

Orthodoxy - No Condemnation

New City Catechism Q.25: Does Christ's death mean all our sins can be forgiven?

Answer: Yes, because Christ's death on the cross fully paid the penalty for our sin, God graciously imputes Christ's righteousness to us as if it were our own and will remember our sins no more.

For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. - 2 Corinthians 5:21

When you wake up in the morning and go to bed at night, what comforts you? The only comfort that can give us rest is the comfort that comes from knowing that Jesus Christ has fully paid for all our sins and we share in his record of righteousness. The death of Jesus on the cross puts right our out of order relationship with God. In the death of Jesus God pardoned wicked, ungodly sinners, accepting them as righteous as a gift. In his death Jesus received the record of the unrighteous sinners, and the unrighteous sinners received the record of Jesus' righteousness. Therefore, those who live by faith in Jesus have the assurance that they are accepted and loved in God's sight for the sake of Jesus. He does not count their sins against them. There is no condemnation. Jesus Christ paid the penalty for all their sin in his death. There is no guilty record for those who live by faith in the righteousness of Jesus Christ.

All our sins that yell at us from the past are forgiven. All our sins that hound us in the present are forgiven. All our sins that we fear will meet us at the door of death are forgiven. The sins of those who live by faith in Jesus were remembered against him at the cross, so the righteousness of him who died in their place is credited to their account.

What difference should this saving grace make in your life? Here are a few thoughts:

In view of these mercies we can offer ourselves to God fully and freely in worship (Rom.12:1-2).
We can draw near to God with a boldness and full assurance of faith (Heb.10:22).
We can draw near to his throne of grace to receive mercy and help in our times of need (Heb.4:16).
We can have peace with God as we hope in his glory (Rom.5:1-2).
The one who humbles himself in need of this grace will be exalted (Lk.18:14).
The one who is forgiven much loves much (Lk.7:47).
The one who is forgiven forgives others (Eph.4:32).
The one who is justified by grace as a gift (Rom.3:24), cannot hold others in contempt (Gal.2:11-16).
The one who is forgiven and accepted as righteous lives to God (Gal.2:19-20) loving others.

This saving grace of God in Christ, the forgiveness of sins and the imputation of Christ's righteousness to wicked sinners, is where we're hidden in God's mercy from God's wrath. But we're not hidden in the world, when in gratitude we respond in love to God and our neighbor. Yet there is no amount of labors of love, zealous works of faith, or broken hearted tears that flow, to fulfill the laws demands. At the beginning and ending of everyday we can only say with Augustus M. Toplady,

Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to Thy cross I cling;
Naked, come to Thee for dress;
Helpless, look to Thee for grace;
Foul, I to the fountain fly;
Wash me, Savior, or I die.