

The Attackers: Former Ritual, Present Reality: Removal of the Barrier: (3) Physical Birth by Regeneration, (4) Relative Righteousness by Imputation & Justification, (5) Character of God: Composites of Divine Integrity

Regeneration: The spiritual term for spiritual birth, or being “born again,”¹ the imputation of eternal life to the newly created human spirit. See Jesus and Nicodemus in John 3:1-18.

- (4) **Relative Righteousness:** A comparative righteousness that pits one set of human morals and values against another. From a human frame of reference, some people, whose behavior patterns adhere to establishment principles and cultural standards, are considered to be “good” people as opposed to those who consistently deviate or reject these ideals and are considered to be “bad.” “For all of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment; and all of us wither like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away” (Isaiah 64:6).

Imputation: The judicial act of crediting a debit or credit to someone’s account. The condemnation of Adam’s original sin is given to each person at birth. God’s eternal life is credited to each person at the moment of faith in Jesus Christ. “He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him” (2 Corinthians 5:21).

Justification: At the point of faith in Christ, the judicial act of God whereby the imputation of divine perfect righteousness is recognized as valid for vindication. “... A man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, so that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the Law; since by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified” (Galatians 2:16).

- (5) **Character of God:** The totality of divine essence made up of absolute attributes that are perfect and uncompromising. Two categories of divine love are noted in the coordination of the righteousness and justice of God in salvation by faith alone in Christ alone--personal love for God the Father and impersonal love for all mankind. This is a composite action under the love of God. All of this means that the love of God is a point of reference for the coordination of the four composites: righteousness, justice, grace, and omniscience. The coordination of the first two composites (righteousness and justice) continues into the third composite, which is grace. Omniscience knew all that was knowable in eternity past so that the other composites of divine integrity are coordinated in the divine decree regarding every believer. “My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways,” declares the Lord. “For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts higher than your thoughts” (Isaiah 55:8-9).

¹ γεννηθῆναι ἄνωθεν (*gennēthēi anōthen*): “born again”; John 3:3.