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WHAT ABRAHAM FOUND

## **Abraham as a Case Study in the Broader Context**

- All are under sin – *Romans 3:9, 19, 23*
- The pursuit of being justified – *Romans 9:30-31; 3:20*
- The presentation of the gospel – righteousness/justification is by faith – *Romans 1:16-17; 3:27-31*

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## WHAT ABRAHAM FOUND

### **Abraham was Justified by Faith**

- He did not find that justification was by works – *Romans 4:1-2*
- He found that justification was by faith – *Romans 4:3, 9, 11, 20, 22*

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“FAITH IS ACCOUNTED  
FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS”

## Terminology

- “*accounted*” – *logizomai*
  - “(1) to reckon, count, compute, calculate, count over; (1A) to take into account, to make an account of” (THAYER)
  - “(1) as an objective reckoning; (1b) charge or credit to someone’s account, reckon to” (ALGNT)
- What? – (v. 9) – “*faith was accounted to Abraham*” – “*faith was credited to Abraham*” (NASB)

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## Terminology

- “*for righteousness*” – *eis dikaiosynēn*
  - *Eis* – “into, unto, to, towards, for, among – ‘For’” (THAYER)
  - *Dikaiosynēn* – “in a broad sense: state of him who is as he ought to be, righteousness, the condition acceptable to God” (THAYER); “the divine action by which God puts a person right with himself” (ALGNT)
- Abraham believed God, and God credited Abraham with his faith with a view to making him right with Him by grace.

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## **Faith is Accounted; Righteousness is Accounted**

- Faith – *“it was accounted to him”* (v. 3); *“his faith is accounted”* (v. 5); *“faith was accounted to Abraham”* (v. 9)
  - Abraham’s faith.
- Righteousness – *“God imputes righteousness”* (v. 6); *“righteousness might be imputed to them also”* (v. 11)
  - Abraham’s righteousness. (by grace)



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## The Description of David

- David describes such through the negative (sins not imputed) – *Romans 4:5-8*
  - “*faith is accounted for righteousness*” (v. 5) = “*God imputes righteousness apart from works*” (v. 6) = “*the LORD shall not impute sin.*” (v. 8)
- Do the sins have to go somewhere (to someone) else? No! – *cf. Acts 3:19; Jeremiah 31:34*



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## Transfer? – A Concept Foreign to Imputation

- The language has nothing to do with something being transferred from one to another.
  - Impute – “*Theology* ascribe (righteousness, guilt, etc.) to someone by virtue of a similar quality in another: *Christ's righteousness has been imputed to us.*” (New Oxford American Dictionary)
  - “*Theology.* to attribute (righteousness, guilt, etc.) to a person or persons vicariously; ascribe as derived from another.” (dictionary.com)

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## **Transfer? – A Concept Foreign to Imputation**

- The language has nothing to do with something being transferred from one to another.
  - “the term ‘imputation’ has been used in theology in a threefold sense to denote the judicial acts of God by which the guilt of Adam’s sin is imputed to his posterity; by which the sins of Christ’s people are imputed to Him; and by which the righteousness of Christ is imputed to His people.” (Hodge, C. W., ISBE 2nd ed., “Imputation”)

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“I have examined all the passages, and as the result of my examination have come to the conclusion, that there is not one in which the word is used in the sense of reckoning or imputing to a man what does not strictly belong to him; or of charging on him what ought not to be charged on him as a matter of personal right. **The word is never used to denote imputing in the sense of transferring, or of charging that on one which does not properly belong to him...**No doctrine of transferring, or of setting over to a man what does not properly belong to him, be it sin or holiness, can be derived, therefore, from this word.” (Albert Barnes’ Notes on the Bible)

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## Transfer? – A Concept Foreign to Imputation

- The language has nothing to do with something being transferred from one to another.
  - Faith? – *Hebrews 11:6* – HIS faith.
  - Righteousness? – *Ezekiel 18:20* – HIS righteousness. (cf. *1 John 3:7*)
  - How is a man righteous when he has sinned? – *Romans 4:3-4, 7-8* – being forgiven by grace through faith.



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# THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD

## **The Imputation (?) of Christ's Personal Righteousness – A Concept Foreign to the Gospel**

- “Christ has become our substitute in two senses: in his suffering and death he becomes our curse and condemnation (Galatians 3:13; Romans 8:3). And in his suffering and life he becomes our perfection (2 Corinthians 5:21). On the one hand, his death is the climax of his atoning sufferings, which propitiate the wrath of God against us (Romans 3:24-25); on the other hand, his death is the climax of a perfect life of righteousness imputed to us (2 Corinthians 5:21; cf. Romans 4:6, 11 with 3:21-22; 5:18-19).”

(Piper, John. *Counted Righteous in Christ: Should We Abandon the Imputation of Christ's Righteousness?*)

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## **The Imputation (?) of Christ's Personal Righteousness – A Concept Foreign to the Gospel**

- This presupposes that God requires perfection to be right with Him – *Romans 1:1-2, 5, 16-17* – but He requires faith.
- This denies the sufficiency of the atoning blood of Christ – *Hebrews 10:11-14* – but it was entirely sufficient.



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## THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD

### **The Imputation (?) of Christ's Personal Righteousness – A Concept Foreign to the Gospel**

- The idea read into the text of *Romans 4:3 (3:21-22)* – “Do you ask how God can reckon in this way? The answer is found in 3:24: ‘gratuitously, by his grace, through the ransoming, that in connection with Christ Jesus.’...The believer really and in himself is never righteous, he is righteous only in God's accounting...What is there in his faith that God can account for righteousness to the believer?... the contents of his faith, Christ, his ransom, his merit...Christ's merit and righteousness is his own, God counts it as though it were the believer's.”

(Lenski, R.C.H. Lenski's Commentary on the New Testament)

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## **The Imputation (?) of Christ's Personal Righteousness – A Concept Foreign to the Gospel**

- The error has influenced brethren as well.
  - “He was perfect so that we don't have to be. He was perfect for us.”
  - “Christ's life is a substitute for ours.”
  - “The doing and dying of Jesus is applied to us.”
  - “‘It is finished,’ Jesus said in reference to perfect obedience to the Law on our behalf.”
  - “When God looks down on us, He does not see us, but the perfection of Jesus.”

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## **The Imputation (?) of Christ's Personal Righteousness – A Concept Foreign to the Gospel**

- The error has influenced brethren as well.
  - God says, “I will put my righteousness on you. That’s amazing! God will see you as righteous as He is.”
  - “Old law, we’re keeping a resume of your righteousness. New law, only God’s righteousness is in view. And that’s gotta make you smile. Not mine, not my record, not my ups and downs, nope. All of that has been taken away and replaced with the righteousness from the Lord.”
  - “Seek first His righteousness. I want his righteousness. I want His—imputed is a word we use—I want His goodness laid upon me.”

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## The Imputation (?) of Christ's Personal Righteousness – A Concept Foreign to the Gospel

- This contradicts:
  - The meaning of the word *logizomai* – “(1) to reckon, count, compute, calculate, count over; (1A) to take into account, to make an account of” (THAYER)
  - The plain teaching of scripture – *Ezekiel 18:20*
- What about these passages? – *Romans 5:18-19; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Philippians 3:9*

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# THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD

## The Plan of God for Man's Righteousness

- The “*righteousness of God*” is in reference to God’s plan to make man righteous – *Romans 1:16-17*
- Christ’s atoning sacrifice – *Romans 3:24-26; 5:6, 9*
- Newness of life through forgiveness – *Romans 6:2-4, 6-7, 19* (cf. *Hebrews 9:14*)
- Walking as He walked, practicing righteousness – *1 John 2:6, 29; 3:7* (imitation/obedience, not transfer)



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**Abraham’s righteousness before God by faith is recorded for us as a pattern – *Romans 4:23-25***

*“not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith.”*

*(Philippians 3:9)*



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