

WHAT IS RIGHTEOUSNESS BY FAITH (ANSWERING A CRITIC)

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1. There are some people to whom it must be asked “how readest thou?” because they read the scriptures with a veil (of flesh) upon their minds. Lk. 10:25, 26; 2 Cor. 3:14-16.
2. They do not know that the Word of God is exclusively made up of the law and the testimony which is the Gospel. Isa. 8:20.
3. There are some who claim to show reverence for God’s Law, but as they do not encourage obedience to it, they in fact encourage men to break it. Matt. 7:21; Ps. 40:8.
4. These antinomian people overlook very important points concerning the validity of keeping the Law. Here are some points.
 - a. Adam and Eve broke the Law of God when they sinned. 1 Jn. 3:4; Rom. 5:12-14.
 - b. Abraham kept God’s Law. Gen. 26:5.
 - c. Jesus Himself came to magnify the Law (which is to shew its exceeding greatness) thus to cause it to be truly honored. Isa. 42:21; Mk. 12:28-33.
 - d. Jesus certainly kept the Law of God. Jn. 15:10.
 - e. Paul the apostle encouraged people to keep all the Law of God in his epistles. Rom. 3:28,30,31; Rom. 2:26,27; Rom. 8:4; Rom. 13:8-10; 1 Cor. 7:19.
 - f. The Bible showed that the “people of God” must keep the Sabbath. (The Greek word translated “rest” is “sabbatismos” a noun that literally means “Sabbath-keeping”. Heb. 4:9.
 - g. John, the beloved disciple of Jesus Christ advocated keeping the Law. 1 Jn. 2:3, 4; 1 Jn. 3:22, 24; 1 Jn. 5:2, 3; 2 Jn. 6.
 - h. James the half-brother of Jesus taught that the Law is to be kept. Jam. 1:25.
 - i. The Law was also shown by him to be the standard in the Judgment. Jam. 2:8-12.
 - j. The last remnant church of God will keep the Law of God. Rev. 12:17; Rev. 14:12.
 - k. Only these who have kept the Law of God will enter into the holy city, the New Jerusalem, and have right to partake of the tree of life. Rev. 22:14.

5. The biblical teaching about the Law of God is namely the following points:

- a. The Law is a written out transcript of God's nature of Righteousness, in the form of requirements. 2 Pet. 1:4; Jer. 23:5, 6; Ps. 119:172.
- b. Man's sin problem is frankly lawbreaking. Rom. 3:23; 1 Jn. 3:4.
- c. The death of Jesus Christ was meant to establish the Law. Rom. 3:24, 25, 28, 30, 31; 1 Jn. 1:7; Rom. 8:3, 4.
- d. Conviction is achieved by the Law of God. Jam. 1:23-25; Rom. 7:7, 13.
- e. Justification is the gift of the Law in the heart. Rom. 5: 1; Ps. 119:165; Heb. 8:10.
- f. Sanctification is in obedience to the Law of God. 1 Thess. 4:3; Ps. 40:8; Rom. 12:13.
- g. The Judgment is based upon the Law of God. Jam. 2: 12.

6. A critic of one of our web pages from Thusia (SDA) in Canada claims that on our page about the "righteousness that is of faith" we "...confuse the imputation of Christ's completed righteousness with the work of the spirit within us— something that is not by faith because it can be seen, felt, and experienced."

- a. To this misunderstanding we answer:
 - i. Christ's (or God's) righteousness is not to be viewed as something "completed" as if it is certain works that had to be fulfilled. Christ's (or God's) righteousness is He Himself, not His flesh or body, but His divine nature, for He is so called. Jer. 23:5, 6; 1 Cor. 12:3.
 - ii. This same righteousness is identified as being apart from the Law (of works). Rom. 3:21.
 - iii. Christ's righteousness is called the righteousness of God, this was in existence in Old Testament/First Witness (F.W.) times, so it did not need to be worked out or developed. Rom. 3:21, 22; Ps. 5:8; Isa. 46:13.
 - iv. Righteousness belongs unto God, and as being God, Christ had this righteousness as his own and therefore did not need to work it out, it cannot be worked out. Rom. 10:4; 1 Cor. 1:30.
- b. The imputation of the righteousness of God cannot be confused with the work of the Spirit within us because:

1. Imputation or counting of righteousness to the believer is not to any account or books but into the believer. Rom. 3:22. (The Greek word translated counted “unto” is “eis” and rightly means “into”).
 2. If righteousness was counted to us but not being “in” us, we would not be cleansed from within first, but only have pretended and hypocritical good works outside that does not come from a cleansed heart. Matt. 23:23-28; Mk. 7:21-23.
 3. Since the righteousness of God that is imputed into us is the Divine Nature of God, it is God coming to dwell within us. Rom. 3:22; Jer. 23:5, 6; 2 Cor. 6:16.
 4. God who is Righteousness comes to dwell within us by His Spirit; the Spirit is God, therefore there is no confusion between imputed Righteousness and the work of the Spirit within us. 1 Cor. 3:16; Gal. 4: 6.
 5. Faith is not believing, for the devils believe and yet do not have faith because they are not just, and the just shall live by Faith, and what is not of Faith is sin. Jam. 2:19; Heb. 10:38; Rom. 14:23.
 6. Faith is the revealed Truths of God’s Word. 1 Tim. 4:6; Rom. 10:8.
 7. The Spirit is that Truth. Jn. 16:13; 1 Jn. 5:6.
 8. God comes to dwell in us by the Spirit of Faith (or revealed Truths which is the Spirit). Rom. 8:9; 2 Cor. 4:13.
 9. Thus when we have the doctrine of Christ which is the Spirit of Faith or Truth, we have God and Christ. 2 Jn. 9; Rom. 8:9, 11.
- c. The work of the Spirit in us cannot be physically seen. Jn. 14:16, 17.
- i. We can see the fruits or works-result of the Holy Spirit. Gal. 5:22-23.
 - ii. But the new birth which is the gift of the Spirit within us cannot be seen. Jn. 3:3-8.
 - iii. Even though the work of the Holy Spirit (in certain contexts) can be seen and felt, that does not mean it is not by Faith. The just lives by Faith, so every good thing is by Faith. Rom. 1:17; Rom. 14:23.
7. Justification (or the gift of righteousness) by Faith is indeed a subjective change. 1 Cor. 6:4-11; Tit. 3:5-7.
 8. Justification is the gift of the Holy Spirit within. Gal. 3:7-9, 14; Gal. 4:6.
 9. Our critic tells us:

“Certainly you can see that any “right doing” that is ours and experienced in this earthly realm passes through the medium of our fallen nature and thus seen in the heavenly realm as “filthy rags” when compared to the righteousness of Christ!”

a. Right doing does not pass through the medium of our fallen nature and thus become “filthy rags” — righteousness, to say it like that is to presume that the works were good before done, and when done by the born again person becomes sin because the person is human.

1. We all have sinful human flesh. Rom. 8:3.

2. Jesus had sinful human flesh, yet without sin. Rom. 8:3; 1 Jn. 3:5.

3. Sinful human flesh is not sin, it is:

a. Having the liabilities of perverted emotions flowing in the flesh (without it actually flowing. Rom. 7:5, 6; Col. 3:5.

b. Having infirmities in the flesh which is not sin. 1 Tim. 5:23; Heb. 4:15; Gal. 4:13.

c. The problem we have of sinning is when we are carnal sold under sin, that is, when our flesh has perverted feelings flowing because we are sold over to sin in our minds first. Rom. 7:14, 5, 15-23; Rom. 8:5-8.

d. However we can be delivered from that state. Rom. 7:24, 25.

e. Serving the law with his mind (as Paul explains) is not done by the Holy Spirit, but by Paul himself (“I myself”). Rom. 7:25.

f. Deliverance from self-righteousness and perverted emotions flowing is done by the Holy Spirit. Rom. 8:1-4.

g. Thus from the heart we can truly serve God. Rom. 6:17, 18; Rom. 8:9-16.

4. Faith and works of right doing go together. Jam. 2: 14-18.

5. Works are only good works when it is done by Faith. Rom. 2:27; Rom. 9:31, 32; Rom. 14:23.

6. Good works done by Faith are sinless since it is only sin when it is not done out of Faith, (thus human nature when converted cannot pollute them to become filthy rags). Rom. 14:23.

7. God works are what God has foreordained we should walk in, thus converted humans doing them by Faith will never render them “filthy rags”, they are truly good works. Eph. 2:10; 1 Thess. 1:3.
 8. He that doeth righteousness is righteous exactly as God is righteous. 1 Jn. 3:7; 1 Jn. 2:29.
 9. When the Bible speaks about our righteousness as filthy rags, it does not mean good works done by faith from humans with sinful flesh who are converted, but it means good works (ethics) that are done by unconverted people, to justify or make themselves righteous. Isa. 64:6, 7; Rom. 9:31-33; Rom. 10:1-3.
 10. Even though we have truly good works through faith, it is not the good works that is saving us, we are being saved by the Divine Nature of God in us that is called the Righteousness of God/Christ. Phil. 3:3, 9.
 11. The only right doing that is “filthy rags” are those done from an un-renewed heart. Rom. 9:31-33; Rom. 2:17-25, 27.
 12. Right doing done from a converted heart is truly good works (and never filthy rags), because they are called the righteousness of the law that is done by Faith. Rom. 3:28, 30, 31; Rom. 6:12, 13, 16-22; Rom. 8:4.
 13. The Law is kept by Faith, since Faith brings us into its obedience. Rom. 3:28, 30, 31.
 14. Under Sanctification the Law is kept, and even this Sanctification is by Faith. Acts. 26:18; 1 Jn. 5:1-4.
 15. The gospel is not only Justification by Faith, but also Sanctification by Faith. The just lives by Faith. Rom. 1:16, 17; Heb. 10:38, 39.
10. Our critic tells us “How can you say that the “righteous-ness of faith” is the law...”
- a. We do not teach that Righteousness by Faith is the Law, we teach that Righteousness by Faith involves both Justification and Sanctification.
 1. Righteousness by Faith is to be justified by Faith: that means to be given the Righteousness of God, God’s Nature within the heart. 2 Pet. 1:4; Jer. 23:5, 6; Rom. 3:22; Ps. 40:10.
 2. This is also the gift of the Spiritual Law in the heart. Rom. 7:14; Heb. 10:16.
 3. Justification which changes us brings us into obedience to the law of God. Rom. 3:28, 30, 31.

4. We are made to keep the law to live being sanctified, and this is by Faith. Acts. 26:18; Rom. 1:17; Jam. 2:10-12, 14-18.
5. Righteousness by Faith under Sanctification is the maintaining of the Righteousness or nature of God within by abiding in Faith, and by also obedience to the Faith which is keeping the Law of God. 1 Jn. 3: 7-10; 2 Cor. 6:16; 2 Cor. 7:1; Rom. 1:17.
6. The following is a chart on Righteousness by Faith:

RIGHTEOUSNESS BY FAITH

JUSTIFICATION
BY FAITH

SANCTIFICATION
BY FAITH

SUBJECTIVE
CHANGE

MAINTAINING
SUBJECTIVE CHANGE

Gift of God's
the nature
Spirit within

Abiding Obedience
in Faith to the Law
 of God

11. Our critic quotes a number of scriptures from a version of the Bible that is a bad translation and the translation is antinomian. Therefore it attacks obedience to the law of God. Matt. 5:17-19.
12. The following texts are those our critic has quoted about the Law, but they are misinterpreted, and have been carelessly read. They are: Gal. 2:15, 16, 21; Gal. 3:21-25; Gal. 1:6-9; Gal. 3:10-13. (How readest thou? Lk. 10:25, 26).
 - a. Gal. 2:15,16; does not tell us that righteousness by Faith means the law should not be kept by Faith, it is telling us that we are not to use the human initiated keeping of the law with Faith and conversion to gain the righteousness of God or to be converted, for so the Jews thought. Rom. 10:1-3.
 - b. Gal. 2:21; shows us clearly that the Jews sought to keep the law on their own ability to get Righteousness, it does not say that keeping the law by Faith is filthy rags and has nothing to do with Righteousness by Faith.
 - c. Gal. 3:21-25; does not in any way attempt to separate the keeping of the Law from Righteousness by Faith or from Faith.
 1. The problem of the Jews is that they sought to keep the Law without the Faith of Jesus Christ. Rom. 10: 1-3.

2. The Law was never against any of the promises of God as our critic will have us believe by the way he presents the Law, it was never meant to give life, Righteousness cannot come by doing the Law, even much worse on our own strength. Gal. 3:21.
 3. Since no part of the Law was against the promises of God, Abraham was justified by Faith and yet he kept the Law. Gen. 15:5, 6; Gen. 26:5; Rom. 4:1-5.
 4. David was justified by Faith yet David kept the Law of God. Rom. 4:7; Ps. 32:1, 2, 11; Ps. 119:55, 166.
 5. Paul tells us that we are justified by Faith, but we must not break the Law, we must keep the Law, but by Faith. Rom. 3:28, 30, 31; 1 Cor. 7:19.
- d. We who believe the gospel are given the promise of the Spirit like those of the First Witness (O.T.). Gal. 3:7-9, 14, 22.
- e. Because God sought to lead unconverted Israel to Christ to be justified by Faith (as Abraham, David and all righteous people before the birth of Christ), they were garrisoned or kept under watch (not “held prisoners” according to our critic’s bad translation) by the moral and ceremonial laws, towards getting Faith in F.W. times (like men of old: Heb. 11); this is the same Faith that was revealed when Christ came. These laws were Israel’s “pedagogue” or “childhood guardian” to direct them to Christ for justification by Faith. But now that the Christian has this Faith he does not need the help or supervision of a “childhood guardian”— the moral and ceremonial laws— to bring him to Christ. Gal. 3:23-25.
1. The ceremonial laws were written by Moses with his hands. Deut. 31:9, 24.
 2. The Moral Law was written with the very finger of God. Ex. 32:15, 16; Ex. 34:1; Deut. 9:10.
 3. The ceremonial laws were written in a book (scroll). Deut. 28:58; Deut. 31:24.
 4. The Moral was written on two tables of stone. Deut. 10:1-4.
 5. The ceremonial laws were placed in a pocket on the side of the ark. Deut. 31:24-26.
 6. The Moral law on the table of stones were placed inside of the ark. Deut. 10:4, 5.
 7. The ceremonial laws were about sacrifices, offerings, holy days and the Levi priesthood. Heb. 10:1-8; Heb. 7:5, 16,18,19,28.
 8. The Moral law contained no ceremonial ordinances, but only the Ten

Commandments which includes the Seventh-day Sabbath. Ex. 20:1-17.

9. The Moral was used to bring conviction of sin. Rom. 3:19.

10. The ceremonial laws were used to lead men's minds to the teachings of the everlasting Gospel. Gal. 3:23, 24.

11. If the man repented and believe he was justified or converted in F.W. times also. Zec. 18:21-23, 31, 32; Rom. 4:9-16.

12. Gal. 3:21-25 does not forbid keeping the Law by Faith, it forbids using the Law to make oneself righteous. Gal. 2:16, 21.

f. What is this "another gospel" believed by our critic? It is righteousness put on one's heavenly account through believing, and escaping penalty for all wrong doing at the same time. Added to this teaching is a depreciated and de-emphasized view of obedience to the Law, to the point of saying that it cannot be kept in this life once one has "fallen nature". This rotting corpse of a "gospel" is the way that seems right but ends in death. Gal. 1:6-9; Pr. 16:25.

g. Our critic's version of the Bible quotes Gal. 3:10-13 in an antinomian way.

1. The point of Gal. 3:10-13 is that no man is justified by the works of the Law (Vs. 11), not that we must not keep the Law at all. Paul said we must keep the Law. 1 Cor. 7:19.

2. The term "the Law is not of Faith" does not mean it should not and cannot be kept by Faith, Paul elsewhere shows that the Law is only truly kept when it is kept by Faith. Rom. 3:28, 30, 31; Rom. 8:4.

3. What we are being told in Vs. 12 is that the using of the works of the Law by ethical ability to gain righteousness is not something that can be or is done out of Faith. But we are to live by Faith! How? In obedience to God's Law. Rom. 1:17; Rom. 3:28, 30, 31; Jam. 2:17, 18.

4. The curse of the Law in Vs. 13 is the condemnation of the Law from which we are redeemed when we are converted. Rom. 8:1, 2.

5. Christ was condemned for us, not for our obedience to the Law, but for our transgression of it which is sin; Christ was condemned for our sins. 1 Jn. 3:4; 1 Pet. 3:18.

6. Using the ethical works of the Law to gain righteousness does not remove us from under condemnation of the Law into which we are all born (Jn. 3:18,19), but rather still keeps us in the sin of self-glory. Rom. 4:1, 2; Gal. 3:10.

7. Curse is everyone who follows not in all the things written in the book of the Law to do them (Vs. 10). This means that to do the Law to get righteousness is not a teaching written in the book of the Law which Moses wrote under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit; if one were to do this they would not be following all the things written in this book which tells us that righteousness is not of works but of Faith. Deut. 30:10-14; Rom. 10:8.
 8. The book of the Law which are the writings of Moses also tells us that Abraham believed God and it was counted unto him for righteousness, so it comes by Faith and not by works. Gen. 15:5, 6.
 9. The book of the Law tells us that the Law is only properly done when it is done by Faith. Deut. 4:2; Isa. 1:11-18; Deut. 30:6, 8, 10-16.
13. Our critic tells us “I am not against the Law as God intended the Law to be used. It was supposed to convince us of sin, convict us of sin, and to lead to the One who would save us from sin — Jesus Christ.”
- a. We agree, but that is not the only use of the Law. There are six uses of the Law. They are;
 1. The Restraining Use: It is used by the Spirit to convict and restrain evil doers without their conversion. Rom. 3:19.
 2. The Conviction Use: It is used to show us the moral standards of holiness and right doing, and to thus point out sin. Jam. 1:25; Rom. 7:7, 13.
 3. The Divine Ideal Use: It is used to spiritually identify the Nature of God. Ps. 119:40, 44, 55, 123, 124.
 4. The Transformative Use: It is used by God being put into the heart of the penitent to convert them. Ps. 19:7; Heb. 8:10-12.
 5. The Obedience Use: It is used in conversion for obedience to the will of God through Faith. Jam. 2:8-12.
 6. The Judgment Use: It is used as the standard of judgment in the Judgment day of God. Jam. 2:8-12.
14. Our critic is in fact antinomian or against God’s Law, because he does not at all mention that the Law MUST be kept. Pr. 28:4, 7, 9; 1 Cor. 7:19.
15. Our critic tell us that the gospel is “the teaching of the righteousness that is by faith.”
- a. Yes, that is true, but “Righteousness by Faith” is a headline under which five major points (of grace) is listed as the Gospel.

1. The Gospel is called the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. 1 Cor. 1:17, 18, 23; 1 Cor. 15:3, 4, 12-20.
 2. The Gospel also includes believing and repentance. Mk. 1:14, 15; Lk. 24:46, 47.
 3. The Gospel is also called Justification by Faith. Gal. 3:7-9, 14.
 4. The Gospel is also called living by Faith which is really Sanctification. Rom. 1:16, 17.
 5. The Gospel is also called the Judgment that necessitates the glorifying and worship of God if it is to benefit us. Rev. 14:6, 7.
16. Our critic in his final passage tells us: “I merely reflect another interpretation of the gospel of ‘righteousness by faith’.”
- a. But a false gospel brings a curse and is a lie which will cause those who hold it to be lost. Gal. 1:6-9; Rev. 22: 14, 15.
 - b. Our critic needs to remember Jesus’ teaching that to break the Law and to teach and thus encourage others to break it is to be lost. Matt. 5:17-19.
17. Since our critic has accused us of confusing Justification with Sanctification, a brief historical review of the rediscovery of the Gospel in the Reformation is in place.
- a. Martin Luther who rediscover the gospel of Justification by Faith under the influence of the Holy Spirit taught that Justification was a subjective inner change. Here are some quotations from his writings.
 1. Luther calls justification “made righteous”.

“Therefore as well as Abraham and the other fathers, as also we, are made righteous by faith in Christ.” **Martin Luther A Commentary On St. Paul’s Epistle to the Galatians, pg. 233.**
 2. Luther calls justification a “new spiritual birth”.

“He says that Christ had to come, a second Adam, to bequeath His righteousness to us through a new spiritual birth in faith as the first Adam bequeathed sin to us, through the old, fleshly birth. Thus he declares, and confirms it, that no one by his own works, can help himself out of sin unto righteousness, any more than he can prevent the birth of his own body.” **Martin Luther Commentary On Romans, pg. xxi.**
 3. Luther calls justification the spiritual birth.

“Now, if they be above and without the law, then are they justified by the spiritual birth only, which is nothing else but faith...” **Martin Luther A Commentary On St. Paul’s Epistle to the Galatians, pg. 425.**

4. Luther even taught that John chapter 3 on the new birth was teaching justification, thus it is the new birth, hence subjective.

“This chapter [John 3] stresses above all else that sublime topic: faith in Christ, which alone justifies us before God.” **Luther’s Works, 22:275. Quoted in Erwin R. Gane, The Scriptural Doctrine of Justification, pg. 15.**

b. To Luther justification was the work of God in us.

“Natural motion is our motion, but the movement of justification is the work of God in us, to which our propositions refer.” **Luther’s Works, 34:177. Quoted in Ibid, pg. 13-14.**

c. When Luther said that justification is outside of us, he did not mean that it is outside of our hearts as deceived theologians tell us today, he meant that it is not common to our abilities, nor from our powers. Observe what he says:

“The phrase is grammatical. To be outside of us means not to be out of our powers. Righteousness is our possession, to be sure, since it was given to us out of mercy. Nevertheless, it is foreign to us, because we have not merited it.” **Ibid, pg. 178. Quoted in Ibid, pg. 14.**

d. Observe again the subjective change of Luther’s teaching on justification.

1. “Therefore the Christ who is grasped by faith and who lives in the heart is the true Christian righteousness, on account of which God counts us righteous and grants us eternal life.” **Ibid, 26:130. Quoted in Ibid, pg. 14.**

2. “Faith takes hold of Christ and has Him present, enclosing Him as the ring encloses the gem. And whosoever is found having this faith in the Christ who is grasped in the heart, him God accounts as righteous.” **Ibid, 26:132. Quoted in Ibid, pg. 14.**

3. “...faith, which takes hold of Christ the Saviour Himself and possesses Him in the heart. This faith justifies...” **Ibid, 26:137. Quoted in Ibid, pg. 14.**

4. “But so far as justification is concerned, Christ and I must be so closely attached that He lives in me and I in Him. What a marvelous way of speaking! Because He Lives in me, whatever grace, righteousness, Life, peace, and salvation there is in me is all Christ’s...” **Ibid, 26:167-168. Quoted in Ibid, pg. 14.**

18. How did the change in the subjective and change oriented nature of justification take place?

It was Luther's closest companion in the Reformation that brought about the change. His name was Phillip Melanchthon.

a. "It was Melanchthon who made the great mistake of narrowing justification down to the declaration that sinners are righteous on account of the external merits of Christ, whereas Luther allegedly understood justification as a real transformation of persons from the state of sinfulness to that of righteousness." **Carl E. Braaten, Justification, pg. 13.**

b. "It seems that Luther's doctrine of justification was modified somewhat by his followers, such as Melanchthon... Melanchthon gives the following definition of justification: 'To be justified does not mean that an ungodly man is made righteous, but that he is pronounced righteous in a forensic manner'." **Ibid, pg. 73.**

19. At first Melanchthon did teach that justification was a subjective change. In his 1531 Apology to the Augsburg Confession he wrote:

a. "Regarding faith we maintain... that because of Christ by faith itself we are truly accounted righteous or acceptable before God. And "to be justified" means to make unrighteous men righteous or to regenerate them, as well as to be pronounced or accounted righteous. For scripture speaks both ways. Therefore we want to show first that faith alone makes a righteous man out of an unrighteous one that is that it receives the forgiveness of sins." **Phillip Melanchthon, The Apology to the Augsburg Confession, Quoted in Good News Unlimited, April, 1999, Vol. 19. No. 4. Pg. 12-13.**

b. "Therefore we are justified by faith alone, justification being understood as making an unrighteous man righteous or effecting his regeneration." **Ibid, pg. 117. Quoted in Ibid, pg. 13.**

c. Observe that like Luther, Melanchthon, before he changed his teaching, explained faith to be the knowledge of Christ, justification to be a subjective change, and faith makes us keep the Law.

"In penitence and the terrors of conscience it [faith] consoles and encourages our hearts. Thus it regenerates us and brings us the Holy Spirit, so that we can finally obey God's Law, love him, truly fear him, be sure he hears us, and obey him in all afflictions. It mortifies our lust. By freely accepting the forgiveness of sins, faith set against God's wrath not our merits to love, but Christ the mediator and propitiator. This faith is the true knowledge of Christ, it uses His blessings, it regenerates our hearts, it precedes our keeping of the law." **Ibid, pg. 113. Quoted in Ibid, pg. 12-13.**

20. However sometime after Melanchthon drifted from the concept of a subjective, inner, point of change justification and gave the Reformation an objective, forensic concept.

a. "Following the writing of the Apology and the controversy with Brenz, Melanchthon expressed the difficulty he had encountered in writing on justification and

his desire to make his position unmistakably clear. As a result he brought out the forensic quality of justification more positively than before and made a sharper case against effective or “analytic” justification by stressing the distinction between justification and sanctification... The new life of holiness or sanctification was the inevitable result of justification, from which however, it was carefully distinguished.” **Lowell C. Green, How Melancthon Helped Luther Discover the Gospel, pg. 225.**

b. The formulation Melancthon gave of justification as he began to change from subjective justification is still closer to the original concept than the concept held by our critic, for his concept is one that is a result of further deteriorations over the centuries after the Reformation, and which has also taken in antinomian elements. What our critic holds as justification is a far cry from the Reformation doctrine, it is a rotting corpse, nevertheless, let us see Melancthon’s shift from the true concept.

“But Melancthon said substantially the same in the *Confessio Saxonica* (1551): ‘Although renovation is simultaneously begun, nevertheless we do not teach that a person is just in this life on account of such new qualities, but on account of what the Mediator has suffered for him.’” **Ibid, pg. 263.**

c. Thus it was that Melancthon led the way in first changing subjective justification as taught by Luther into the objective forensic formulation we have today.

“It seems that Luther’s doctrine of justification was modified somewhat by his followers, such as Melancthon...” **Alister McGrath, Justification by Faith, pg. 55.**

d. We are told how Melancthon changed Luther’s subjective justification into something like what our critic holds.

“Melancthon gives the following definition of justification: “To be justified does not mean that an ungodly man is made righteous, but that he is pronounced righteous in a forensic manner.” Augustine had interpreted the Latin verb iustificare (“to justify”) as iustum facere (“to make righteous”), but Melancthon eliminates this idea: Justification is about being declared or pronounced righteous, not being made righteous.” **Ibid, pg. 56.**

e. Thus our critic holds a concept of justification that was a drifting away from the Reformation, the concept was a new concept to Christian theology at that time.

1. “These ideas were subsequently developed by Luther’s follower Philip Melancthon to give the doctrine now generally known as “forensic justification.”... The importance of this development lies in the fact that it marks a complete break with the teaching of the church up to that point. From the time of Augustine onwards, justification had always been understood to refer to both the event of being declared righteous and the process of being made righteous. Melancthon’s concept of forensic justification diverged radically from this.” **Alister E. McGrath, Christian Theology, An Introduction, pg. 387.**

2. “What the first fifteen hundred years of the Christian church had called “justification” now had to be split into two parts, one of which was still called “justification”!” **Alister McGrath, Justification by Faith, pg. 59.**

21. It was next left up to John Calvin, another reformer to further the development of the separation of justification into two parts.

- a. John Calvin took up the new justification concepts of Philip Melancthon. Calvin was one of the major reformers.

“Melancthon’s concept of forensic justification diverged radically from this. As it was taken up by virtually all the major reformers subsequently, it came to represent a standard difference between the Protestant and Roman Catholic churches from that point onward.” **Alister E. McGrath, Christian Theology, An Introduction, pg. 387.**

- b. John Calvin solved the problem of whether justification was subjective or objective, but we know that he moved away from Luther’s concept which started the Reformation.

“It was due to the genius of John Calvin that this difficulty was completely overcome –in fact, so successful was Calvin’s solution that it was adopted by just about every Lutheran theologian as well, despite Luther’s somewhat different views on the matter.” **Alister McGrath, Justification by Faith, pg. 57.**

- c. What did Calvin like Melancthon teach on the matter? Read:

1. In effect, Melancthon and Calvin distinguish two aspects of the process that both Augustine and the young Luther had treated as a single unit. Thus Augustine taught that justification embraces all of Christian existence, including both the event of being treated as righteous and the process of becoming righteous. For Melancthon and Calvin, however, the event (justification) and the process (sanctification) could be and should be distinguished. The forgiveness of sins and the renewing gift of the Holy Spirit are to be treated as logically distinct.” **Ibid, pg. 56.**

2. “But for Melancthon and Calvin, there is no righteousness within us which could function as the basis of the divine verdict of justification...” **Ibid, pg. 60.**

- d. It was Calvin’s model or formulation of justification that was eventually accepted by all, and has now come to us through many systematic theologians, and later became infected with antinomianism.

“The model of justification which would eventually gain the ascendancy in the later Reformation was formulated by Calvin in the 1540s and 1550s.” **Alister E. McGrath, Christian Theology, An Introduction, pg. 387.**

- e. Over the years following Calvin the great Reformed theologians who wrote many Systematic Theologies finally hardened the idea that justification does not make one

righteous, he is only declared so, while at the same time the man is given righteousness within and that is sanctification, the two being distinct events and are thus not the same. But this was a first shift, and a dangerous one, from Luther's concept of justification and which the Bible teaches, namely that justification is the gift of the Spirit within the hearts of the penitent and sanctification is the maintenance of the inward change even in the obedience to the law of God.

22. Another important thing our critic needs to know is that we teach that there are basically two types of Righteousness just as Luther taught. We will now look into Luther's 1519 sermon entitled "Two Kinds of Righteousness."

a. As we showed before, there are:

1. The Righteousness of God or divine Righteousness which is the Nature of God or God Himself. Jer. 23:5, 6; Rom. 2:21.
2. The righteousness of the Law which is the good works of the law which is only performed by Faith. Rom. 8:4; Rom. 9:31, 32.

b. here is Luther speaking about the first kind of Righteousness, the Righteousness of God.

1. "There are two kinds of Christian righteousness, just as man's sin is of two kinds. The first is alien righteousness, that is the righteousness of another instilled from without. This is the righteousness of Christ by which he justifies through faith..."
John Dillenberger, Martin Luther, Selections From His Writings, pg. 86.

2. By saying that this Righteousness is "instilled from without" Luther means that it comes from without to within, thus we see again justification is subjective. Here is Luther again with the first type of Righteousness, the Righteousness of God.

"Through faith in Christ, therefore Christ's righteousness becomes our righteousness and all that he has become ours; rather he himself becomes ours. Therefore the Apostle calls it "the righteousness of God" in Rom. 1[:17]; For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed... such a faith is called 'the righteousness of God'." **Ibid, pg. 87.**

3. Observe the transformative work of the first kind of Righteousness taught by God.

"This is an infinite righteousness, and one that swallows up all sins in a moment, for it is impossible that sin should exist in Christ. On the contrary, he who trusts in Christ exists in Christ; he is one with Christ, having the same righteousness as he. It is therefore impossible that sin should remain in him. This righteousness is primary; it is the basis, the cause, the source of all our own actual righteousness. For this is the righteousness given in place of the original righteousness lost in Adam. It accomplishes the same as that original righteousness would have accomplished;

rather, it accomplishes more.” **Ibid, pg. 87-88.**

4. Again we see the subjectivity of Justification based upon “instilling” or putting within us this alien Righteousness the Righteousness of God.

“Therefore this alien righteousness, instilled in us without our works by grace alone—while the Father, to be sure, inwardly draws us to Christ...” **Ibid, pg. 88.**

c. Now observe the second kind of righteousness as explained by Luther. It is the righteousness of the law, and it is done under the influence of the Righteousness called the Righteousness of God.

1. Here is the righteousness of the law.

“The second kind of righteousness is our proper righteousness, not because we alone work it, but because we work with that first and alien righteousness. This is that manner of life spent profitably in good works, in the first place, in slaying the flesh and crucifying the desires with respect to the self...” **Ibid, pg. 88.**

2. Observe that the second righteousness of works is a product of the first Righteousness of God.

“This righteousness is the product of the righteousness of the first type, actually its fruit and consequence...” **Ibid, pg. 89.**

23. What about obedience to the law? Did Luther and the tradition of the Reformation teach about keeping the Law? Luther attacked those that were against obedience as much as he attacked those who believed in doing works to bring righteousness to themselves or convert themselves.

a. Here is his chief condemnation to an antinomian party that arose claiming the Law did not need to be kept after justification.

“Finally, something must be added for the sake of those for whom nothing can be said so well that they will not spoil it by misunderstanding it. It is questionable whether they will understand even what will be said here. There are very many who, when they hear of this freedom of faith, immediately turn it into an occasion for the flesh and think that now all things are allowed them. They want to show that they are free men and Christians only by despising and finding fault with ceremonies, traditions, and human laws; as if they were Christians because on stated days they do not fast or eat meat when others fast, or because they do not use the accustomed prayers, and with upturned nose scoff at the precepts of men, although they utterly disregard all else that pertains to the Christian religion. The extreme opposite of these are those who rely for their salvation solely on their reverent observance of ceremonies, as if they would be saved because on certain days they fast or abstain from meats, or pray certain prayers; these, make a boast of the precepts of the church and of the fathers, and do not care a fig for the things which

are of the essence of our faith. Plainly, both are in error because they neglect the weightier things which are necessary to salvation and quarrel so noisily about trifling and unnecessary matters.” **Martin Luther, Three Treatises, pg. 310.**

b. Luther also calls antinomians “wicked men”.

“Now let us turn to the second part, the outer man. Here we shall answer all those who, offended by the word “faith” and by all that has been said, now ask, “If faith does all things and is sufficient unto righteousness, why then are good works commanded? We will take our ease and do no work and be content with faith.” I answer: not so, you wicked men not so.” **Ibid, pg. 294.**

c. The fact that Luther taught that the Law should be kept by Faith as the second righteousness is found in many place in his writings. Let us see some.

1. Faith does not free us from works. Nowhere in his letter does our critic show that there is an obedience use of the Law, but Luther show that the Law is to be kept.

“Our faith in Christ does not free us from works but from false opinions concerning works that is from the foolish presumption that justification is acquired by works. Faith redeems, corrects and preserves our consciences so that we know that righteousness does not consist in works, although works neither can nor ought to be wanting; just as we cannot be without food and drink and all the works of this mortal body, yet our righteousness is not in them, but in faith; and yet those works of the body are not to be despised or neglected on that account.” **Ibid, pg. 311.**

2. Again, all the Law must be kept.

“Now when a man has learned through the commandments to recognize his helplessness and is distressed about how he might satisfy the law—since the law must be fulfilled so that not a jot or tittle shall be lost, other wise man will be condemned without hope...” **Ibid, pg. 283.**

3. Here is Luther again telling us that faith makes us keep the Law of works.

“But works, being inanimate things, cannot glorify God, although they can, if faith is present, be done to the glory of God. Here, however, we are not inquiring what works and what kind of works are done, but who it is that does them, who glorifies God and brings forth the works. This is done by faith which dwells in the heart and is the source and substance of all our righteousness.” **Ibid, pg. 288.**

4. Here is Luther again.

“Nevertheless the works themselves do not justify him before God, but he does the works out of spontaneous love in obedience to God and considers nothing except the approval of God, whom he would most scrupulously obey in all things.” **Ibid, pg.**

295.

5. One more time, here is Luther showing justification by faith to be not only subjective, but faith to also be the cause of the good works of the Law of God.

“As works do not make a man a believer, so also they do not make him righteous. But as faith makes a man a believer and righteous, so faith does good works. Since, then works justify no one, and a man must be righteous before he does a good work, it is very evident that it is faith alone which, because of the pure mercy of God through Christ and in his Word, worthily and sufficiently justifies and saves the person.” **Ibid, pg. 298.**

6. Luther never rejected good works which he taught was to be done after justification; what he rejected was the Roman Catholic use of works to make an unconverted man righteous. Here is Luther again.

“We do not, therefore, reject good works; on the contrary, we cherish and teach them as much as possible. We do not condemn them for their own sake but on account of this godless addition to them and the perverse idea that righteousness is to be sought through them; for that makes them appear good outwardly, when in truth they are not good. They deceive men and lead them to deceive one another like ravening wolves in sheep’s clothing.” **Ibid, pg. 300.**

24. Perhaps it shall help our critic to read a brief account of the origin of antinomianism, that heresy that has so deeply shaped his “gospel” at this present time.

“Apart from its early appearance in New Testament times, and in Valentinian Gnosticism, the formal rise of Antinomianism has usually been associated with Johannes Agricola, sometimes called Islebius, an active leader in the Lutheran Reformation. In his search for some effective principle by which to combat the doctrine of salvation by works, Agricola denied that the believer was in any way obliged to fulfill the moral Law. In the Disputation with Luther at Wittenberg (1537), Agricola is alleged to have said that a man was saved by faith alone, without regard to his moral character. These views of Agricola were denounced by Luther as a caricature of the Gospel, but in spite of this, the Antinomians made repeated appeal to Luther’s writings and claimed his support for their opinions. This claim, however, is based merely on certain ambiguities in Luther’s expressions, and general misunderstanding of the Reformer’s teaching.” **Ernest F. Kevan, The Grace of Law, pg. 23.**

25. At the later time, when the great Wesleyan Revival came, it too was against not only antinomianism but also against our critic’s concept of righteousness by faith. Count Zinzendorf’s vulgarly called Moravian Brethren, further developed this antinomian gospel after the Lutheran and Calvinistic Reformation had passed. John Wesley gave a seven point identification of the errors associated with these Moravians which are exactly what our critic teaches today. Here is what Wesley said:

a. “The difference between the Moravian doctrine and ours (in this respect) lies

here:—

They believe and teach,—

1. That Christ has done all which was necessary for the salvation of all mankind.
2. That, consequently, we are to do nothing, as necessary to salvation, but simply to believe in him.
3. That there is but one duty now, but one command, viz., to believe in Christ.
4. That Christ has taken away all other commands and duties, having wholly ‘abolished the law’; that a believer is therefore ‘free from the law’, is not obliged thereby to do or omit anything, it being inconsistent with his liberty to do anything as commanded.
5. That we are sanctified wholly the moment we are justified, and are neither more or less holy to the day of our death; entire sanctification, and entire justification, being in one and the same instant.
6. That a believer is never sanctified or holy in himself, but in Christ only; he has no holiness in himself at all, all his holiness being imputed, not inherent.

7. That if a man regards prayer, or searching the Scriptures, or communicating, as matter of duty; if he judges himself obliged to do these things, or is troubled when he does them not, he is in bondage; he has no faith at all, but is seeking salvation by the works of the law.” **The Works of John Wesley Vol. X, pg. 201-202.**

b. Our critic may not hold every point as exactly outlined in the Antinomian Moravian teachings, but they are his concepts more or less, since they logically fit in with the things he said, and most of them are exactly what he believes. However, let us read exactly what Wesley said about all seven points.

“We believe that the first of these propositions is ambiguous, and all the rest utterly false.” **Ibid, pg. 202.**

c. In criticizing all these points Wesley has some strong words which we ourselves apply to our critic.

1. “So your liberty is a liberty to disobey God; whereas ours is a liberty to obey him in all things: So grossly, while we “establish the law,” do you make void the law through faith!” **Ibid, pg. 203.**
2. “What a heap of palpable self-contradiction, what senseless jargon, is this!” **Ibid, pg. 203.**
3. “Thus obedience with you is a proof of unbelief, and disobedience a proof of faith! What is it, to put darkness for light, and light for darkness, if this is not?” **Ibid,**

pg. 204.

26. What does all this prove? It proves that our critic is the one who has removed far from the real Gospel as taught in the Holy Scriptures and as Luther whom God used to start the Reformation. Our critic, sad to say is fastened in the great delusion of the last days which is the general apostate doctrines of the Protestant and Evangelical churches. They all similarly believe this antinomian gospel which is a result of centuries of falling away from the Reformation. However, Thusia Seventh-day Adventist has retained the Reformation in modern times, while our critic like the modern day apostate churches are outside of the stream of the Reformation. The last true church of God is a remnant, and they keep the Law of God. Rev. 12:17; Rev. 14:12.
27. Finally, the things that have been said here in this paper was said in a spirit of meekness, with love to our critic “in deed and truth”, and also to all who believe like him. We call upon him and others to repent of his/their sins of false doctrines lest he/they be lost forever. Accept the true Christ of faith as shown in this our true theology. Amen. Rev. 18:1-4; Rev. 2:5.

THE END

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