

3. Its Implications

a. *Logizomai* is a fact

- 1) Because of Abraham's faith, God applied His righteousness to Abraham's account. That is a fact.
- 2) The righteousness of God can ONLY be received by faith in Christ's completed propitiation on the cross. It cannot possibly be earned. (Ephesians 2:8-9) "*For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.*"
- 3) God gave us this account in Romans 4 that we might be assured that the same applies to us. Read vs.24-25.
 - a) By faith, we must believe that God accepted Christ's payment on the cross on our behalf (v.24).
 - b) We must trust in Christ who died for our sins and raised again for our justification (v.25).
 - c) When we do, God promises that our faith in Him will enable him to *impute* or **apply** his righteousness to our accounts.

b. It is permanent

- 1) Imputed righteousness is a reality. It is a fact. It will **not** change based on our performance. Once applied, it cannot be withdrawn. Once truly born into God's family, you cannot be "unborn".
- 2) However, those who truly receive God's righteousness cannot indulge in the pleasures of sin again without feeling guilt and the chastening of the Lord (Heb 12:7-8).

Conclusion: I have attempted to simplify this complicated topic.

Remember that *logizomai*, the word often translated to *reckon*, *count*, and *impute*, describes an application to another's account that is a reality. It is like using a debit card.

More important than understanding its meaning is receiving its reality in your life. You **cannot** earn God's righteousness, but by faith in Christ, you **can** receive His righteousness. Your faith will enable Him to apply His righteousness to your account.

If you are still confused, please come and talk with me about it.

Song: To God be the Glory, 449

Simplifying the Complicated

28 November 2021 AM – Romans 4:1-25 – Ro2021 – Scott Childs

Introduction: How many of you are old enough to have used a manual typewriter to type a letter or document? ___ For you youngsters who have never had to do that, the rest of us can assure you that it was a complicated project. Every key had to be pressed with firmness to leave a clear imprint on the paper. Black and red were the only type colour options. The only font available was the one on your type keys. Every mistake had to be corrected manually and never looked perfect. If you were typing a carbon copy or on a stencil for a mimeograph machine, mistakes were unpardonable. The only way to change what you typed or to move sentences around was to type it all over again.

Today, that complicated project has been GREATLY simplified by fast computers with preview monitors, vast memories, editing capabilities, almost unlimited font types and colours, spell checkers, grammar checkers, automatic footnotes and endnotes, and laser-quality colour printers. Typing has simplified tremendously in the past 35 years.

Transition: Romans 4 contains a complicated word that Paul used 11 times in this chapter. The word to which I refer is often translated some form of *count*, *reckon*, *impute*, *think* or *conclude*. It is the Greek word *λογίζομαι* *logizomai*. This word is key to understanding how a believer receives God's righteousness and what that does for him. My aim is to simplify this word so that every one of us will understand its meaning, its use and its implications.

1. Its Meaning

a. The complexity of *logizomai*

- 1) It is properly used of a numerical calculation. ^{Vine}
- 2) Thayer's Lexicon states, "This word deals with **reality**. If I *logizomai* or reckon that my bankbook has \$25 in it, it **has** \$25 in it. Otherwise, I am deceiving myself. This word refers to **facts**, not **suppositions**." ^{emphasis added}
- 3) Alan Carr explains, The word "imputed" means "**to credit to one's account and to treat accordingly**." It means that once you trust Christ for salvation, your sins will never be credited to your account, because they have already been

credited to His account, 2 Cor. 5:21. For he hath made him to be...

- 4) Another commentator put it this way. It means to take something that belongs to someone else and credit it to another's account. PreceptAustin.org
- 5) **Illustrate** with four blocks. God – Me, Righteousness – Sin. If God takes my sin and credits me his righteousness. That is a reality. It is a fact.
- 6) We might say that the thing reckoned is considered true.

b. The simple meaning

- 1) To *logizomai* is similar in some ways to using a debit card. When I make a purchase, I simply use my debit card and the payment is automatically taken from my account and applied to the seller's account.
 - a) By faith, I swipe my card and the transaction takes place.
 - b) I cannot see it happen.
 - c) It happens momentarily.
 - d) The fact is that the money I agreed to pay was in reality applied to the seller's account.
- 2) When it comes to us receiving God's righteousness, similar things take place.
 - a) When we come to God as a guilty sinner and trust Christ's payment for our sin, our faith enables God to apply His righteousness to our account.
 - b) We cannot see His righteousness applied to us.
 - c) It happens momentarily.
 - d) In reality, God applies His righteousness to our account. We MUST remember that this transaction is a reality. It is a fact.
- 3) I believe that a simple translation for *logizomai* is the phrase "**in reality applied**". It may not work perfectly in every situation, but try it in the verses for yourself. (v.3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 22, 23, 24).

2. Its Use

a. Paul used it with works and faith

- 1) Note verse 2. If we received God's righteousness by works, **we would glorify ourselves rather than give God**

the glory (v.20).

- 2) In verse 3, Abraham believed God and his faith was (counted) in reality applied for righteousness.
- 3) Paul then illustrates in verses 4-5. If we worked to earn righteousness, the righteousness we receive is **not in reality applied** as result of grace, BUT as result of a debt owed. God would then owe it to us. **On the other hand**, if we do nothing to earn righteousness and simply believe that Jesus paid sin's debt in full to justify the ungodly, then our faith is **in reality applied for or unto righteousness**. **Faith does not become righteousness; it enables God to give us His righteousness.**
- 4) **Illustration**: Two boys come up. Tell one that if he takes this ___ to the kitchen and comes back he can earn a lolly. Tell the other that if he asks for one, he can have one too. The first received it by debt, the second by grace.
- 5) As we move down to verse 20, we learn that Abraham did not stagger at God's promise. He was strong in faith, which gave *glory to God*. His faith was his full persuasion (v.21). Thus, his faith was *imputed*, or **in reality applied**, to him unto righteousness.
- 6) You see, God cannot impute or apply His righteousness to a sinner who works to earn it. If he did, the sinner would get the glory. He only imputes or applies his righteousness to repentant sinners who, by faith, place their full trust in Christ's payment for their sins. **This way, God receives all the glory.**

b. Paul said it equally applies to Jew and Gentile

- 1) Paul knew that his Jewish readers would wonder how God could apply His righteousness to Gentiles.
- 2) Note in verses 8-11 how Paul tackles this question. Paul reminded his Jewish circumcised readers that Abraham's faith was *reckoned* or **applied** unto righteousness BEFORE he was circumcised.
- 3) This is proof that uncircumcised Gentiles could by faith receive God's righteousness as well (v.11).