

Philippians Series

Lesson #069

April 4, 2024

Dean Bible Ministries

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Righteousness and Justification in Romans Philippians 3:8–11; Romans 3:20–31



Gal. 2:16, “because we know that a man is not declared righteous by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be declared righteous by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be declared righteous.”

Php. 3:1–2: Paul warns against the legalistic, grace-destroying teaching of the Judaizers.

Php. 3:3–6: Paul emphasizes the confidence factor:

Php. 3:7–11: The righteousness which is from God.

What is the important question?

Job 9:2 “... But how can a man be righteous [צַדִּיק (*ṣādēq*) be just, righteous] before God?”

The issue is how do we obtain righteousness.

Rom. 4:3, “For what does the Scripture say? ‘*Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.*’ ”

Rom. 4:3, “For what does the Scripture say? ‘*Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.*’ ”

λογίζομαι *logízomai*;

① a. to determine by mathematical process, *reckon, calculate; count, take into account;*

b. as a result of a calculation *evaluate, estimate, look upon as, consider;*

② to give careful thought to a matter, think (about), consider, ponder, let one’s mind dwell on;

③ to hold a view about something, think, believe, be of the opinion as in *Php. 3:13*

What the Bible Teaches About

Imputation of Righteousness



The difference between real and judicial imputations:

- 1. Real imputations credit something to a person which truly belongs to him; thus, an affinity exists between what is received and the one receiving it. Real imputations include: Adam's original sin to the sin nature at birth (Rom. 5:12–21).**

2. Judicial imputations occur where the justice of God credits to a person what is not previously his own. There is no harmony, agreement, or affinity between what is being imputed and the person receiving the imputation, i.e.,

a. our personal sins to Christ on the Cross (Rom. 8:31–32) and

b. Christ's perfect righteousness to the believer at the point of salvation (Rom. 4:3–4; 2 Cor. 5:21).

3. Real imputations include:

Adam's original sin to the sin nature at birth (Rom. 5:12–21),

eternal life to the human spirit (1 John 5:11–12),

blessings in time to the righteousness of God in us (Eph. 1:3; 1 Cor. 2:9),

blessings in eternity to the resurrected believer (2 Cor. 5:10).

4. The result then is that man is declared righteous. He is not made righteous, sin is not overlooked, it is not just as if I had never sinned. He is declared by God to be righteous not because of what he is or will be but solely because he possesses the righteousness of Christ.

God pronounces their debt to justice paid by another so that they are now righteous in relationship to the standard of perfect justice.

Php. 3:7, “But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ.” [NKJV]

ἦν ἔν εἰμί eimi

**3 sing imperfect indic
to be, exist (sum)**

The imperfect tense indicates continuous action in past time. Paul is saying these merits were continuously worthless, they were never a positive.

Php. 3:7, “But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ.” [NKJV]

κέρδη *kerdē* κέρδος *kerdos* neut plur nom (n) gain, credit

ἡγέομαι *hēgeomai*

1 sing perf mid/passive indic 1. to lead, 2. to engage in an intellectual process, think, consider, regard; also an accounting term. As in James 1:2, “count it all joy”

ζημίαν *zēmian* ζημία *zēmia* fem sing acc *loss, forfeit, financial debit, penalty*

Php. 3:8, “Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ” [NKJV]

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ζημίαν *zēmian* ζημία *zēmia* fem sing acc *loss, forfeit, financial debit, penalty*

γνῶσις *gnōsis* fem sing gen *knowledge*

σκύβαλον *skubalon* neut plur acc *dung, manure, garbage*

What is the important question?

Job 9:2 “... But how can a man be righteous [צַדִּיק (*ṣādēq*) be just, righteous] before God?”

The issue is how do we obtain righteousness.

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Noun fem sing acc

righteousness, justice,

the quality of

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Noun fem sing acc

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πίστεως Χριστοῦ,

pisteos Christou

faith “of” Christ, an

objective genitive

not the faithfulness of

Christ, or Christ’s own

faithfulness.

Faith directed toward Christ

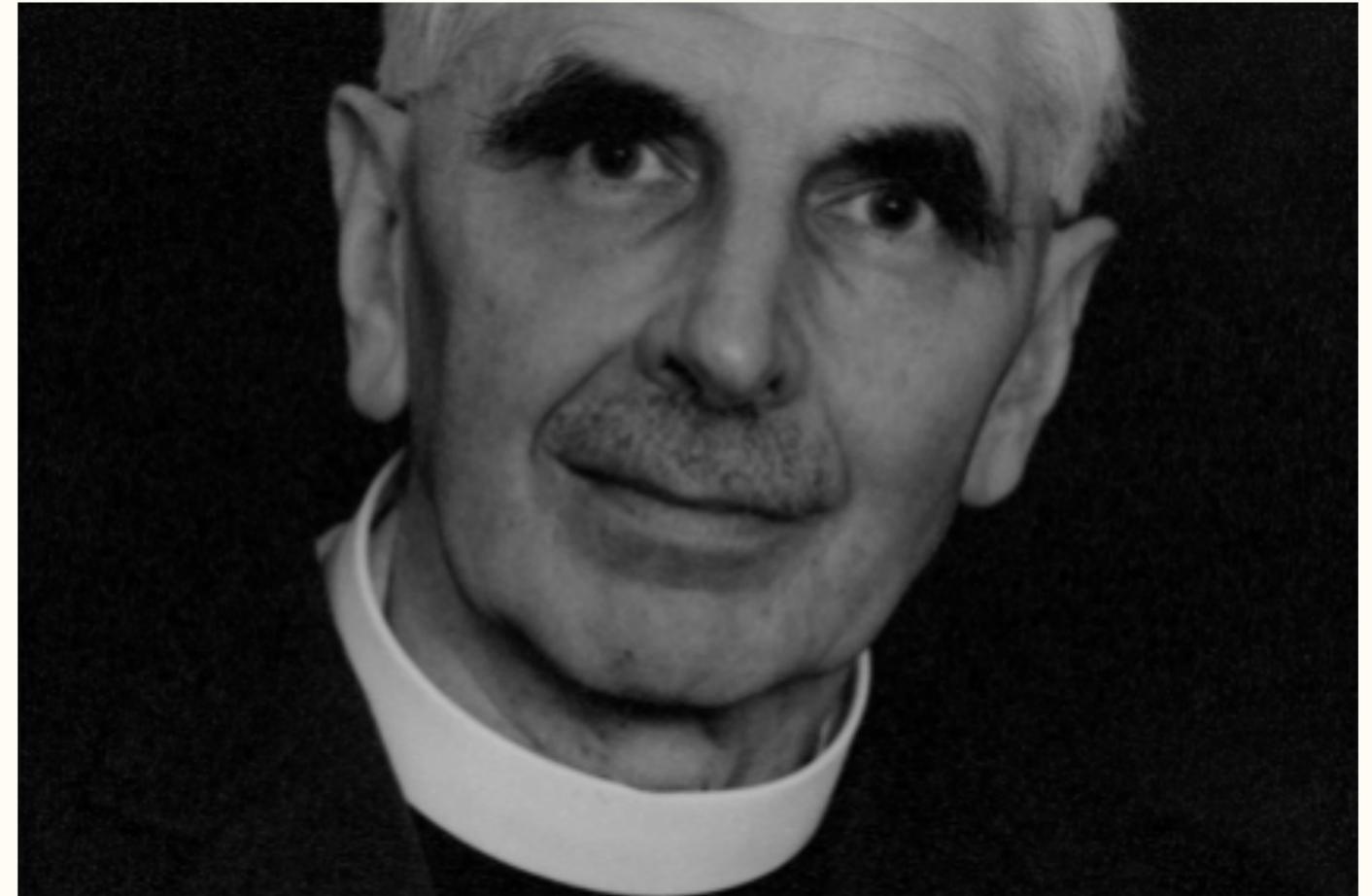
Types of Righteousness in the New Testament

- 1. Righteousness from works of the law or human good, might benefit others, but has no benefit before God. This is –R.**
- 2. The righteousness of God with reference to His divine essence. Rom. 3:25, 26**
- 3. The righteousness of God imputed to the believer. Php. 3:9, “and be found in Him, 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;” [*ek theou*]**

Romans 3:21–26

“This short section is, as has already been indicated, the centre and heart of the main division to which it belongs. We may go farther and say that it is the centre and heart of the whole of Rom. 1:16b–15:13.”

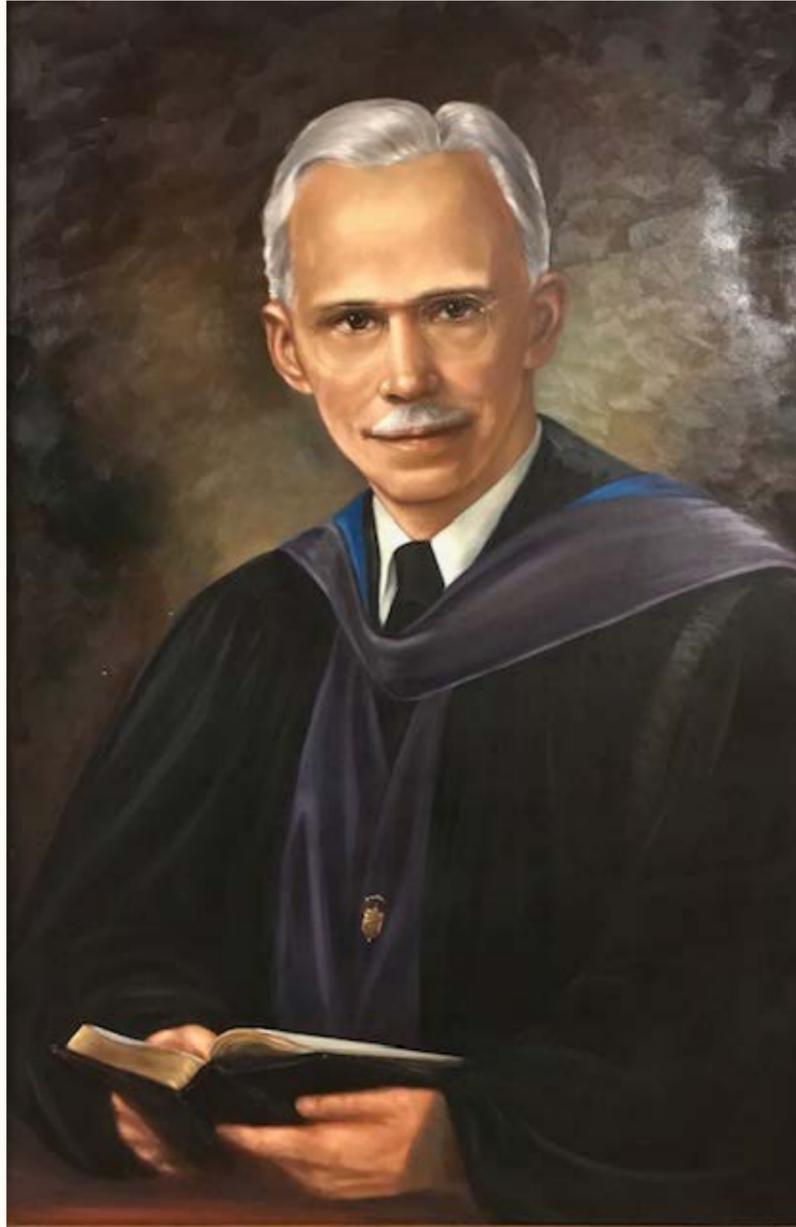
~C. E. B. Cranfield



Charles E. B. Cranfield

1915–2015

**Respected theologian, academic,
and commentator on “Romans.”**



Alva J. McClain
1888–1968
founder of Grace
Theological Seminary and
Grace College

“This section is the very heart of the book of Romans. For this reason, all Christians ought to memorize verses 21–26. If someone should ask me, ‘Brother McClain, if you could have just six verses out of the Bible, and all the rest be taken away, which would you take?’, I would select these six verses. All of God’s gospel (Good News) is there, and in a way found nowhere else in the Word of God.”



Leon Morris
1914–2006

“Romans 3:21–26 is
‘possibly the single most
important paragraph ever
written,’ ”

Rom. 3:23, “for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

Rom. 3:24, “being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,”

Rom. 3:23, “for all **have sinned and **fall short** of the glory of God,**

Rom. 3:24, “being justified** freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,”**

The problem:

“Being justified” is an adverbial participle that *must* modify the main verb. There are two main verbs it modifies, “have sinned” and “fall short.”

However, this is awkward if not impossible to translate in a smooth English sentence.

Rom. 3:24, δικαιούμενοι “being justified”—The thought connection is difficult. Grammatically, the only viable construction for this masculine nominative plural participle is adverbial to the pair of verbs that have the masculine nominative plural πάντες “all” as subject. The exact thought connection, though, is difficult. It seems to me that Paul’s thought connection actually goes back to vv. 21 and 22 to explicate the nature of the righteousness he refers to there. In the meanwhile, though, he has introduced sinners into the sentence as the subject of the verbs of v. 23, and so the resumption of the thought from vv. 21–22 now shifts the construction to one in which that righteousness initially named with the noun δικαιοσύνη now takes the form of a passive verb from δικαιόω, with πάντες as its subject. The diagramming, then, reflects the grammatical construction, with the deeper thought connection left as a matter for the exegete to explore on bases other than strict grammar.

~Leedy, Randy A. 2020. *SBL Greek New Testament Sentence Diagrams*. Faithlife.

Rom. 3:23, “for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

Rom. 3:24, “being justified [present passive participle] freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,”

Rom. 3:23, “for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

Rom. 3:24, “being declared righteous freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,”

Rom. 3:23, “for all [mnpl] have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

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Rom. 3:24, “being declared righteous [mnpl pres passive ptcp] freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,”

A solution:

For all being declared righteous have sinned [in the past] and are falling short in the present of the glory of God ...

For all while declared righteous have sinned [in the past] and are falling short [in the present] of the glory of God.

For, though [or while] all being declared righteous in the present have sinned [in the past] and are falling short [in the present] of the glory of God are still being declared righteous freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

Rom. 3:20, “Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.”

Gal. 2:16, “because we know that a man is not declared righteous by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be declared righteous by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be declared righteous.”

**ἐξ ἔργων νόμου
ex ergon nomou
prep “from”
“the works of the law”**

**ἔργα νόμου (*erga nomou*) “works of the law”
occurs 3× in Romans; 6× in Galatians,
nowhere else in the New Testament.**

**ἔργον (*ergon*) 26th most common noun in
the NT (169×) 68× in Paul, 15× in Romans
νόμος (*nomos*) 19th most common 195×
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***New Perspectives of Paul* developed by**

- **E. P. Sanders**
- **James D. G. Dunn**
- **N. T. Wright**

Works of the law = narrow = circumcision, dietary laws, and sabbath laws.

Problem: their view leads necessarily to Replacement Theology, the promises to Abraham expand to the world.

Rom. 2:15, “who show the work of the law written in their (Gentile) hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and between themselves their thoughts accusing or else excusing them)”

Works of the law = human efforts to gain righteousness through morality, ritual, good deeds, or any human effort.

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Rom. 3:21, “But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets,

Rom. 3:22, “even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference;

Rom. 3:23, “for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

Rom. 3:24, “being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,

Rom. 3:25, “whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed,”

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Several interpretive questions in Romans 3:21–26.

- 1. What is the meaning of “righteousness of God”?**
- 2. What is the meaning of “faith in Jesus”?**
- 3. What is the relationship of Romans 3:23 to Romans 3:24?**

Rom. 3:21, “But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets,”

- 1. What is the meaning of “righteousness of God”?**
- 2. What kind of righteousness is this?**
 - a. Is it God’s righteousness, i.e., referring to His essence?**
 - b. Or is this imputed righteousness?**
 - c. What kind of righteousness is witnessed by the Law and the Prophets?**

Rom. 3:21, “But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets,”

But now — Νῦνι δὲ (*nuni de*) —

- 1. temporal marker with focus on the moment as such, now**
- 2. temporal marker with focus on a prevailing situation, with the idea of time *being* entirely absent, “now, as it is.” ~BDAG**

Rom. 3:21, “But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets,”

δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ *dikaiousune theou*

- 1. The righteousness of God with reference to His divine essence. Rom. 3:25, 26**
- 2. The righteousness of God imputed to the believer. *Php. 3:9*, “and be found in Him, 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;” [*ten ek theou*] genitive of source, from the source of God.**

Imputed Righteousness

- a. God's own righteousness credited to the believer in Jesus (Rom. 3:22; 4:5; 2 Cor. 5:21).**
- b. It is not produced in life by the Spirit; and is unrelated to human, experiential righteousness in every form.**
- c. It is not related to right conduct, or morality, or ritual; Php. 3:9**
- d. It is that which we become when we are vitally joined to Christ, 2 Cor. 5:21.**

2 Cor. 5:21, “For He [God the Father] made Him [the Lord Jesus Christ] who knew no sin to be sin for us [imputation of our sin to Him on the Cross], that we might become the righteousness of God [imputed righteousness at moment of faith] in Him.”

Rom. 5:17, “For if by the one man’s offense death reigned through the one, much more those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.)”

Rom. 3:21, “But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets,”

apart from the law = the whole of the Mosaic Law

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The law required two witnesses or more:

- 1) the Law itself (which included the witness of the song of the nation, and the heavens and the earth)**
- 2) the Prophets**

[NKJV] Rom. 3:22, “even the righteousness of [from] God, through faith in Jesus Christ to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference;”

[NIV] Rom. 3:22, “This righteousness is given through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference between Jew and Gentile,”

[NET] Rom. 3:22, “namely, the righteousness of God through the faithfulness of Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction,”

**Romans 3:22, “even the righteousness of [from] God,
through faith in Jesus Christ to all and on all who believe.
For there is no difference;”**

**διὰ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ χριστοῦ [*dia pisteos Iesou Christou*]
Objective genitive, faith toward Christ NOT the faithfulness
of Christ cf., [NET]**

**Context indicates “faith” *pistis*, consistently used for
belief, not faithfulness. (Used 8× in Romans)**

Rom. 3:22, “even (*kai*, ascensive) the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference;”

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ἁμαρτάνω *hamartanō*

Verb

**3 plur aorist (past) act indic
“to sin; err; miss the mark”
gnomic aorist: presents a
timeless, general fact, not a
specific sin**

Rom. 5:12, “Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned”

Imputation of Adam’s original sin.

Rom. 3:23, “for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

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Verb

3 plural aorist (past) active indicative

to sin; err; miss the mark

ὑστερέω *hustereō*

Verb

3 plural present middle to lack; be late; postpone

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Verb

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to sin; err; miss the mark

ὑστερέω *hustereō*

Verb

3 plur **present** mid
to lack; be late; postpone

δικαίωω *dikaioō*

Verb **present** mid participle modifies a verb
to pronounce or declare righteous, justify

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Rom. 3:24, “though [or while] being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,”

δωρεάν *dorean*

adverb.

Pertaining to being freely given, as a gift, without payment, *gratis*

Rom. 3:24, “though [or while] being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,”

δωρεάν *dorean*

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**Pertaining to being
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~BDAG

χάρις *charis*

fem sing dat

**grace, divine favor or
generosity with nothing
in return**

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διὰ τῆς ἀπολυτρόσεως

***dia tes apolutroseos* (the redemption)**

dia* with the genitive = through, emphasizing the *means

The redemption that is in Christ Jesus

The word in this verse is about the liberation. Everywhere in the New Testament this Greek word, when used metaphorically, refers to deliverance effected through the death of Christ.

Conclusion:

Rom. 3:22, “even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference;”

- 1. The “all who believe” (3:22) are also the all who have sinned and continue to fall short of the glory of God (v. 23).**

And those who have sinned and continue to fall short are also those who are justified—*while at the same time falling short!*

Conclusion:

2. We all sinned in Adam, and we continue falling short of the glory of God.

The glory of God:

“glory” references all that makes God significant and important, thus, is an idiom for all of His attributes.



Simul Justus Et Peccator

(Simultaneously righteous and sinner)

~Martin Luther

for all sinned and are falling short of the glory of God while being justified freely by His grace ...

Conclusion:

3. The declaration of righteousness is freely given *through* the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

That declaration of righteousness is not through human efforts, or perseverance, or continuing in the faith, but is through the redemption.

Therefore the redemption occurs *first*, and is the means for justification.

Conclusion:

- 4. The declaration of righteousness is based not on God *imparting* righteousness or *infusing us* with righteousness, but is a judicial declaration from the Supreme Court of Heaven which looks at the perfect righteousness imputed to us and declares us righteous at the same time we are still falling short experientially.**

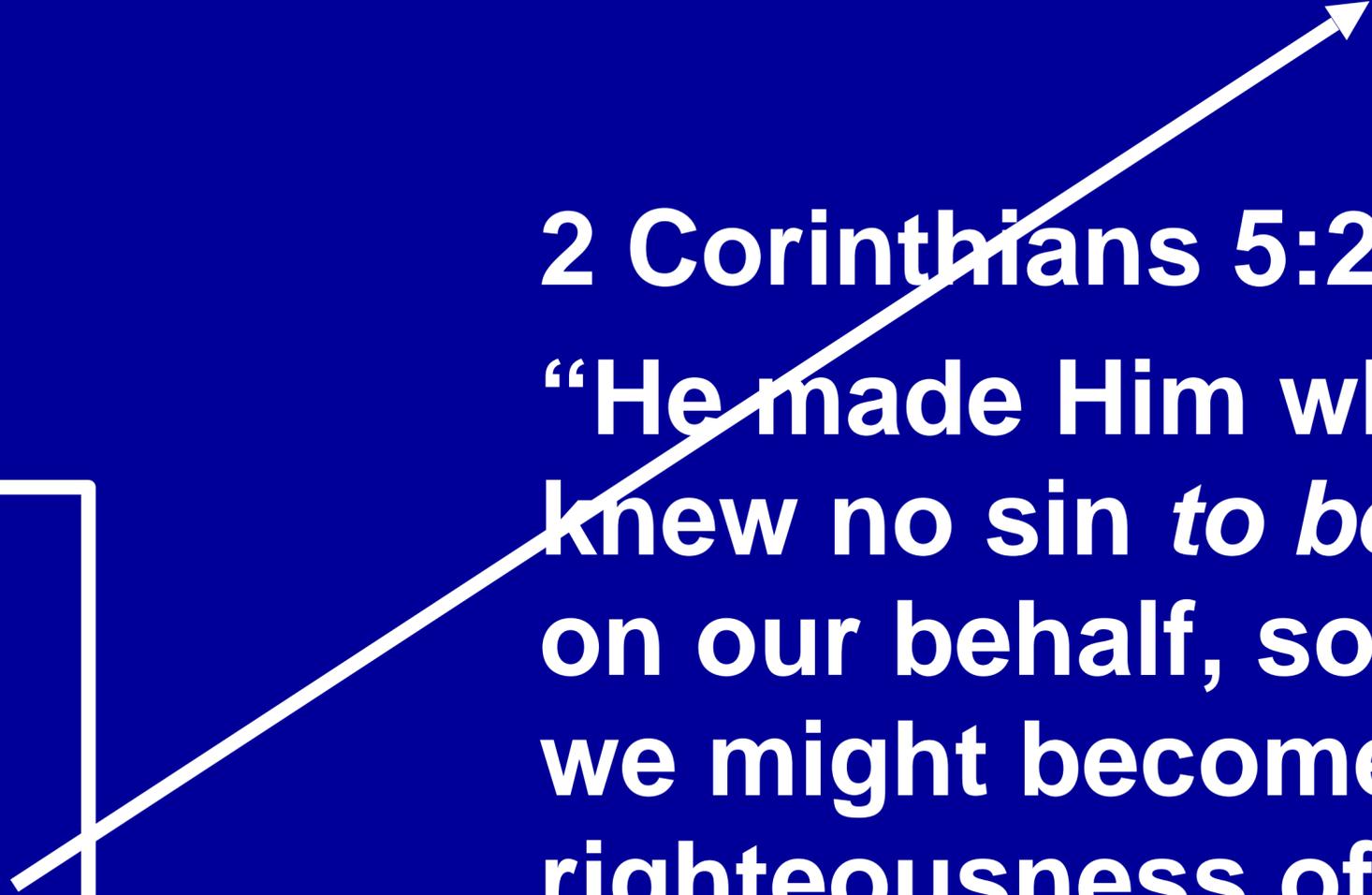
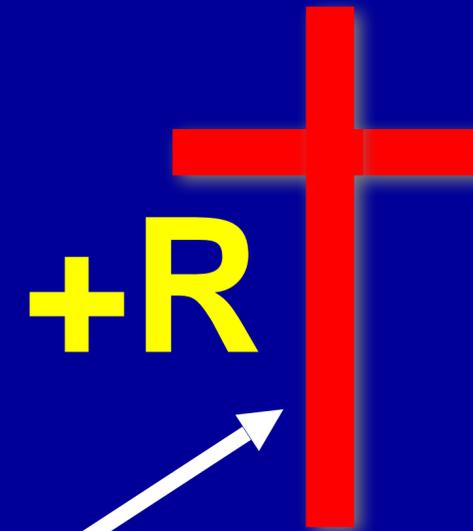
Imputed righteousness provides a complete, total, legal righteousness package justifying us completely, not progressively, thus securing our salvation for eternity.

+R
J

- R

Isaiah 64:6, “For all of us have become like one who is unclean, And all our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment;”

+R
J



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.”

