
a *Grace Notes* course

Doctrines of the Christian Faith

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Doctrine 205

Heresy and Apostasy
Judgment, Justice, and Judging
The Law of Moses
Negative Volition

Grace Notes

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Doctrines of the Christian Faith
Doctrine 200, Lesson 5

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Heresy and Apostasy

The words "heresy" and "apostasy" are two of the most often used words to refer to doctrinal error and practice in the Church Age.

Any Christian is subject to error in his thinking about spiritual matters. The presence of the sin nature in the soul guarantees that we will have a constant battle to distinguish between human and divine viewpoints. Error may be the result of ignorance, of a lack of doctrine, or of deliberately adopting some point of view or activity.

The open-minded Christian who is positive to the teaching of the Bible and who is willing for the Lord to deal with him in doctrinal matters will find that his erroneous ideas will be replaced with the truth of the Word of God. As he grows in Christ, he will avoid heresy and any deliberate apostasy.

Heresy itself, which is the result of making a wrong choice among competing ideas, may have been entered into as a result of being deceived (EPH. 4:11-18) or of falling into a snare of Satan. Heresy becomes apostasy, however, whenever a person deliberately decides to reject Bible truth and maintain and promote false ideas. This paper is written to help believers avoid error, heresy, or apostasy.

Heresy

The word "heresy" comes from the Greek *αἵρεσις* (**haireisis**) meaning, "a choice; a taking for oneself; a sect or school of philosophy". Hence, in the Bible, it means (1) a chosen course of thought or action; (2) dissension arising from diversity of opinions and aims; or (3) doctrinal departures from revealed truth, or erroneous doctrinal views.

The apostles warned the church continuously against such non-Biblical views. Note particularly the stern directions to Titus regarding the correction of problems caused in Crete by Judaistic heresies.

In the Apostolic Age we find three fundamental forms of heresy. These have appeared in one form or another in every generation since.

Judaism

Judaism is the false counterpart of Jewish Christianity which insists on combining Jewish practice with Christianity. This tends to cause Christianity to sink to the level of Judaism in that it makes the Gospel merely the perfection which they suppose can be obtained by keeping the Law. Judaism regards Christ as a mere prophet, a second Moses; it denies His divine nature, His priestly function, and His kingly offices.

Judaism holds that circumcision, sacrifice, etc. are to be binding on Christians and necessary for salvation. There is no conception of Christianity as a new, free, and universal religion. Judaism appears in the 2nd Century AD in a more fully developed version under the name of Ebionism.

Gnosticism

Gnosticism spread through the whole church during the first two or three centuries after Christ. This heresy was an opposite reaction to Judaism. It separated Christianity completely from Jewish influence with the result that it tried to eliminate any connection to the true historical foundations of Christianity. Gnosticism denies the humanity of Christ, and it adulterates Christianity with pagan ideas and practices.

Syncretism

Syncretism combines Judaism, and then Christianity, with heathen philosophies, especially those of Pythagoras and Plato, so that, under the Christian name, there appeared confused combinations of these opposing systems, forming either a paganized Judaism or a Christianized paganism, depending on which element prevailed.

Whatever the differences in the heresies, all amount to a distinct denial of the Gospel, the incarnation of the Son of God for the salvation of the world. They make Christ either a mere man or a mere superhuman phantom; they allow no real and lasting union of the Divine and human natures in the person of the Redeemer. Heresy disturbed the unity of doctrine and of fellowship in the early church, which was therefore forced to exclude those holding false doctrine from its communion (TITUS 3:10). Once excluded, however, heretics formed societies of their own.

Heresy becomes apostasy when there is a deliberate holding to error in spite of knowing the truth of the Word of God. A heretic becomes apostate at the point when he hears the truth and decides against it.

Apostasy

Apostasy is the deliberate act of a professing Christian who knowingly and deliberately rejects revealed truth regarding the deity of Jesus Christ, redemption through His atoning sacrifice, or any part of the doctrines related to Salvation. The apostate is in revolt against God. He maintains an outward profession of faith and a facade of true spirituality; but he departs from the faith. Apostasy, then, is insidious, subtle, and quite devastating.

Some of the characteristics, or synonyms, of apostasy are mentioned in the Bible, including: seducing spirits, doctrines of demons, hypocritical lying, a seared conscience, forbidding of marriage and meats, and a form of godliness without the power thereof. The rest of this paper contains a number of points about apostasy along with an extensive listing of Bible references for further study of the subject.

1. Satan is the author of apostasy, JOHN 8:44, "Ye are of your father, the devil..." and 2 COR. 4:4, "In whom the god of this world has blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ should shine unto them."

2. Demons help to carry out apostasy in the world, 1 TIM. 4:1.

3. Examples of apostasy in the human race mentioned in Jude are:

Cain - who rejected the Word of God and went religious.

Balaam - who accepted a bribe to curse Israel and fell victim to slavery to the details of life.

Korah - who led a revolt against authority, was anti-establishment.

4. Religious apostasy has many facets:

False gospels: GAL. 1:6-12; 2 COR. 11:3,4

False doctrines: 1 TIM. 4:1,2; 2 PET. 2:1; 1 JOHN 4:3

False messiahs: JOHN 5:43; MATT. 24:5

False prophets, teachers, and evangelists: 2 PET. 2:1; 1 JOHN 4:1; 2 COR. 11:13-15

False ritual: 1 COR. 10:20,21; ROM. 11:9; ISA. 1:10-14

False Gods: 1 COR. 8:5; 10:19-21

False righteousness: Phil. 3:9; Matt. 5:20

5. Characteristics of apostate doctrines:

They repudiate the Person and work of Christ, 2 PET. 2:1; 1 JOHN 2:22,23; 2 JOHN 9,10

They repudiate the veracity of the Word of God, 2 PET. 3:3,4

They ignore the judgments of God, 2 PET. 3:5,6

6. Apostasy appeals to the trends of the sin nature; the trend toward asceticism, 1 TIM. 4:1-3, and the trend toward licentiousness, 2 PET. 2

7. Apostasy is judged by God:

Angels were judged for their apostasy, 2 PET. 2:4; JUDE 6.

Civilizations are judged for apostasy, 2 PET. 2:5.

Cities and national entities are judged for apostasy, 2 PET. 2:6; JUDE 7; JER. 23.

8. Apostates are described in the Bible as:

Animals of instinct, minus doctrine and minus morality, operating on emotional impulses and licentious desires, 2 PET. 2:12.

Fruitless trees that are twice dead; they are spiritually dead, and they will go to the Lake of Fire, JUDE 12.

Waterless clouds, unstable, driven by the wind, 2 PET. 2:17; JUDE 12.

Vicious waves of the sea, dangerous and to be avoided, JUDE 13.

Wandering stars, living in delusion and error, JUDE 13.

9. Apostasy is prevalent in the last days of each dispensation:

Age of the Gentiles, GEN. 11:1-9.

Age of Israel, REV. 13; 2 THESS. 2

Church Age, 2 PET. 3:3; 2 TIM. 3:1.

11. Apostasy is prevalent in the last days of a national entity, JER. 23:9-40.

12. There will be no apostasy during the Millennial Kingdom, REV. 20:1-3; COL. 2:15; ZECH. 13:2,3; ISA. 2:1-4; ISA. 11:9.

13. A brief period of apostasy will follow the Millennial reign of Christ, REV. 20:7-11.

Justice, Judgment and Judging

The Bible says that God is just. We know that He exercises perfect judgment and discernment in His dealings with mankind. This study discusses the various Bible passages dealing with the subjects of judgment and justice and gives the Christian believer a basis for knowing the difference between sinful judging and spiritual discernment in human affairs.

God is the Only Capable Judge of Mankind

ROMANS 2:1-16

The general purpose of ROM. 1:18 TO 3:20 is not to prove that all men are sinners -- this is taken for granted. It is, rather, to make starkly clear the certainty of God's judgment on unrighteousness, which is the terrible consequence of sin.

In chapter 1, the Gentiles were not actually referred to, although they were probably in the picture in the minds of some readers, particularly the Jews. In fact, some people, including especially the Jews, would not have regarded themselves as in the category of immoral persons. Yet these very people, in their self-righteousness, were in equal need of conviction of sin.

This conviction of sin is found in chapter 2, with the individual being addressed as "thou", as opposed to the "they" of chapter 1.

The self-righteous person does not consider himself as being subject to condemnation; and it is not easy to convince him of sin. His self-righteousness and moral trends are so strong that he does not feel the need of the Gospel of Christ.

If the immoral man of chapter 1 is "holding down" or "hindering" the truth by sinning, the respectable man of chapter 2 is "proclaiming the truth in unrighteousness" by judging. Spiritual pride is a great stumblingblock. Chapter 2, verses 1 to 16, is arranged as follows:

1. The Rebuke -- (2:1) The Apostle appeals to the S/R person's conscience. If the man assents to the condemnation of sinners, he really condemns himself. The man must have his arrogance removed; God has one standard for all. Judging others will not bring escape from God's judgment.
2. The First Principle of Judgment -- (2:2) The judgment of God is "according to truth", therefore impartial.
3. The Impossibility of Escape -- (2:3-5) The Jew will not be able to claim any exemption because of his national heritage or religion. No human righteousness provides for escape from judgment.

In human jurisdictions, a guilty person may get away with a crime if (1) his offence is not known; (2) he escapes beyond the bounds of the jurisdiction; (3) there is some failure in the legal process after his arrest; or, (4) he escapes from custody and hides from officers of the law. Of course, none of these will help a person escape from divine justice.
4. The Second Principle of Judgment -- (2:6) God's dealings with mankind are based on absolute justice, whether as to punishment or reward. "Who will render to every man according to his deeds." cf. Prov. 24:12
5. The Reality of Meaning -- (2:7-10) There is no middle ground. Only two sorts of deeds are allowed. People are either on one side or the other.
6. The Third Principle of Judgment -- (2:11) "There is no respect of persons with God." God has no favorites. The Jews' being chosen did not mean that they had immunity from judgment.
7. Universal Application of Judgment -- (2:12-15) Standards of judgment will be different between Jew and Gentile, the Jews being judged by the Law of Moses, and the Gentile being judged by the law of conscience. Thus, character will be the test in both cases.
8. The Fourth Principle of Judgment -- (2:16) Both Jews and Gentiles will be brought face to face with Christ and the Gospel in the ultimate judgment. "In the day when God shall judge

the secrets of men according to my Gospel by Jesus Christ."

The Justice of God

God has sovereignty over His creatures by virtue of His creation. He has the perfect right to dispose of His works as it may please Him. PSA.. 115:3; 135:6

God is a judge. PSALM 50:6. As a judge, He places a penalty on sin. ROM. 6:23, "The wages of sin is death." God demands that disobedience against His laws be punished, DEUT. 18:18-19.

God is perfect in Justice.

ISA. 45:20-25

Ps. 89:13-16

God's Justice is impartial.

II Chr. 19:4-11

Rom. 3:26, "To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus."

God's Justice is satisfied because of God's provision: Jesus Christ paid the penalty.

Col. 2:13-15

The Person and Work of the Lord Jesus Christ satisfied the just demands of God's Righteousness and Justice.

II Cor. 5:21

Isa. 53:10-11

Therefore, God is Just when He forgives the person who accepts the Work of Jesus Christ.

Rom. 8:1, "There is therefore now no condemnation..."

I John 5:11,12 "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life."

Principle : Grace always precedes judgment. cf. Mal. 1,2

Judging

There are several words in the Bible referring to various types of discernment, judgment, and

condemnation. Sometimes we are warned not to engage in sinful judging of others. At other times we are told to exercise godly judgment (discernment) in deciding a matter. In almost every passage dealing with judging, the context will enable you decide which type of judging is being discussed.

For clarity in our teaching, we often use the word *judging* to refer to improper, destructive criticism, either by a believer out of fellowship, or by an unbeliever under certain conditions. We use the word *discernment* for the proper evaluation of people, events, or problems, by believers under the control of the Holy Spirit.

USES OF κρινω (**krino**)

The basic Greek word for the verb "to judge" is **krino**. This word is used for *both* legitimate discernment and for sinful judging. This word has the following uses :

To select, to prefer:

Rom. 14:5 "One man esteems (**krino**) one day above another: another esteems every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind."

This is legitimate discernment.

To judge: "I speak as to wise men; judge ye what I say." I COR. 10:15 Used in the right sense of discernment.

To reach a decision: "...hath so decreed..." I COR. 7:37. The right sense.

To hold court (used as a legal term)

I Cor. 5:12, "For what have I to do to judge thee also that are without? (the unbelievers) Do not ye judge them that are within (believers in local church)?" Paul or a congregation have the right to hold court. In regard to believers this is legitimate.

Acts 25:10, "...where I ought to be judged." Paul is before the Roman Court where it is legitimate for cases to be judged.

Settling a dispute or quarrel :

I Cor. 6:6, "But brother goes to law with brother, and that before the unbelievers..."

Here, **krino** is translated "to go to law", which, in itself, is legitimate. But between two church members it is not right in these circumstances.

Divine Court :

2 Tim. 4:1, "...Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom."

To pass judgment upon, thus to express an opinion:

Matt. 7:1,2, "Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again." This kind of judgment is sinful judging carried on by a believer out of fellowship.

John 7:24, "Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgement." This is an excellent illustration of the Lord teaching that sinful judging is to be replaced by discernment based on spiritual information.

To pass unfavorable judgment upon, to criticize, to find fault with, to condemn:

Romans 2:1, "Therefore, thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself, for thou that judgest doest the same things." This is either a mental attitude sin, a sin of the tongue, or both.

Romans 14:3, "Let not him that eats despise him that eats not; and let not him which eats not judge him that eats: for God hath received him." In other words, mind your own business.

Romans 14:10, "But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ." Delegate all judging to the Lord.

Romans 14:13, "Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way." Here **krino** is used both in the bad sense and in the good sense.

I Cor. 4:5, "Therefore judge nothing before the time until the Lord comes, 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 Cor. 10:29, "Conscience, I say, not thine own but of the other: for why is my liberty judged of another man's conscience?" Live and let live. Live your life as unto the Lord, not unto people..

Col. 2:16, "Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days..."

That is, let the other believer live his life as unto the Lord.

James 4:11,12, "Speak not evil one of another, brethren. He that speaks evil of his brother, and judges his brother ... there is one lawgiver, who is able to have and to destroy: who are you that keeps on judging another?" This person sets himself up as God when judging in this manner.

USES OF ἀνακρίνω (**anakrino**)

To examine for answers ... "to pass judgment upon", which comes to mean "to examine". This is a legitimate activity, especially concerning our attitude toward the scriptures. ACTS 17:11, "These were more noble (open-minded) than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the Word with all readiness (eagerness) of mind, and searched (**anakrino**) the Scriptures (daily), whether those things were so."

I COR. 10:25-27, "...eat, asking no question, for conscience sake...whatsoever is set before you, eat, asking no question for conscience sake."

The idea is that we are not to make an issue out of food set before us by passing judgment on it.

To discern (while in fellowship) ...

The proof that **anakrino** takes on a good connotation is found in the following passage, among others. The term "spiritual" indicates that the believer in fellowship can be discerning without condemnation from God.

I Cor. 2:14,15, "But the natural man (unbeliever) receives not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned (**anakrino**). But he that is spiritual (in fellowship) judges (discerns) all things, yet he himself is judged of no man."

USES OF διακρινω (**diakrino**)

To be at odds with oneself, to doubt, to waver:

Rom. 4:20, "He (Abraham) staggered (**diakrino**) not at the promise of God..."

Rom. 14:23, "And he that doubts (**diakrino**) is damned if he eat, because he eats not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin." This is an introspective judging which proceeds out a guilt complex.

To make a distinction:

I Cor. 4:7, "For who makes thee to differ from another" This is describing the sin of partiality, exalting one person over another; it is failure to recognize that a person is what he is because of the Grace of God.

To judge oneself:

I Cor. 11:31, "For if we would judge (**diakrino**) ourselves, we should not be judged (**krino**).

To render a decision:

I Cor. 6:5, "I speak to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you? No, not one that shall be able to judge between his brethren?"

USE OF κριτικός (**kritikos**)

Used only once in the Word of God, to describe the quality of the Word of God as an absolute criterion of judgment.

Heb. 4:12, "For the Word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor (**kritikos**) of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

USE OF διακρισις (**diakrasis**)

Heb. 5:14, "But strong meat belongs to them that are of full age (mature believers) even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern (**diakrasis**) both good and evil." The believer who uses the Word of God in fellowship will be able to discern a great deal.

The Law of Moses

Introduction

The Law of Moses is divided into three parts, or codes, as follows.

Code I, **The Commandments**, Exodus 20:1-17, contains the laws of divine institution and establishment, including the moral law. This is the Magna Carta or Bill of Rights of human freedom.

Code II, **The Ordinances**, or the spiritual code, included a complete Christology (doctrine of Christ), and was designed to present Christ as the only Savior. Included in the ordinances is a "shadow" Christology and a 'shadow' Soteriology (doctrine of salvation). These ideas are presented in the descriptions of the Tabernacle, the Holy Days, the Levitical Offerings, and the daily activity of the priesthood.

Code III, **The Judgments**, was the social code - the divine laws of establishment applied to social living. Questions of diet, sanitation, quarantine, soil conservation, taxation, military service, how to spend a honeymoon, what to do about divorce, slavery, inheritances, etc., were all covered. It was a complete set of laws.

The Law of Moses is called the Book of the Covenant: Ex. 24:7,8; 34:27,28; Deut. 4:13-16,23,31; 8:18; 9:9,11,15. There is a written addendum to the Law in Deut. 29.

The prophecy regarding the breaking of the Covenant is found in Deut. 31:16,20; Jer. 22:9. The Book of the Covenant is the subject of Jeremiah 11; but it is not to be confused with the new covenant with Israel discussed in Jeremiah 31 to 33.

In the teaching of world history in universities, Hammurabi's Code is set forth as the shining example of law-giving in human history. But the Law of Moses is far more comprehensive and far reaching.

Recipients of the Law of Moses

The Law was given to Israel: Ex. 19:3; Lev. 26:46; Rom. 3:19; 9:4.

The Law was specifically *not* given to Gentiles: Deut. 4:8; Rom. 2:12-14.

Born-again believers of the church age are not under the Law. Therefore, the Mosaic Law was never given to the church: Acts 15:5, 24; Rom. 6:14; Gal. 2:19.

Jesus Christ fulfilled the Law: Matt. 5:17, "...I am not come to destroy the Law, but to fulfill..." He fulfilled the Commandments by living perfectly under the Law. His impeccability and perfect life fulfilled Code I. The Ordinances, Code II, were fulfilled by Christ's death, burial, resurrection, ascension, and session. The Judgments, Code III, were fulfilled by Christ as He observed the law of the land; he lived under divine institutions and establishment.

Jesus Christ is the "end of the Law" for believers: Rom. 10:4.

Believers in the church age are under a higher law of spirituality: Rom. 8:2-4; Gal. 5:18,22,23; I Cor. 13. The believer who functions under the filling of the Holy Spirit takes up where Christ left off and fulfills the Law.

Limitations of the Mosaic Law

The Law cannot provide justification either for individuals or for groups: Gal. 2:16; Rom. 3:20; Rom. 3:28; Acts 13:39; Phil. 3:9.

The Law cannot give life: Gal. 3:21.

The Law cannot give God the Holy Spirit nor the divine power and energy from the Holy spirit: Gal. 3:2.

The Law cannot solve the problem of the Sin Nature: Rom. 8:3. While there were laws of punishment in varying degrees, and fear of punishment helps keep people in line, the Law does nothing to provide victory over sin.

Present Purpose of Mosaic Law

The Commandments provide laws of human freedom and provide a divine standard to which the sinner can compare himself and his actions and recognize that he is a sinner and needs a Savior: Rom. 3:20,28; 1 Tim. 1:8,9.

The Ordinances are designed to communicate God's Grace in both salvation and restoration to fellowship.

The Social Code is designed to provide a true concept of a national function and freedom under the laws of divine establishment.

Salvation in the Old Testament

Salvation is the adjustment a person makes to the Justice of God when he believes on the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior. The justice of God was satisfied when Christ bore our sins in His body on the cross. This makes it possible for God to reconcile the believer to Himself and to impute righteousness to the believer. Gen. 15:6

The Gospel is the information provided in the Bible to give us the facts about God's provision for us.

The death of Christ on the cross was predetermined by the decisions of the Divine Decrees so that, from the standpoint of the OT times, Jesus Christ's substitutionary atonement was certain to take place, even though the actual efficacious sacrifice had not yet occurred. The justice of God was satisfied.

OT believers received Jesus Christ as Savior as He was revealed in OT times. Sometimes He was called Elohim, Jehovah-Elohim, or Jehovah plus a noun (God our Righteousness, etc.). Whenever there was positive volition at the point of God consciousness, God provided Gospel information to the individual.

The first statement of the Gospel is recorded in Genesis 3, at the time of original sin, Man's fall. When Adam and Eve fell, they only had one count against them - negative volition to the command regarding good and evil. Good and Evil is the plan of Satan; so knowledge of good and evil is knowledge of Satan's plan. Adam and Eve, in their innocence in the garden of Eden did not need to be introduced to Satan's plan or to be inculcated with it. Therefore, this one tree was forbidden.

Eve partook of the tree in innocence, Adam partook in cognizance. He had seen the first sinner, Eve, disobey God, but he took part anyway. Remember, there was no immorality involved here, because at the time they were neither moral or immoral. Their sin was merely rejection of what God had commanded. This brought instant spiritual death.

At this instant, man no longer ruled the world; Satan became the ruler of this kosmos. The coup d'etat was complete; and man was now subject to Satan as far as this world is concerned. Mankind immediately became marked with the "mark of Adam", the Sin Nature.

To the question "Which came first, personal sin or the Sin Nature?" the answer is that personal sin came first and caused the existence of the Sin Nature. The human spirit was cancelled out in the sense of spiritual death.

For the rest of the human race, the Sin Nature is inherited at birth, so the Sin Nature is present before there is any opportunity for personal sin. Also, Adam's sin is imputed to us, so that we are born with two strikes against us. "For as in Adam all die ..." Note : we are not called sinners because we sin; we are sinners because we are born, with a Sin Nature, and having Adam's sin imputed to us.

This is the reason that God, with His character of absolute Justice and Righteousness, is not free to enter into a relationship with us unless it can be done without compromising his integrity. And that is only possible if all the sins of the world are judged.

But the Lord has found a way to save mankind. Gen. 3:15, "I will put enmity (hostility) between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; it shall bruise (crush) thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."

The "seed of the woman" is the title for the Lord Jesus Christ in virgin birth. The Sin Nature and Adam's imputed sin is passed down through the male; and Christ was not born of a male-female relationship. He was able to avoid that result of the curse. The Lamb of God had to be without spot or blemish.

At the Second Advent of Christ, the head of Satan will be crushed, and he will no longer rule the world -- Christ will rule the world and Satan will be imprisoned for 1,000 years.

The pattern of salvation in the Old Testament is exactly the same as the pattern of New Testament salvation. Gen. 15:6, "Abraham believed God, and God imputed it to him for righteousness." Imputed righteousness means that God's Justice

has been satisfied. This verse is found in the context of Rom. 4:1-4.

Comments:

- There never was a time, and there never will be a time when God is not saving mankind. Rom. 10:13; 2 Pet. 3:9
- The Gospel was clearly declared in Old Testament times. Rom. 1:1-4; I Cor. 15:3-4; Acts 3:18. The passage in Isa. 53:5,6 has exactly the same boundaries as are found in I Cor. 15:3. Dan. 12:2,3 has the boundary of the resurrection.
- Regardless of age or dispensation, man is always saved in the same manner - positive volition to the Gospel expressed in a non-meritorious way, faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Acts 4:12; Gal. 3:6-8
- Positive volition existed in Old Testament times, both at the point of God consciousness and the point of Gospel hearing. Ex. 33:7; Gen. 15:6
- While revelation from God is progressive, reaching its peak with the New Testament scriptures, it has always been, nevertheless, sufficient for salvation of souls at all periods of time.
- The object of faith in salvation is the Lord Jesus Christ, Gal. 3:26. However, the revelation concerning Christ varies in different ages.
- Jesus Christ was first revealed as Savior at the time of man's fall, Gen. 3:15. He is represented as the "seed of the woman".
- Jesus Christ is usually revealed in the Old Testament by "shadows". For example, in the Tabernacle, in the feasts, in the modus operandi of the Levitical priests.

Another means of revealing Christ was through "inanimate revelation", that is, through things in nature like the burning bush, the Rock, the Shekinah Glory, or through the typology of the furniture in the Tabernacle (Num. 17:7). The Mercy Seat, the hilasterion, was the place of propitiation in the Holy of Holies.

The Levitical offerings were "witnessing by ritual". The burnt offerings taught propitiation,

with emphasis on the word of Christ, the Lamb of God. The meal and fruit offerings revealed the Person of Christ on the cross. The peace offering taught about the barrier between God and man being removed.

The gospel was presented in the Old Testament directly in theological teaching. Isa. 53 was straight doctrinal teaching which showed that Christ carried our guilt as well as our sins.

- Once the reality is come, we have the New Testament, which is historical Christology.
- According to Isa. 55:6, salvation in the person of Jesus Christ, is always available. Acts. 4:12.
- Many conversions are recorded in the Old Testament, including:

Noah was declared "just" in Gen. 6:8,9, and was said to have righteousness in Heb. 11:7. Heb. 11 shows the spiritual life of OT believers. The OT imputation of righteousness is seen in Psalm 24:5 and Isa. 61:10.

For Abraham, compare Gen. 15:6 with Rom. 4:1-4. Job gave perfect testimony to salvation in Gospel form -- death, burial, and resurrection. Job. 19:23-27.

Many Gentiles were saved in the Old Testament. The citizens of Nineveh responded to the Gospel when Jonah preached to them. Matt. 12:41; Luke 11:32. See also Rom. 9:24,25; 9:30-33. See Daniel regarding the salvation of Nebuchadnezzar.

Negative Volition

The Apostle Paul issued a stern warning to mature Christian believers living at Ephesus when he told them to beware of falling into a state of indifference to, or antagonism to, the Word of God. He stated that if they were to become negative to the Lord's teachings, their lives would very quickly become indistinguishable from those of unbelievers in terms of fruitfulness and Christian character.

Ephesians 4:17-19, "This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity (emptiness) of their minds, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God

through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness."

The "darkness" referred to in these verses begins with a negative disposition toward the Word of God. This volitional decision not to follow the Scriptures leads immediately to a breakdown in the faith system of understanding divine viewpoint. There is a cessation in the spiritual growth process; and there is actually a total reversal in progress in the Christian life (backsliding, or reversion).

As a result of the lack of divine viewpoint in the soul, the negative person begins to entertain human standards, human criteria, human doctrine, human programs -- these things, plus the full gamut of Satanic doctrine, are substituted for the plan of God. The further result is subjectivity, unhappiness, and deep frustration in trying to live by techniques which do not work.

These conditions lead to a frantic search for happiness through details of life such as riches, friendships, possessions, human approbation, personal influence and power, and so forth. The believer on this treadmill is a slave to these details of life rather than being a servant of the Lord Jesus Christ. While the believer thus engaged is still "in Christ" positionally, he is actually no better off than an unbeliever as far as this life is concerned. In fact, he is destined to be far unhappier than the unbeliever, as will be shown in the following paragraphs.

The time, energy, and emotional commitments to this person's search for happiness lead to further isolation from the teachings of the Word of God. He is spending maximum effort to find happiness through other means. Thus, the very method for reversing the downward trend is ignored.

During this process, neuroses and psychoses are being developed, aggravated by the self-induced misery which accompanies chronic and unmitigated sins of the mind such as pride, jealousy, envy, vindictiveness, worry, fear, mental adultery, implacability, and the like, from which there is no relief outside of the plan of God.

Because of these sin patterns, divine discipline is compounded daily. This believer has a horrible life composed of his own failures, doubled and redoubled chastisement, his self-induced unhappiness, and the fact that he has no defense against the attacks of Satan and his demons. His "righteousness" (-r) has replaced the

righteousness (+R) of God. This whole miserable situation is avoidable, as you will see with further study.