

This is a contradiction to biblical imperatives to make it our goal to please God (2Cor 5:9,10), and the reality of our goodness because of the new birth that is a reality and not a mere experience (Romans 15:14).

3. There is life in the law.

Galatians 3:21 states the following:

Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law.

Calvinism teaches that a perfect keeping of the law must be maintained in order to justify sinners. This can be clearly seen from the aforesaid CI 3.14.11, and several other things Calvin said in the same section. Hence, the law can give life if someone keeps it perfectly. This is an important element of Calvin's gospel called the "double imputation" of Christ's "passive obedience" to the cross and "active obedience" to the law. The famous Calvinist Gresham Machen said that there is no hope without this take on double imputation. As long as the Christian continually revisits the same gospel that saved them afresh, the perfect obedience of Christ to the law is imputed to the believer and he/she remains justified. The problem with this view is: who keeps the law isn't the issue, the law cannot give life.

In contrast, the Bible states that we are justified apart from the law (Rom 3:21, 28, Rom 4:15, Rom 5:13, Rom 6:14,15, Rom 7:1, 5,6, 8-11). The law now informs our sanctification (Rom 3:21, Rom 8:3,4,7, Gal 3:21, 1Thess 4:3-8), but has no part in justification.

The biblical "double imputation" is not from Christ only; it is the imputation of God's righteousness to us, and the imputation of our sins to Christ.

The 3 Pillars of Calvin's False Gospel



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1. Justification is not a finished work.

2Timothy 4:1 (KJV) states the following:

I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom;

This passage makes it clear that two types of people will be judged at Christ's appearing: the alive, and the dead. The Bible also makes it clear that the spiritually alive and the spiritually dead will be judged separately:

Revelation 20:5 - But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. 6 Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years (KJV).

The reason for two or more resurrections and two separate judgments is because justification is a settled issue for the believer. Christians will stand in a judgment that determines rewards, not a judgment that determines justification (1Cor 3:14, Luke 14:12-14 KJV).

To the contrary, Calvin believed that justification is a process for each believer that begins at our confession and continues till it is finalized at one resurrection and one judgment at the end of the ages. In other words, justification is not finished for each believer; it is a progression, or *progressive justification*.

The subject of Calvin's *progressive justification* is addressed by him in the Calvin Institutes (3.14.), and the very title of that chapter is, "The Beginning of Justification. In What Sense Progressive."

In other words, justification has a beginning, a progression, and a finalization. Calvinists that really know what Calvin believed call this the process of *objective justification*, *subjective justification*, and *final justification* or the "golden chain of salvation."

Hence, since justification is not finished when we believe in Christ's finished work on the cross, we must continue to do something that will not break any of the links of the golden chain from objective justification to final justification. It necessarily implies that we are part of the justification process in some way because justification progresses and is not finished.

2. Rejection of the new birth.

Furthermore, because Calvin saw salvation as progressive, he was concerned with the idea of a new birth that would enable the believer to participate in the golden chain of salvation. Since justification progresses according to Calvin, the believer cannot participate (however, because it is a "chain," participation by the "believer" is inescapable). Therefore, in Calvin's gospel, the believer remains totally depraved, and remains a sinner. Calvin replaced the new birth with *mortification and vivification* (Michael Horton's Systematic Theology: pp. 661-663).

This is a perpetual daily re-salvation by faith alone in repentance and a joyful new birth EXPERIENCE. We "keep ourselves in the love of God" (CJ Mahaney, Resolved 2010) by preaching the gospel to ourselves every day and re-experiencing the joy of our original salvation. This is why Calvinists like John Piper insist that Christians who don't experience joy are going to hell.

The pursuit of joy in God is not optional. It is not an 'extra' that a person might grow into after he comes to faith. Until your heart has hit upon this pursuit, your 'faith' cannot please God. It is not saving faith (*Desiring God*: p. 69).

This is because re-salvation by the same turning from sin that saved us (a turning from the old life) is followed by the original experience of salvation joy. This makes the new birth a mere experience only. But lack of joy is considered to be evidence that the "Christian" is not partaking in mortification (the same repentance that saved us), and experiencing vivification (the original joy of our salvation).

Consequently, Calvin believed that the Christian cannot do one work that pleases God:

We must strongly insist on these two things: that no believer ever performed one work which, if tested by the strict judgement of God, could escape condemnation; and , moreover, that were this granted possible (though it is not), yet the act being vitiated and polluted by the sins of which it certain that the author of it is guilty, it is deprived of its merit (CI 3.14.11).