

# Reckoned to Our Account

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Preacher: Tom Holland

[ 0 : 00 ] When we met last time, we used a term that we've used for several weeks, and that being declarative.

! And we also introduced a new term, that being constitutive. Judgment rendered. Constitutive means a thing, to make a thing what it is, or to exercise the power to enact or establish something. And obviously the person that does it has to have the power to pull that off. And since we're talking about the triune God, they have the one God has the power to pull that off. Justification is both of these things.

It is both a declarative act and a constitutive act or action of God's free grace. God constitutes the new relationship and then declares it to be so. The constitutive act involves the imputation of the obedience and righteousness of Christ into the person being regenerated, being saved.

Now this is staggering to say the least. When God saves a soul by grace through faith in the finished work of Christ, it is said that propitiation occurs.

Propitiation is defined as the appeasement. Or the satisfaction. Now specifically, what is appeased or what is satisfied in propitiation.

[ 2 : 08 ] It is the righteous wrath of God he has stored up for lost sinners. I've told you before, when Paul Worsher went to a church to preach for the whole week and that Sunday he preached on that we are saved from the wrath of God.

When church was over, they asked him not to come back. And his whole week was over after the first service. After salvation, this wrath is gone and is replaced with the imputed righteousness and obedience of Christ.

Now note I didn't say that discipline went away. God can still discipline us and does. Scourges every son. But when the father looks upon a convert, he sees Christ in all his fullness.

A staggering thought. And you know what? People, men couldn't invent that religion. No way we could invent that thought.

That's from God. And the world's religions, that's foreign to the world's religions. It's foreign to a lot of people that call themselves Christians. The obedience of Christ must therefore be regarded as the ground of justification of the ungodly.

[ 3 : 36 ] It is the righteous acts of Christ. At salvation, God imputes the righteousness of Christ to us. And by the way, he imputes our sins to him.

And the Bible has a unique way of putting this. The Holy Spirit, the author of the Word of God says, When we are justified, the righteousness and obedience of Christ is reckoned to our account.

And I think that clearly the Lord was from the south or the west because we say, You know, I reckon or I reckon so or I reckon it to be so. Listen to this passage from the book of Genesis, which speaks about the faith of Abraham, our spiritual father.

In Genesis 15, 6. Then he, that's Abraham, believed in the Lord. And he, that's the Lord, reckoned it to him, that's Abraham, as righteousness.

Abraham believed what God was telling him. And in so believing, it was reckoned to Abraham as righteous.

[ 4 : 54 ] I looked up the word reckon in my Strong's Concordance. It's quite instructive. It is a Hebrew word, which I'll mispronounce now. Kashab. As is common in the Hebrew language, and I might add the Greek language.

It is very expressive. There was no accident that the Bible was written in Hebrew, in the Old Testament, Greek, and the New Testament. Two most expressive languages on earth.

Much more so than English, I may add. The Hebrew word of reckon means to account, to compute, to consider, to count.

I said account first. To count, to hold, to impute, to invest, to be like, to purpose, to reckon, to regard.

To name just a few definitions. There were some others. Other translations say it was counted to him as righteousness or accounted to him as righteousness.

[ 6 : 03 ] It is interesting that this text shows up repeatedly in the New Testament. This concept. Let me give you some examples.

Romans 4.3. For what does the Scripture say? And by the way, that's a great question. When someone asks you a question, just throw it back on. What do the Scriptures say?

I'm dealing with that right now in my own family. Well, what do the Scriptures say? Abraham believed God. In Galatians chapter 3.

Does he who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you do so by works of the law? Or by hearing with faith?

Or by hearing with faith? Just as Abraham believed God and it was counted to him as righteousness. And then in James chapter 2.

[ 7 : 01 ] Verse 23. And the Scripture was fulfilled that says, Abraham believed God and it was counted to him as righteousness. And he was called a friend of God.

Amazing passages of Scripture here. The Greek word for Canada is a logoidzomai and it means the same thing as the Hebrew counterpart.

Put in the same definitions. Now, if we're not careful, we can easily arrive at the conclusion that it was Abraham's faith that he conjured up internally.

And once he did that, the Lord looked down and said, Oh, good. I can reckon him to be righteous. God, the Father, God, the Son have to sit kind of impotent until another person comes along and does that.

That's not salvation. Abraham didn't conjure up enough faith. So the Lord concluded it was enough faith to be credited to Abraham's account.

[ 8 : 13 ] So it was then credited with enough righteousness to be saved. That's not how it works. In other words, God accepted Abraham's faith originating in Abraham as sufficient to fulfill the requirements necessary for a full and perfect justification.

It says he believed God. He believed what God was telling him. And we could go all the way over to Ephesians, find out faith itself is even a gift of God.

But if all that's true, then Abraham and every person ever justified was justified on the ground of faith. And because of faith.

Now I want you to note very carefully in the preceding sentence, I twice used the preposition of in front of the word faith.

The scriptures never use that term unless it's a bad translation. They just don't use that term. Instead, the Bible speaks of our justification or our salvation of being by faith and through faith or upon faith.

[ 9 : 30 ] But the word of God never speaks of us being justified on account of faith or because of faith. It would be very easy to accuse me of splitting hairs on this point, but that's not the case.

The doctrine of justification by faith alone in Christ and him alone on the basis of scripture alone was largely lost by the church for a thousand years.

Look up the dark ages. And it had devastating results. In the 21st century, there are indications that it's being lost again. Again, what we've been studying here, guys, is not going on in a lot of places. Out yonder. It's just not going on. The fact that the word of God, and especially the apostle Paul, the great writer on justification, avoids such terms as of faith or on account of faith, is more than ample reason for us to at least be careful when we study the truth of justification or when we speak of justification.

The fact is that faith is not itself the righteousness spoken of in justification. The righteousness of justification is not wrought in us or done by us.

[ 10 : 56 ] If it is, I'm in deep trouble. Well, we need to develop this point further because it's vitally important. Far too many have been deceived over the generations and often by well-meaning people that if they will conjure up faith one time, they'll be saved.

I mean, we all know that scripture that says once saved, always saved. And that's what they say. I believe that, but I never use that because it's been abused. But in their thinking, just conjure it up one time.

Just repeat this prayer and that'll be faith enough and you'll go to heaven. And then the people are sent away and they have an insurance policy that'll keep them out of hell.

And they have their ticket that'll get them into heaven. Well, the Bible didn't teach that. So let's talk some more about this point. And I'm going to use me as an example.

I was saved around age 30. If I'd been able to conjure up real righteousness, which the Bible, by the way, says is an impossibility. And once that righteousness was conjured up, I would never have committed another sin from that point forward in the future.

[ 12 : 14 ] Wouldn't that be nice? Now, the Bible says that's an impossibility. But the righteousness that I conjured up, it still would have fallen short from the justification taught in the scriptures.

I would not have been justified. Well, why not? That type of righteousness would have been powerless to cancel the sin debt that I owed God for past transgressions.

I'd stored up a whole bunch of sins. I always remember my good friend from Morocco, Islamic boy, and we were talking on this subject.

And I said, of course, the big thing in Islam, you've got to go to the Hajj, to Mecca, and you walk around the Kabbalah, a rock. And millions go around this rock.

And I said, have you done that yet? He said, no, I'm still storing up sins. I want to make sure I've got a sufficient amount of sins, and then I'll go and be cleansed. I said, you know, I get cleansed every day.

[ 13 : 21 ] I get cleansed every hour every day. Oh, I can't buy into that. Yeah, I know. But that kind of justification is powerless to eradicate past sins, my sin debt.

My sins and transgressions would not be obliterated, and my condemnation for the past would still rest heavily upon me.

Biblical justification, as taught in God's Word, includes the remission of all sin. Past, past, present, and future.

And the impossibility of condemnation for those sins still in my account before God. We had a dear old timer.

He's gone now, and he struggled on that point. He said, I understand that the Lord forgave me of my present sins. He even forgave me for my future sins, but I don't know how he could forgive me for my past sins.

[ 14 : 30 ] And I said, Lloyd, all your sins were in the past. I mean, when you got saved at 40 or whatever you were, you had a whole tassel of those.

And a bunch of them were still in the future. He struggled with that his whole life. The only righteousness that God accepts that is the basis of true and lasting justification must be one that erases past sins and future sins at the same time.

God won't allow sin in his presence. Be ye perfect, as Christ is perfect. Well, we are perfect if we're saved, but it's the perfections of Christ and not me, I can tell you.

But that's the only righteousness that God accepts. It is what theologians call enwrought righteousness. And that enwrought righteousness no way measures up to the essential need.

There's a certain amount of righteousness that comes with regeneration when we realize that God has done a work in us. If nothing else, we feel good or we should feel good.

[ 15 : 48 ] There's also a certain amount of righteousness that comes in the sanctification process. We're going to be studying that. We become increasingly more Christ-like. We engage in the good works which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

Talk about, you can read about that in Ephesians 2.10. But any degree of righteousness that may flow from regeneration and sanctification are fleeting at best and can never measure up to the righteousness required for eternal life in Christ.

One theologian said this, Only a perfect righteousness can provide the basis for a complete, perfect, and irreversible justification.

That's the kind of justification we need. The justification we are speaking about flows from the triune God. And it gives us a title to and secures for us eternal life.

Listen to Paul in Romans chapter 5. For if, because of one man's trespass, that's Adam and me, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ.

[ 17 : 24 ] Therefore, as one trespass, that's the Garden of Eden, led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness, that's Christ, leads to justification in life for all men, all who will believe,

all the elect of God.

For as by one man's obedience, the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience, many will be made righteous. Now the law came in to increase the trespass.

But where sin increased, grace abounded all the more. So that as sin reigned in death, grace also might reign through righteousness, leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Later, Paul would say, well, since grace increases more than our sins, does that mean we should sin so we get more grace? He said, God forbid. He said, don't even think that.

Clearly, none of us made ourselves righteous. We didn't. We were made righteous by the action of one man, the God-man, Jesus Christ.

[18:50] Our reward of eternal life is found in Him. It is not found in us. We do not have to have faith, but even that is...

I'm sorry, we do have to have faith. Now, we don't have faith in faith. That's a misnomer. But we have faith, and even that is referred to as the gift of God given to all who God knows will believe. And He doesn't gift them because they're going to believe. They believe because He gifts them. And by the way, that's Ephesians 2, 8 and 9. And another point, which should be obvious to all of us, is that justification is not performance-based.

Aren't you glad? It is not by righteousness, righteous performance on our part. In other words, it's not by our works.

Here are some passages that support this conclusion. Romans 3, 20. Very familiar. For by works of the law, no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin.

[20:03] Romans 4, 2. For if Abraham was justified by works, that's works of the law, he has something to boast about, but not before God.

I always get aggravated when I read, well, we're saved by grace. And the Old Testament, they were saved by keeping the law. They never kept the law for one minute, for one second.

I mean, how many have kept the greatest commandment for five seconds? Love God with all your heart, mind, soul, and strength. Have you even loved your neighbor for five seconds as you want God to love you? Romans 10, 3.

For being ignorant of the righteousness of God and seeking to establish their own, they did not submit to God's righteousness.

Galatians 3, 11. Now it is evident that no one is justified before God by the law, for the righteous shall live by faith. Righteous person lives by faith and not law.

[21:02] You are severed from Christ, Galatians. You are severed from Christ. You would be justified by the law. You have fallen away from grace. I love Philippians 3, 8, and 9.

Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For His sake, I suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish.

Dung, manure, in order that I may gain Christ. Powerful, powerful messages here.

And note, they're all from Paul. Paul was the real author of justification by faith. And the Scriptures insist that justification is never attained by the works of the law or any other types of works.

Now what about the Ten Commandments? See, we're not under the dietary laws. Doesn't mean we eat bad like we did tonight.

[22:12] We're not under dietary laws. We're not under many of the Jewish laws. They passed away. The Jews were under that. What about the Ten Commandments? Nine of the Ten Commandments are reaffirmed in the New Testament.

Nine of the ten. What's the one that's not? Sabbath. Sabbath being six o'clock Friday evening and six o'clock Saturday evening.

When do we worship? First day. First day, but actually every day. But we do. We set aside for the corporate worship, most of us, most churches.

Is it evil to worship for the Seventh-day Adventist to worship on Saturday? Of course not. Of course not. There's some other problems with our theology, but not that.

We worship to honor resurrection. He resurrected on Sunday morning. But we don't follow the Jewish Sabbath.

[23:13] And what was the Jew supposed to do on the Sabbath? Nothing. Exactly. Rest. Okay, it's Sunday morning. I'm going to rest.

I'm not going to drive my car. I'm not going to church. I've got to rest. You know, a lot of people do. That was a day of rest. Commemorated by the seventh day of creation where God rested.

Was God tired? No. He wasn't tired. He was teaching a lesson. But the Scriptures insist that justification is never retained by works of the law. We are justified by the free grace of God. Such justification is never the reward for anything in us. It proceeds totally from God's free, unmerited, undeserved, and unearned favor.

You can put all the uns in there you want. And it's good to do that. Romans 3.24. We read it before. We are justified by His grace as a gift through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

[ 24 : 28 ] It's the whole basis of our justification. It's a gift. He gifts it to His people. If we are to find the righteousness that is the sole provider of the full and perfect justification which God bestows on the ungodly, we cannot find it in ourselves.

Wesley thought he could. John Wesley thought he could. And he taught perfectionism. He admitted on his deathbed, apparently, he didn't attain it.

And he said, I don't know anybody that has. I met a guy that said, why? I told you that, didn't I? And he said, I've attained perfection. By the time I saw you, he'd lost his salvation. He was so mad at me.

We don't find anything that resides in us that brings about our justification. We cannot find anything within ourselves that God then uses to bring about this change.

It is not anything we do. Now, let me say this. You know, thin ice. It is not even something that God does inside of us.

[ 25 : 42 ] Now, let me complete my thought before you storm the castle with pitchforks and torches. In order to receive justification, we must look away from ourselves.

And that's what I meant by that. Look away from yourselves. We must look in an entirely different direction. So what direction do the Scriptures teach us to look?

Look to Christ. He's everything. He's not an afterthought. That used to be, I remember that was taught 30 years ago.

Pastor, you were barely alive. 40 years ago, you weren't alive. Where they said, Salvation Day is plan B. Guys, there's only plan A.

There is no plan B. We must look to Christ. It is in Christ that we are justified.

[ 26 : 44 ] Acts 13, 39. In Christ, everyone who believes is freed from everything from which they could not be freed by the law of Moses.

And I think we all understand the law was never given to save. It never was given to save. The law is a mirror. You look in the mirror and what do you see?

Well, depending on who's looking, something really bad or ugly. Myself included. But the law is a mirror. It reflects back on us. The law was intended to drive us to a Savior.

I need somebody that can fulfill that law because I can't do it for five seconds. Romans 8, 1.

Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

How much condemnation is reserved for somebody that's in Christ? Absolutely none. None. I had a good Wesleyan friend of mine who said, can you show me one verse?

[ 27 : 48 ] And I showed him that one. He says, can you show me another one? I said, yeah, I'll read the whole eighth chapter. 1 Corinthians 6.11. You were washed. That's Oklahoma, how you say washed.

My wife says washed. It just aggravates me. It's washed. There's about four R's in there. That'll be on tape, won't it? You were washed. You were sanctified.

You were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God. Let me tell you guys, all this is the Trinity at work.

It's the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit that are doing all this. We are justified solely on the basis of our union with Christ.

He's the ground. He's the justifier. We are united him through the sacrificial and redemptive work of Christ Jesus.

[ 28 : 51 ] We are justified by his grace as a gift through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, our Lord. Romans 3.24. Romans 5.9.

Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. I'd love to go to that church where Paul worshiped.

They said, the Bible didn't teach that. What'd that say? Much more will we be saved by Jesus from the wrath of God. Where'd that wrath go?

Squarely on Jesus. I think that's why the whole world turned dark. I think God closed his eyes. Could not look upon sin, the sin that Christ had taken.

And there's the torture of the cross. Now, yeah, the beatings were bad. Clearly the scourgings. All that was bad. But the torture of the cross was his separation from the Godhead and taking upon himself.

[ 29 : 54 ] He who knew no sin became sin that we might become the righteousness of God in him. And then, of course, the very famous Romans 8, 33 and 34.

Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died. More than that, he was raised. Who is at the right hand of God. And now I love this.

Who is indeed interceding for us. I tell my good Wesleyan friends at VOM, what's Christ doing right now? Well, I don't know.

Well, he's interceding for you. Now, when does he stop doing that? And they don't have an answer. He never stops. He never stops.

[ 30 : 50 ] How are we going to be lost? He's interceding for us. We are justified by the blood of Christ. When we think of our justification, men, we think of the cross.

It occurred 2,000 years ago. We were not there except in the mind of Christ. But in his mind, we were there. We are justified by the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The End