

Christian Independence

The Fourth of July is truly an All-American holiday. For the most part, this is a day set aside to celebrate the liberties we enjoy as citizens in this country. We celebrate because we are thankful, be it to God or man. The day of America's Independence is a day to rejoice in the freedom won by the blood of our forefathers. Christianity can be paralleled to this in several ways.

By Jonathan Perz

blessings such as: a heavenly Father, adoption, forgiveness, redemption, mercy, grace, love, eternal life, true riches, prayer, and many other blessings. Law abiding citizens enjoy these blessings. Those who transgress or fall short of these laws must make things right before God to keep these blessings (I Jn. 1:8-9).

Many died that America's freedom could be declared and maintained. For the Christian, the death of one man made freedom from sin possible (Rom. 5). Until Christ, mankind was under bondage to sin. Jesus Christ died to free men from that bondage. This is the reason God sent Him (Jn. 8:31-36). It is through His blood that we can have remission of our sins (Eph. 1:7). The only way to come into contact with that blood is to be a part of His body, the church (Col. 1:18, 24). The only way to become a part of His body is baptism—complete immersion in water (Gal. 3:27).

As Americans rejoice in their freedom, Christians should rejoice in their freedom in Christ. Like the Ethiopian eunuch, a Christian who has been released from the debt of his sin should rejoice and rejoice indeed (Acts 8:36-39). God and the angels rejoice over one sinner who repents (Lk. 15:10).

A free country is a blessing that is often unappreciated by those who have never known oppression. The freedom we celebrate on July 4th is a wonderful inheritance. Greater yet is the wonderful freedom a Christian celebrates in Christ Jesus—our ETERNAL inheritance. His blood paid for our salvation—take up your cross and follow Him (Lk. 9:23; Mk. 10:21)!



Citizenship in America grants one the right to share the blessings we have in this country. Likewise, a person must become a citizen of the kingdom of heaven to enjoy its blessings (Col. 1:12-14). Citizens of God's kingdom enjoy

Philippians 2:5-8 (NKJV) - Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, ⁶who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, ⁷but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. ⁸And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.

Sick			
Richard Wood (Melanie Smith's Uncle)	Eli Williams (Friend of Sarah Norman)	Frank Hand (Laura Humphrey's dad)	Sandlyn Fultz (Davis Fultz's Sister)
Gloria Detmer and Carol Dickerson (Toni Herd's Sisters)	Don Lanier (Father of Greg Lanier)	Bill Rhodes (Toni Herd's Uncle)	Philip Locke (Jeremiah Johnson's Uncle)
Josie Keith (Friend of Heath Fowler)	Haylie Watson (Tyler Claxton's Relative)	Easton Alexander (Phillip Box's cousin's baby)	Andrew Hage-wood (Friend of Sarah Norman)
Gaylord Huffman (Jennifer Daniel's Grandfather)	Quinton Addison (April Jerkins Grandfather)	Kathryn Crawford (Hunter Crawford's Mother)	Mary Smith (Nathan Smith's Grandmother)
Gerald White (Christopher, Anna and Wesley's Father)	Dave Brown (Friend of the Lanier's)	Dale Herd (William Herd's brother)	Larry Alexander (Friend of Phillip Box)
Marty and Aubrey Meeks, Russell Dickerson (Toni Herd's Nephews)	Betty Bradford	Ann Robinson (Sharon Bailey's Mom)	Debra Lowe (Toni Herd's Friend)

February Birthdays

- 2 - Wesley Herd
- 2 - Ken Sullivan
- 3 - Chris Long
- 5 - Mark Zeanah
- 5 - Josh Redden
- 6 - Jackson Fowler
- 8 - Grant Burton
- 13 - Leslie Freeman
- 13 - Megan McMurray
- 14 - Leighton Daniels
- 15 - Terria Burton
- 15 - Ella Miller
- 16 - Seth Humphrey
- 18 - Caralise Hunt
- 20 - Haley Chittam
- 20 - Laura West
- 22 - Windy Dembowski
- 22 - Elizabeth Anne Calvert
- 22 - Alexander Calvert
- 23 - Greg Lanier
- 24 - Jeff Jerkins
- 26 - Maghen Smith
- 27 - Julie Johnson

News and Notes

- Our college Devotional will be tonight at the Tam's! Kyle Gibson will be teaching!
- Our monthly men's business meeting will be today at 3:00.
- If you would like to donate to the flower fund please see Yvette Rouse.
- Our monthly singing will be tonight!
- Brother Clint Stagner has identified with the University church!
- Chase Harrison's grandmother died last week.

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The Auburn Beacon

Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven. (Matthew 5:16)

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Thoughts to Ponder

Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to thy cross I cling.

Do You Have a Bible Question?
Call (334) 734-2133 or
E-mail:
LarryRouse@aubeacon.com

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES
Sunday
Bible Class9:30 AM
Worship10:20 AM
Evening Worship 6:00 PM
Wednesday
Bible Classes.....7:00 PM

Ask about our home Bible Study Groups!

Larry Rouse
Evangelist and Editor

Romans 4:8, Windshield Wipers, Etc.

By Edward O. Bragwell, Sr.

"Blessed is the man to whom the Lord shall not impute sin" (Rom. 4.8).

I am amazed at how freely Calvinists and some brethren, who say they are not Calvinists, use this passage. To the Calvinist it proves his brand of the security of the saints. To such brethren it proves their brand of continuous cleansing of the saints. In either case it is used to prove that a Christian's sins, at least some of them, are not held against him by the Lord.

The main difference, the best I can determine from their writings, between Calvinists and the "continuous cleansing" brethren is that Calvinists believe that no sins are charged to the Christian's account while the brethren believe that only some sins are charged to his account - mainly those high-handedly committed.

If the Lord does not impute sin, in the sense of never charging it to our accounts, then there is no need to talk about "continuous cleansing." One does not cleanse that which is not soiled. If sin is not imputed, in the sense of not being charged to him, he is not soiled by the sin. He

The difference between hard core Calvinists and the brethren that use the illustration, as I see it, is that once the Calvinist's wiper is turned on there is no way he can turn it off; while brethren leave us with the option of turning it off through high handed or willful sin.

needs no cleansing - continuous or otherwise.

The popular illustration of the windshield wiper effect does apply here - even though this is one of the proof texts usually used in connection with it. The most recent usage that I have seen is in a sermon by Guy N. Woods being distributed in tract form by Britnell Publications of Little Rock, Arkansas. For the reader who may not be familiar with the windshield wiper illustration, it goes something like this: When one becomes a Christian his "windshield wiper" is turned on. Rain drops (sins) will continue to

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fall on his windshield (soul) but they are immediately wiped off by the wiper (blood of Christ). So, they say, a Christian's sins are taken care of without his having to reach and turn the wiper on each time a drop hits his windshield - it is automatically wiped off. They may deny (as they do) that they are teaching "automatic continuous cleansing" rather than mere "continuous cleansing" - the windshield wiper illustrates automatic cleansing or it is a pointless illustration. The difference between hard core Calvinists and the brethren that use the illustration, as I see it, is that once the Calvinist's wiper is turned on there is no way he can turn it off; while brethren leave us with the option of turning it off through high handed or willful sin.

Anyway, if the sins are not charged to our account then what is produced is not a windshield wiper effect, but an umbrella effect. One is covered by an umbrella when he becomes a Christian. Though sin may fall all around him, in the case of the Calvinist, even soaking his flesh, it is not allowed to get to his soul because the Lord will not impute it to him, holding an umbrella over his head.

Really now, who is this man to whom the Lord will not impute sin in **Romans 4**? Anything more than a superficial reading of this statement in context should make it clear. It is the man whom God has forgiven after he has confessed his sin. It is not the man whose sins are never imputed to him. It is not the man whose sins are forgiven without their being confessed. **Verses 7 and 8, of Romans 4**, should be taken together. They form a quote from **Psalms 32:1,2**.

It seems to me that these two verses alone identify the kind of person contemplated as a forgiven man. If he is forgiven, the sin was at one time imputed to him or there would have been no need for forgiveness. Once forgiven, he is a blessed man to whom the Lord no longer imputes the sin because it has been forgiven.

When one takes the first 5 verses of Psalms 32 together it becomes abundantly clear that the

sin that is not imputed is confessed sin.

In the first two verses, those quoted in **Romans 4**, David tells of the blessedness (for any man) of being forgiven - of not having sin imputed to him. He then turns to a practical application of the principle in his own life.

Verses **3 and 4** tells of his own lack of blessedness as long as he did not confess - i.e., "kept silent":

1. "My bones grew old through my groaning all the day long"
2. "Day and night Your (the Lord's - EOB) hand was heavy upon me"
3. "My vitality was turned into the drought of summer"

In **verse 5**, he gives the basis upon which he now enjoyed the blessedness of "the man to whom the Lord does not impute iniquity":

1. "I acknowledged my sin to You"
2. "My iniquity I have not hidden"
3. "I said, 'I will confess my transgression to the Lord,'"
4. "And you forgave the iniquity of my sin."

So, if one is going to find any basis for some kind of cleansing of unconfessed sins, he will have to find it in some other passage. It looks to me like David had to consciously "turn the wipers on" when he said, "I will confess my transgressions."

1 John 1:7-9 does teach continuous cleansing for the Christian as long as he confesses his sins (not merely acknowledging his sinfulness). "If we keep on confessing our sins, God 'is faithful and righteous to forgive our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.' 'Faithfulness' and 'righteousness' are attributes of the great Jehovah; and when we confess our sins before him, we enter into and partake of the blessings which result from them. He has promised to forgive us on condition that we confess our sins. . . ." (A Commentary on the New Testament Epistles, pp. 219-220, by Guy N. Woods). All emphasis in the preceding quotation are mine and I couldn't have said it better myself.



Grace — The Basis of Justification

By Grover Stevens

In **Ephesians 2:8-9** the inspired word of God tells us: "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."

That salvation from sin is by God's grace is positively affirmed and clearly stated by the inspired apostle (**Eph 2:1-3**), and then to make sure that there be no misunderstanding he adds negatively that salvation is "not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast." The word "grace" means not deserved or unmerited. The word "gift" likewise

indicates something received without compensation, unearned. It is abundantly clear that God's grace alone is the very founding stone on which man's salvation from sin rests.

By God's **Grace—Through Man's Faith** However, this passage also informs us that this grace saves us "through faith." The apostle Paul says in **Titus 2:11-12**, "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to *all* men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world." If our salvation is solely by grace on God's part and there is nothing that man can do to receive that gift of God's grace, then *all men will be saved* and we would have universal salvation. But the apostle Paul tells us that we become the recipients of God's saving grace "through faith." The eminent Greek scholar, A. T. Robertson, says in commenting on this passage: "Through faith: This phrase he adds in repeating what he said in **verse 5** to make it plainer. 'Grace' is God's part, 'faith' ours. *And that (kai touto)*: Neuter, not feminine *saute*, and so refers not to *pistis* [faith] (feminine) or to *charis* [gift] (feminine also), but to the act of being saved by grace *conditioned on faith on our part.*"

"Not of Works"

When Paul says "not of works" he does not mean that there is nothing that man can or must do, as some loudly insist. There are four classes of works revealed in the New Testament:

(1) **The works of the Law of Moses**, by which man cannot be justified as it demanded perfect **obedience** (**Gal 2:16-21; Acts 13:39**).

(2) **The works of man's own** righteousness, works

commanded by men (**Col 2:21-23; Titus 3:5; Rom 10:1-3; 1 Jn 3:12; Acts 7:41**). Obviously, these are works of man's own devising. Such teaching as "join the church of your choice" or "worship in the way of your choice" or "believe in the faith of your choice" or "live good (keep the ten commandments) and you will go to heaven" are all included in this class.

(3) **The works of Satan, darkness, and the flesh** (**1 Jn 3:8; 2 Thess 2:9; Rom 13:12; Jn 7:7; Gal 5:19ff**). Certainly we are not saved by any of these kinds of works.

Working God's Righteousness

The fourth kind of works are the works of God, faith, and righteousness. In **John 6:29** the Lord Jesus said, "This is the *work of God*, that *ye believe* on him whom he hath sent." Clearly, *faith* is a work, and is a work that we must work in order to receive God's gift of grace, salvation. **Galatians 5:6** says the faith that avails is the "faith which worketh by love." And **James 2:26** tells us that "faith without works is dead." In **Acts 10:34-35**, the inspired apostle Peter says, "God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation he that feareth him, and *worketh righteousness*, is accepted with him. **1 Thess 1:3** speaks of "your *work of faith*." **Philippians 3:9** says, "And be found in him, *not* having my *own* righteousness, which is of the law, but that . . . *righteousness which is of God by faith*." **Romans 10:1-3** teaches that salvation is not by the establishment of our *own* righteousness, but by *submission unto the righteousness of God*. **Romans 5:1-2** teaches that it is "by faith" that we "have access into this grace wherein we stand" (are saved); and verse 21 says that "grace reigns through righteousness."

No Cause To Boast

God's grace provided Christ and the gospel. In the gospel God has revealed His righteousness or commandments (**Ps 119:172**) These commandments are faith, repentance, confession, baptism and godly living. When man has submitted to (obeyed) all of these, he still has done nothing of merit nor of which he could boast. He has done no works of his own righteousness, but has simply submitted to the righteousness of God—God's conditions of acceptance (**Acts 10:35**). His salvation is *merely* by the grace and *mercy* of God (**Titus 3 5**).

