

New City Catechism » Question 25

Does Christ's death mean all our sins can be forgiven?



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.

2 Corinthians 5:21 from the Apostle Paul

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

Prepare

A first-century pagan society would not necessarily see *holiness* as a virtue, but they might see the legal term *righteous* full of many benefits. To be righteous meant you were found worthy of favor, honor, and glory. Our understanding of *imputation* is found in Christ's sinless and obedient identity as it becomes "*transplanted*" onto ours; God looks at those who profess Christ as Lord *and sees the obedience of His son*.

In the same way, *our sins are imputed to Christ* causing all sin to be dealt with. If this were not the case, his mission would have failed completely. We remember the cost of this forgiveness as part of our response so that we would enjoy God's mercy with grateful hearts, singing "amazing grace" - once-wretched sinners and now forever washed in his blood!

Discuss

1. How does Christ's righteousness bring glory to God?
2. How does our *imputed* righteousness bring glory to God?
3. Why are some tempted to believe our sins are only partially dealt with?
4. What assurance does God point us to in regard to his promise of complete forgiveness?
 - a. Psalm 103:8-12
 - b. Isaiah 53:1-5
 - c. Romans 5:1
 - d. 1 John 1:4-7

Apply

Hebrews 4:16; In tabernacle and temple worship, only one high priest was able to enter the holy of holies room – and even that was just once a year and after a tremendous amount of blood sacrifice. With our imputed righteousness, we are able to offer perfect and pleasing worship as well as have uninterrupted access to the throne of God.

5. As complete forgiven people, what can we do that people were not once able to do? How is this personally significant for you? (or how could it be?)
6. If our sins are forever dealt with, why must we practice the discipline of private and corporate confession?
7. What is the role of faith in receiving forgiveness? What can you do to strengthen faith when it is lacking?

Prayer

Forgiving Father, when we are covered in the righteousness of Christ, you remember our sins no more. You have put them as far as the east is from the west. Help us not doubt your forgiveness, your mercy, or your love, but come to you boldly as your beloved children. Amen.

Coming up

- Q26. What else does Christ's death redeem?
- Q27. Are all people, just as they were lost through Adam, saved through Christ?
- Q28. What happens after death to those not united to Christ by faith?
- Q29. How can we be saved?