

**NOTES
DISPROVING THE SO
CALLED
FORENSIC GOSPEL**



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FOREWORD

Time and time again we have been faced with the claims of a so called forensic gospel that has encouraged believers in a sense of security while sin resides within their lives, and this has been presented to us by theologians as the gospel of Christ that saves us **from** sin.

But this is not the real Gospel of Jesus Christ, it is a travesty of the gospel that Satan has deceived many with, in an effort to make them think that they are **in Christ** while in the experience of sin.

But even more, it is Satan's effort to present his pantheistic gospel of good and evil as being part of each other, and acceptable to God. This has been Satan's effort to deify himself on the same level with God which has been the main point in his original rebellion in heaven.

In this booklet this false **forensic** gospel is answered in brief notes, to encourage readers to really see the error of it. A summary account of the real gospel which is **transformative** is presented in contrast to the false gospel that all may clearly see the difference. Amen.

Notes Disproving the So-called Forensic Gospel

INTRODUCTION

1. The Bible tells us that any **false gospel** is a thing **cursed** by God. Galatians 1:6-9.
2. The false gospel makes us say Lord, Lord, but do not His Will, such people are lost. Matthew 7:21-23.
3. The false gospel is described as untempered mortar that cannot help. Ezekiel 13:9-16.
4. It also tells a person peace, peace, (which is given by Justification) when there is no peace. Romans 5:1; Jeremiah 8:10, 11.
5. However, the real Gospel is described as the power or science of God unto salvation because it makes the believer, live by Faith. Romans 1:16, 17.
6. The Bible clearly explains that the Gospel of God's Grace teaches **denying ungodliness**, it teaches **living righteously**, it teaches that the purpose of the sacrifice of Christ was to **redeem us from all iniquities**, (not in them), and to **purify** a people who are **preoccupied with performing good works**. This is what we are to preach. Titus 2:11-15.
7. Jesus clearly tells us, that the order of salvation is **inner cleansing first of all**, then the reformation of outer works may proceed; there is no scripture that teaches assumed holiness in God's sight, then actual inner and future holiness later. Matthew 23:25, 26.

A FALSE FORENSIC GOSPEL DESCRIBED AND REFUTED

8. Here is a brief description of a forensic "gospel".
 - a. "The righteousness which is the basis of our acceptance with God lies **outside** the believer. Justifying righteousness is a righteousness which is **forensic** to the believer, an **alien** righteousness ... justification means to be pronounced **righteousness on the grounds of a righteousness which is outside the believer, in Jesus Christ.**" Geoffrey J. Paxton, **The Shaking of Adventism**, p. 38. (Emphasis original).
 - b. "Reformationists are equally emphatic that justification must be understood as objective and forensic. J.H. Morrison is quoted as saying: 'The great Pauline doctrine of justification by faith ... brings with it the aroma of law courts. It is suggestive of legal proceedings in some criminal case, with a judge on the bench and a prisoner at the bar anxiously awaiting sentence.'" A. Leroy Moore, **The Theology Crisis**, pp. 50-51.
9. Concerning the so-called forensic gospel we are told.

“He does not pronounce the sinner subjectively righteous, which he is not, but forensically righteous, which he is, because Christ has satisfied the demands of justice on his behalf.” Carnell, quoted in **Ibid**, p. 51.

10. However, a forensic gospel is very impossible as we are told in these following quotations.
 - a. “The ground of judicial or **forensic justification** invariably is, and **must be universal obedience to law** ... Gospel justification is the justification of sinners; it is therefore naturally impossible, and a most palpable contradiction that the justification of a sinner ... is judicial or forensic justification.” Charles G. Finney, **Lectures on Systematic Theology**, p. 547.
 - b. “He further says ‘justification aims directly at character. It contemplates making the man himself right’. Coming to grips then with the issue noted above, Vincent makes this fine statement of the case. “Justification which does not actually remove the wrong condition in man which is at the root of his enmity to God, is no justification. In the absence, of this, a legal declaration that the man is right is a fiction’. God has provided more than a legal pardon. He imparts Christ to the one who believes. Then, and then only, can He recognize us as righteous.’ A. John Clifford and Russel R. Standard, **Conflicting Concepts of Righteousness by Faith**, p. 56.

SCRIPTURES DEBUNKING THE FORENSIC GOSPEL

11. The following quotation explains the false forensic gospel.

“The righteousness imputed to the believer in Jesus gives him a **standing with God** higher than the standing enjoyed by Adam in his sinless state. It gives him a higher standing than the angels. It raises him in the **scale of moral value to equality with Jesus Christ**. Such is the gift of God’s justifying righteousness, which comes by faith of Jesus Christ. Yet it is in **heaven, not on earth; outside of us, never within the greatest saint**; in Jesus Christ, and **in no one** but Jesus Christ.” Robert D. Brinsmead, **Justification**, pp. 34-35.
(Emphasis supplied).
12. But first of all, Righteousness through Faith is the Righteousness of God. Philippians 3:9.
13. This Righteousness is YHWH, God Himself. Jeremiah 23:5, 6; Psalms 143:1.
14. The Righteousness of God imputed is the Righteousness of God imparted. (Romans 4:11; Romans 5:17).
15. The Righteousness of God is **within** the heart. Psalms 40:9, 10; Romans 3:22.
16. When we have Righteousness **imputed**, this means that the Righteousness is **imparted or given actually** to the believer by God as the gift of the Spirit in blessedness. (Romans 4:6-9; Galatians 3:7-9, 14; Galatians 4:6).

17. Our Righteousness is Christ who is within the human temple, not millions of miles away. (1 Corinthians 1:30; Galatians 2:20, 21).
18. Righteousness without means that the person is **without** God (who is Christ), and without Christ (who is our Righteousness) in this world; such a person is in a **lost** state. (1 John 5:20; 1 Corinthians 1:30; Ephesians 2:12).
19. Righteousness rains down on the earth in the gift of the Spirit of God who is our Righteousness, and which Spirit dwells within us. (Hosea 6:3; Hosea 10:12; 2 Corinthians 3:17; 1 Corinthians 3:16).
20. The Holy Spirit is **given in the heart as Justification**. (Galatians 3:7-9, 14; Galatians 4:6).
21. If a person does not have the Spirit of Christ **within him** (which is given in Justification), he does **not** belong to Him. Romans 8:9, 11.
22. Here is another account of the false forensic gospel.

ANOTHER QUOTATION DEBUNKED

“When God set forth Christ to be a propitiation for our sins ... He actually dealt with our sins. Our sins were punished in Christ and **put away** by Christ. Then, in Jesus’ resurrection, God caused His acquitting verdict to be proclaimed openly, declaring that those who believe are justified—that is, **they stand innocent and free from sin in the eyes of the Judge**. It is therefore not possible for **God to find any sin in the man** who confesses with his mouth the Lord Jesus Christ and believes in his heart that God has raised Him from the dead.” **Ibid**, pp. 68-69. (Emphasis supplied).

23. But the **provisions** for the putting away of sins were revealed or manifested at the cross. This is Christ’s sufferings and gift of Life. (1 Peter 4:1; 1 Peter 3:18; John 10:10, 11; 1 Peter 1:18-20).
24. However, they were done from the **foundation of the world** when the Lamb was slain. (2 Timothy 1:9; Romans 13:8).
25. Sins condemned on the cross in the death of Christ only means **sins put away in the believer** by God removing the mind of sin **at justification** and also replacing it with the mind of Christ or Righteousness. (Ephesians 4:22-24; Romans 6:6, 7).
26. In other word, what makes the difference in the believer is not the cross event itself which he believes, but the **present work of God upon the heart** when he believes. This is a work of metamorphosis or a removing of the old and a replacing of it with the new heart. Romans 12:2; Ezekiel 11:19-20; Philippians 2:5.
27. In another way of putting it; the idol-values are removed, and God takes the place as the

mind's supreme ideal. (Ezekiel 36:25-27; 1 John 4:12).

28. It is this new birth, the work of God when the man repents and believes, that makes him sinless in a real sense at that time. 1 John 3:9; 1 John 5:18.

ANOTHER QUOTATION DEBUNKED

29. Here is another quotation of the false forensic gospel.

“Calvary not only enables God to do something with sin, but Calvary did something with sin. The death of Christ was God’s judicial atonement whereby sin was both judged and **purged** by Him.” *Ibid*, p. 69.

30. But the cross of Christ nowhere purged sin **from**, or rather **away from** man. The cross of Christ **cleansed** or **purified** our sins in the sense of manifesting the blood or Life of Christ which is the **purifying agent**. (Hebrews 1:3; Hebrews 9:14; 1 John 1:7; Colossians 1:14, 20). Hebrews 12:24.

31. The word translated “purged” in Hebrews 1:3 is “Katharismos”, and it is better translated “purged” or “cleansed”.

“**Katharismos** ... cleansing, purification.” Cleon L. Rogers Jr. and Cleon L. Rogers 111, *The New Linguistic and Exegetical Key to the Greek New Testament*, p. 516.

32. The blood which is the purifying agent justifies us only when **applied** to us. (Romans 5:9, 10, 18; Leviticus 17:11, 14; Hebrews 13:20, 21).

33. The blood is the purifying agent that washes us **from** sins within. (Revelation 1:5; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; Titus 3:5-7).

34. Purifying by the purifying agent—the blood—only occurs to or in the believer when he believes and repents. (Revelation 7:14; 1 John 1:7).

ANOTHER QUOTATION DEBUNKED

35. Here is another quotation of the false forensic gospel.

“This means that the entire community of believers has already been **perfected** in Christ ... God has already judged and acquitted the world in Jesus Christ. He has already purged and put away sin, and has **perfected** humanity in His redemptive act in Jesus.” Robert D. Brinsmead, *Justification*, pp. 69, 70.

36. But, first of all, **perfection** in the Bible means **sinless perfection**. Matthew 5:20, 48; Ezekiel 28:15).

37. The entire community of believers could not have been perfected in Christ, because Christ

provided or made available manifestly the Grace or merits to make man sinlessly perfect. (2 Timothy 1:9, 10; Titus 2:11-14).

38. Perfection is a **gift** of the **new birth**. 1 John 3:9; 1 John 5:18.
39. The new birth is done by the Holy Spirit. John 3:5-8.
40. And since the Holy Spirit is the **gift** that Justification gives, then the new birth is Justification. Galatians 3:7-9, 14.
41. Justification is what makes the believer sinlessly perfect. Romans 6:6, 7.

ANOTHER QUOTATION DEBUNKED

42. Here is another quotation showing the false forensic gospel.

“All who believes are **pure and righteous** before God. That is, in God’s estimation—which is the only estimation that matters—**they are free from sin**. They are judged righteous, pure, perfect, and they sit at His own right hand in heavenly places. We must further insist that **this work of God has gloriously triumphed whether man believes it or not**. Man’s unbelief cannot make the faith of God of none effect ... Humanity has already been rescued and made the righteousness of God in Jesus Christ assuredly as this representative Man is at God’s right hand. We say this because some people assume that Calvary has accomplished nothing without their marvelous power of choice or exercise of faith. They talk as if God’s acts were lifeless and ineffective until this human contribution brought everything to life and saving efficacy ... God has **made our humanity pure and righteous in** Jesus Christ, and therefore everyone who believes is truly righteous with God. This is righteousness by faith. **God will not, cannot find any sin in any man who believes this gospel**. But this life of faith is not without severe trial. The man who lives nearest to God knows only too well that the viper of sin still lives in his own bosom. The more holy his life, the more sensitively he feels **the power of indwelling sin** and realizes that even his most pious works bear the taint of **inbred corruption**. At times he is severely tempted to doubt that he has a righteousness which is valid with God. Yet God sends His Spirit to sustain the Christian’s faith and to strengthen him so that in the midst of conflict his **remaining sin** does not become **reigning sin**. In this way God marvelously **causes indwelling sin to be a great blessing** to the believer.” *Ibid*, pp. 70, 72-73. (Emphasis supplied).

43. But the sinfreeness of Jesus Christ does not make a believer sinless without God actually transforming him when he believes. It is the transforming Faith of Christ as the Spirit of Truth given to the believer at Justification that makes him sinless. (Galatians 3:7-9, 14; John 3:3-8; 1 John 5:18).
44. When God estimates a man to be sinless, it is His **active estimation** that actually makes the man sinless. That means, only when God first removes the sinful values from the heart, and esteems His Righteousness as the person’s new holiness, that the person is actually

holy. (Romans 4:5-9; Psalms 32:1, 2, 10; Psalms 36:10; Romans 3:22).

45. To say that a person is **actually** holy or **sinless**, is to say that their **present consciousness** of God as God, or as the highest ideal in their mental values, constitute sinfreeness actually. (Jeremiah 23:5, 6; 1 Corinthians 15:34; 2 Corinthians 4:6, 7).
46. To be sinless “in Christ” in God’s estimation while sin remains within the believer makes God overlook sin and estimate a “**good and evil**” state of the believer as sinless. This is folly because God expects the person who is justified to be **righteous** and to do righteousness only. (1 John 3:5-10; Galatians 5:16, 17; 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20).
47. If God accepts righteousness and sinfulness together, calling the man who has this experience righteous in His sight or estimation, then God is saying that good and evil are acceptable together. This would mean that Lucifer who is evil, is on the same level with God, thus he is God as God is God. This is the original claims of Lucifer in his rebellion and in Eden. (Isaiah 14:12-14; Galatians 3:1-5).
48. But good and evil together is not accepted to God, He cannot even look on evil, and evil has no part in His scheme. Matthew 1:21; John 8:10, 11; John 5:14; Psalms 5:4; Habakkuk 1:13).

ANOTHER QUOTATION DEBUNKED

49. Here is another quotation of the false forensic gospel.

“... some souls are in excessive haste to become pure and sinless saints in their existential situation. They are not content with the righteousness of faith. They want an existential salvation in which they know and feel no sin at all. When they find that God does not cooperate with their excessive zeal, they are in danger of sinking into discouragement. The flesh wants to live by a “righteousness of sight.” To the flesh it appears that **a God who does not exterminate indwelling sin** is a weak or an unwilling God ... That a believer in **the midst of his sinfulness of nature can be pure and righteous before God** is more an exhibition of God’s power, grace and wisdom than the final transformation from mortal sinfulness to immortal sinfreeness.” **Ibid**, p. 73. (Emphasis supplied).
50. But the Bible does tell us to expect an existential **sinfreeness** after Justification. We must even act as if this is really so, because it **is** so. Romans 6:7, 11-14, 17-22.
51. God does **exterminate sin from within**. The new birth or Justification shows this, the man is **made sinless** according to Scripture. 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; 1 John 3:9.
52. The converted man is even instructed to keep himself sinless from the time of conversion by obedience to the faith. Ephesians 2:10; Galatians 5:16, 17, 24, 25; Philippians 3:14, 15; James 1:27.
53. We cannot continue in sin and remain in the grace which makes us sinless. (Romans 6:1,

2; Romans 8:1, 2).

54. We are **never** sinful in nature while we are sinless in God's estimation only. God must **first remove** the old sinful garments and then cover us with sinfreeness, it is only then we are sinless in fact, and as God truly approves. (Zechariah 3:1-5; Romans 8:4).
55. Sinfreeness is the work of God **now** upon penitent sinners, not in the time when Christians are glorified at the second coming of Jesus. At that time, those who have sin will remain sinful, and those who have Righteousness will remain righteous. John 8:11, 12; John 5:14; Revelation 22:11.
56. It is Righteousness within that finally determines Christians receiving the verdict-declaration as being righteous forever in the Judgment. This is presented in different ways. Revelation 19:7, 8; Galatians 5:5, 6; Revelation 3:5; Romans 3:24, 25.
57. It is Righteousness within that ensures that passing over of all past sins in the Judgment. Romans 3:24, 25.

CONCLUSION

58. Here are some very true statements that condemns a forensic gospel or justification.

“That gospel justification is not to be regarded as a forensic or judicial proceeding ... Now it is certainly nonsense to affirm, that a sinner can be pronounced just in the eye of law; that he can be justified by deeds of law, or by the law at all. The law condemns him. But to be justified judicially or forensically, is to be pronounced just in the judgment of law. This certainly is an impossibility in respect to sinners.” Charles Finney, **Finney's Systematic Theology**, pp. 318,319.

“The whole system of sacrifices taught the doctrine of pardon upon the conditions of atonement, repentance, and faith. This, under the old dispensation, is constantly represented as a merciful acceptance of the penitents, and never as a forensic or judicial acquittal or justification of them ... for sinners to be forensically pronounced just, is impossible and absurd.” **Ibid**, p. 320.

59. The following chart is a point-summary of the differences between the false **forensic** gospel and the true **transformative** Gospel. This relates **only** to Justification.
60. The false forensic gospel entails other points that follow a systematic pattern. Here it is:
 - a. At the fall of Adam all his descendants got original sin. Sinful flesh is sin.
 - b. Christ incarnated in sinless flesh.
 - c. Christ lived holy fulfilling the Law for all men in their actual place.

- d. Christ suffered our penalty for all our sins in our actual place on the cross.
 - e. All the world were justified in Christ, on the cross.
 - f. When the believer is justified he stands righteous in God's sight, not within.
 - g. The believer's sanctification is his heartfelt works-response with divine help, but it is never sinless and does not contribute to his salvation.
 - h. At the second coming of Christ the believer will receive holy, glorified flesh and so he will then totally be sinless and stop all sinning.
61. But the teachings like that above have come about because men in their sins have come to hate sound doctrines. 2 Timothy 4:3, 4.
62. Now those false doctrines—the forensic gospel—they hold leads to the increase of more ungodliness. 2 Timothy 2:16-18.
63. We are told we must not consent to such unwholesome words, but only to the doctrines which is unto godliness. 1 Timothy 6:3-5.
64. And we are only to speak the things which are sound doctrines. Titus 2:1.

Notes