

Systematic Theology: Justification, Pt 2: Imputation vs. Infusion



Wittenberg Castle Church, Germany
Site of Luther's 95 Theses, October 31, 1517

The Reformation begins in the heart of a priest...



MARTIN LUTHER

- Born 1483
- 1507 ordained as a Catholic Priest
- 1512 Doctor of Theology at University of Wittenberg



The Reformation begins in the heart of a priest...

- About Romans 1:17: "I hated that word, 'the righteousness of God,' by which I had been taught according to the custom and use of all teachers ... [that] God is righteous and punishes the unrighteous sinner."

The Reformation begins in the heart of a priest...



- Luther said, “I saw the connection between the justice of God and the statement that ‘the just shall live by his faith.’ Then I grasped that the justice of God is that righteousness by which through grace and sheer mercy God justifies us through faith. ... Thereupon I felt myself to be reborn and to have gone through open doors into paradise. The whole of Scripture took on a new meaning, and whereas before the ‘justice of God’ had filled me with hate, now it became to me inexpressibly sweet in greater love. This passage of Paul became to me a gate to heaven.”



The Ground of Justification

How shall we be
declared just before God?

We are **ACTUALLY JUST** so as
to merit being declared just

We are declared just
By the **RIGHTEOUSNESS
SUPPLIED BY ANOTHER**



The Ground of Justification

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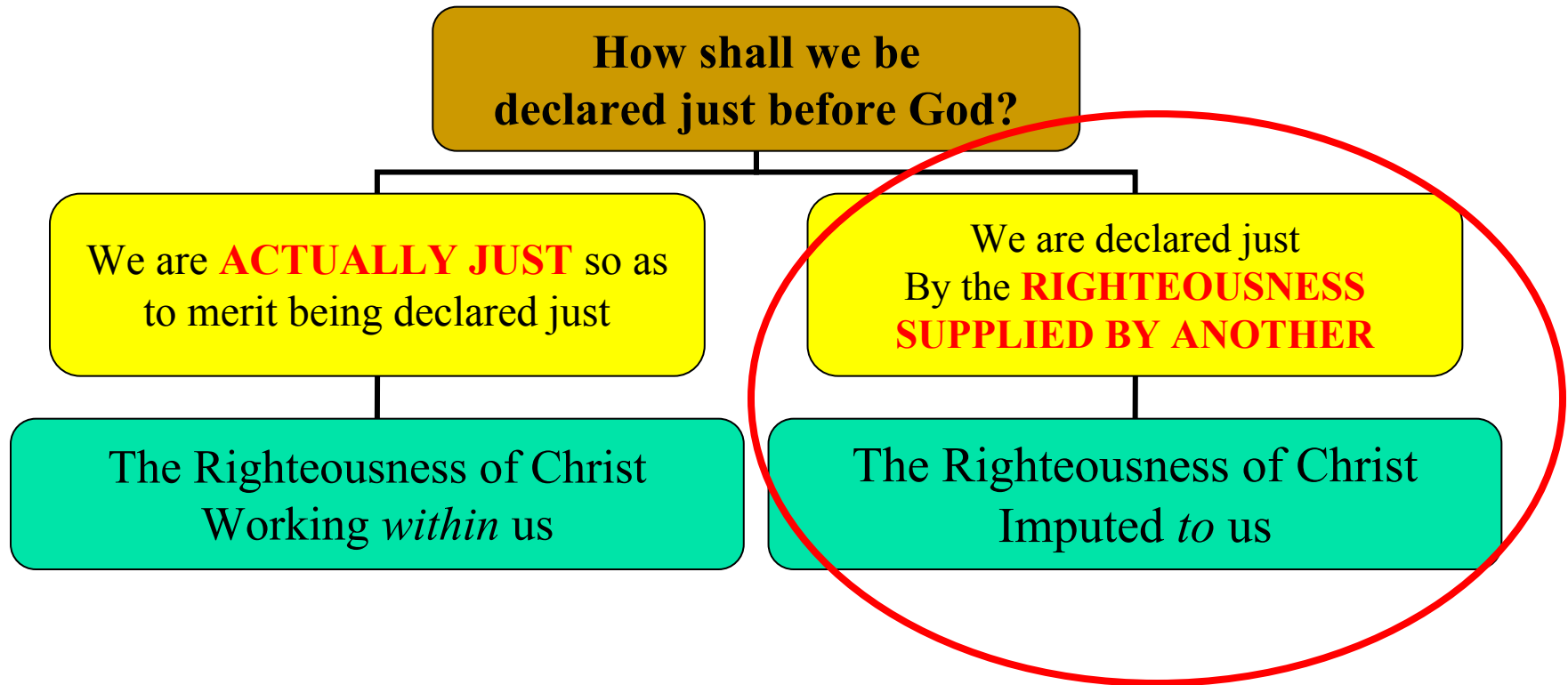
The Righteousness of Christ
Working *within* us

We are declared just
By the **RIGHTEOUSNESS
SUPPLIED BY ANOTHER**

The Righteousness of Christ
Imputed *to* us



The Ground of Justification





The Concept of Imputation

To Impute: “To charge; to ascribe; to attribute; to set to the account of; to charge to one as the author, responsible originator, or possessor.”

--Dictionary.com



The Concept of Imputation

- **Psalm 32:2**

How blessed is the man to whom the LORD does not impute iniquity.



The Concept of Imputation

- **1 Samuel 22:15**

“Do not let the king impute anything to his servant or to any of the household of my father, for your servant knows nothing at all of this whole affair.”



The Concept of Imputation

- **Philemon 18:** “But if [Onesimus] has wronged you in any way or owes you anything, charge that to my account”



The Concept of Imputation

- Three Biblical Imputations:
 - The imputation of **Adam's sin** to the **human race** (Romans 5)
 - The imputation of **a Believer's sin** to Christ.
 - The imputation of **Christ's Righteousness** to Believers.



The Imputation of our Sin to Christ

- **Romans 4:6-8:** “Blessed are those whose lawless deeds have been forgiven, and whose sins have been covered. Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord will not take into account.”



The Imputation of our Sin to Christ

- **2 Corinthians 5:21:** “He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf.”
- **Isaiah 53:6:** “The Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.”
- **1 Peter 2:24:** “He Himself bore our sins in his body on the tree.”



The Uniqueness of the Gospel

- Why did it have to be Jesus to bear our sins?



The Uniqueness of the Gospel

- Why did it have to be Jesus to bear our sins?
 - **Cannot be an animal: Hebrews 10:4:** “It is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins”



The Uniqueness of the Gospel

- Why did it have to be Jesus to bear our sins?
 - **Cannot be an animal: Hebrews 10:4:** “It is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins”
 - **Cannot be “one of us:”** We have our own sins to pay for
 - We need a perfectly innocent human to take our place



The Imputation of our Sin to Christ

- After imputing our sins to Him, God offered Jesus as the **propitiation** for sin
- **Propitiation:**
 - “a sacrifice that bears God’s wrath to the end and in so doing changes God’s wrath toward us into favor.”

--Grudem



The Imputation of our Sin to Christ

- **Hebrews 2:17:** “He had to be made like His brethren in all things...to make propitiation for the sins of the people.”
- **1 John 2:2:** “He Himself is the propitiation for our sins.”



The Imputation of our Sin to Christ

- **Penal Substitution:**
 - Penal □ penalty
 - Substitution □ in our place



The Imputation of our Sin to Christ

- **Penal Substitution:**

- Penal □ **penalty**
- Substitution □ **in our place**

- **Vicarious Atonement:**

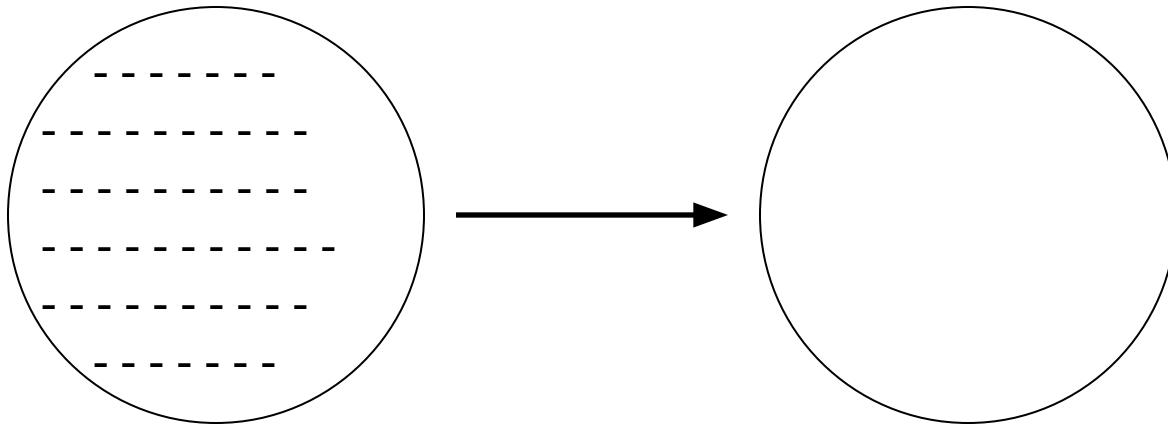
- A vicar □ someone who **stands in the place** of another.



The Imputation of our Sin to Christ

- **Penal Substitution:**
 - Penal □ penalty
 - Substitution □ in our place
- **Vicarious Atonement:**
 - A vicar □ someone who stands in the place of another.
- **Passive Obedience:** Christ suffering the **penalty for our sins**

The Imputation of our Sin to Christ

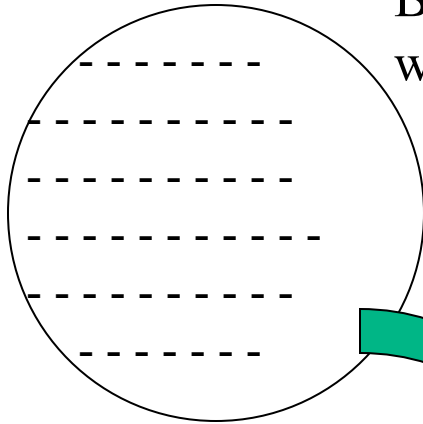


Forgiveness of sins is one part of justification

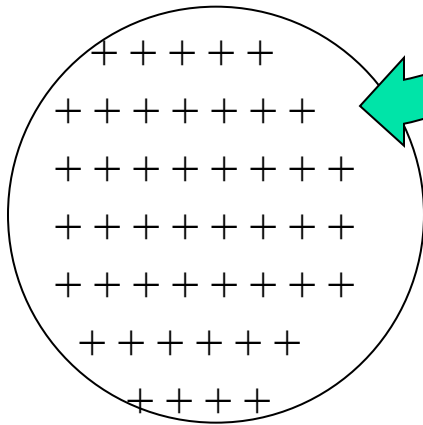
The Imputation of our Sin to Christ

Believers' sins were imputed to Christ, so that when God looked on Christ, He saw our sin

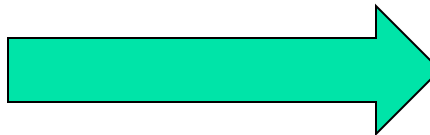
Believers



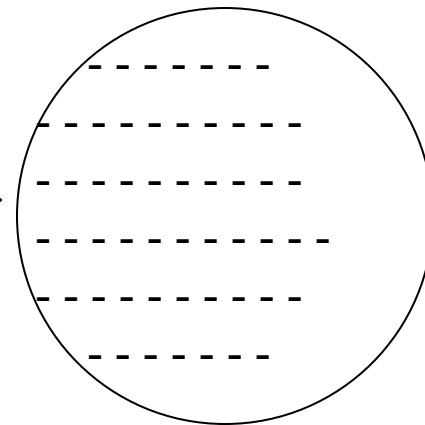
Christ



GOD



Christ





The Catholic Mass

- **Council of Trent (Session 22, canon 1):** "If any one saith that in the Mass a true and proper sacrifice is not offered to God; or, that to be offered is nothing else but that Christ is given us to eat; let him be anathema."

The Catholic Mass



Roman Catholic Crucifix



Christian/Protestant Cross



The Imputation of our Sin to Christ

- **John 19:30:** “It is finished!”
- **Hebrews 9:28:** “so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many.”
- **Hebrews 1:3:** “After making purification for sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.”



The Imputation of our Sin to Christ

- **Hebrews 10:11-12** says: “Every priest STANDS *daily* ministering and offering time after time the *same* sacrifices, which can never take away sins; but Jesus, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, SAT DOWN at the right hand of God.”

“The Burning of our English Reformers”



“Great indeed would be our mistake, if we supposed that they suffered for the vague charge of refusing submission to the Pope, or desiring to maintain the independence of the Church of England. Nothing of the kind! The principal reason why they were burned, was because they refused one of the peculiar doctrines of the Romish Church. On that doctrine, in almost every case, hinged their life or death. If they admitted it — they might live; if they refused it — they must die! The doctrine in question was the real presence of the body and blood of Christ in the consecrated elements of bread and wine in the Lord's Supper. Did they, or did they not, believe that the body and blood of Christ were really, that is, corporally, literally, locally, and materially, present under the forms of bread and wine after the words of consecration were pronounced?” --J.C. Ryle

The Reformed Change in Architecture



Roman Catholic Mass



Protestant Pulpit

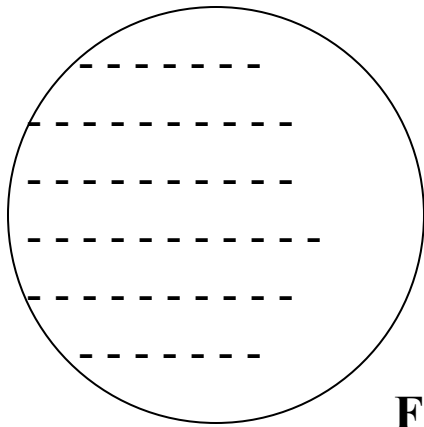


Imputed Righteousness

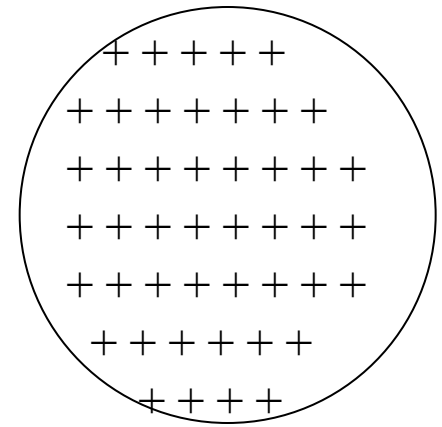
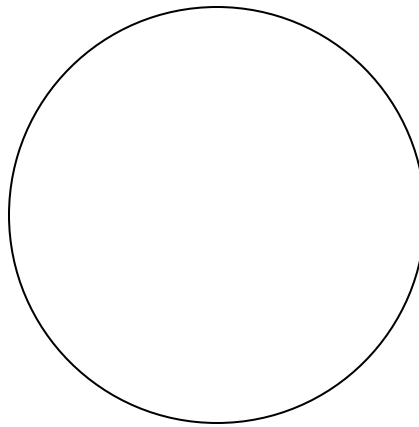
- Forgiveness leaves us **morally neutral** before God
- We must also have **positive righteousness** to get into heaven
- “Justification is more than just forgiveness. To speak of forgiveness is to say, ‘you may go, you have been let off from your penalty,’ but to speak of justification is to say, ‘you may come, you are welcome into all my love and my presence.’”



Imputed Righteousness



**Forgiveness
of Sin**



**Imputation
of Righteousness**



Imputed Righteousness

- **Romans 4:2-3:** (2) “For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. (3) For what does the Scripture say? ‘Abraham believed God, and it was credited to Him as righteousness.’”
- Paul thinks of justification in terms of the imputation of a positive righteousness



Imputed Righteousness

- **2 Corinthians 5:21:** “He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”



Imputed Righteousness

- God **made** Him to be sin **(by imputation)**
 - God **made** us to become the righteousness of God. **(by imputation)**
- An upward-pointing arrow connects the word "made" in the second bullet point to the word "made" in the first bullet point.



Imputed Righteousness

- The righteousness that is being imputed is the **righteousness of God**.
 - **Jeremiah 23:6:** “And this is His name by which He will be called, ‘The LORD our righteousness.’”



Imputed Righteousness

- More specifically, **Christ's righteousness**, is imputed to our accounts.
- Christ came to fulfill all righteousness.
 - **Matthew 3:15**: “fulfill all righteousness”
 - **Matthew 5:17**: “fulfill the Law and the Prophets”



Imputed Righteousness

- Imputed righteousness is often referred to as God **clothing us** with His righteousness.
- **Isaiah 61:10:** “My soul will exult in my God; for He has clothed me with the garments of salvation, He has wrapped me with a robe of righteousness.”



Imputed Righteousness

- **Zechariah 3:3-5:** “Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments and standing before the angel. He spoke and said to those who were standing before him, saying, ‘Remove the filthy garments from him.’ Again he said to him, ‘See, I have taken your iniquity away from you and will clothe you with festal robes.’”



Imputed Righteousness

- **Passive Obedience:** Christ suffering the *penalty for our sins*

- **Active Obedience:**



Christ actively fulfilling *all perfect righteousness*



Imputed Righteousness

“The cross alone, however, does not justify us. We need not only a substitute to pay for our demerits, but also positive righteousness. We are justified not only by the death of Christ but also by the life of Christ. Christ’s mission of redemption was not limited to the cross. To save us he had to live a life of perfect righteousness. He earned the merit of perfect righteousness, not only for his own humanity, but for all those whom he redeems.”

--R.C. Sproul



Imputed Righteousness

- *iustitia extra nos*: “a righteousness **outside of or apart** from us.”
- *iustitia alienum*: “an **alien** righteousness.”
- “A Christian is righteous and holy by an alien or foreign holiness. It is a divine blessing, given us through the true knowledge of the Gospel.”

--Martin Luther



The Uniqueness of the Gospel

- The whole world and all world religions are based on you giving your merit to God
- Christianity is the only religion in which God *gives His* merit to you



The Ground of Justification

How shall we be
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We are **ACTUALLY JUST** so as
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We are declared just
By the **RIGHTEOUSNESS
SUPPLIED BY ANOTHER**

The Righteousness of Christ
Working *within* us

The Righteousness of Christ
Imputed *to* us

simul iustus et iustus
“Simultaneously just and **just**”

simul iustus et peccator
“Simultaneously just and **sinner**”



Rome on Justification

“If anyone says that men are justified either by the sole imputation of the justice of Christ or by the sole remission of sins...or also that the grace by which we are justified is only the good will of God, let him be anathema.”

--Canon 11, Council of Trent



Infused Righteousness

“For since Christ Jesus Himself continually infuses strength into those justified, which strength always precedes, accompanies, and follows their good works, and without which they could not in any manner be pleasing and meritorious before God, we must believe that...by those very works which have been done in God, [these works have] fully satisfied the divine law according to the state of this life and have truly merited eternal life.”

--Chapter 16, the Council of Trent



Infused Righteousness

- Baptism allows us to receive the infused righteousness of Christ
- Infused righteousness changes us **internally and morally** to do **good works**
- We can do enough good works “in Christ” to **merit eternal life**
 - Then we are justified



Infused Righteousness

“Romanists [teach] that on account of the work of Christ, God grants, through Christian baptism, an infusion of divine grace, by which all sin is purged from the soul. This is the first justification. Then in virtue of the new principle of spiritual life thus imparted, the baptized or regenerated are enabled to perform good works, which are really meritorious and on account of which they are admitted to heaven.”

--Charles Hodge



3 Important Questions

Is Justification...	Protestant/ Evangelical	Roman Catholic
Legal or Moral?	Legal	Moral
An Event or a Process?	Event	Process
Distinct from Sanctification or the Same Thing?	Distinct	Same Thing



Infused Righteousness

ROME:

Baptism

Justified!

Good works by infused righteousness
received by faith to merit justification

A Person's Life

**Rome mixes justification with sanctification,
making justification a process instead of a
Single event**



Infused Righteousness

ROME:

Baptism

Justified!

Good works by infused righteousness
received by faith to merit justification

A Person's Life

Justified!

Bible:

Faith

Sanctification: God making us more like Christ
produces good works

A Person's Life



Practical Applications

- Imputed Righteousness allows us to take **Communion "in remembrance of Him"** (1 Corinthians 11:24)



Practical Application

- Imputed Righteousness changes your sense of **personal value**
- “Our shared core hunger is for value. We desperately want to matter and feel a sense of worthiness.”

--Tony Schwartz, *The Enduring Hunt for Value*

Personal



Practical Application

- “The gospel is the only form of worthiness and value that's not achieved, it's given to you. This is the end of your struggle to matter. If we are all sinners, then you have no right to feel superior to anyone else, but you also have no need, because your identity and value is secure in the love of the King.” --Tim Keller



Practical Application

- Imputed Righteousness allows us to be **open and honest** with one another in fellowship and care groups.