

Glad Tidings

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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Another Gospel

(Jerry Fite)

In the 2010 Together for the Gospel conference, John Piper confirmed the validity of R.C. Sproul’s statement: “*If you don’t have imputation, you don’t have sola fide (faith alone), and if you don’t have sola fide, you don’t have the gospel.*” By imputation these men are saying that not only our sins were imputed to Christ, the sacrificial lamb of God, but Christ’s righteousness was imputed to us so God can declare us righteous. The means through which such righteousness can be obtained is faith, the simple trust in Christ as the basis for our righteousness.

The transferring of sins and righteousness is part of Calvinistic thinking going back to man inheriting the sin of Adam. Being totally tainted in flesh and spirit, man needs the perfect righteousness of Christ to be transferred to one’s self in order to be righteous before God. The problem with such thinking is the Bible does not teach such. The Scriptures teach us that sin did enter into the world through Adam (*Romans 5:12*), but it does not claim that all men were guilty because of Adam’s sin being inherited. All men were separated from God because “*all sinned*” (*Romans 5:12*).

If man follows the steps of Abraham in being justified by faith and not by works of law, he will have his faith reckoned unto him for righteousness. “*Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned unto him for righteousness*” (*Romans 4:3*). Notice, it is one’s faith that is put to one’s account for righteousness, not the perfect life or righteousness of Christ. Christ’s death and resurrection is the basis for one being righteous, and faith is the means. “*Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was reckoned unto him; but for our sake also, unto whom it shall be reckoned, who believe on him that raised Jesus from the dead, who was delivered up for our trespasses, and was raised for our justification*” (*Romans 4:23-25*).

The Scriptures teach justification is by faith, but not the Calvinistic theory of faith alone. Such a theory restricts justification by faith to the simple trust in Jesus as Savior, excluding other actions of faith involved in justification from sin. For example, Paul reminds us not only is believing Jesus was raised from the dead necessary to being saved, but confessing, or speaking the truth with God that Jesus is Lord is necessary for salvation. “*For with*

the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with his mouth confession is made unto salvation” (*Romans 10:9-10*).

In his preaching, John Piper emphasizes faith as looking away from self and only focusing upon Jesus as the basis for righteousness. Is this not what one does when he looks beyond self, and confesses Jesus as Lord?

John Piper places before men two passages: *Romans 5:1* and *Romans 8:1*. He emphasizes we are justified “by faith” and those “in Christ” have no condemnation. The Gospel also offers a third passage instructing us as to how faith acts in order to bring us into Christ. “*For ye are all sons of God by faith, in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ*” (*Gal.3:27*). One comes to being “in Christ” by being baptized “into Christ”. Baptism is part of saving faith which looks beyond self and trusts in Jesus’ death and resurrection as the basis for justification (*Rom. 6:3-4, Col. 2:12, I Peter 3:21*).

Calvinistic imputation and faith alone, is another gospel, not the Gospel Paul preached. (*cf. Gal.1:6-8*).