

Preached on 10/30/22 at GBC

"The Blessedness Of THE MAN"

Romans 4:6-8

As we prepare to take the Lord's Table today, I couldn't help but think there is **NO BETTER MESSAGE** to hear than to once again preach what God has commanded us to declare every time we gather to worship, i.e., God's glorious Gospel - "***For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.***"(I Cor.2:2) "***For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!***"(I Cor.9:16) I often think of the Apostle Paul's words to those at Philippi concerning the necessity of clearly and repetitively declaring this **AGELESS** message - "***Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe. Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision. For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.***"(Phil.3:1-3) Paul **NEVER GREW WEARY** of declaring "***Jesus Christ and Him crucified***", and those who are His **NEVER GROW WEARY** of hearing about Him "***who loved us and gave Himself for us.***" This Gospel message of **FULL, FREE, UNCONDITIONAL JUSTIFICATION, SALVATION, and ETERNAL LIFE** is the **ONLY MESSAGE** that **CAN and DOES** set sinners free - "***There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.***"(Rom.8:1-4) This **GOSPEL MESSAGE** is what our God declared to be "***the power of God unto salvation to every man that believeth, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.***"(Rom.1:16) What makes this Gospel so powerful is that **WHICH IT DECLARES**, the very "***righteousness of God***" found in the Substitutionary, Redemptive work of the God sent Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ. **REMOVE THIS ONE TRUTH**, or **ADD ANY CONDITIONS TO IT**, and you have removed the **HEART OF THE GOSPEL** - "***Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.***"(Gal.5:1-4)

Let's read **Rom.5:1-5** - In these verses Paul brought forth and used Abraham as an example or **PROOF POSITIVE** that the **ONLY HOPE, CAUSE, or GROUND** of any sinner's justification is found exclusively in a righteousness established for them by the accomplished work of their Substitute and Surety, the Lord Jesus Christ, while **THEY THEMSELVES** were "***UNGODLY.***" In these verses we want to look at today, the Apostle Paul **QUOTES** God's prophet David who declared this **SAME ESSENTIAL** truth concerning justification to God's church in **Psalm 32**, based on the **same exact ground**, "***the righteousness of God***" - "***Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile.***"(Ps.32:1,2) There are several **STRIKING THINGS** to be found in Psalm 32 as quoted and applied by the Apostle Paul in our text. So let's take note of them this morning.

FIRST OF ALL I'd have us to take note of the **FACT** that it is **GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS**, and **NOT MAN'S** that is imputed - "*Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom **GOD IMPUTETH RIGHTEOUSNESS** without works.*" The word translated "*imputeth*" in this verse, is the same Greek word that translated "*counted*" in **Vss.3&5**, and translated "*reckoned*" in **Vs.4**. In **every instance** it means the same thing: 'to account, compute, or charge over.' From what I have been able to find, it is an **ACCOUNTING TERM**. When you look at the true meaning of the word, its meaning is a **STATEMENT OF REALITY**. In other words we are truly **ACCOUNTED** or **RECKONED** as **righteous**, having God's righteousness imputed to us - **God is not pretending that His people are righteous**. I like the way **Robert Hawker** so simply stated this **FACT** - "For what is imputed **from another**, cannot in the nature of things be his, **to whom it is imputed, until by imputation it is made so.**" Listen to the way Paul stated this to the believers at Philippi - "*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.*"(**Phil.3:7-9**)

SECONDLY, this **RIGHTEOUSNESS**, which is God's righteousness, is **IMPUTED (literally charged to, accounted to, or reckoned)** to sinners "**WITHOUT WORKS**" - "*Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom **GOD IMPUTETH RIGHTEOUSNESS** without works.*" **LET ME MAKE THIS PERFECTLY CLEAR:** Since this **RIGHTEOUSNESS** is imputed or charged to the sinner "**WITHOUT WORKS**", Paul again brings forward and insists that **JUSTIFICATION** is by **GOD'S FREE GRACE ALONE**, founded exclusively in the **ONLY RIGHTEOUSNESS** which God can, will, and must accept, the very "*righteousness of God*". There is **ABSOLUTELY NOTHING** done **IN** or **BY** any sinner, by whatever aid or agency, that can merit their justification - "*Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.*"(**Tit.3:5**) Just as Paul had shown that Abraham did absolutely nothing to merit God's free grace, the same was true of King David and every elect sinner of whom David prophesied concerning this imputation of righteousness - "*And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness. Now it was not written for his 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.*"(**Rom.4:22-24**)

THIRDLY, the imputation of this righteousness is the source of a sinner's eternal, unchangeable, **BLESSEDNESS** - **Vs.6**. This word "*blessedness*" in the original means 'to utter a declaration of blessedness on someone or pronounce one as blessed'. So David is telling us that all those to whom God "*imputeth righteousness **WITHOUT WORKS***" are declared **BLESSED** by God. **WHY are they "blessed"?** "*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**.*"(**II Cor.5:21**) Apart from Christ's righteousness imputed, **ALL** are "*dead in trespasses and sin*", void of a righteousness that equals and answers the demands of God's law and justice, fully deserving God's justice and wrath. **With Christ's righteousness imputed**, though we are yet sinners in our person, we are made alive toward God and as we are found "*in Him*", we are "*holy, unblamable, and unreprouvable in God's sight*". **I'd say that is indeed "blessedness", wouldn't you?**

FOURTHLY, to those "**God IMPUTETH RIGHTEOUSNESS without works**", their "**iniquities are forgiven**", and their "**sins are covered**". Those sinners the Lord has graciously justified when they were "**ungodly**", justifying them by imputing or charging the righteousness of Christ the Son to them "**WITHOUT WORKS**", **He removes their iniquities from them** - "**He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him. As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.**" (**Ps.103:10-12**) Isaiah spoke of God's dealing with our iniquities in this manner - God "**hast cast all my sins behind thy back.**" (**Isa.38:17**) **Listen to him again** - "**I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.**" (**Isa.43:25**) According to the Prophet Micah - "**He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.**" (**Micah 7:19**) Every sinner God clothes with the "**robe of righteousness**" and garment of salvation, their "**iniquities**" will never be found, because they have been removed. The words "**are forgiven**" in the original mean 'to send away'. I believe this is typified beautifully in the Scape Goat - "**And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness.**" (**Lev.16:21**) Our blessed Lord bore our iniquities away by satisfying God's infinite wrath and justice by His obedience unto death. But both David and Paul were moved to tell His elect that not only are their "**iniquities are forgiven**", but they were also moved to tell all those God justified through the blood and imputed righteousness of His dear Son that their "**sins are covered**". The word "**sins**" means 'to miss the mark', that mark being **PERFECT RIGHTEOUSNESS**. So all our failures to keep God's holy law "**are covered**", which means 'to cover over, or to hide by a veil'. **THINK ABOUT THIS**: Our sins, (**ALL OF THEM**), are hidden from the eye of divine justice in Christ our Surety and Substitute, and shall never be seen again, nor shall they ever be brought against us to our condemnation. Paul stated it this way in **Rom.8:33,34** - "**Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.**" Without a doubt, all who are "**justified from all things from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses**" have to be **HAPPY PERSONS**, which is what "**blessed**" means.

FIFTHLY: I want to consider the slight change in wording when the Apostle Paul quotes David's prophecy from Psalm 32 to support this blessed doctrine of **FULL, FREE, ETERNAL JUSTIFICATION WITHOUT WORKS**. When David prophesied this glorious truth in **Ps.32**, he declared "**Blessed is HE**", and "**blessed is the MAN**", which speaks of the blessing of one man. But when Paul quotes David, he uses **PLURALS** - "**blessed [are] THEY whose iniquities are forgiven, WHOSE sins are covered**", which speaks of **MANY** being blessed. This slight change cannot be overlooked. Here's what I think the slight change in wording infers: Now that the work of redemption was **FINISHED** by the God sent Messiah at Calvary, the Apostle is commissioned by the Holy Ghost to declare the **BLESSEDNESS** of the whole mystical body of Christ, all that are His, whether Jew or Gentile, for their encouragement. I think we see similar language toward Gentiles used by Paul in his epistle to the **Eph.2:11-22**, which we read in the **CALL TO WORSHIP**.

FINALLY, look at **Vs.8** - What a blessed promise and truth! All those God **JUSTIFIED**; all those to whom God imputed the **RIGHTEOUSNESS** of His dear Son, **HE WILL NEVER "IMPUTE SIN"** to them. Again, this word "**impute**" means 'to charge to one's account'. While it is true that God's elect, redeemed, justified sons and daughters **STILL SIN**, God has promised He will never charge their sins and iniquities to their account. **HOW CAN THIS BE?** Does God just pretend we don't sin? Does He simply ignore our sin? Does God pretend that we're righteous, when in reality we aren't? **ABSOLUTELY NOT!** God **IMPURED** all the elect's sins (**past, present, and future**) to Christ our Surety, and He bore the guilt, penalty, and condemnation for all our sins, **MAKING FULL SATISFACTION** to God's law and justice. I love what Robert Haldane wrote in his commentary on Romans on this verse: "Righteousness is imputed when sin is not imputed, for we here see that the man to whom sin is not imputed is blessed. As Jesus was accursed, **Gal.3:13**, when the sins of His people were imputed to Him, so they are blessed when His righteousness is imputed to them. Justification, or the judgment of God by which He renders us 'blessed,' consists of two acts, by one of which He pardons our sins, by the other He gives us the kingdom." **Let me say this and we'll stop** - By this Divine act of imputing our sins to Christ, and imputing Christ's righteousness to us, all God's elect are **TRULY MADE RIGHTEOUS** before God - **II Cor.5:21**. **Can't we say we are those who are "BLESSED"?** **THINK ABOUT YOUR STANDING IN CHRIST** - We stand before the throne of God without **FAULT, BLAMELESS,** and **UNREPROVABLE** in His sight - "*And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled. In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreprieveable in his sight.*"(**Col.1:21,22**)

I've had folks tell me: "You can't preach something like this and expect people to live right!" The person who makes this sort of statement **is ignorant** of the blessedness of which both David and the Apostle Paul wrote. I hope you see your blessedness in Christ, and based on that God-given knowledge, as a child seek to honor God in every area of your life.