

***“The Breastplate of
Righteousness: Part V”***

Ephesians 6:10-20

June 14, 2009

So far we've talked about...

- The holiness of God and the seriousness of our sin;
- The substitutionary atonement of Christ;
- The imputed righteousness of Christ.

Practical Righteousness

If Christ has accomplished everything for those who believe in him, including our righteousness before God, do we still have to pursue righteousness?

Practical Righteousness

The Bible teaches that good works are a visible display of the fact that we have been reconciled to God. They play no part whatsoever in earning our salvation, which is to say that we are not saved by the good works we do, but they do play an integral part in proving that we have been saved.

Practical Righteousness

“But what is distinctive about the Christian warfare is that we can only kill the sin that has already been killed when we were killed in Christ. Or, to put it positively, we can only achieve practical righteousness as a working out of imputed righteousness. The battle is to become what we are in Christ; righteous with the imputed righteousness of Christ” (Counted Righteous in Christ, 50).

A Response to Catholics...

- Establishing our own righteousness before God is impossible.
- Trying to establish a righteousness of our own is a return to legalism, which God hates.

Galatians 3:1-4

“O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you? It was before your eyes that Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified. Let me ask you only this: Did you receive the Spirit by works of the law or by hearing with faith? Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh? Did you suffer so many things in vain--if indeed it was in vain?”

Galatians 3:1-4

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.”

A Response to Catholics...

- Establishing our own righteousness before God is impossible.
- Trying to establish a righteousness of our own is a return to legalism, which God hates.
- We who teach the imputed righteousness of Christ also teach that good works have a prominent place in life with Christ.

Wayne Grudem

“Faith alone justifies but a justified person with faith alone would be a monstrosity which never exists in the Kingdom of grace. Faith works itself out through love (cf. Gal 5:6). And faith without works is dead (cf. James 2:17-20). It is living faith that justifies and living faith unites to Christ both in the virtue of his death and in the power of his resurrection.

Wayne Grudem

No one has entrusted himself to Christ for deliverance from the guilt of sin who has not also entrusted himself to him for deliverance from the power of sin. ‘What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?’ (Rom 6:1-2)” (Systematic Theology, 131).

A Response to Catholics...

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- We who teach the imputed righteousness of Christ also teach that good works have a prominent place in life with Christ.

Ephesians 2:8-10

⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, ⁹ not a result of works, so that no one may boast. ¹⁰ For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

Philippians 2:12-13, 3:12

“¹² Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, ¹³ for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.” Phil 3:12: “Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own.”

Titus 2:11-15

“¹¹ For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, ¹² training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, ¹³ waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, ¹⁴ who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works. ¹⁵ Declare these things; exhort and rebuke with all authority. Let no one disregard you.”

Hebrews 10:14, 12:14, 2

“For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified.”

“Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord...looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith.”

1 Peter 2:24-25

“²⁴ He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. ²⁵ For you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.”

Application

- Satan is a slanderer and lives to accuse us before God, hoping he can marshal the wrath of God against us.
- And it would work except for the atonement and imputation.
- We will still be disciplined by the Father, but we're no longer under his condemnation.

Romans 8:1-4

“¹ There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. ² For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death. ³ For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh,

Romans 8:1-4

4 in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.”