

“How Free Is Free?”

Theme Verses:

Eph. 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:

Rom. 12:1-2

1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

2 And be not conformed to this world: **but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may [ap]prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.**

Review (Starting from Last Time):

- ***By Grace the Free Blessing of God Is Promised to All Believers***
 - ***Again, we have considered so carefully Paul's teaching in Romans on law versus grace. This is also a good introduction to our lesson for today, and introductory to what by his grace I would like to enter into soon in Romans, which we will study “Dispensationally”, Lord willing, beginning soon. So let's start with those words in Romans 7:***

Rom. 7:22-25

22 For I delight in the law of God after the inward man:

23 But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.

24 O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?

25 I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.

...

Rom. 8:1-4

1 *There is* therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

3 For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:

4 That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

- ***Grace reigns independently of all works as we read here of Paul's testimony. The righteousness of the law is the declaration of righteousness by Almighty God and what verse 3 says so clearly is that Christ's perfect sacrifice for us, on our behalf, in our place even as that was the only way it could be effective, fulfilled the righteous requirement of the law for each of us. Therefore our lives, our walk, in this new realm of the spirit, and not the flesh is enough to please God. If we do walk in the old realm, that of sin and death, as if we could truly live there, we will be miserable indeed, but we are still righteous in God's sight because he sees us through Christ's completed work and therefore sees us as righteous in him. You see how much meaning there is then in these words "in Christ" and "in Christ Jesus". Praise the Lord for such grace indeed.***

May we always bring forth the fruit appropriate for such a life. By his resurrection power we shall. Amen?

Transition:

- ***So, as we have seen in our earlier studies, we are under attack by our enemies (the flesh, the world, and satan and his minions), but spiritual warfare must be engaged in scripturally or it will end in failure and defeat. But when the warfare is properly fought with all the defensive and offensive armaments God has provided, then it may be fought victoriously and always for the glory and honor of Almighty God.***
- ***Our spiritual warfare is enabled by God, therefore, for victory and not defeat and the knowledge of this proper and authentic warfare may be known by us only through the Apostle Paul. This is all part of the revelation of the mystery. Now, today, let us summarize by focusing directly on the many blessings we all have through Christ Jesus who shed his blood for us sinners, who died, and who was then gloriously raised from the dead. That completed redemption ensures for us a great many blessings indeed. We shall consider these today. As we do so, we will be answering the question "How Free Is Free?"***

Our Outline Today: "How Free Is Free?"

- ***How Free Is Free? "Every Spiritual Blessing In Christ Jesus"!***
- ***How Free Is Free? Christ's Own Righteousness "Imputed" to Us All***

- ***How Free Is Free? The Full and Completed Forgiveness of Our Sins!***

Quick recount of the flight to Boston ...

TODAY: “How Free Is Free?”

I. How Free Is Free? “Every Spiritual Blessing In Christ Jesus”!

[READ] Eph. 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:

[READ] Rom 8:28-30

28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

30 Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

- ***Where do we begin, where do we end with all of these blessings? FOR EXAMPLE, CONSIDER THIS SHORT LIST FOUND IN ROMANS 8:28-30:***
 - ***Justification (Christ’s righteous act imputed to us believers), Redemption, Forgiveness, Sanctification, Divine election, Calling***
- ***Today we will look only at two of these, Justification and Forgiveness, and they are so fundamental as we shall see.***
- ***Let me emphasize to start with that this is the realm of “positional” truth as opposed to “conditional” truth. These are the blessings provided solely based on our salvation and in no way are they conditioned or dependent on our works or our obedience or our sanctification. We are “in Christ Jesus”, an expression used by Paul 40 times (none by other writers except in 1 Peter, the last verse where there is a dispute among textual critics as to what the correct reading should be)! As a result, we already POSSESS each of them.***
- ***Note that this is a statement of fact, not a directly expressed or implied exhortation. We must never translate a statement of FACT into an EXHORTATION for obedience (to make it consistent with the commandments of other dispensations, for example). This is a critically essential, fundamental principle of Biblical interpretation.***

So, our point here is that as believers today, we possess Justification NOW. In other dispensational programs this WAS NOT TRUE, SO THE SCRIPTURES GIVEN TO THE JEWS UNDER THE LAW (THROUGH MOSES), FOR EXAMPLE, OR THE JEWS FOR THE KINGDOM (BY CHRIST) DO NOT STATE TRUTH FOR US TODAY (AT LEAST NOT TRUTH INTENDED FOR OUR OBEDIENCE). ROM. 15:4 SAYS THOSE SCRIPTURES ARE FOR OUR “EDIFICATION”, YES, BUT NOT FOR OUR “OBEDIENCE”.

[Any comments on the importance of this for us to know today?]

- ***How Free Is Free? “Every Spiritual Blessing In Christ Jesus”!***

II. How Free Is Free? Christ’s Own Righteousness “Imputed” to Us All

- ***Rom. 8:30*** Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. Here “justified” = “[made or declared] righteous”, or, “[declared] righteous”, ***righteousness imputed.***
- ***Rom 4:22-25***
22 And **therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness.**
23 Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him;
24 But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead;
25 Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.
- ***What then is this righteousness? According to the root meaning of the Greek word, it is “to do right, to do the right thing”, in general, and specifically, in this context, it refers directly to the “righteousness” of our Lord Jesus Christ himself...***
- ***But what is Christ’s righteousness is the logical next question? Isn’t that simply What Christ was sent to do (on our behalf)?***
 - ***Christ is NOT [merely] our example for living as so many have thought (at least not for us today living in this dispensation) BUT, HE IS RATHER OUR SUBSTITUTE, in that he died for our sins (remember, this is the gospel), 1 Cor. 15:3. So Christ’s righteousness, according to Paul, is Christ’s own righteousness as he paid completely the penalty for the sins of the world.***

- ***Contrast this gift of Christ's own righteousness to us all and his eternal life with the requirement under the Kingdom gospel that we must keep any and all of Christ's commandments before we may gain eternal life.***
- ***This answers that critical question then of how Christ's own righteousness is relevant to us: It has been imputed to our account. This was not due to any or all of our works in any sense (Rom. 4:6), but entirely as a free gift as a result of the substitutionary atonement of Jesus Christ on our behalf.***

Rom. 4:6 Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works...

- ***That verse is an interesting one indeed. How can we say that until Christ's completed work of dying for our sins was accomplished when David so long before writes about such righteousness as he does here? The answer, it seems to me, is that by faith he looked forward to it since under the Law he had no hope otherwise than that, no, none at all since they were all under that Law which thoroughly condemned them. When we study the Romans we will have much opportunity to look into that in detail, Lord willing.***
- ***But what does "imputed" mean?***
 - ***It is used 20 times by Paul, not by any other scripture writer (except in the gospels where it is used in a different context altogether 3 times)***
 - ***It is used 10 times in Romans 4 alone; it is a "pauline" word indeed therefore and so critical for expressing all that is fundamental concerning the Pauline revelation of God's completed grace. How free is free?***
- ***"Imputed" is also translated in the KJV by the words "counted" or "reckoned". This is a word which implies faith or belief. It might also be translated "considered". The focus is on the one considering or believing it, and in most scriptures the person referred to is the Lord God himself.***
- ***This is NOT therefore about Christ's righteousness being somehow mystically infused into us (through the sacraments) enabling us to now live it out with Christ's own example before our eyes continually***

as many are teaching. No. That is what the religionist might say though. And that is what is behind the new age Christianity which is really the new age Catholicism.

- ***INSTEAD, what the apostle means when he so often writes to members of Christ's Body using this word ("imputed") is this: Christ offered himself, his own body, as the sacrifice for our sins. The Father accepted his offering. Therefore it is written that God himself has considered that offering to be as our own and that consequently we stand righteous before him.***

Several verses in 2 Cor. 5 say it better than we can:

- ***[READ] 2 Cor. 5:19, 21***
19 To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.
...
21 For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

- ***How Free Is Free? "Every Spiritual Blessing In Christ Jesus"!***
- ***How Free Is Free? Christ's Own Righteousness "Imputed" to Us All***

[Your comments?]

Oh, the glory of this revelation now revealed and never before revealed by the prophets (because it could not be, as long as believers were living under a Legal System where works were required and sacrifices must be offered).

Praise God for His unlimited grace!

Next Time:

- ***How Free Is Free? The Full and Completed Forgiveness of Our Sins!***