers of the divine nature merely by believing, quoting, memorizing, or claiming the "exceeding great and precious promises," but they are made partakers by the promises themselves, made to be such by the God who promised. God has promised, and, "...what He had promised, He was able also to perform (Romans 4.21)." Paul is "confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ (Philippians 1.6)."

"And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness (Ephesians 4.24)." In the face of a text like this one, the will-worshiper will ever be whining, "Oh, see, YOU have to put it on. WE must put on the whole armor of God, it is left up to US," ad nauseam.

The will-worshiper, the Arminian, the Conditionalist, they are one and the same! And they all, to a man, have utterly no understanding or

comprehension of God's righteousness, either imputed or imparted. "For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God (Romans 10.3)." Let God answer them all through Isaiah: "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels. For as the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations (61.10f)." Let us consider these five points in more detail:

1. *For he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation:* This is imputed righteousness. God Himself, in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, has clothed His people, collectively recognized as His body and His bride, with His own righteousness. As the bride of the King, she is His queen, and how glorious she is as partaker of His glory: "...upon thy right hand did stand the queen in gold of Ophir... The king's daughter is all glorious within: her clothing is of wrought gold. She shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needlework: the virgins her companions that follow her shall be brought unto thee. With gladness and rejoicing shall they be brought: they shall enter into the king's palace (Psalm 45.9, 13-15)." Gold, in the Old Testament types and figures, speaks of Christ's deity. Wrought or beaten gold speaks of the sufferings our God endured for His bride. She shall be *brought* unto the King, as Eve was brought to Adam (Genesis 1.22). She shall be *brought* as Rebecca was brought to Isaac, wearing the "jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment" furnished by the father (Abraham, type of God the Father) and delivered by the servant (type of the Holy Spirit) who brought her to Isaac (type of God the Son). They shall be *brought* to enter into the King's palace, heaven itself.

2. *He hath covered me with the robe of righteousness:* Again, this is imputed righteousness, elaborating on the garments of salvation just mentioned.

3. *As a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments:* How is it that when the bridegroom orna-

ments himself he is at the same time ornamenting his bride? In nature this is not strictly the case; a man only clothes and decorates his own body. In grace, however, the glorious dress of the divine Bridegroom, Jesus Christ, covers His bride also, because she is His body (Ephesians 1.22f).

Jeremiah prophesies, "In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS (Jeremiah 23.6)." One name of the glorious Savior is **Jehovah Tsidkenu**, "The Lord our Righteousness." There are no ifs and conditions for her to meet. He met them all in her behalf.

4. *And as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels:* This is imparted righteousness. She adorns herself, but only as He works in her both to will and to do of His good pleasure (Philippians 2.13).

Jeremiah later says, in almost the same words but with at least one important difference, "In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely: and this is the name wherewith she shall be called, The LORD our righteousness (Jeremiah 33.16)." In chapter 23 it is His name. In chapter 33, it is her name. There is a Scriptural precedent for the bride to take her husband's name. He is her righteousness.

5. *For as the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations:* This again is imparted or practical righteousness. Even as in the economy of nature, as God has designed it, the sunshine, the moisture, and the soil all work together to cause the latent life within a seed to manifest itself, so the Sun of Righteousness (Malachi 4.2), the water of life (Revelation 21.6), and the good ground (Matthew 13.8, 23) collaborate to cause righteousness and praise to spring forth in God's people in every nation, kindred, tongue, and people (Acts 10.35): "But in every nation he that feareth Him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with Him." You will note here, it is said of the ones who truly work righteousness in whatever nation, they are accepted with Him, already. They do not work righteousness in order to become accepted with Him. The working of righteousness is proof and evidence they are already accepted with Him. How is this?

Paul says, "He hath **made** us accepted in the beloved (Ephesians 1.6)."

He does not say, "If you will begin fearing God and working righteousness you will be accepted with Him," and he doesn't say, "He that feareth Him, and worketh righteousness, is going to be accepted with Him." He says, "But in every nation he that feareth Him, and worketh righteousness, **is** accepted with Him (Acts 10.35)." In every nation in the world, the one or ones who fear God and work righteousness, as Cornelius the example, is accepted with Him. The fact that they fear God and work righteousness is evidence that they are accepted with God, proof that He has begun a good work in them (Philippians 1.6, 11), and that He is working His righteous works in them.

"He restoreth my soul: He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake. (Psalm 23.3)." It is for His name's sake, or honor, that He leads them in righteous paths. His name or reputation is at stake. He has made the commitment and must make good on it to maintain His integrity. His very name means "salvation is of the Lord": "...and thou shalt call His name JESUS: for He shall save His people from their sins (Matthew 1.21)."

At the cross of Christ, "Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other. Truth shall spring out of the earth; and righteousness shall look down from heaven. Yea, the Lord shall give that which is good; and our land shall yield her increase. Righteousness shall go before Him; and **shall set us in the way of His steps** (Psalm 85.10-13)." Righteousness itself, then, is what irresistibly, effectually places, puts, sets His people in the footsteps of Christ, following Him in the paths of righteousness.

"He shall receive the blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of his salvation (Psalm 24.5)." Receiving is passive, and the saints receive both blessing and righteousness as unmerited gifts from God.

The saints are even quickened in the righteousness of Jesus: "Behold, I have longed after Thy precepts: quicken me in Thy righteousness (Psalm 119.40)." "If ye know that He is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of Him (1 John 2.29)." "Little children, let no man deceive

you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as He is righteous (1 John 3.7).”

“As it is written, He hath dispersed abroad; He hath given to the poor: His righteousness remaineth for ever. Now He that ministereth seed to the sower both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed sown, *and increase the fruits of your righteousness* (2 Cor. 9.9f).” In the light of this passage of Scripture, we may conclude that if it were up to the individual to increase his or her own fruits of righteousness, texts such as this one would be worse than meaningless; they would be a misrepresentation of both God and His truth as here expressed. Instead, it is the false “ministers of righteousness,” Satan’s emissaries who teach and preach “it is up to you” who falsify God and His righteousness.

IMPUTED AND IMPARTED

There are some passages of Scripture that are too all-inclusive to be referring to either imputed or imparted righteousness, as only one or the other. These passages encompass both, indicating all true righteousness, whether imputed or imparted, stems only from God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

1. “But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord (1 Corinthians 1.30f).” God has made Jesus Christ righteousness (among other things) to His people, and this cannot be limited to imputed righteousness alone. It certainly includes that, but Jesus also imparts His wrought righteousness in them, as before proved.

We must give one other Scripture that bears this out: “Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen (Hebrews 13.20f).”

When (1) God makes a sinner perfect in every good work to do His will, and (2) He does it through the blood of the everlasting covenant, and (3) it is that which is wellpleasing in His sight, and (4) it is through Jesus Christ, and (5) Jesus Christ thereby

gets the glory for ever and ever, if words and language have meaning and value, then this text certainly teaches both the imputed and imparted righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ.

2. “For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith (Galatians 5.5).” For which kind of righteousness do the saints wait in hope? In their lives while here on earth, they wait in hope that the Spirit of Christ will produce His imparted righteousness in their lives. They also wait in hope for the full manifestation of their being glorified in His glorious imputed righteousness that will be counted as their own when He returns for them. Even at His coming, when He translates His saints into His glorified image, this too will be only by the grace of God: “Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ (1 Peter 1.13).”

3. “Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed (1 Peter 2.24).” Living unto righteousness is imparted righteousness which actually takes place in their lives, but it is based on His bearing their sins in His own body on the tree, thereby providing them with His own imputed righteousness.

SUMMARY

If there is anything that is clear and emphatic in the Scriptures, it is this: The righteousness of the saints, whether imputed or imparted, is entirely of the Lord. In their Adamic nature they are unrighteous. By His infinite grace, love, and mercy, God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were (Romans 4.17), first calls His sinful people righteous, and then gives or imputes His own righteousness to them. He therewith works His righteousness in them, through them, and by them as an imparted righteousness that He can and does acknowledge as His own. Nothing less than this will do a sinner any lasting good, nor will anything less than Jesus Christ, the Lord Our Righteousness, satisfy the ones who have tried, failed, and have been brought to their wit’s end.

—Elder C. C. Morris

COMPLETE IN CHRIST

And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power (Colossians 2.10).

Someone once said the difference between the doctrine of the Primitive Baptists and the doctrine of the religions of the world lies in two letters. The world's doctrine says, "Do," but our doctrine says, "Done." There is nothing more comforting and satisfying to the troubled, sin-distressed child of God than the truth that Jesus Christ is the totality of his salvation.

The apostle Paul wrote the letter to the Colossians to combat grievous errors that were plaguing the church of Christ at Colosse. Without going into detail about them, suffice it to be said that these errors, as always, involved substituting something else in the place of Jesus Christ or supplementing His work with some creature addition. In the heart of this letter we find the beautiful, error-destroying statement of our completeness in Christ. Let those who want to enslave the children of God in their systems of human works rage on. Until they can blot this verse out of the word of God, we may continue to "worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Jesus Christ, and have no confidence in the flesh (Philippians 3.3)."

Who is the "ye" in this text? The first chapter of Colossians gives the description of those addressed. The ones who are complete in Christ are those who have been set apart by the Spirit of God unto faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. This sanctification of the Spirit is shown by the fact that those who were some time alienated and enemies in their mind by wicked works have now been delivered from the power of darkness. They have heard the word of truth concerning Jesus Christ and have been given faith to believe on Him as the Son of God. This God-given faith is attended by love in the Spirit to all the saints. In those saint-loving believers the word of truth brings forth fruit—the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God (Philippians 1.11).

It is necessary that we have a living experience of the grace of God in order to have a scriptural hope of salvation by Jesus Christ. The promises of God are

always bound to our union with Christ. This eternal union is manifested in our calling, in which we are brought to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. Without faith in Christ we have no ground for hope, but with faith in Christ we have reason to believe that all the promises of God are ours and that "he which hath begun a good work in us will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ (Philippians 1.6)."

Ye are complete. Those who have Jesus Christ have all. The glory of the gospel is that the sinful, unworthy wretches who believe in Jesus Christ are not just barely forgiven of their sins. They are not placed in a state of probation. They are not under a set of conditions for them to meet in order to maintain acceptance with God. Rather, they are fully justified. They are acquitted of all charges and declared to be wholly righteous. They are complete. All the promises of God in Christ are yea and amen. Those who believe in Christ are proclaimed to be heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ.

Jesus said, "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 5.20)." A partial righteousness is not good enough. Jesus said, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect (Matthew 5.48)." We must be in possession of a perfect and complete righteousness, which is impossible for us to achieve in ourselves. That which is impossible with men is possible with God. Jesus Christ came into this world at the appointed time as the perfect Servant of Jehovah. He was "made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons (Galatians 4.4, 5)."

As the Servant, Christ yielded perfect, spiritual obedience to the law of God. He faced every temptation known to man and came away unsullied. When He had fulfilled the law to the last jot and tittle, He displayed the utmost love to His people in laying down His life, bearing their sins in His own body on the tree. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends (John 15.13)." As He lived under the law, He lived for His people. In His death under the law, He died for His people. As He rose from the dead to sit enthroned in glory, He lives forevermore for His people. By the miracle

of double imputation, Christ's perfect obedience to God is reckoned to the account of each of His many brethren. Also, the countless sins of His sheep in every age were reckoned to and discharged by Jesus Christ in His propitiatory death. Through this miracle the entire family of God stands complete in Him.

Ye are complete. It is not by mistake or accident that the word of God uses the present tense in this verse. The completeness of the saints in Christ is a present reality. When we turn our eyes within we see so much that causes us to doubt whether there has even been the beginning of a good work, much less the completion of it. We groan under the burden of a sinful flesh that lusts continuously after the things of time and sense. Though we are energetic enough in pursuit of worldly pleasures and ambitions, we find ourselves unable to do the things we would in the spirit. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. We feel the presence of worldly lusts, envy, malice, pride and every evil work in our flesh. As the song says, "If ever a few moments in praise I employ, I have hours again to complain." How is it then that we *are* complete?

The saints of God are called to walk by faith and not by sight. We walk and live by faith in the One who calls those things which be not as though they were. In our experience of salvation we groan with the rest of creation, waiting for the redemption of our body (Romans 8.23). We plod on through the furnace of affliction toward our salvation which is "nearer than when we believed (Romans 13.11)." We look for the day when this tabernacle of flesh shall be dissolved and we shall be clothed upon with glory in the presence of our Lord (2 Corinthians 5.1-4). We can look back at a time when we had no care for the spiritual realities which seem so important to us now, and we look forward by faith to a time beyond time, when we shall be perfect and perfectly delivered from this present evil world. Our God, however, does not live sandwiched in between what was and what is to be. With Him all is one eternal now. Before the foundation of the world He declared "the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure (Isaiah 46.10)."

When God declares something it is just as sure as it ever will be. In Romans 8 the eternal salvation of

God's elect is spread out before us as an accomplished fact. "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified (Romans 8.29, 30)."

The glorification is stated in the same tense as the predestination, calling and justification. There are at least two reasons for this. One is the obvious (to those taught by God), that the future, unfulfilled events decreed by Almighty God are just as certain as if they were already accomplished. Nothing can hinder or thwart the eternal purpose of our sovereign King. He says, "I will do all my pleasure." None can stay His hand or say unto Him, "What doest thou (Daniel 4.35)?"

The other reason is tied to the text at the head of this article. "Ye are complete in Him." By virtue of our union with Jesus Christ, our Head, we are in a very real and present sense complete. Our Lord prayed to His Father in the Garden of Gethsemene, "And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was (John 17.5)." The body—the bones of His bone and flesh of His flesh—is bound by eternal union to the Head. As Jesus Christ was humiliated in the flesh, we were humiliated in Him. As He suffered, we suffered. When He went down to death under the righteous judgment of God for sin, we went down with Him. And, praise the Eternal God of Heaven and Earth, when He rose from the dead and ascended to the right hand of the Majesty on high, we rose with Him. We are seated "in heavenly places in Christ Jesus (Ephesians 2.6)."

God heard the prayer of His Son. He did glorify Him, and, as the Son is ever one with His body, He glorified us in Him. It is not only that our ultimate salvation is certain to become a reality because God decreed it, it is a reality because it is accomplished in Jesus Christ. The voice of the Son of God speaks throughout all ages, "Behold I and the children which God hath given me (Hebrews 2.13)." He is never separated from His body. When Christ was predestinated to be the firstborn among many brethren, the many brethren were in Him predestinated to be conformed to His image. When Christ was called to

be the Righteous Servant, His brethren were called in Him. When He was justified in the spirit, the whole body was justified in Him. When He was glorified, He said, "Behold I and the children which God hath given me." They were all glorified in Him. This is why we, if we are whom we hope to be, are complete in Him.

We see things as they appear, but God sees things as they are. We see and feel our wretchedness, but God sees our perfection in His Son. We groan under temptation, warring with a body of death that keeps us from doing what we would, but God declares that we are "more than conquerors through him that loved us (Romans 8.37)." We sit in sullenness or sigh because we feel separated from our God, but He declares that "neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord (Romans 8.38, 39)."

If we are His, we are complete and we are free. "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death (Romans 8.2)." "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage (Galatians 5.1)." "Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ. Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, and not holding the Head...(Colossians 2.16-19)." "Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject or ordinances, (Touch not; taste not; handle not; which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men (Colossians 2.20-22)?" "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection of things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory (Colossians 3.1-4)."

What a glorious God! What a wonderful Savior! What a beautiful gospel! What a compelling hope! What an exalted position for worms of the dust to inhabit thrones of glory! May God bless us to believe and rejoice in the glorious truth of the gospel of the grace of God in Jesus Christ. May He bless us to live as children of the heavenly King, following our Lord through all trials, enduring hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ. May He bless us to be not "ashamed of the testimony of our Lord," but to be partakers "of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God; who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel (2 Timothy 1.8-10)."

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A BASKET AS A LIFE-PRESERVER

But their laying await was known of Saul. And they watched the gates day and night to kill him. Then the disciples took him by night, and let him down by the wall in a basket (Acts 9.24f).

Omnipotence is not hindered by anything, else it would not be omnipotence. God delights to show His power in using the smallest of things to accomplish His will, to show His glory and power, and to preserve His people. The Egyptian magicians duplicated the "bigger" miracles of Moses, turning rods into serpents, water into blood, and multiplying frogs. Yet, when it came to "little things," turning *dust* into *lice*, they could not, but said to Pharaoh, "This is the finger of God." When men tried to kill Saul, the man God predestinated to write over half the books of the New Testament and to preach the gospel throughout the Roman Empire, God rescued him, not with an army of angels, but with a basket. "Omnipotence hath servants everywhere."

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The following is an outline of principles the readers of *The Remnant* may expect to see maintained in this publication. Under no circumstances do the publishers or writers for *The Remnant* seek to delineate herein a standard of doctrine or views to be imposed upon the readers. Rather, we set these principles before the readers that they may know what general principles guide our efforts. All attempts at declaring articles of faith will be marred by prejudices and frailty, and ours are by no means any exception.

We believe these principles are, in the main, harmonious with the articles of faith published by predestinarian associations and churches of the old order of Baptists known as Primitive, Particular, or Old School Baptists the world over.

1—The eternal existence, sovereignty, immutability, omnipotence, and perfections of Jehovah God; He has revealed Himself as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and these sacred Three are One; Jesus Christ was and is God manifest in the flesh, and in Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily;

2—The Old and New Testaments in their original languages are the verbally inspired word of God, and they are the complete and only valid guide of faith and practice; the King James Version is the preferred English translation;

3—The will of the eternal God is the first cause of all causes;

4—The absolute predestination of all things;

5—The eternal personal election of the redeemed in Christ, before the world began, and their eternal, vital union with Him; their number is fixed, certain, and sure, and can neither be increased nor diminished; their fall in their federal head Adam into spiritual death, total depravity, and just condemna-

tion; their utter inability to recover themselves from this fallen state;

6—The blood atonement and redemption by Jesus Christ are for the elect only, and are both efficacious and effectual in accomplishing the will and purpose of God to reconcile His people unto Himself;

7—The sovereign, irresistible, effectual work of the Holy Spirit in quickening the elect of God; the new birth is by the direct operation of the Holy Spirit without the use of any means;

8—The final preservation, perseverance, and eternal happiness of all the sons of God, by grace alone;

9—No works are good works other than those which God Himself has so designated; none of the works called good are left up to men to perform or not, at the creature's discretion; nor do the works of the creature, either before or after regeneration, result in merit accruing to his account in God's sight;

10—The peaceable fruits of righteousness are the certain result of God's working in His people both to will and to do of His good pleasure, and His people will be found walking in paths of righteousness for His name's sake;

11—The separation of church and state;

12—The principles outlined in the Black Rock Address of 1832;

13—The bodily resurrection, first of Christ, and also that of all the dead;

14—The final and eternal judgment; and,

15—The bliss of the redeemed and the torment of the wicked are both eternal and everlasting.