

All Sufficient Merit Devotional

The all-sufficient merit of Christ credited to me is a bit like trying to understand the Trinity. My reasoning and learning and logical paths only take me so far, until I'm back where I started.

How is it that the Father looks at me and sees the righteousness of Jesus? Not "imagines" ...but SEES.

It's not like He un-knows my actual doings. Quite the opposite; because of the indwelling Spirit of Jesus, I'm often convicted of sin seen or unseen, which means He is absolutely acquainted with my real-time activity. Psalm 139 speaks at length of the intimate knowledge the Creator God has of the smallest to biggest details of my life.

Because I am saved, regenerate, and have the Holy Spirit, there are Spirit-filled "works" that I do. Some days more than others. But, those good works are also mixed in with everything else; and even on my A-game, it would not be enough.

I read verses like 2 Corinthians 5:21, "For our sake He made Him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God." (emphasis my own)

Do you know what the Greek is for "become"? Me either – but I looked it up! (Shout out to Bible Hub!) The word Paul used is "genōmetha" – which means to come into being, to happen, to become; can be used as "am born".

So, just to be clear: when we are told that the Father made Jesus, who knew no sin, to be sin for our sake so that in Him (Jesus) we might become the righteousness of God – that's exactly what it means!

Whether or not your natural tendency is to be introspective, we are all aware of how far we are from being perfectly good. It's strangely comforting to hear the stories of Martin Luther spending upwards of six hours confessing to a priest in the monastery, only to turn back around when he had left to go confess pride over confessing! He was tortured by the presence of his sin-- until he discovered the true Gospel. It's what—or Who—freed him from an invisible prison of fear and led him to risk his life on multiple occasions. The remainder of his days were spent sharing the GOOD NEWS with everyone and anyone he could: we are not saved by our own merit, and we don't have to earn it!

The Gospel is not that the merit of Christ is a bar raised for me to try and meet. The Gospel is that the merit of Christ is the free gift of God, so that “no one may boast” (Ephesians 2:9). Just as the priests would slaughter a spotless lamb and lay it on the altar for the forgiveness of sins, the Father “provide(d) for himself the lamb for a burnt offering” (Genesis 22:8), our High Priest and the Lamb of God, Jesus!

And it is not only the sacrificial death of Christ; His life on earth was lived in total obedience, pleasing the Father. (Hebrews 5:8, John 5:19)

We aren’t trying to pull a fast one over on God the Father; the evidence of His glad heart in this exchange is overwhelming:

“Yet it was the will of the Lord to crush Him...” Isaiah 53:10

“Come now, let us reason together, says the Lord: though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall become like wool,” Isaiah 1:18

“...so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me.” John 17:23

“Jesus... who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross...” Hebrews 12:2

“They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb,” Revelation 7:14.

It is far beyond our comprehension; but we hear the Lord’s words “It is finished!” continue to thunder through history to today, changing the whole trajectory of our lives and generations after.

We rejoice as ones who have been forgiven much; we rejoice and have rest deep within as the orphan who is adopted out of poverty and danger into unearned riches and safety; we rejoice as those who have received the steadfast love of the Lord in Jesus Christ! There is truly “no more condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus” (Romans 8). There is instead the commendation of the Father as we stand in confidence before the throne, covered in the all-sufficient merit of our Savior.

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