

the
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Vol. 50, No. 1

Special issue on

*Christ
Our
Righteousness*

What Happened in 1888? \ Justification by Faith \ Sanctification

Harold A. DeVries

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Righteousness**

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"The age in which we live calls for reformatory action."
—Testimonies, vol. 4, p. 488.

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Children's Corner

Righteousness *by Faith*

We often hear references to “the 1888 message.” What does it mean? Many interpret this differently in their own way and have been unclear in their minds. There was a failure to preach about the atoning sacrifice of Jesus as the basis of human hope. About 120 years have since passed. At this juncture we need to take stock of what is our condition, and what this message is about. The 1888 message revolves around justification by faith. It incorporates the saving power of both justification and sanctification. “The present message—justification by faith—is a message from God; it bears the divine credentials, for its fruit is unto holiness.”¹

Salvation means rescue or deliverance. It is a rescue operation. Christians cannot be static. If the Spirit of Christ reigns within, they are in the process of change. Justification + Sanctification = Glorification. Justification is “a done deal,” sanctification is an ongoing process, and glorification is assured. Sanctification is a dynamic and progressive process with constant growth in fellowship with God. Justification is given to the penitent sinner, sanctification is granted to the justified sinner, and glorification is given to the sanctified Christian. This maturity and fitness must be revealed in everyone’s life as proof of his or her conversion. True justification by faith is always a change. Righteousness by faith is the third angel’s message in verity. This was the message brought in 1888.

The message of righteousness by faith establishes faith as the first condi-

tion of salvation. “The thought that the righteousness of Christ is imputed to us, not because of any merit on our part, but as a free gift from God, seemed a precious thought. . . . When we are clothed with the righteousness of Christ, we shall have no relish for sin.”²

The message of righteousness by faith transforms our character. “Christ is the great pattern; His character must be our character.”³

This message emphasizes that “faith and works go together, believing and doing are blended.”⁴ This message binds law and love together, for the gospel and the law go hand in hand. “In presenting the binding claims of the law, many have failed to portray the infinite love of Christ. . . . The gospel does not weaken the claims of the law.”⁵

The message of Christ Our Righteousness demands the cooperation of the human agent with God. “Let no man present the idea that man has little or nothing to do in the great work of overcoming; for God does nothing for man without his cooperation.”⁶

“The soul-saving message, the third angel’s message, is the message to be given to the world. The commandments of God and the faith of Jesus are both important, immensely important, and must be given with equal force and power.”⁷

Thus, the message of 1888 marked the beginning of a new era of spiritual awakening and growth. “This is the

message that God commanded to be given to the world. It is the third angel’s message, which is to be proclaimed with a loud voice, and attended with the outpouring of His Spirit in a large measure.”⁸

“This is the testimony that must go throughout the length and breadth of the world. It presents the law and the gospel, binding up the two in a perfect whole.”⁹

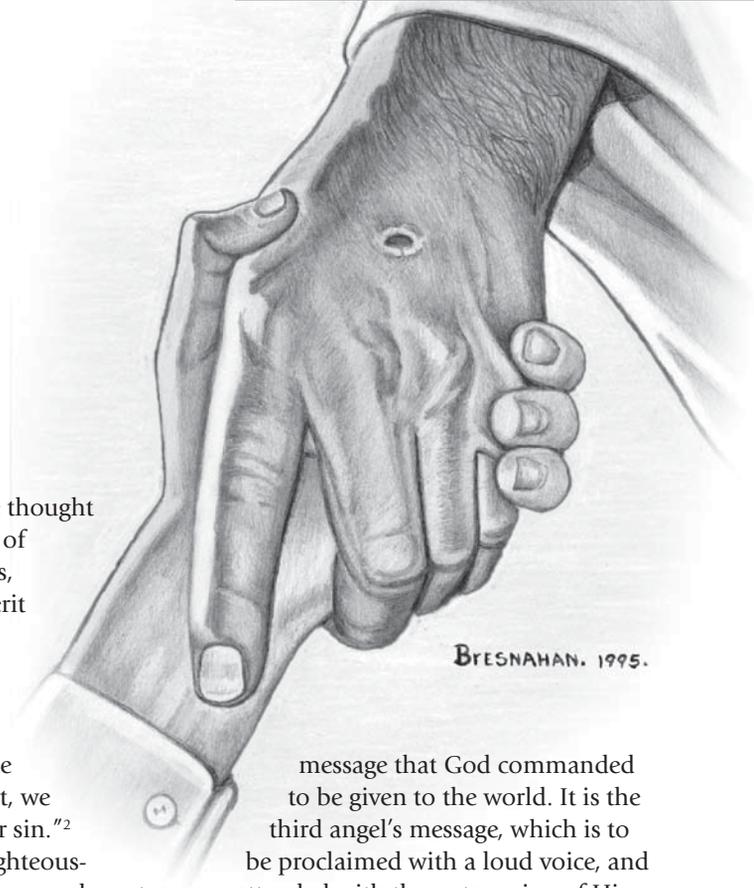
This message, ‘Righteousness by Faith’, if accepted would do the cleansing and regenerating work in the church, which is made manifest in obedience to all the commandments of God. “If ye be willing and obedient” (Isaiah 1:19), Christ will work for us, in us, and through us to His glory.

May God help us to understand the importance of this message and to proclaim it loud and clear and that we may be ready for the outpouring of the latter rain!

✠

References

- ¹ *Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 359.
- ² *Ibid.*, p. 360.
- ³ *Ibid.*, p. 362.
- ⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 373.
- ⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 371, 373.
- ⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 381.
- ⁷ *Ibid.*, bk 3, p. 184.
- ⁸ *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 92.
- ⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 94.



THE PERILS & PRIVILEGES OF THE LAST DAYS

By Ellen G. White

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: looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works" (Titus 2:11–14).

To the early church the hope of Christ's coming was a blessed hope, and they were represented by the apostle as waiting for His Son from heaven, as loving His appearing. As long as this hope was cherished by the professed followers of Christ, they were a light to the world. But it was not the design of Satan that they should be a light to the world; and because iniquity abounded, the love of many waxed cold, and the unfaithful servant is represented as saying, "My Lord delayeth his coming" (Matthew 24:48). As a result of loss of faith in the appearing of Jesus, the unfaithful servant begins to smite his fellow servant, and to eat and drink with the drunken. Satan was at work to cause apostasy in the early church; and in accomplishing his purpose, doctrines were introduced through which the church was leavened with unbelief in Christ and His coming. The adversary of God and man cast his hellish shadow athwart the path of the believ-

ers, and dimmed their star of hope, even their faith in the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.

The hope which had been so precious to them lost its attractions; for the specious delusions of Satan almost wholly extinguished the light of salvation through the merits of a crucified and risen Saviour, and men were led to seek to make an atonement through works of their own—by fasts and penances, and through the payment of money to the church. It was more agreeable to the natural heart thus to seek justification than to seek it through repentance and faith, through belief in, and obedience to, the truth. . . .

Among those who claim to believe in the near coming of the Saviour, how many are backslidden, how many have lost their first love, and come under the description written of the Laodicean church, denominating them as neither cold nor hot. Satan will do his utmost to keep them in a state of indifference and stupor. May the Lord reveal to the people the perils that are before them, that they may arouse from their spiritual slumber, and trim their lamps, and be found watching for the Bridegroom when He shall return from the wedding.

The days in which we live are eventful and full of peril. The signs

of the coming of the end are thickening around us, and events are to come to pass that will be of a more terrible character than any the world has yet witnessed. . . .

There is great need that our weakening faith should be quickened, and that we should ever keep before the mind the evidences that our Lord is soon coming, that we may ever be found not only waiting, but watching and working. We are not to be found in idle expectancy; for this leads to carelessness of life, and deficiency of character. We are to realize that the judgments of God are about to fall upon the earth, and we should most earnestly present before the people the warning that the Lord has commissioned us to give. . . .

Let everyone who claims to believe that the Lord is soon coming search the Scriptures as never before; for Satan is determined to try every device possible to keep souls in darkness, and blind the mind to the perils of the times in which we are living. Let every believer take up his Bible with earnest prayer, that he may be enlightened by the Holy Spirit as to what is truth, that he

Beholding Jesus upon the cross of Calvary arouses the conscience to the heinous character of sin as nothing else can do.



may know more of God and of Jesus Christ whom He has sent. Search for the truth as for hidden treasures, and disappoint the enemy. **The time of test is just upon us, for the loud cry of the third angel has already begun in the revelation of the righteousness of Christ,** the sin-pardoning Redeemer. This is the beginning of the light of the angel whose glory shall fill the whole earth. For it is the work of everyone to whom the message of warning has come, to lift up Jesus, to present Him to the world as revealed in types, as shadowed in symbols, as manifested in the revelations of the prophets, as unveiled in the lessons given to His disciples and in the wonderful miracles wrought for the sons of men. Search the Scriptures; for they are they that testify of Him.

If you would stand through the time of trouble, you must know Christ, and appropriate the gift of His righteousness, which He imputes to the repentant sinner. Human wisdom will not avail to devise a plan of salvation. Human philosophy is vain, the fruits of the loftiest powers of man are worthless, aside from the great plan of the divine Teacher. No glory is to redound to man; all human help and glory lies in the dust; for the truth as it is in Jesus is the only available agent by which man may be saved. Man is privileged to connect with Christ, and then the divine and the human combine; and in this union the hope of man must rest alone; for it is as the Spirit of God

touches the soul that the powers of the soul are quickened, and man becomes a new creature in Christ Jesus. He was manifested to bring life and immortality to light. He says, "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life" (John 6:63). The psalmist declares, "The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple" (Psalm 119:130).

Then let us study the word of God, that we may know Him in whom there is no darkness at all. Jesus says, "He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (John 8:12). The theme that attracts the heart of the sinner is Christ, and Him crucified. On the cross of Calvary, Jesus stands revealed to the world in unparalleled love. Present Him thus to the hungry multitudes, and the light of His love will win men from darkness to light, from transgression to obedience and true holiness. Beholding Jesus upon the cross of Calvary arouses the conscience to the heinous character of sin as nothing else can do. It was sin that caused the death of God's dear Son, and sin is the transgression of the law. On Him was laid the iniquities of us all. The sinner then consents unto the law that it is good; for he realizes that it condemns his evil deeds, while he magnifies the matchless love of God in providing for him salvation through the imputed righteousness of Him who knew no sin, in whose mouth there was found no guile.

The truth is efficient, and through obedience its power changes the mind into the image of Jesus. It is the truth as it is in Jesus that quickens the conscience and transforms the mind; for it is accompanied to the heart by the Holy Spirit. There are many who, lacking spiritual discernment, take the bare letter of the word and find that unaccompanied by the Spirit of God, it quickens not the soul, it sanctifies not

the heart. One may be able to quote from the Old and the New Testament, may be familiar with the commands and promises of the word of God; but unless the Holy Spirit sends the truth home to the heart, enlightening the mind with divine light, no soul falls upon the Rock and is broken; for it is the divine agency that connects the soul with God. Without the enlightenment of the Spirit of God, we shall not be able to discern truth from error, and shall fall under the masterful temptations and deceptions that Satan will bring upon the world. We are near the close of the controversy between the Prince of light and the prince of darkness, and soon the delusions of the enemy will try our faith, of what sort it is. Satan will work miracles in the sight of the beast, and deceive "them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast" (Revelation 13:14).

But though the prince of darkness will work to cover the earth with darkness, and with gross darkness the people, the Lord will manifest His converting power. A work is to be accomplished in the earth similar to that which took place at the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the days of the early disciples, when they preached Jesus and Him crucified. Many will be converted in a day; for the message will go with power. It can then be said: "Our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost" (1 Thessalonians 1:5). It is the Holy Spirit that draws men to Christ; for He takes of the things of God, and shows them unto the sinner. Jesus said: "He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you" (John 16:14).

The work of the Holy Spirit is immeasurably great. It is from this source that power and efficiency come

The truth is efficient, and through obedience its power changes the mind into the image of Jesus.

to the worker for God; and the Holy Spirit is the comforter, as the personal presence of Christ to the soul. He who looks to Christ in simple, childlike faith, is made a partaker of the divine nature through the agency of the Holy Spirit. When led by the Spirit of God, the Christian may know that he is made complete in Him who is the head of all things. As Christ was glorified on the day of Pentecost, so will He again be glorified in the closing work of the gospel, when He shall prepare a people to stand the final test, in the closing conflict of the great controversy. . . .

The people of God are to be called out from their association with worldlings and evildoers, to stand in the battle for the Lord against the powers of darkness. When the earth is lightened with the glory of God, we shall see a work similar to that which was wrought when the disciples, filled with the Holy Spirit, proclaimed the power of a risen Saviour. The light of heaven penetrated the darkened minds of those who had been deceived by the enemies of Christ, and the false representation of Him was rejected; for through the efficiency of the Holy Spirit they now saw Him exalted to be a Prince and Saviour, to give repentance unto Israel, and remission of sins. They saw Him encircled with the glory of heaven, with infinite treasures in His hands to bestow upon those who turn from their rebellion. As the apostles set forth the glory of the only begotten of the Father, 3,000 souls were pricked to the heart, and they were made to see themselves as they were, sinful and polluted, and Christ as their Saviour and Redeemer. Christ was lifted up, Christ was glorified, through the power of the Holy Spirit resting upon men. By the eye of faith these believers saw Him as the one who had borne humiliation, suffering, and death, that they might not perish, but have everlasting life. As they looked upon His spot-

less righteousness, they saw their own deformity and pollution, and were filled with godly fear, with love and adoration for Him who gave His life a sacrifice for them. They humbled their souls to the very dust, and repented of their wicked works, and glorified God for His salvation.

They said one to another, "This is the very one who was accused of gluttony, of eating with publicans and sinners; the one who was bound, and scourged, and crucified. We believe in Him as the Son of God, the Prince and Saviour." The revelation of Christ by the Holy Spirit brought to them a realizing sense of His power and majesty, and they stretched forth their hands unto Him by faith, saying, "I believe." Thus it was in the time of the early rain; but the latter rain will be more abundant. The Saviour of men will be glorified, and the earth will be lightened with the bright shining of the beams of His righteousness. He is the fountain of light, and light from the gates ajar has been shining upon the people of God, that they may lift Him up in His glorious character before those who sit in darkness.

Christ has not been presented in connection with the law as a faithful and merciful High Priest, who was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. He has not been lifted up before the sinner as the divine sacrifice. His work as sacrifice, substitute, and surety, has been only coldly and casually dwelt upon; but this is what the sinner needs to know. It is Christ in His fullness as a sin-pardoning Saviour that the sinner must see; for the unparalleled love of Christ, through the agency of the Holy Spirit, will bring conviction and conversion to the hardened heart. It is the divine influence that is the savor of the salt in the Christian. Many present the doctrines and theories of our faith; but their presentation is as salt without savor; for the Holy Spirit is not working through their faithless

ministry. They have not opened the heart to receive the grace of Christ; they know not the operation of the Spirit; they are as meal without leaven; for there is no working principle in all their labor, and they fail to win souls to Christ. They do not appropriate the righteousness of Christ; it is a robe unworn by them, a fullness unknown, a fountain untouched.

O that the atoning work of Christ might be carefully studied! O that all would carefully and prayerfully study the word of God, not to qualify themselves for debating controverted points of doctrine; but that as hungry souls they might be filled, as those that thirst, be refreshed at the fountain of life. It is when we search the Scriptures with humble hearts, feeling our weakness and unworthiness, that Jesus is revealed to our souls in all His preciousness. When we become partakers of the divine nature, we shall look with abhorrence upon all our exaltation of self, and that which we have cherished as wisdom, will seem as dross and rubbish. Those who have educated themselves as debaters, who have looked upon themselves as sharp, keen men, will view their work with sorrow and shame, and know that their offering has been as valueless as was Cain's; for it has been destitute of the righteousness of Christ.

O that we as a people might humble our hearts before God, and plead with Him for the endowment of the Holy Spirit! If we came to the Lord in humility and contrition of soul, He would answer our petitions; for He says that He is more willing to give us the Holy Spirit than are parents to give good gifts to their children. Then would Christ be glorified, and in Him we should discern the fullness of the Godhead bodily. For Christ has said of the Comforter, "He shall glorify me; for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you" (John 16:14). This is the thing most essential to us. For "this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent" (John 17:3).—*The Review and Herald*, November 22 and 29, 1892 (emphasis supplied). ☞

What Happened in 1888?

A Historic Perspective

By B. Monteiro

The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun" (Ecclesiastes 1:9).

There is much to be learned from history. Hindsight tends to be clearer than foresight; as we look backward, we often have a more objective perspective—free from entanglements of emotion and self-interest. Then our minds are more open to absorb a greater degree of truth and to grasp a fuller sense of reality.

In considering the 1888 General Conference Session in Minneapolis, Minnesota, the scene unfolds amid a certain amount of controversy. Two years before, in 1886, Elder E. J. Waggoner had introduced the subject of the law in Galatians, publishing his views in *The Review and Herald*. His presentation had triggered a sharp debate.

In addition, around this same time, Elder A. T. Jones began to present a matter which contradicted a few

historic details found in Elder Uriah Smith's *Daniel and the Revelation*.

These two matters were brought out at a seven-day ministerial institute which preceded the 18-day conference in Minneapolis. As a result of what should have been relatively minor issues for a Christian forum, the 1888 conference began on a rather polarized note.

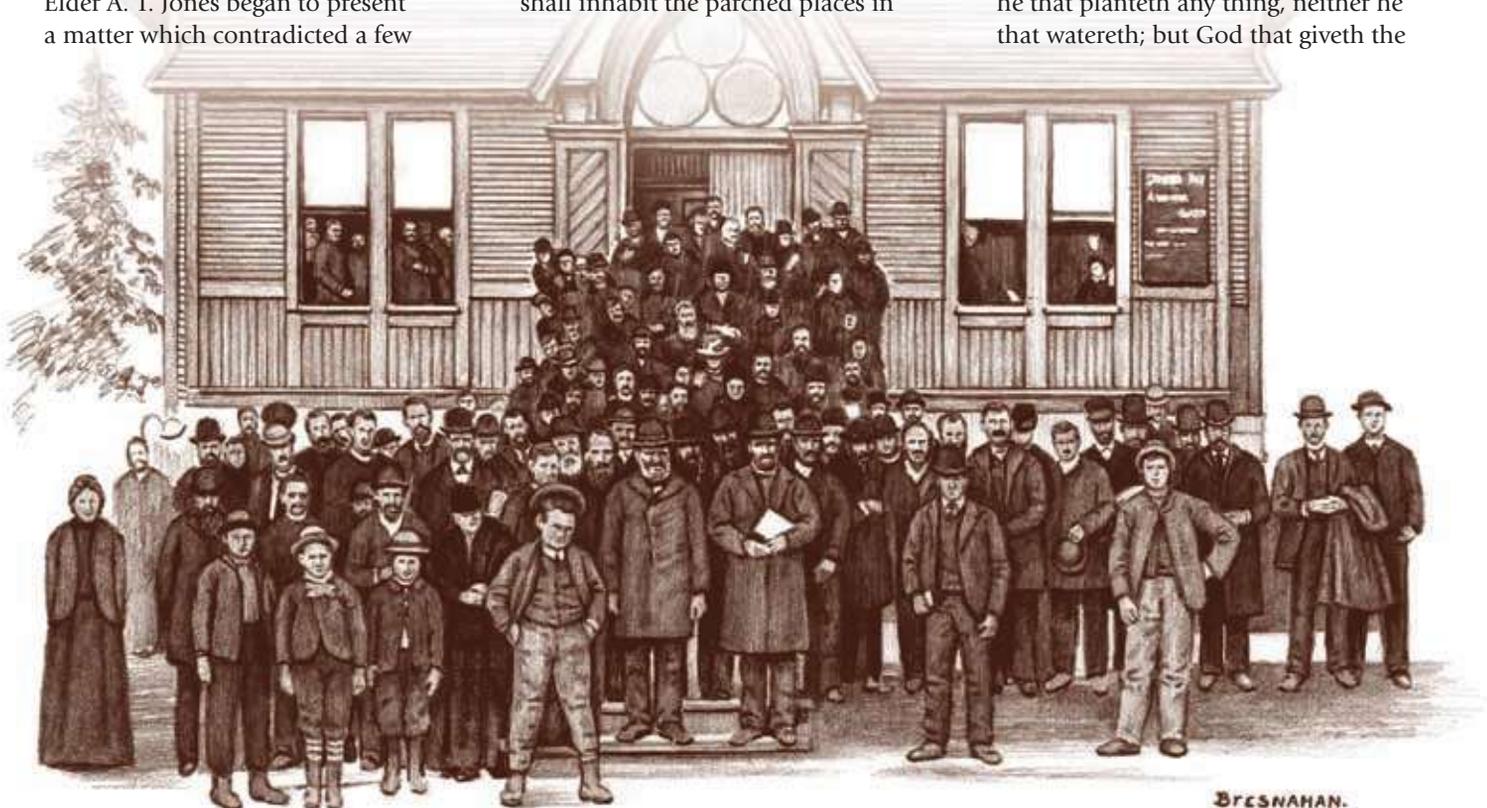
Sister White recognized that the spirit prevailing at the conference had not been of Christ.

The folly of trusting in human strength

"Thus saith the Lord; cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord. For he shall be like the heath in the desert, and shall not see when good cometh; but shall inhabit the parched places in

the wilderness, in a salt land and not inhabited" (Jeremiah 17:5, 6).

In ancient Israel, the people had asked for a king in order to be like the other nations. Their view of God had been eclipsed by their worldly perspective. Likewise, in 1888, many of the Advent people were making humans their trust and were exalting and glorifying their favored, pet colleagues (and especially themselves). Entrusted with such great light, might they nonetheless have forgotten the words of the apostle Paul? "Ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal? Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the





E. J. Waggoner

increase. . . . The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain. Therefore let no man glory in men" (1 Corinthians 3:3–7; 20, 21).

Around the time of the 1888 session, the servant of the Lord was compelled to write: "Depending upon men has been the great weakness of the church. Men have dishonored God by failing to appreciate His sufficiency, by coveting the influence of men. . . .

"Men set aside God as not sufficient for them. They resort to worldly men for recognition, and think that by means of the influence gained from the world they can do some great thing. But they mistake. By leaning on the arm of the world instead of the arm of God, they turn aside the work which God desires to accomplish through His chosen people."¹

Too often, even professed believers compare themselves with the world at large. Some simply compare themselves with their own brethren or sisters in the faith. Either way is wrong. The disciples had this problem even on the last night before the agonizing crucifixion of their Master. How grieved was Jesus' heart to know that even after three and a half years of pressing close to their Lord, His dearest followers were still preoccupied with their own status—mentally aspiring to make every effort to be accounted greatest among their peers. How foolishly vain! The apostle Paul later warned, "We dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among

themselves, are not wise" (2 Corinthians 10:12). This is a common problem.

"Oh, that self may be subdued in each one of us who profess to believe in Jesus! Oh, that pride may be laid in the dust! Oh, that we may more fully reflect the image of Jesus!"²

A lesson from the early disciples: What weakened them?

There is a familiar experience from the time of Christ. Three disciples, Peter, James, and John were just returning from that wondrous moment with Jesus on the mount of Transfiguration. Now, "when [the disciples and Jesus] were come to the multitude, there came to him a certain man, kneeling down to him, and saying, Lord, have mercy on my son: for he is a lunatick, and sore vexed: for oftentimes he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water. And I brought him to thy disciples, and they could not cure him. Then Jesus answered and said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him hither to me. And Jesus rebuked the devil; and he departed out of him: and the child was cured from that very hour. Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out?" (Matthew 17:14–19).

What was the problem? Why did the disciples lack the power promised by their omnipotent Redeemer? The answer is given:

"The nine disciples were yet pondering upon the bitter fact of their own failure; and when Jesus was once more alone with them, they questioned, 'Why could not we cast him out?' Jesus answered them, 'Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you. Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting' (Matthew 17:20, 21). Their unbelief, that shut them out from deeper sympathy with Christ, and the carelessness with which they regarded the sacred work committed to them, had caused their failure in the conflict with the powers of darkness.

"The words of Christ pointing to His death had brought sadness and doubt. And the selection of the three disciples to accompany Jesus to the mountain had excited the jealousy of the nine. Instead of strengthening their faith by prayer and meditation on the words of Christ, they had been dwelling on their discouragements and personal grievances. In this state of darkness they had undertaken the conflict with Satan.

"In order to succeed in such a conflict they must come to the work in a different spirit. Their faith must be strengthened by fervent prayer and fasting, and humiliation of heart. They must be emptied of self, and be filled with the Spirit and power of God. Earnest, persevering supplication to God in faith—faith that leads to entire dependence upon God, and unreserved consecration to His work—can alone avail to bring men the Holy Spirit's aid in the battle against principalities and powers, the rulers of the darkness of this world, and wicked spirits in high places."³

Healthy enthusiasm—or human excitement?

In 1888, the people of God entrusted with His law had become quite adept at preaching that law—and, like the Pharisees, they felt they had reason to be proud of such an accomplishment. After all, it was present truth. Yet their message had become lopsided. The commandments of God were being preached—but not the faith of Jesus. Christ was being left out of the picture. The people had evidently missed out on the spirituality of the law. God's law must penetrate the heart, not just do a mere surface work. It must reach deeply into the very thoughts and motives of our entire being. Only then will we see how great is our need of a Saviour. By examining our hearts much more deeply we may discover that we may have been doing many of the right things for the wrong reason.

The Spirit of Prophecy summarized the situation: "As a people, we have preached the law until we are as dry as the hills of Gilboa that had neither dew nor rain. We must preach Christ in the law, and there will be sap and

nourishment in the preaching that will be as food to the famishing flock of God."⁴

This sap and nourishment was found in the message of Christ our Righteousness.

Elders Jones and Waggoner were enthusiastic about reviving this truth—and so was Ellen G. White. They had good reason to be enthusiastic: "If there is anything in our world that should inspire enthusiasm, it is the cross of Calvary. . . .

"[Christ] is the source of spiritual power, and if He abides in our hearts, the divine influence will flow forth in our words and actions to all within the sphere of our influence, begetting in them desires and aspirations for strength and purity, for holiness and peace, for a joy that brings no sorrow with it."⁵

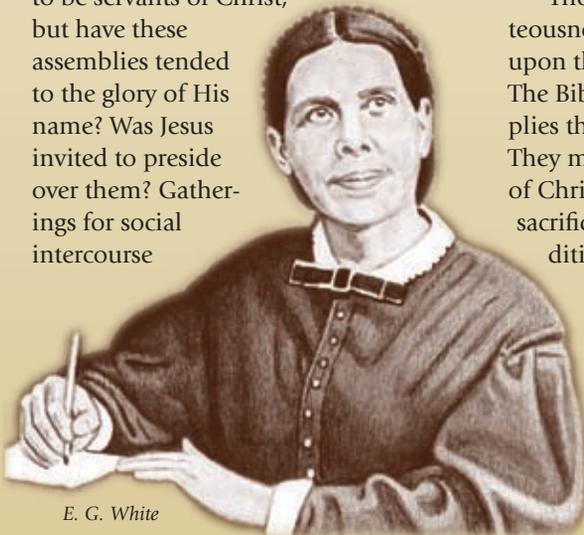
"For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost" (Romans 14:17).

Counterfeit "fellowship"

Around 1888, there was actually a counterfeit enthusiasm being manifested among many of God's professed people. The warning was given:

"While there has been so much fear of excitement and enthusiasm in the service of God, there has been manifest an enthusiasm in another line which to many seems wholly congenial. I refer to the parties of pleasure that have been held among our people. These occasions have taken much of the time and attention of people who profess to be servants of Christ;

but have these assemblies tended to the glory of His name? Was Jesus invited to preside over them? Gatherings for social intercourse



E. G. White

may be made in the highest degree profitable and instructive when those who meet together have the love of God glowing in their hearts, when they meet to exchange thoughts in regard to the word of God, or to consider methods for advancing His work, and doing good to their fellowmen. When nothing is said or done to grieve the Holy Spirit of God, but it is regarded as a welcome guest, then God is honored, and those who meet together will be refreshed and strengthened. [Malachi 3:16 quoted.]

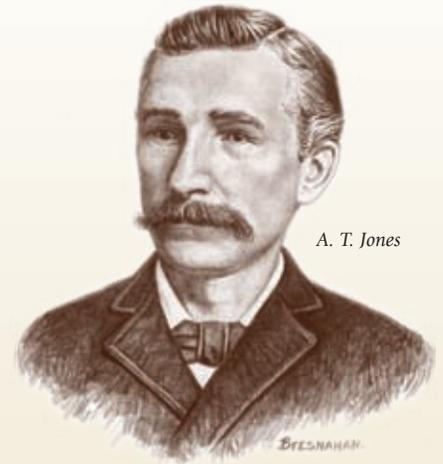
"But there has been a class of social gatherings in Battle Creek of an entirely different character, parties of pleasure that have been a disgrace to our institutions and to the church. They encourage pride of dress, pride of appearance, self-gratification, hilarity, and trifling. Satan is entertained as an honored guest, and he takes possession of those who patronize these gatherings. . . .

"Many such gatherings have been presented to me. I have seen the gaiety, the display in dress, the personal adornment. All want to be thought brilliant, and give themselves up to hilarity, foolish jesting, cheap, coarse flattery, and uproarious laughter. The eyes sparkle, the cheek is flushed, conscience sleeps. With eating and drinking and merrymaking, they do their best to forget God. The scene of pleasure is their paradise. And heaven is looking on, seeing and hearing all."⁶

The genuine enthusiasm of Emmaus

"Those who are seeking the righteousness of Christ will be dwelling upon the themes of the great salvation. The Bible is the storehouse that supplies their souls with nourishing food. They meditate upon the incarnation of Christ, they contemplate the great sacrifice made to save them from perdition, to bring in pardon, peace, and everlasting righteousness.

The soul is aglow with these grand and elevating themes. Holiness and truth, grace and righteousness, occupy the thoughts. Self dies, and Christ lives in His servants. contemplation of the word,



A. T. Jones

their hearts burn within them, as did the hearts of the two disciples while they went to Emmaus, and Christ walked with them by the way, and opened to them the scriptures concerning Himself.

"How few realize that Jesus, unseen, is walking by their side! How ashamed many would be to hear His voice speaking to them and to know that He heard all their foolish, common talk! And how many hearts would burn for holy joy if they only knew that the Saviour was by their side, that the holy atmosphere of His presence was surrounding them, and they were feeding on the bread of life! How pleased the Saviour would be to hear His followers talking of His precious lessons of instruction and to know that they had a relish for holy things! When the truth abides in the heart, there is no place for criticism of God's servants, or for picking flaws with the message He sends. That which is in the heart will flow from the lips. It cannot be repressed. The things that God has prepared for those that love Him will be the theme of conversation. The love of Christ is in the soul as a well of water, springing up into everlasting life, sending forth living streams that bring life and gladness wherever they flow."⁷

120 years later

As we look at the events of 1888 from our more objective perspective 120 years later, there are some thoughts for us to prayerfully ponder: Like our forefathers, have our views of Christ been eclipsed? . . .

(Continued on p. 11)

Good Works

By E. J. Waggoner

The Bible holds out no promise of a reward for laziness. In God's plan no provision is made for idleness. Heaven is pictured before us as a place of activity, and heavenly beings as untiring workers. The Saviour said, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work" (John 5:17); and again, "I must work the works of him that sent me" (John 9:4). Of the angels we read that they are all "ministering spirits, sent forth to do service for the sake of them that shall inherit salvation" (Hebrews 1:14, RV).

This being the case, it cannot be thought that those who are to inherit salvation should be idle. The apostle Paul labored with his hands, as an example to the believers, and left on record the divine commandment, "If any will not work, neither let him eat" (2 Thessalonians 3:10, RV). But the frequent exhortation to work is with special reference to spiritual things, rather than physical. Jesus said, "Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life" (John 6:27). So the apostle Paul says that the reward will be given to those who patiently continue in well doing (Romans 2:7); and the Saviour says: "Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be" (Revelation 22:12).

Again we read that Christ "gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a people for his own possession, zealous of good works" (Titus 2:14, RV) And again, the Holy Spirit, through the apostle James, puts a premium upon good works, in these

words: "But he that looketh into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and so continueth, being not a hearer that forgetteth, but a doer that worketh, this man shall be blessed in his doing" (James 1:25, RV). Many other texts might be quoted to show that the Christian life is to be one of activity, and that good works are not only necessary, but are the one indispensable requisite.

Works, and works alone, in the judgment, will determine a man's condition for eternity. God "will render to every man according to his 'works'" (Romans 2:6). The question which the judgment will settle will not be, "What has this man believed?" nor "How has he felt?" but, "What are his works?" There is no place for the cavil of those who think that they are enunciating a principle of which the Bible is ignorant, when they say, "God will not damn a good man for his opinions nor for his belief." People are neither condemned nor saved because of their opinions, but because of their deeds.

"What!" exclaims one, "are you going to deny the doctrine of justification by faith?" Not by any means. I would go so far as to claim that the doctrine of justification by faith is the one great theme of the Scriptures, and that all other things are but parts of it. But the thing to be emphasized by the above remarks and quotations is that faith works. See Galatians 5:6. No truer statement was ever made than this, that "faith is not a sedative, but a stimulant." Faith is intensely active, and the source of all spiritual activity. While it is true that only a man's works

will be considered in the judgment, it is equally true that the character of his works will be determined by his faith. Where there is no faith, there can be no enduring works.

The works which are acceptable to God are "good works." But perfect goodness resides in God alone. See Mark 10:18. The righteousness which we must have is God's righteousness. Matthew 5:20. Of His own ways God says: "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts" (Isaiah 55:9). Who, then, can hope to present to God the good works that will be equal to His? None but those who, like Paul's brethren, are ignorant of God's righteousness, would be presumptuous enough to think such a thing possible. Only God can do the works of God. Therefore when the Jews said to Christ, "What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?" He replied, "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent" (John 6:28, 29).



The words of Paul to the Philippians, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling" are often quoted by those who forget the words immediately following, "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure" (Philippians 2:12, 13). God Himself does the good works which, when exhibited in the lives of men, render them pleasing to Him. So the Saviour said: "But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God" (John 3:21).

How, then, do they appear in men? This is the "mystery of godliness." It is the mystery of "God manifest in the flesh." "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us" (John 1:1, 14). This was done to demonstrate the possibility of God's dwelling in human flesh. The mystery of the works of God being manifested in the lives of men is simply the mystery of the incarnation.

In Christ dwelleth "all the fulness of the Godhead bodily" (Colossians

2:9). Therefore when Christ in His completeness dwells in the heart by faith, that person will be "filled with all the fulness of God" (Ephesians 3:17–19).

What words could be more full of comfort and more suggestive of the infinite possibilities of the Christian life than these in Psalm 31:19: "Oh how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men!" Think of it! God Himself has wrought the good works with which we are to appear before His throne. And how are we to get them?—Simply by trusting Him; by appropriating those good works by faith. God Himself comes to dwell with those who believe His word, and He lives out His own life in them. This thought is enough to fill every soul with love and joy and confidence.

The Christian life means an actual life. But life means activity. To live a godly life, therefore, means the living of a life in which the acts of God Himself are manifested. The apostle Paul said: "But by the grace of God I am what I am; and his grace which was

bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all;" and then he added, "yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me" (1 Corinthians 15:10). And again: "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me" (Galatians 2:20).

The secret of the whole matter is to acknowledge that in us dwells no good thing; and that God alone is good; that we are nothing, but that He is everything; that we are weakness, but that power belongs to God, and that God has the power to manifest Himself in the flesh today as well as eighteen hundred years ago, if we will but let Him; and to submit ourselves to the righteousness of God. Exaltation comes only through self-abasement. Christian activity comes only through passive submission to God, as the clay is passive in the hands of the potter. "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy and for thy truth's sake" (Psalm 115:1). *✍*

Editorial note: While we do not endorse all the writings of Jones and Waggoner, nor their entire experience after the Minneapolis session, they did make some concerted efforts to promote the message of present truth. This article was originally printed in The Signs of the Times, March 20, 1893.

What Happened in 1888? A Historic Perspective (Continued from p. 9)

Do we really look to Him as we should—or are we too often relying on human counsel? Do we take our trials to Him in prayer, or are our tongues too often busy in murmuring and gossip when things do not go our way? When we socialize, is Christ ever-present, or do we sometimes "take a little break" from having Him around? Are we looking to be the wittiest one, to trigger a laugh, to catch the eye, to be thought the greatest? Have we coveted the esteem of mortals? Have we painted a lopsided picture—either by leaving Christ out of the law, or on the flip side, by minimizing His requirements in promoting a "watered down" Jesus to gain popularity?

For 120 years God has appealed to Advent believers to allow our pride to be humbled in the dust. Have we honestly listened? Have we taken

earnest heed? Or, like those in the days of Noah, have we glossed over the appeals—pretending that the uncomfortable, inconvenient aspects of the message don't really apply much to me?

For 120 years God has spoken to us about the state of our hearts and to keep foremost in mind the only reliable source of our dependence. He declares: "Self in you must die. Self-importance must be laid in the dust. . . . You must be renewed, transformed, converted, and your whole life should be ordered and fashioned after the likeness of Christ. God has given you capabilities, and talents to use wholly to His glory. God will not accept a divided half and half service."⁸

One hundred and twenty years have passed since 1888—the same length of time as the preaching of Noah. Now

is no time to serve two masters. May our fervent prayer echo the plea of the psalmist: "There is none like unto thee, O Lord. . . . Thou art God alone. Teach me thy way, O Lord; I will walk in thy truth: unite my heart to fear thy name. . . . Thou, O Lord, art a God full of compassion, and gracious, longsuffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth. O turn unto me, and have mercy upon me" (Psalm 86:8, 10, 11, 15, 16). *✍*

References

- ¹ *Testimonies*, vol. 6, pp. 249, 250.
- ² *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 15, p. 90.
- ³ *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 429–431.
- ⁴ *The Review and Herald*, March 11, 1890.
- ⁵ *Ibid.*, September 29, 1896.
- ⁶ *Testimonies to Ministers*, pp. 82, 83.
- ⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 87, 88.
- ⁸ *The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, p. 1189.



KEPT BY THE

Word

By A. T. Jones

In the Christian life everything depends upon the word of God. It is true that God is able and desires to keep us from sinning, but this must be done through His word. So it is written, "By the word of thy lips I have kept me from the paths of the destroyer" (Psalm 17:4). "Thy word have I hid in my heart that I might not sin against thee" (Psalm 119:11). This is the way that God has appointed and there is no other way to have this thing accomplished.

Nor is this way appointed merely because He arbitrarily chose that this should be the way and then laid it upon men that this must be the way that they should go. His word is the way of salvation and the way of sanctification (Christian living) because this is the way that the Lord does things, because this is the way that He manifests Himself. It was by His word that He created all things in the beginning. It is by His word that He creates men anew, and it will be by His word that He will recreate this world and all things pertaining to it. "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth. . . . For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast" (Psalm 33:6, 9). "Being born again. . . by the word of God" (1 Peter 1:23). "And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold I make all things new. . . . And he said unto me, It is done" (Revelation 21:5, 6).

It is not only that the worlds were created by the word of God, but they are also sustained by the same word. "By the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water; whereby [by the word of God] the world that then was, being overflowed with water, per-

ished. But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store" (2 Peter 3:5-7). So also it is not only that the Christian is created by the word of God, but by that same word He is sustained, nourished, and caused to grow. God holds up "all things" by His powerful word. And the Christian is among this "all things" no less than any or all the worlds.

There can be no question whatever that all the worlds are held up and held in their places by the Lord. But it is not only all the worlds, it is "all things" that are held up and held in place by the Lord. And it is as true of the Christian as it is of any star in the firmament or any world on high. Nor can there be any question that the stars and the worlds are held up and held in their courses by the word of the Lord. And no less than this can there be any question that the Christian is held up and held in his right course by the word of the Lord.

This is to be believed and depended upon by every one who professes the name of Christ. You and I can no more hold ourselves up and in the right way than can the sun or the earth. And as certainly as the worlds are dependent upon His word, so certainly is the Christian to depend upon His word. And when this is so, the Christian is kept in the way of the Lord as certainly and as easily as is any planet in the universe. It is written that He "is able to keep you from falling" (Jude 24). And He says, "I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness" (Isaiah 41:10). "Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand" (Romans 14:4).

O struggling, failing Christian, is not that word which holds up great worlds able also to hold up you? Trust that word. Depend implicitly upon it. Rest wholly upon it, and then you will find rest in it. Trust the Lord to hold you up, just as you trust Him to hold up the sun. His word holds up the sun, and His word is over and over to you, "Fear thou not; for I am with thee." "I will uphold thee" (Isaiah 41:10). I will keep thee, thou art mine. "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee" (Hebrews 13:5). I will never leave thee till I have done that thing which I have spoken to thee of.

"The word of God is quick [‘living’ RV], and powerful" (Hebrews 4:12). "Powerful" means "full of power." the word of God is living and full of power, to do for you, with you, and in you, all that that word says. Believe that word, trust it, for it is the word of the living God. It is the word of the pitying Saviour. "Receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your soul" (James 1:21). "I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up" (Acts 20:32). "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly" (Colossians 3:16). You "are kept by the power of God through faith" (1 Peter 1:5). The power of God is manifested through His word and therefore it is His powerful word. Faith comes by hearing the word of God; therefore, it is the faithful word, the word full of faith. Therefore when He says, you "are kept by the power of God through faith," it is only saying in another way, You are kept by the word of God, "unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time" (1 Peter 1:5). Believe that word, trust it, and find its keeping power.—*The Review and Herald*, October 13, 1896

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Editorial note: Shortly after the 1888 General Conference, Elders Jones and Waggoner together with Ellen G. White promoted topics such as this to strengthen the faith of the believers.

The Relevance of 1888 in *Times of Change*

By Peter D. Lausevic

The term “Christ Our Righteousness” has been used and misused extensively in Adventism ever since the memorable General Conference Session held in Minneapolis, Minnesota, in the year 1888. The past 120 years since that infamous session have introduced many ideas regarding that message as well as to its messengers. Some have revered Alonzo Trevier Jones and Elliot Joseph Waggoner as prophets, while others have viewed them as apostates. Till today some devour any piece of literature coming from their pen as fresh inspiration from the Holy Spirit, while others view their material as dangerous and heretical. This is not only true in Adventist circles but even in Protestantism regarding the same subject. As we consider this issue in the light of past Reformers such as Martin Luther, John Calvin and John Wesley, we find the same attitude among modern Evangelicals. In it all they seem to be forgetting the term “protest” in Protestantism and are more interested in uniting with Rome rather than preserving the essence of the message of the early Reformers. In all this discussion about such an important topic, it seems that the term “Christ Our Righteousness” has become more a political football rather than the wonderful message that it really is.

The year 2008 has fast drawn to its close, and the people of America and the world are enamored with change. A new president has been elected in the United States with historic relevance, and all across the world celebrations are taking place at this critical period in

the history of the world. A people who were once considered slaves by having just a small percentage of African heritage in their blood have now risen to a status of holding the most powerful position in the world by the election of the new President of the leading country in the free world. The reaction in economic circles at the news of that election brought the largest increase in the stock market ever recorded after the election of an American President. However, to show the fickleness of the economy, a day later we also saw the largest fall of stocks ever recorded after the election of the President of the United States.

As we look at the world economy spiraling downward with the largest world economy taking the lead, how is it possible to relate to the message of Christ Our Righteousness as presented 120 years ago by two relatively young ministers to the leadership of Adventism?

Righteousness

The whole purpose of this message is to bring about a righteous and a holy people. When we accept the grace of God through our Savior, there is liberation from the past life of sin. “Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness” (Romans 6:18). The natural heart is one where the rulership of the mind brings destruction. However, with this new change the control center of the being becomes righteousness. “That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteous-



ness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord” (Romans 5:21). This is the real change of which both America and the world are in desperate need. This real liberation changes the once sinful life into that of a holy being. “He that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous” (1 John 3:7).

This means that the purpose of this message of Christ our Righteousness is to produce characters like that of Jesus. If we accept a message that does not make us righteous as a result of its teachings, then it is a false doctrine. “In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother” (1 John 3:10). One cannot justifiably claim to belong to God and then consciously act directly in opposition to His will. “As the Son of man was perfect in His life, so His followers are to be perfect in their life.”¹

This is not some kind of forced submission to the will of God. Our Creator has always desired willing obedience. Even in Old Testament times, when He spoke His will from the grandeur of Mount Sinai, He wanted not just a mental assent. It was Israel’s heart that was at stake. “O that there were such an heart in them, that they

would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children for ever!" (Deuteronomy 5:29). "It is no part of Christ's mission to compel men to receive Him. It is Satan, and men actuated by his spirit, that seek to compel the conscience. Under a pretense of zeal for righteousness, men who are confederate with evil angels bring suffering upon their fellow men, in order to convert them to their ideas of religion; but Christ is ever showing mercy, ever seeking to win by the revealing of His love. He can admit no rival in the soul, nor accept of partial service; but He desires only voluntary service, the willing surrender of the heart under the constraint of love. There can be no more conclusive evidence that we possess the spirit of Satan than the disposition to hurt and destroy those who do not appreciate our work, or who act contrary to our ideas."²

Realization

Before a change is possible one needs to realize his or her true condition as a sinner. If I think I am good enough, then no real substantial change is possible. This is the crux of the problem with one who is found in a Laodicean condi-

tion. "Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked" (Revelation 3:17). We are in danger of thinking we are in a healthy situation while in reality being totally absent of righteousness.

Do we really understand our natural human condition? "As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one" (Romans 3:10). The thought that we are in a "good enough" condition is far from the real truth. Instead of being barely able to make it, we are totally, fully corrupt and depraved. That is a real description of our human nature. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" (Jeremiah 17:9). Have we ever come to the point in our life to realize that this is a description of ourselves? If we have not, then we are in a very precarious condition as we are lost beings in need of a Saviour. It does not matter how long we have been attending church or even have been active members. Or even, dare I say, have been workers or pastors.

"The greatest triumph given to us by the religion of Christ is control over ourselves. Our natural propensities must be controlled. Few realize what this is. They do not know their own

weakness; and the natural sinfulness of the human heart often paralyzes their best endeavors. There must be a coming out from the world, and a nearness to God, if we would be adopted into the family of Heaven as children of the great King. We must walk by faith. When we do the will of God, we shall know of the doctrine. Our feet will be planted on the rock of eternal truth, and we shall not

be swept away by the doubt and skepticism of an unbelieving age."³

The whole purpose of this message is to bring us to this realization. "What is justification by faith? It is the work of God in laying the glory of man in the dust, and doing for man that which it is not in his power to do for himself."⁴ Can we imagine two young ministers attending a General Conference session with the message that many holding leadership roles are in desperate need of a Saviour? That would be a very difficult message to receive by the foremost religionists of the day. However, this is exactly what happened in 1888. We are so easy to condemn the rejection of the leadership in Adventism of that precious message, but are we more ready to receive a message that tells us that we, as longtime Reformers, need Jesus?

"The Lord in His great mercy sent a most precious message to His people through Elders Waggoner and Jones. This message was to bring more prominently before the world the uplifted Saviour, the sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. It presented justification through faith in the Surety; it invited the people to receive the righteousness of Christ, which is made manifest in obedience to all the commandments of God. Many had lost sight of Jesus. They needed to have their eyes directed to His divine person, His merits, and His changeless love for the human family."⁵ Keep in mind that this statement refers to a General Conference Delegation in Session. The people in this passage refers to ministers as well as other major leaders who were attending as delegates. Why is it, that as a person living in this Laodicean period, I have a tendency to think that I am good enough for the kingdom of heaven?

We find two equally dangerous positions today that were manifested in the time of Jesus. The first is the danger of conservatism similar to that of the Pharisees. They thought that all that was necessary for salvation was to mentally agree to the most rigid teachings of truth. "The greatest deception of the human mind in Christ's day was that a mere assent to the truth constitutes righteousness."⁶ As a result of this belief, Jesus called them hypocrites



“What is justification by faith? It is the work of God in laying the glory of man in the dust, and doing for man that which it is not in his power to do for himself.”

who were, far from the kingdom of heaven. This is why Jesus said, “Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 5:20). Their form of righteousness was insufficient to bring them everlasting life. A sacred regard for even the pure truth is insufficient to bring us salvation. We actually need to live a righteous life.

On the other hand there was the liberalism of the Sadducees. They applied a spiritual application to the entire Scriptures and openly declared that a righteous life is not necessary to have the blessings of God. This group views the message of 1888 as a liberating philosophy that gives freedom to a person to transgress the law without a negative impact in his or her present life or even in the future estate. It is interesting to compare the Pharisee and the Sadducee. They argued their positions publically and privately. They had not a single point of agreement. However, they finally came to one point they could all agree upon. They united their efforts to crucify Jesus. Why? Why did they form an unbelievable coalition against the powerful worker of miracles who was so loved by the people? It was because He lived a righteous life. “But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham” (John 8:40). Jesus did not tell the truth merely in words as the Pharisees have often done that. “For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth” (1 Peter 2:21, 22). It was His character that they hated. Both the Pharisee and the Sadducee lived in transgression of the law of God. One lived in open transgression,

while the other lived a hypocritical double life.

The message of Christ Our Righteousness cuts across the path of both the conservatives as well as the liberals in Christian society today. Jesus is not interested in a label. Rather, He is interested in changed characters, ready for the society of angels, and occupants to sit with Him in His throne (Revelation 3:21).

The Law seen through Jesus

How is it possible for us as sinners by nature and by choice to see ourselves as God sees us? We all have a tendency to think of ourselves as good people to some degree or another. Because of this value that we place upon ourselves it is impossible for God to bring salvation to the common human through a natural process of reasoning and understanding. “Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil” (Jeremiah 13:23). A supernatural power needs to be introduced into the mode of human reasoning.

We all, as Christians by profession, intellectually recognize the need of Jesus. We say that the world needs Jesus. But what do we mean by the term “Jesus.” We refer to Him as a person and ask people to accept Jesus as a personal Savior. We speak of Him in theological terms and describe His preexistence and His eternal nature. However, all that talk does not bring us to a real, deep realization of our corrupt human nature.

One Bible verse places all this in its proper perspective. “The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul” (Psalm 19:7). Is it possible that the law brings genuine conversion? In Adventism we have heard so much about the law and begin to think that

the message of 1888 is a rejection of the preaching of the law. It is true that there was a misapplication of the law in the pre-1888 Adventism. We even remember the words of the last-day prophet about this experience by our forefathers. “As a people, we have preached the law until we are as dry as the hills of Gilboa that had neither dew nor rain.”⁷ Most of us may remember this statement clearly. However, do we know that the next sentence places this thought in its proper perspective? “We must preach Christ in the law, and there will be sap and nourishment in the preaching that will be as food to the famishing flock of God.”

We are well aware that we are to preach the truth to the people in order for them to accept salvation. This truth is none other than Jesus Christ Himself. “Jesus saith . . . , I am the way, the truth, and the life” (John 14:6). Is it possible to separate Jesus and the truth from the law of God? “Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and thy law is the truth” (Psalm 119:142). In reality, Who is this Jesus and this preaching of righteousness by faith? “[Many] are not willing to exchange their own righteousness, which is unrighteousness, for the righteousness of Christ, which is pure, unadulterated truth.”⁸

When we speak of the law separated from Christ, we miss the whole purpose of the message of salvation. However, if we remove the law from our teaching, we cannot bring salvation to a single soul because it is the law as seen through Jesus that converts the soul. “Without the law, men have no just conception of the purity and holiness of God or of their own guilt and uncleanness. They have no true conviction of sin and feel no need of repentance. Not seeing their lost condition as violators of God’s law, they do not realize their need of the atoning blood of Christ. The hope of salvation is accepted without a radical change of heart or reformation of life. Thus superficial conversions abound, and multitudes are joined to the church who have never been united to Christ.”⁹

What happens to an unconverted soul whether in the church or in hea-

Are we more ready to receive a message that tells me that I, as a longtime Reformer, need Jesus?

then lands that hears the law (as it is in Jesus) taught? "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Romans 10:17). Can you imagine that? The entrance of faith comes through the medium of the word of God. It is this word that has the power to change the soul from a sinner to a saint. From one who is without righteousness to one who is able to reflect the character of Christ perfectly. It is through the study and understanding of the word of God (in reality the revelation of the law of God) that victory is possible. "For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith" (1 John 5:4).

Why is such a radical change possible through the study of the law of God as revealed through Jesus, the Word? "By looking constantly to Jesus with the eye of faith, we shall be strengthened. God will make the most precious revelations to His hungering, thirsting people. They will find that Christ is a personal Saviour. As they feed upon His word, they find that it is spirit and life. The word destroys the natural, earthly nature, and imparts a new life in Christ Jesus. The Holy Spirit comes to the soul as a Comforter. By the transforming agency of His grace, the image of God is reproduced in the disciple; he becomes a new creature."¹⁰

Do you want this type of change in your life? Are you prepared to make a determination to understand the character of God through a diligent daily study of His Word?

Partaking of the divine nature

As important as Bible study is in the turmoils that this 21st century brings, it alone is insufficient to bring about salvation. The various religious leaders among the Jews in the time of Christ were readers of the Scriptures. "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they

are they which testify of me" (John 5:39). The unwritten subject of this sentence is the word "you." So it would read, "You search the scriptures." They studied the Bible because they thought that by studying alone they would have eternal salvation. That study actually brought merit to their spiritual plight. Yet through their study they were rejecting the very One that the Scriptures were pointing to. Why was it that their study did not help them? Why was it in vain?

Is it possible for us to be diligent students of the Scriptures and yet come to wrong conclusions? In reality our attitude when we come to the study of the Bible is critical in its proper understanding. "The spirit in which you come to the investigation of the Scriptures will determine the character of the assistant at your side."¹¹ What kind of attitude do we have as we are studying our Bible? What is the right attitude in Bible study that brings us salvation? A reading of a familiar passage in another translation gives us a better idea of the original meaning of Christ. "If anyone wants to do His will, he shall know concerning the doctrine, whether it is from God or whether I speak on My own authority" (John 7:17, NKJV). It is willingness to obey God that produces salvation as a result of Bible study and helps us come to right conclusions in our research.

This willingness to obey is also described as a complete and total surrender to the written will of God. "Submit yourselves therefore to God" (James 4:7). What happens to us when we truly surrender our will to the will of God as found on the pages of the inspired writings? What becomes our relationship to the law of God? "The law is an expression of the thought of God; when received in Christ, it becomes our thought. It lifts us above the power of natural desires and tendencies, above temptations that lead to

sin."¹² Can you imagine your natural tendency to be so converted that, when tempted, your inclination will be to do the will of God? This is the real plan of salvation that cuts across the conservative and the liberal believers. It results in real obedience.

Why does God want to change more than just the outward actions? "All true obedience comes from the heart. It was heart work with Christ. And if we consent, He will so identify Himself with our thoughts and aims, so blend our hearts and minds into conformity to His will, that when obeying Him we shall be but carrying out our own impulses. . . . Through an appreciation of the character of Christ, through communion with God, sin will become hateful to us."¹³ We need the experience of Jesus as seen from the manger to the cross. He hated sin so much that nothing could change His course, not even the cruel cross.

Why does this willingness to obey make such a difference in our outlook on life? Why does it change our inclinations and tendencies? The root of that reason is found in a small New Testament book. "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust" (2 Peter 1:4). This verse tells us that if we accept the precious promises in Scripture by total surrender, we actually become partakers of the divine nature.

When Jesus came to this world, "He took upon His sinless nature our sinful nature, that He might know how to succor those that are tempted."¹⁴ It is by combining both of these natures that He was able to obtain victory in this corrupt world. "Christ's humanity alone could never have endured this [appetite] test [in the wilderness], but His divine power combined with humanity gained in behalf of man an infinite victory."¹⁵

It is impossible for humanity alone to have victory. Only defeat is a reality. But when we surrender the will, in that very act of submission to the written will of God, we partake of something supernatural. We partake of

His divine nature and victory is a reality. All this is within our reach. "The life of Christ has shown what humanity can do by being partaker of the divine nature. All that Christ received from God we too may have."¹⁶

When Nicodemus came to Jesus by night, he thought to have an intellectual discussion regarding the validity of Jesus as a teacher. However, the Saviour touched the real need of his soul. It was not a philosophical discussion he needed. He already had that in hearing the Pharisees and Sadducees argue. What he needed was a new life changing principle instilled in his life. "Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. . . . Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3:3, 5).

What really is this new birth? "Christ brought His divinity to earth, veiled by humanity, in order to rescue man from his lost condition. Human nature is vile, and man's character must be changed before it can harmonize with the pure and holy in God's immortal kingdom. This transformation is the new birth."¹⁷ When Jesus came to this world He was born of the Holy Ghost. When we realize our need as sinful human beings, we need to be born again of the same Holy Spirit. It is only as we receive the Holy Spirit, it is only as we partake of that divine nature that it is possible to escape the corruption that is in this world and that is intertwined with our human nature.

Victory in Jesus

So far we have seen that in order for salvation to come to our soul, we must see ourselves as God sees us. This is only possible through a comprehensive understanding of the law of God as seen through the merits of Jesus as our Saviour. We also saw that by a complete surrender to that written will of God we partake of the divine nature and receive the power necessary to have victory over sin and experience a complete change in our life. But in order to become

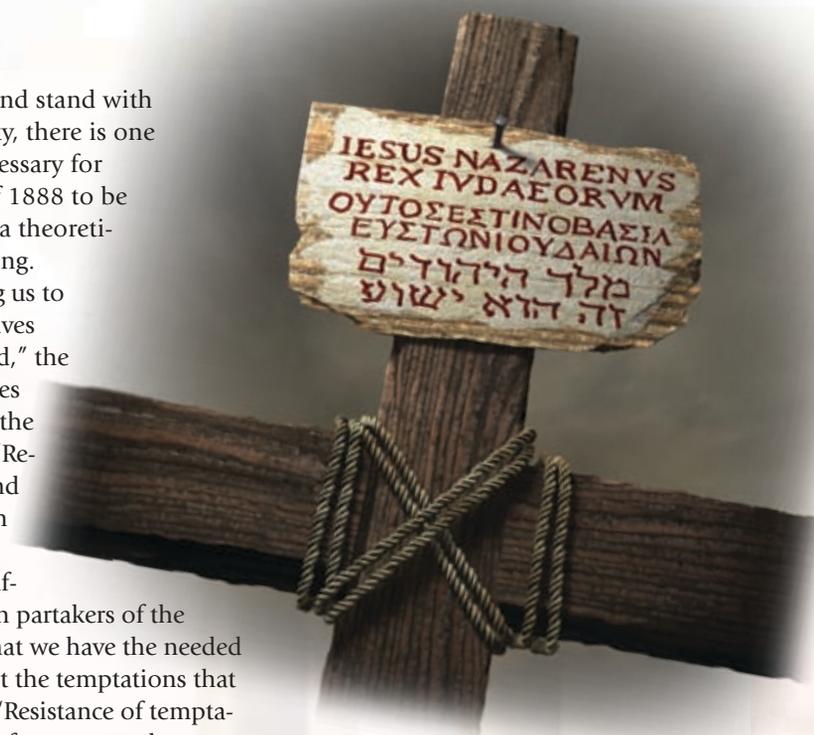
an overcomer and stand with Jesus for eternity, there is one more thing necessary for that message of 1888 to be more than just a theoretical understanding.

After telling us to "submit yourselves therefore to God," the apostle continues with the rest of the responsibility: "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you" (James 4:7). It is only after we have been partakers of the divine nature that we have the needed strength to resist the temptations that come our way. "Resistance of temptation must come from man, who must draw his power from God."¹⁸

The real battle is for the control of the human mind. God wants your mind, and once He has that will on His side, victory is a reality. "Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ" (2 Corinthians 10:5). "The first work of those who would reform is to purify the imagination. If the mind is led out in a vicious direction, it must be restrained to dwell only upon pure and elevated subjects. When tempted to yield to a corrupt imagination, then flee to the throne of grace and pray for strength from Heaven. In the strength of God the imagination can be disciplined to dwell upon things which are pure and heavenly."¹⁹

"I Would Be Like Jesus"

Do you want to be like Jesus? In our search for understanding the truth, we are to be looking not for mere theological understandings but a revelation of Jesus Christ. More than anything else, over one hundred years ago the prophet wrote: "The world needs today what it needed nineteen hundred years ago—a revelation of Christ."²⁰ How can we get that? We need to study not for mere understanding but to see Jesus. Jesus is something that cannot be described. But we can experience Him.



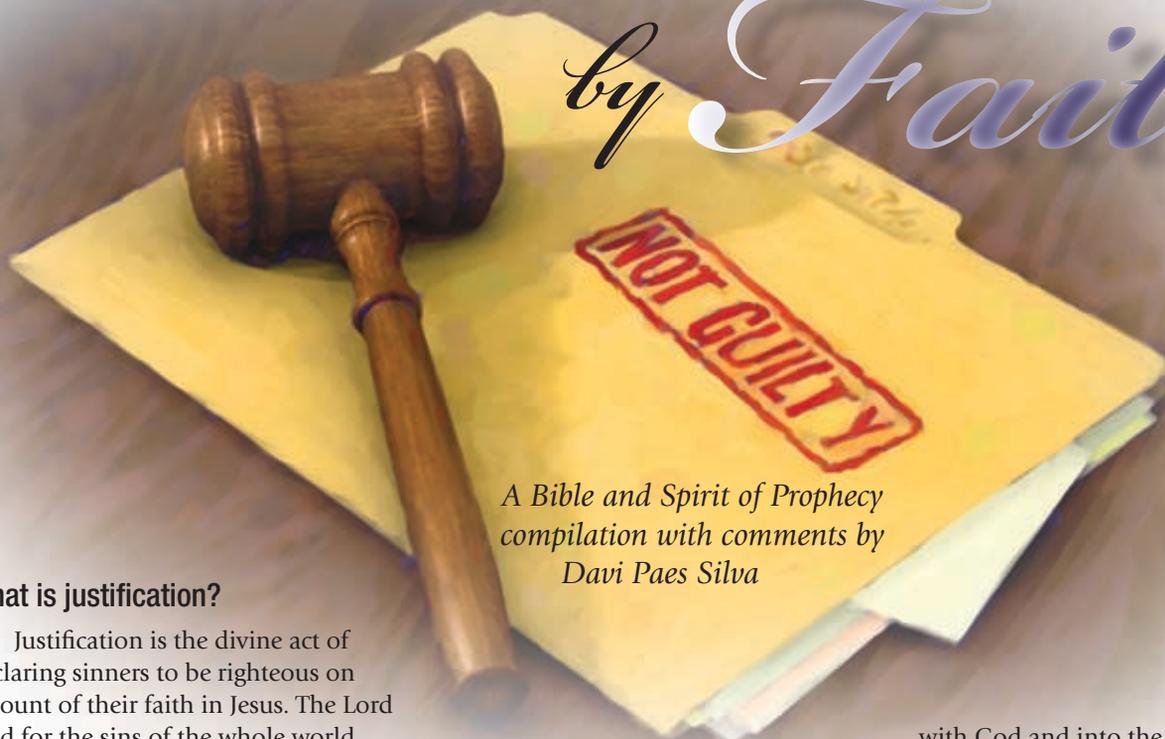
Under inspiration, the disciple whom Jesus loved could say at the end of his life, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not" (1 John 3:1). What will happen in our life when we really see Jesus? "When the sinner has a view of the matchless charms of Jesus, sin no longer looks attractive to him."²¹ This is the purpose of the message of 1888. Are we ready to receive this message today and completely surrender our life to the will and way of our Creator and Redeemer? 

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- ⁴ *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 456.
- ⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 91, 92.
- ⁶ *The Desire of Ages*, p. 309.
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- ⁸ *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 65.
- ⁹ *The Great Controversy*, p. 468.
- ¹⁰ *The Desire of Ages*, p. 391.
- ¹¹ *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 108.
- ¹² *The Desire of Ages*, p. 308.
- ¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 668.
- ¹⁴ *Medical Ministry*, p. 181.
- ¹⁵ *The Review and Herald*, October 13, 1874.
- ¹⁶ *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 149.
- ¹⁷ *The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 2, p. 133.
- ¹⁸ *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 482.
- ¹⁹ *A Solemn Appeal*, p. 75.
- ²⁰ *The Ministry of Healing*, p. 143.
- ²¹ *Reflecting Christ*, p. 76.

Justification

by Faith



*A Bible and Spirit of Prophecy
compilation with comments by
Davi Paes Silva*

What is justification?

Justification is the divine act of declaring sinners to be righteous on account of their faith in Jesus. The Lord paid for the sins of the whole world completely and finally on the cross, and those who accept Him by faith are forgiven (see Romans 3:21; 4:5; 5:1).

"The Greek noun for justification is derived from the Greek verb *dikaioo*, meaning 'to acquit' or 'to declare righteous' (used by Paul in Rom 4:2, 5; 5:1). It is a legal term used of a favorable verdict in a trial."¹

"Justification is wholly of grace and not procured by any works that fallen man can do."²

"In [Christ] is our hope, our justification, our righteousness."³

"The repentant soul realizes that his justification comes because Christ, as his Substitute and Surety, has died for him, is his atonement and righteousness."⁴

"As the penitent sinner, contrite before God, discerns Christ's atonement in his behalf and accepts this atonement as his only hope in this life and the future life, his sins are pardoned. This is justification by faith. . . .

"Pardon and justification are one and the same thing. Through faith, the

believer passes from the position of a rebel, a child of sin and Satan, to the position of a loyal subject of Christ Jesus, not because of an inherent goodness, but because Christ receives him as His child by adoption. The sinner receives the forgiveness of his sins, because these sins are borne by his Substitute and Surety. The Lord speaks to His heavenly Father, saying: 'This is My child, I reprieve him from the condemnation of death, giving him My life insurance policy—eternal life—because I have taken his place and have suffered for his sins. He is even My beloved son.' Thus man, pardoned, and clothed with the beautiful garments of Christ's righteousness, stands faultless before God. . . .

"Justification is the opposite of condemnation. God's boundless mercy is exercised toward those who are wholly undeserving. He forgives transgressions and sins for the sake of Jesus, who has become the propitiation for our sins. Through faith in Christ, the guilty transgressor is brought into favor

with God and into the strong hope of life eternal."⁵

What is faith?

"Belief, trust'; faith is the means by which sinful people can experience and enjoy all the blessings of salvation. It is a complete trust in Jesus for salvation from sin and coming judgment."⁶

"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Hebrews 11:1).

"Faith is the clasping of the hand of Christ in every emergency."⁷

"Saving faith is a transaction by which those who receive Christ join themselves in covenant relation with God. Genuine faith is life. A living faith means an increase of vigor, a confiding trust, by which the soul becomes a conquering power."⁸

"Faith is trusting God—believing that He loves us and knows best what is for our good. Thus, instead of our own, it leads us to choose His way. In place of our ignorance, it accepts His wisdom; in place of our weakness, His strength; in place of our sinfulness, His

“Faith is trusting God—believing that He loves us and knows best what is for our good. Thus, instead of our own, it leads us to choose His way.”

righteousness. Our lives, ourselves, are already His; faith acknowledges His ownership and accepts its blessing. Truth, uprightness, purity, have been pointed out as secrets of life’s success. It is faith that puts us in possession of these principles.”⁹

What does the Bible say about justification by faith?

Let us quote some Bible portions about the theme in the Old and New Testaments.

Through the prophet Isaiah, the Lord said that “we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousness are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away” (Isaiah 64:6). The prophet uses the expression “filthy rags” referring to garments stained during menstruation. We should take very seriously this declaration. This Bible verse says that “we are all as an unclean thing,” and there is no exception.

The apostle Paul in his epistle to the Christians in Rome wrote:

“What then? Are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin; as it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: their feet are swift to shed blood: destruction and misery are in their ways: and the way of peace have they not known: there is no fear of God before their eyes. Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God” (Romans 3:9–19).

After describing the condition of men and women, Paul affirms: “Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin” (verse 20).

The law of God is a perfect reflection of God’s character and His character is righteous. Then, to be considered righteous before God, we need to be in perfect harmony with His law. On the other hand, Paul declares that no one will be considered righteous by the deeds of the law, because the purpose of the law is not to justify sinful man but to reveal his true spiritual condition. In other words, we cannot be justified or be considered righteous by obeying God’s law. “We do not earn salvation by our obedience.”¹⁰

But the Bible speaks about several people that were known as “righteous men.” Let us mention some of them:

Abel: “By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous” (Hebrews 11:4).

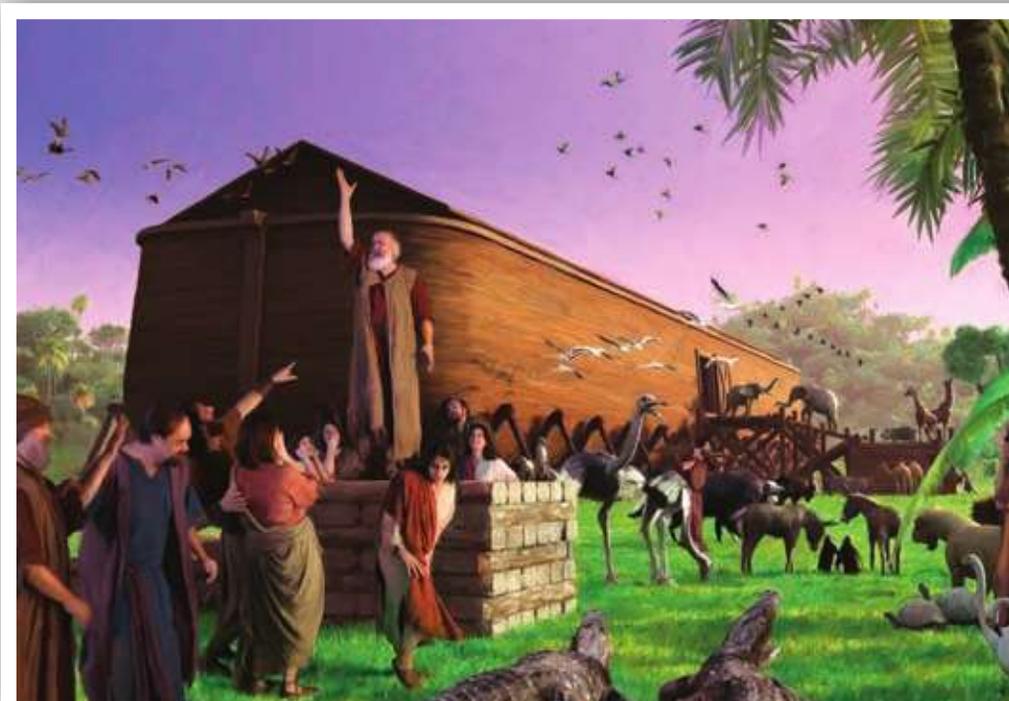
Enoch: “Before his translation [Enoch] had this testimony, that he pleased God” (verse 5).

Noah: “[He] became heir of the righteousness which is by faith” (verse 7).

Abraham: “What shall we say then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found? For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God. For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness” (Romans 4:1–3). What “scripture” is Paul talking about?

In Genesis 15, we find the following dialogue between the Lord and Abram:

“Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward. And Abram said, Lord God, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of



Damascus? And Abram said, Behold, to me thou hast given no seed: and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir. And, behold, the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir. And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be. And he believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness" (verses 1-6). The faith of Abram in the promises of the Lord was accounted righteousness in his behalf.

Did Abram commit any sin or mistake after being declared righteous by the Lord? What happened when he "journeyed from thence toward the south country, and dwelled between Kadesh and Shur, and sojourned in Gerar"?

"And Abraham said of Sarah his wife, She is my sister: and Abimelech king of Gerar sent, and took Sarah. But God came to Abimelech in a dream by

night, and said to him, Behold, thou art but a dead man, for the woman which thou hast taken; for she is a man's wife" (Genesis 20:1-3).

When questioned by Abimelech about the reason of his deception, Abraham explained: "Because I thought, Surely the fear of God is not in this place; and they will slay me for my wife's sake. And yet indeed she is my sister; she is the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother; and she became my wife" (verses 11 and 12).

This fact demonstrates that when a person is justified he or she is still subject to the weakness of sinful humanity. As a matter of fact, Abraham had this weak point in his character. Before this problem in Gerar, he had committed the same mistake in Egypt. (See Genesis 12:10-20.)

How about Noah? "Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God" (Genesis 6:9). The whole life of Noah, his willing obedience to the instructions of the Lord in spite of the opposition of

the whole world, proved him to be an "heir of righteousness." But he was not free from the frailties of human beings. After the Flood, he also committed a serious mistake when he became drunk "and became uncovered in his tent."

The reason why men and women cannot be justified by their obedience or good works is because they are sinners; they have sinful natures and sinful tendencies. Being sinners, they cannot produce righteous acts of obedience.

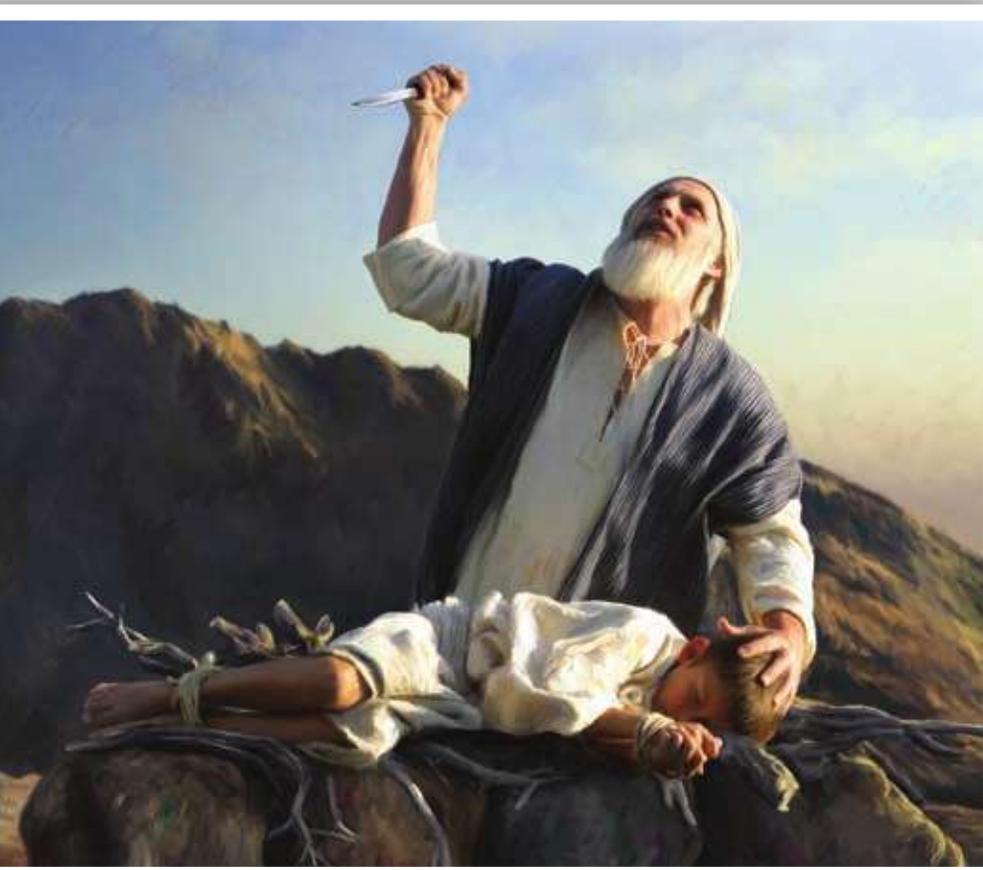
Jesus said in plain words that the condition to enter into the kingdom of God is possessing a "righteousness that exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees" (Matthew 5:20). God demands much more than this.

How can we possess the righteousness that satisfies God's standard?

Paul answers this vital question with the following words: "But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus. Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith. Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law" (Romans 3:21-28).

We should stress some essential points contained in this scripture:

The righteousness of God (the only true righteousness) has been revealed apart from the law, being witnessed by the law and the prophets. Who revealed the righteousness of God to the world? Jesus Christ in His life and His death on the cross of Cal-



vary. Since Christ, being God, is the Source of the true righteousness, only He could reveal the perfect righteousness of God. And the law declares that His righteousness is perfect. It is the only righteousness that satisfies the demands of the law. This righteousness is offered to all who believe, and it can be received only by faith in Jesus Christ.

In verse 23 Paul declares that "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." Then all the world is in need of justification.

Verse 24 says that we are justified freely by His grace. There is no other way.

Verse 26 reads: "That [God] might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." This is indeed a powerful scripture, and we should spend some time on it. How can God be just and, at the same time, justify repentant sinners who believe in Jesus? By faith in Jesus, the confessed sins are transferred to Him, and His perfect righteousness is credited to the account of the sinner. In this way he or she is considered a righteous person.

Paul concludes his explanation about justification in verse 28, when he declares: "We conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law."

Romans chapter 3 is closed with this powerful declaration: "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law" (verse 31).

We are not saved by our obedience to the law, but we are saved from the disobedience to the law. The angel Gabriel said to Joseph about Jesus: "Thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21).

According to many scriptures quoted so far, faith is the key element in justification. But we should keep in mind that faith is not a human byproduct. Faith is a gift of God. "So they faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Romans 10:17).

"Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Romans 5:1, NKJV).

Imputed righteousness

The apostle Paul starts chapter 4 of Romans with an interesting question: "What then shall we say that Abraham our father has found according to the flesh? For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God." And he continues his reasoning: "For what does the Scripture say? Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness" (verse 1–4, NKJV).

Paul makes it clear that the only way we can be justified before God is by faith. Let us continue reading Romans 4: "Now to him who works, the wages are not counted as grace but as debt" (verse 4). In other words, if we work during a whole month, and at the end receive a salary, this money is not the result of grace but of works. But if at the end of the month, without working, we receive wages, these are given totally by grace, because we did not deserve them.

"But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness, just as David also describes the blessedness of the man to whom God imputes righteousness apart from works: 'Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, and whose sins are covered; Blessed is the man to whom the Lord shall not impute sin'" (verses 5–8, NKJV).

David's personal experience

The verses quoted by Paul in Romans 4 are found also in Psalm 32. "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile." And then David identifies himself as that man: "When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long. For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me: my moisture is turned into the drought of summer. I acknowledge my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin." (verses 1–5).

Whose sins is David talking about? He is acknowledging the terrible sins that he committed against the Lord as recorded in 2 Samuel 11. He committed adultery with Bathsheba and murder against her husband. How could David be justified? How could the Lord not impute sin to David? He said: "I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin." When David acknowledged and confessed His sin he was forgiven or justified. How could this be?

"To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Corinthians 5:19–21).

Why was David's sin not imputed to him? Why was he justified? Though he was a great sinner, when he acknowledged his transgression his sin was transferred to Christ, the pure Lamb of God, in whom there was no sin. In other words, our sins, through heartfelt confession, are imputed to Christ, who knew no sin, and His perfect righteousness is imputed to us, who knew no righteousness. A wonderful transaction!

What did David do to be justified? He believed in his Substitute, the sin-bearer; he repented of his sin and confessed it to the Lord. This is the only way that sinners can be justified. 

References

¹ From *Nelson's NKJV Study Bible*. © Thomas Nelson, Inc., 1997. Used by permission.

² *Faith and Works*, p. 20.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 36.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 101.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 103, 104.

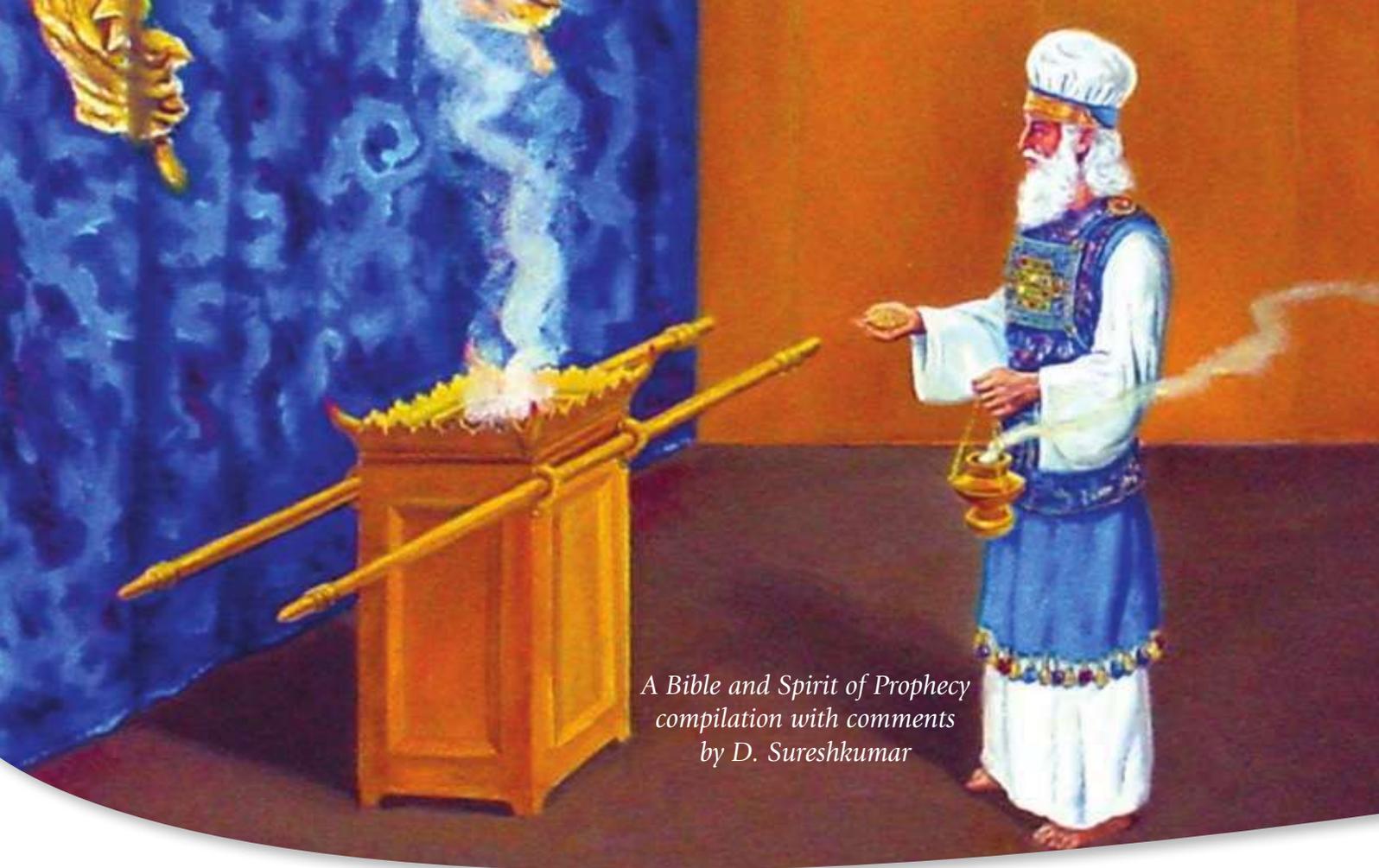
⁶ From *Nelson's NKJV Study Bible*, © Thomas Nelson, Inc., 1997. Used by permission.

⁷ *Gospel Workers*, p. 262.

⁸ *The Desire of Ages*, p. 347.

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*A Bible and Spirit of Prophecy
compilation with comments
by D. Sureshkumar*

There is not one in one hundred who understands for himself the Bible truth on this subject [of justification by faith] that is so necessary to our present and eternal welfare."¹

The term "sanctification" is not a felicitous expression but a personal connection and expression of continued justification by faith. The Greek word *hagiazō* (hag-ee-ad'-zo) usually translated "sanctify" is more accurately rendered "to dedicate to God" or "to consecrate" to God; to purify.

The Old Testament prophet Isaiah referred to this vital spiritual concept: "An highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein" (Isaiah 35:8).

Likewise, the New Testament apostle Paul echoed the same principle: "Now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life" (Romans 6:22).

We can thus only conclude the following: "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (2 Corinthians 7:1).

A sanctified person has made a commitment to God and remains in that commitment.

Therefore, sanctification is the process of transformation into Christlikeness which extends throughout our life. It is a progressive work of God combined with the human agent that makes us more and more free from sin and similar to Christ in our actual life.

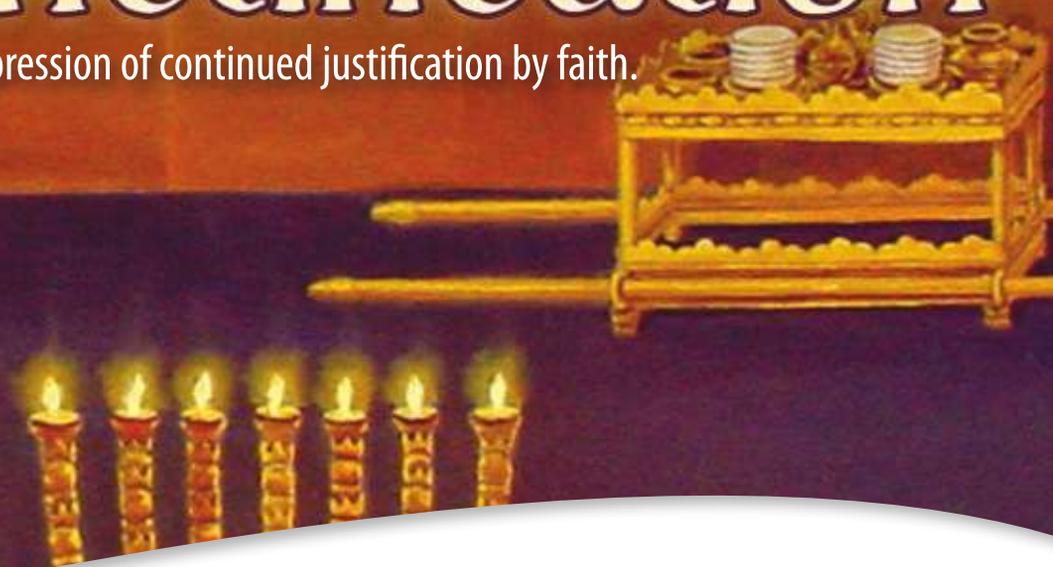
Biblical sanctification usually denotes the sinner's affirmative response to God's pleading through the Holy Spirit, and his or her acceptance of Jesus as their personal Saviour. Hebrews 10:10 explains that "by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (NKJV). Any person who made a solemn life commitment to God is holy in the biblical sense. He or

she is a saint. Today we would call such persons Christians. Sanctification here refers to a sinner's turn to God with joyous acceptance of His plans and will for his or her life. That soul becomes an obedient child of God.

Through justification by faith a man or a woman is put into a life-giving connection or union with God and given the Holy Spirit for growth in grace and victory over sin. We are bidden to "put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (Ephesians 4:24). "To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints." "For this is the will of God, even your sanctification." "For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness" (1 Thessalonians 3:13; 4:3, 7). The apostle's prayer is: "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Thessalonians 5:23).

Sanctification

A personal expression of continued justification by faith.



"True sanctification is an entire conformity to the will of God. Rebellious thoughts and feelings are overcome."

Aspects of sanctification

Simplifying the process of sanctification, we may say that sanctification is:

1. HABITUAL COMMUNION WITH GOD:

"Sanctification means habitual communion with God."²

2. CONSTANT PROGRESS AND IMPROVEMENT:

"Let no one suppose that conversion is the beginning and end of the Christian life. There is a science of Christianity that must be mastered. There is to be growth in grace, that is constant progress and improvement."³

3. WHOLENESS TO CHRIST:

"But how shall we know that we are in Christ?—We may know it by the character of our fruit. The fruit borne on the Christian tree is holiness of heart—wholeness to Christ."⁴

4. PERFECT OBEDIENCE:

"Holiness is wholeness for God. It means perfect obedience to every precept of the law of God. This is the

only true moral excellence. A character in harmony with the law of God is the only character which will receive His approval."⁵

"Let no one say that your works have nothing to do with your rank and position before God. In the judgment the sentence pronounced is according to what has been done or to what has been left undone."⁶

5. UNRESERVED CONSECRATION:

"True holiness is wholeness in the service of God. This is the condition of true Christian living. Christ asks for an unreserved consecration, for undivided service. He demands the heart, the mind, the soul, the strength. Self is not to be cherished. He who lives to himself is not a Christian."⁷

6. COMMUNION WITH GOD:

"The true Christian obtains an experience which brings holiness. . . . A glow of perfect love for the Redeemer

clears away the miasma which has interposed between his soul and God. The will of God has become his will, pure, elevated, refined, and sanctified. His countenance reveals the light of heaven. His body is a fit temple for the Holy Spirit. Holiness adorns his character. God can commune with him; for soul and body are in harmony with God."⁸

7. IMPLANTING OF CHRIST'S NATURE:

"The sanctification of the soul by the working of the Holy Spirit is the implanting of Christ's nature in humanity. Gospel religion is Christ in the life—a living, active principle. It is the grace of Christ revealed in character and wrought out in good works. The principles of the gospel cannot be disconnected from any department of practical life. Every line of Christian experience and labor is to be a representation of the life of Christ."⁹

"It is our privilege to cut away from the entanglements of self and sin, and advance to perfection."

8. ENTIRE CONFORMITY TO THE WILL OF GOD:

"True sanctification is an entire conformity to the will of God. Rebellious thoughts and feelings are overcome, and the voice of Jesus awakens a new life, which pervades the entire being. Those who are truly sanctified will not set up their own opinion as a standard of right and wrong. . . . True sanctification is a daily work, continuing as long as life shall last."¹⁰

"God requires the entire surrender of the heart, before justification can take place; and in order for man to retain justification, there must be continual obedience, through active, living faith, that works by love and purifies the soul."¹¹

9. PERFECT LOVE, PERFECT OBEDIENCE:

"True sanctification means perfect love, perfect obedience, perfect conformity to the will of God. We are to be sanctified to God through obedience to the truth. Our conscience must be purged from dead works to serve the living God. We are not yet perfect; but it is our privilege to cut away from the entanglements of self and sin, and advance to perfection."¹²

10. TRANSFORMATION OF CHARACTER:

"[The sanctification of the soul] is the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ revealed in character, and the grace of Christ brought into active exercise in good works. Thus the character is trans-

formed more and more perfectly after the image of Christ in righteousness and true holiness."¹³

11. DAILY, CONTINUING WORK:

"Bible sanctification does not consist in strong emotion. Here is where many are led into error. They make feelings their criterion. When they feel elated or happy, they claim that they are sanctified. Happy feelings or the absence of joy is no evidence that a person is or is not sanctified. There is no such thing as instantaneous sanctification. True sanctification is a daily work, continuing as long as life shall last."¹⁴

12. LIFELONG OBEDIENCE:

"Sanctification is not the work of a moment, an hour, a day, but of a lifetime. It is not gained by a happy flight of feeling, but is the result of constantly dying to sin, and constantly living for Christ. Wrongs cannot be righted nor reformations wrought in the character by feeble, intermittent efforts. It is only by long, persevering effort, sore discipline, and stern conflict, that we shall overcome. We know not one day how strong will be our conflict the next. So long as Satan reigns, we shall have self to subdue, besetting sins to overcome; so long as life shall last, there will be no stopping place, no point which we can reach and say, I have fully attained. Sanctification is the result of lifelong obedience."¹⁵

13. THE ROBE OF CHRIST'S RIGHTEOUSNESS:

Justification and sanctification by faith is the robe of Christ's righteousness.

14. THE POWER AND GLORY OF THE "OTHER ANGEL" OF REVELATION 18:

This is the power and glory of the "other angel," the banner of God's faithful people, a powerful witness of the truth. This is "Christ Our Righteousness."

15. THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT:

Sanctification is the term used to describe the work of the Holy Spirit upon the character of those who are justified. We are justified in order that we may be sanctified, and we are sanctified in order that we may be glorified.

16. CHEERFUL PERFORMANCE OF DAILY DUTIES:

"This is true sanctification; for sanctification consists in the cheerful performance of daily duties in perfect obedience to the will of God."¹⁶

17. RIGHTEOUSNESS BY FAITH:

Sanctification is living righteousness by faith, and it is the standard of Christian experience.

Sanctification is granted only for the justified sinner, and glorification comes only to the sanctified Christian. It is God, through the Holy Spirit, that is making one righteous as Christ's



*“Sanctification is the result of constantly dying to sin,
and constantly living for Christ.”*

rightdoing is imparted to the Christian. Sanctification removes from us the power of sin, for we are empowered by the Holy Spirit and receive the strength needed to overcome our sins.

Righteousness is not a belief but a reality. It is not a theory but a practical daily experience.

“The truth is of no value to any soul unless it is brought into the inner sanctuary and sanctifies the soul. Piety will degenerate, and religion become a shallow sentimentalism, unless the plowshare of truth is made to go deep into the fallow ground of the heart.”¹⁷

God requires perfection from His children. We need to understand the message of sanctification, which is living “righteousness by faith” and the increasing light of the power and the glory of the other angel.

We are bidden to “follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord” (Hebrews 12:14).

The truth as a sanctifying power

“For their sakes I sanctify myself,” Christ said, “that they also might be sanctified through the truth” (John 17:19).

“No error can sanctify the soul; we must bear this in mind. Sanctification comes not through error, but through belief of the truth. We need to possess a faith that is based upon the sure word of promise.

“The Word of God specifies the quality of the faith that will distinguish between the sacred and the common,

and will render the life well-pleasing to Him who has purchased the powers of our being by the redemption price of His blood. All men have a certain kind of faith; but it is that faith which works by love that purifies the soul. This faith cleanses the life from all self-serving, from all acquiescence to man’s arbitrary exactions. It is a genuine faith that is revealed in the spirit, in the speech, and in the actions. In the life of the one who possesses such a faith as this the will of Christ will be daily carried out.

“The soul who really believes the truth will carry out in his life the principles revealed in the life of Christ. Of Enoch it is written that his ways pleased God; and without faith it is impossible to please God. Not a thread of coarseness or selfishness was woven into the web that this servant of God was weaving in his daily life. And of him we read, ‘Enoch walked with God . . . three hundred years; . . . and he was not; for God took him’ (Genesis 5:22, 24).

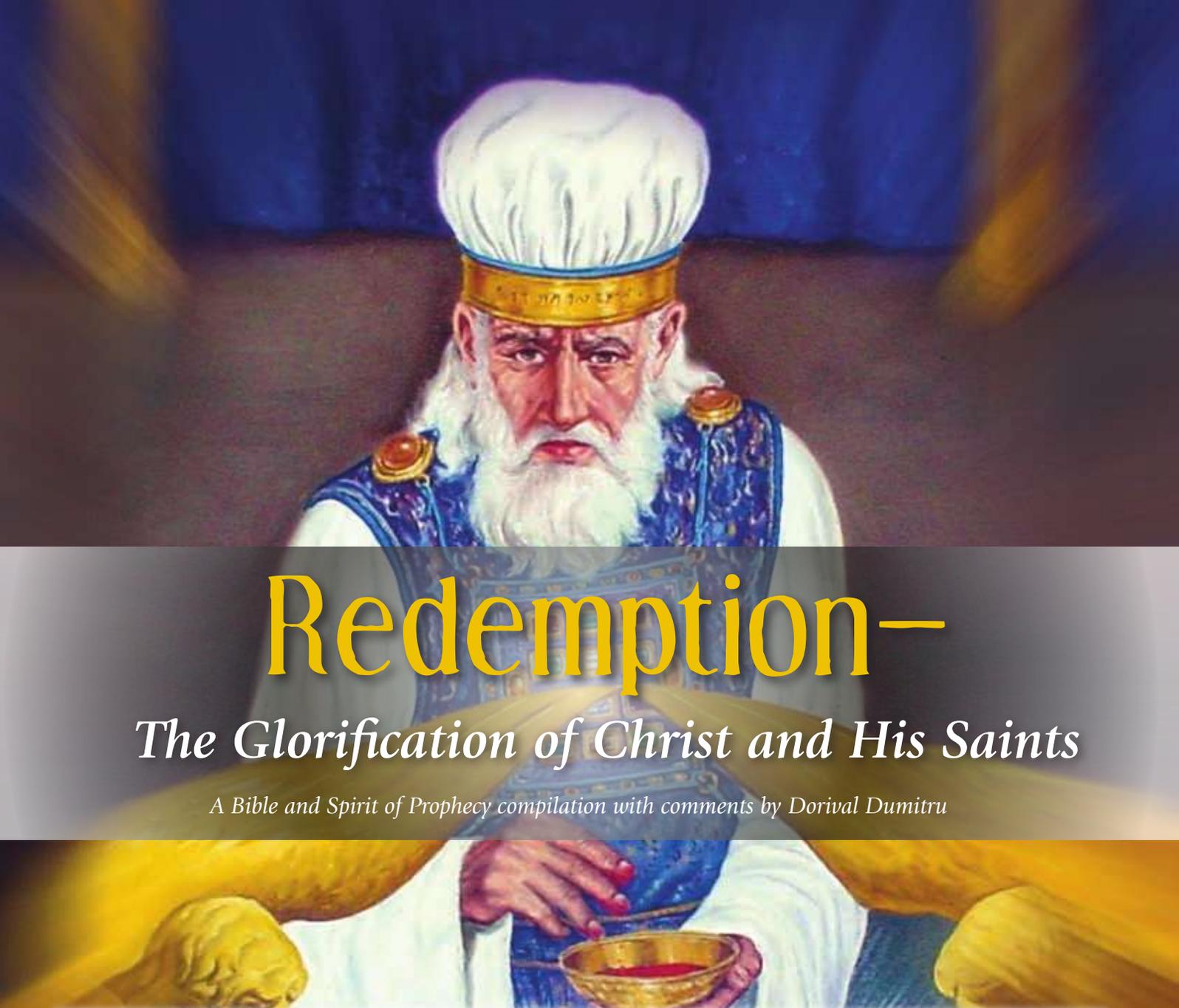
“The Lord’s measure of correct character is given in the words of the prophet Micah: ‘What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?’ (Micah 6:8). There are men who may be represented as doing justly and loving mercy, but who have not the true principle within them, the faith that will lead them to walk humbly with the Lord. They may seem to have every specification needed but that of sanctified faith, but lacking this, they lack all. The life is not sanctified, and without this sanctification of mo-

tive and purpose, it is impossible to please God. God has given men and women affections and intellect that they may appreciate the character of God as it was revealed in the earthly life of Christ, and through faith in Christ reveal the same attributes. Christ is to be manifest in the life of every true believer. Each is to prove in his life his right to the claim he makes for citizenship in the kingdom of Christ and of God. . . .

“The science of overcoming as Christ overcame is the science of salvation. If we will unite with Christ in the work of developing Christian character, if we will maintain unwavering faith in God and in the truths of His Word, we shall be given strength to overcome every evil thing in the life.”¹⁸ May this great victory be our life experience! *R*

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- ² *Ibid.*, March 15, 1906.
- ³ *Christian Education*, p. 122.
- ⁴ *The Signs of the Times*, April 3, 1893.
- ⁵ *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 12, p. 145.
- ⁶ *Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 381.
- ⁷ *Christ’s Object Lessons*, pp. 48, 49.
- ⁸ *The SDA Bible Commentary* [E. G. White Comments], vol. 7, p. 909.
- ⁹ *Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 384.
- ¹⁰ *Reflecting Christ*, p. 80.
- ¹¹ *The Review and Herald*, November 4, 1890.
- ¹² *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 565.
- ¹³ *Selected Messages*, bk. 3, p. 198.
- ¹⁴ *My Life Today*, p. 248.
- ¹⁵ *The Act of the Apostles*, pp. 560, 561.
- ¹⁶ *Christ Object Lessons*, p. 360.
- ¹⁷ *The Review and Herald*, May 24, 1892.
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Redemption—

The Glorification of Christ and His Saints

A Bible and Spirit of Prophecy compilation with comments by Dorival Dumitru

What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour” (Psalm 8:4, 5).

When sin came in, it brought shame and death. Humanity lost its former glory. Why? Simply because this glory had not actually originated in humanity in the first place—it was God’s glory. “Thine is . . . the glory” (Matthew 6:13). The divine glory, once manifested in humanity, was now gone. Jesus was to come and show us God’s glory. Thus, the

opportunity was granted for humanity to recover the glory lost by disobedience.

The final glorification of God’s children is our expectation. “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. . . . The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that **we may be also glorified together**” (Romans 8:14, 16, 17, emphasis supplied).

The glorification of Christ

During the earthly sojourn of Christ, we think of His glorification in relation

to certain occasions when the voice of the heavenly Father was heard testifying in His Son’s behalf.

One such example is at Christ’s baptism at the beginning of His ministry, when He “pleads with the Father for power to overcome [the] unbelief [of men and women], to break the fetters with which Satan has enthralled them, and in their behalf to conquer the destroyer. **He asks for the witness that God accepts humanity in the person of His Son.**

“Never before have the angels listened to such a prayer. They are eager to bear to their loved Commander a message of assurance and comfort. But

no; **the Father Himself will answer the petition of His Son. Direct from the throne issue the beams of His glory.** The heavens are opened, and upon the Saviour's head descends a dovelike form of purest light—fit emblem of Him, the meek and lowly One.

"Of the vast throng at the Jordan, few except John discerned the heavenly vision. Yet the solemnity of the divine Presence rested upon the assembly. The people stood silently gazing upon Christ. His form was bathed in the light that ever surrounds the throne of God. His upturned face was glorified as they had never before seen the face of man. **From the open heavens a voice was heard** saying, 'This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased' (Matthew 3:17).

"These words of confirmation were given **to inspire faith** in those who witnessed the scene, and to strengthen the Saviour for His mission."¹

Another example of the glorification of Christ is found when certain Greeks came to see Him toward the close of His earthly ministry. We read:

"The hour of Christ's glorification had come. He was standing in the shadow of the cross, and the inquiry of the Greeks showed Him that the sacrifice He was about to make would bring many sons and daughters to God. . . . By making this propitiation for the sins of men, Christ knew that His kingdom would be perfected, and would extend throughout the world. He would work as the Restorer, and His Spirit would prevail. For a moment He looked into futurity, and heard the voices proclaiming in all parts of the earth, 'Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world' (John 1:29). In these strangers He saw the pledge of a great harvest, when the partition wall between Jew and Gentile should be broken down, and all nations, tongues, and peoples should hear the message of salvation. The anticipation of this, the consummation of His hopes, is expressed in the words, **'The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified'** (John 12:23). **But the way in which this glorification must take place was never absent from Christ's mind. The gathering in of the Gen-**

tiles was to follow His approaching death. Only by His death could the world be saved. Like a grain of wheat, the Son of man must be cast into the ground and die, and be buried out of sight; but He was to live again."²

At that moment Jesus and the Father immediately answered His request.

What was the petition of Jesus? What was the petition of Jesus? "Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again" (John 12:28).

Jesus later prayed:

"Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world" (John 17:24).

"All the favors [God] has shown to His Son in His acceptance of the great atonement are shown to His people. Those who have united their interests in love with Christ are accepted in the Beloved. They suffered with Christ in His deepest humiliation, and His glorification is of great interest to them, because they are accepted in Him. God loves them as He loves His Son. Christ, Emmanuel, stands between God and the believer, revealing the glory of God to His chosen ones, and covering their defects and transgressions with the garments of His own spotless righteousness."³

God's glory revealed in humanity

At the sudden death of their father, four brothers were thrilled in their souls with deep emotion as they made a vow among themselves: By God's grace, they were going to make manifest in their own consecrated lives, and by their dedication, to continue their Father's interrupted ministry—to carry on what had been the true ideal and character of that godly man. The consecrated worker was taken; now—not one, but four younger workers would replace him and develop the work in the main branches, as their father foresaw it should be done. Had he lived to see the accomplishment of his sons, he would not have been disappointed.

Let us draw a parallel between the faithful dedication of those four sons and the work of Christ's true followers.

At the end of His mission on earth, Jesus said in His intercessory prayer: "I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do" (John 17:4).

And then Jesus added, "I have given them thy word. "As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world" (verses 14, 18).

Would the followers of Jesus also glorify the Father's name by faithfully carrying on the work of Jesus—the greatest and most important work ever entrusted to human beings? Yes, they would. And would the glory of God—through Jesus—also be reflected upon them? Yes, it would. Jesus said:

"The glory which thou gavest me I have given them, that they may be one, even as we are one" (verse 22).

What is the first evidence that the glory of God is being restored in Christ's followers? Remember Galatians 2:20. Paul wrote: "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me."

In His intercessory prayer to His Father, Jesus described the beautiful harmony: "I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. . . . And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them" (verses 23, 26).

Here is one more evidence pointing to the glory of God shining forth through Christ's followers:

"Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh? Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the Lord shall be thy rereward" (Isaiah 58:7, 8).

"In the night of spiritual darkness God's glory is to shine forth through His church in lifting up the bowed

down and comforting those that mourn.

"All around us are heard the wails of a world's sorrow. On every hand are the needy and distressed. It is ours to aid in relieving and softening life's hardships and misery."⁴

"[Christ] says, *Let your light shine.* If you have received the grace of God, the light is in you. Remove the obstructions, and the Lord's glory will be revealed. The light will shine forth to penetrate and dispel the darkness. . . .

"The revelation of His own glory in the form of humanity will bring heaven so near to men that the beauty adorning the inner temple will be seen in every soul in whom the Saviour dwells."⁵

The glorification of God's people

If Christ lives in us (Galatians 2:20), we cannot help beholding Him constantly through the eyes of our consciousness, as though we were seeing Him in the mirror. And, by contemplating Him, we are changed into His image. According to Paul, this is the experience of every genuine Christian.

"We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord" (2 Corinthians 3:18).

This is the work of the Spirit of the Lord in us. As He guides us into all truth (John 16:13) with our consent and cooperation, we are changed "from glory to glory" until the character of Christ is perfectly reproduced in us and is shining forth through us into the darkness of the world.

Therefore, "we pray always for you, that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power: that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and ye in him, according to the

grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Thessalonians 1:11, 12).

"If any man serve Me," said Jesus, "let him follow Me; and where I am, there shall also My servant be: if any man serve Me, him will My Father honor" (John 12:26). All who have borne with Jesus the cross of sacrifice will be sharers with Him of His glory. It was the joy of Christ in His humiliation and pain that His disciples should be glorified with Him. They are the fruit of His self-sacrifice. The outworking in them of His own character and spirit is His reward, and will be His joy throughout eternity. This joy they share with Him as the fruit of their labor and sacrifice is seen in other hearts and lives. They are workers together with Christ, and the Father will honor them as He honors His Son."⁶

A special measure of divine glory

At the finishing of God's work on earth, when the loud cry is given under the latter rain, God's people will receive a special measure of the divine glory.

"As the members of the body of Christ approach the period of their last conflict, 'the time of Jacob's trouble,' they will grow up into Christ, and will partake largely of His Spirit. As the third message swells to a loud cry, and as great power and glory attend the closing work, the faithful people of God will partake of that glory. It is the latter rain which revives and strengthens them to pass through the time of trouble. **Their faces will shine with the glory of that light which attends the third angel.**"⁷

Immediately before the coming of Christ, God's people will be blessed with a still greater measure of God's glory. This will happen when God's voice is heard from heaven, declaring the day and hour of Jesus' coming.

"The voice of God is heard from heaven, declaring the day and hour of Jesus' coming, and delivering the everlasting covenant to His people. Like peals of loudest thunder His words roll through the earth. The Israel of God stand listening, with their eyes fixed upward. Their countenances are **lighted up with His glory.**"⁸

"**At the voice of God [the living righteous] were glorified.**"⁹

"Satan and his angels, and wicked men, who had been exulting that the people of God were in their power, that they might destroy them from off the earth, witness **the glory conferred upon those who have honored the holy law of God.** They behold the faces of the righteous lighted up and reflecting the image of Jesus. Those who were so eager to destroy the saints cannot endure **the glory resting upon the delivered ones,** and they fall like dead men to the earth. Satan and evil angels flee from **the presence of the saints glorified.** Their power to annoy them is gone forever."¹⁰

Finally, the greatest glory will be at the return of Christ:

"While the wicked flee from His presence, Christ's followers will rejoice. The patriarch Job, looking down to the time of Christ's second advent, said, 'Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not a stranger' (Job 19:27, margin). To His faithful followers Christ has been a daily companion and familiar friend. They have lived in close contact, in constant communion with God. Upon them the glory of the Lord has risen. **In them the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ has been reflected.** Now they rejoice in the undimmed rays of the brightness and glory of the King in His majesty. They are prepared for the communion of heaven; for they have heaven in their hearts."¹¹ Dear brethren and sisters, let us earnestly strive to be in that blessed company! ❧

References

- ¹ *The Desire of Ages*, p. 112 (emphasis supplied).
- ² *Ibid.*, pp. 622, 623 (emphasis supplied).
- ³ *The SDA Bible Commentary* [E. G. White Comments], vol. 6, p. 1115.
- ⁴ *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 417.
- ⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 420.
- ⁶ *The Desire of Ages*, p. 624.
- ⁷ *Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 353 (emphasis supplied).
- ⁸ *The Great Controversy*, p. 640 (emphasis supplied).
- ⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 645 (emphasis supplied).
- ¹⁰ *Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 354 (emphasis supplied).
- ¹¹ *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 421 (emphasis supplied).

FINAL SUMMARY: THE 1888 MESSAGE

By Paul Balbach

What is the 1888 Message? Many sincere believers ask this question. Forty years had passed since the beginning of Adventism and the church was going through “growing pains.” Our principal messages such as the Second Coming of Christ, the Sabbath, the State of the Dead, and the Judgment were being debated by our preachers with advocates of other Christian denominations. They had all the biblical proof, and the church was gaining ground—the membership was growing.

Where was Christ in all this preaching and debating? It seems as if Christ had been left behind. This was what Jones and Waggoner were trying to explain.

Let us pause right here. Where is Christ in your life? Are you living by the law, or are you living by Christ? You see, it is possible to live the law through Christ, but it is impossible to live the law without Christ. Confused? The apostle Paul said that “a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified” (Galatians 2:16). Although the Scripture says that “not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified” (Romans 2:13), the question of justification was still at the very center of the controversy among the SDA leadership (ministry). Much was misunderstood, and the Book of Galatians became the focus of extensive debate.

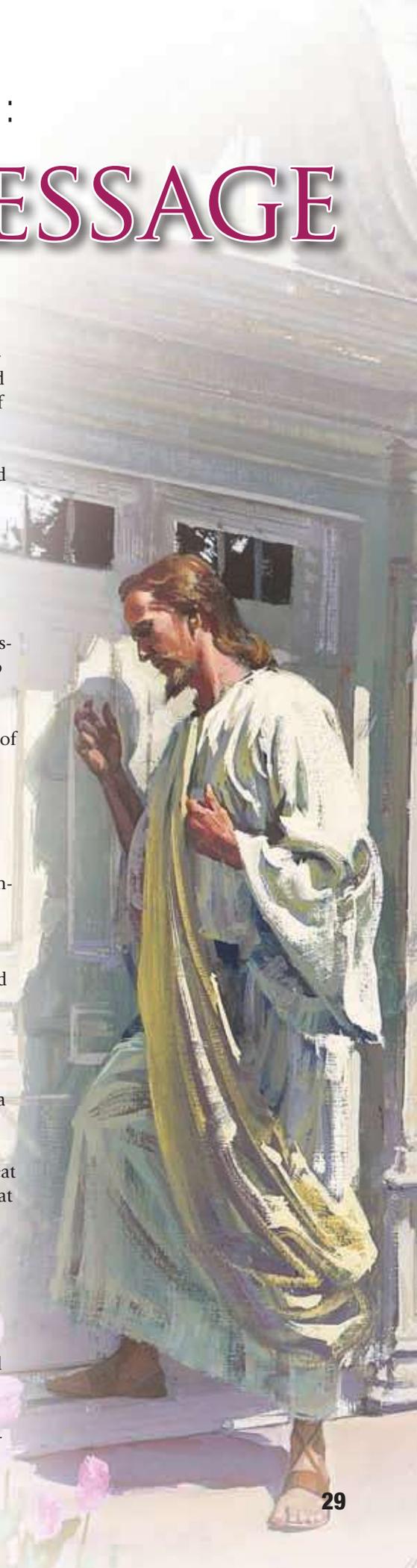
The young preachers, Jones and Waggoner, were backed up by Ellen G. White, who stated that “the Lord in His great mercy sent a most precious message to His people through Elders Waggoner and Jones. This message was to bring more prominently before the world the uplifted Saviour, the sacrifice for the sins

of the whole world. It presented justification through faith in the Surety; it invited the people to receive the righteousness of Christ, which is made manifest in obedience to all the commandments of God. Many had lost sight of Jesus. They needed to have their eyes directed to His divine person, His merits, and His changeless love for the human family. All power is given into His hands, that He may dispense rich gifts unto men, imparting the priceless gift of His own righteousness to the helpless human agent. This is the message that God commanded to be given to the world. It is the third angel’s message, which is to be proclaimed with a loud voice, and attended with the outpouring of His Spirit in a large measure.”¹

The above statement from the Spirit of Prophecy summarizes the entire 1888 message. Let us read in this statement attentively, since this is the Lord’s “most precious message to His people.” Remember, “we are his people, the sheep of his pasture” (Psalm 100:3).

1 The messages given by Waggoner and Jones were sent by God, and therefore the messages are of heavenly origin. Anything of heavenly origin needs our full attention. We should take interest in these messages and study them, making a personal application.

2 The message was given by God’s “great mercy.” Whenever this language (great mercy) is used in inspiration it is indicative of the person receiving the message (in this case, the church is the recipient of the message) standing on dangerous ground. God was merciful to the church at the right time. We will name a few of the dangers the church faced: a. Spiritual pride as a denomination; b. Division over the interpretation of prophecy and Scripture; c. Imminent passage of the Na-



The message of the "righteousness of Christ" is to be accompanied with power. This is the loud cry of the third angel's message.

tional Sunday Law by the United States Congress; d. Disbelief in the inspired counsels.

3 The message was "most precious." What should be done with that which is "most precious"? Should it be ignored? Should it be hidden? On the contrary, that which is sent by God as "most precious" deserves our most earnest attention.

4 The message was to focus on Christ, the "uplifted Saviour." The apostle Paul said "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world" (Galatians 6:14). Further, inspiration counsels us to "let the cross of Christ be made the science of all education, the center of all teaching and all study. Let it be brought into the daily experience in practical life."²

5 The message "presented justification through faith in the Surety." Webster says that "surety" is "one who has become legally liable for the debt of another." Needless to say, and as confirmed by the fact that "Surety" in this statement is written with an initial capital this Surety is no doubt the Lord Jesus Christ, our Saviour. The message presents justification through faith in Christ who has assumed our debt, and Who received the punishment (death) for our sins (Romans 6:23).

"There are but few who have an appreciation of the grievous character of sin, and who comprehend the greatness of the ruin that has resulted from the transgression of God's law. By examining the wonderful plan of redemption to restore the sinner to the moral image of God, we see that the only means for man's deliverance was wrought out by the self-sacrifice, and the unparalleled condescension and love of the Son of God. He alone had

the strength to fight the battles with the great adversary of God and man, and, as our Substitute and Surety, He has given power to those who lay hold of Him by faith, to become victors in His name, and through His merits.

"We can see in the cross of Calvary what it has cost the Son of God to bring salvation to a fallen race. . . . The knowledge of the law would condemn the sinner, and crush hope from his breast, if he did not see Jesus as his Substitute and Surety, ready to pardon his transgression, and to forgive his sin."³

"You should let your hearts break, and let the iron melt out of your souls. Let us be pitiful and courteous. Let us have the Spirit of Christ. He left His royal throne, clothed His divinity with humanity, and came to this earth, all marred and seared by the curse, to meet man's adversary, and deliver us from the bondage of sin and death. . . .

"How is it that men can make their hearts like adamant, and not be moved by the love of Christ? Through the merit of Christ's blood, everyone can be a conqueror. Jesus has brought moral power to combine with human effort, whereby we may obtain the victory. Christ is our helper, and He invites us to take hold of His strength, and we shall make peace with Him. In our conscious weakness we are to lay hold of His merit, and we may become triumphant through the grace of the Man of Nazareth."⁴

6 The message "invited the people to receive the righteousness of Christ." This statement as well as the entire message must be placed in the "present" tense, since it is applicable to our present time. "These things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world" (1 John 2:1, 2).

"Christ gave His life that those who have sinned might be saved; and He calls upon His children to make personal efforts for the saving of souls that are ready to perish. That which Christ has taught and done, His representatives are to teach and do; His influence is to be diffused to others by the well-ordered lives and godly conversation of His followers. God's people are to be links in the golden chain that binds souls to one another and to God.

"Those who have received light from Him who is the light of the world can, if they will consecrate themselves to Him, be instruments in His hands of enlightening many souls. As they share their light with others, it is not lessened, but increased and made more brilliant. As we give to others the riches of the grace of Christ, we too grow in grace; for as we bestow, we receive from the Source of all, light and power to bestow.

"Preaching the Word is one way of spreading the truth, but it is not the only or the most effectual way. It is by personal interviews that the truth is most effectually communicated. Visiting the people in their homes, speaking to them personally, not in regard to worldly matters, but about Christ's power to save to the uttermost all who come to Him—this makes the deepest impression. A few simple words, spoken from a heart filled with the love of Christ, will frequently do more good than the most powerful sermon. Speak calmly, tenderly; drop the seeds of truth into the minds of your hearers, praying that God will bless your work; and your words will spring up and bear fruit to the glory of God.

"This is the work God would have His children do. Whatever may be our circumstances, we can be laborers together with God. We are not all called upon to preach, but each one can tell those around him of the wonderful love of Jesus. Those who have not been blessed with our privileges, those who have not received the light that has flashed into our minds, are to be sought out and labored for. To these souls we must go, saying as did Philip, 'We have found Jesus.' And as they see our earnestness for the Master, they too will be led to look and live."⁵

The message invites the people to come to Christ, but the message needs “messengers” to carry the message. Who are the messengers? Ministers? Canvassers? Medical Missionaries? Yes, and yes, and further, it includes everyone who believes.

“Everyone who believes the message of God should lift up Jesus, point men to Christ, and say, ‘Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world’ (John 1:29). This is the message that everyone will bear who believes in Jesus Christ as his Saviour. This is the message we are to bear to warn the impenitent, encouraging those who love and fear God, inducing souls to look to the cross of Calvary, to behold the Lamb of God.”⁶ All who accept Christ become His messengers. More than this, we must not only take the message and distribute it, as in distributing a pamphlet, or a CD containing the message, but we are to live the message. “Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ” (2 Corinthians 3:3).

7 The righteousness of Christ “is made manifest in obedience to all the commandments of God.” This is the mystery the apostle Paul spoke about to the Colossians: “To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory” (Colossians 1:27). “Christ in you,” “Christ in me,” will manifest (result) in a life of obedience for the glory of God.

8 “Many had lost sight of Jesus.” This was the experience of our early Advent believers. How can a Christian lose sight of Jesus? The apostle Peter lost sight of Jesus when he was walking on the water. “At the command of Jesus, Peter was able to walk on water. But he had to keep his eyes on the Saviour. As soon as he looked away, he began to doubt and sink.”⁷ “Ardent Peter is nearly beside himself with delight. He . . . had taken only a step upon the surface of the boiling deep, when he looked back proudly toward his companions to see if they were watching.”⁸ Do you have your eyes fixed on Christ, or are you looking towards your “companions?”

9 The remnant people of God need “to have their eyes directed to [Christ’s] divine person, His merits, and His changeless love for the human family.” The 1888 message calls us to turn our eyes upon Jesus (see Hebrews 12:2). Listen to the beautiful words (do not just read the words) of this hymn written by Helen H. Lemmel:

*“Turn your eyes upon Jesus,
Look full in His wonderful face,
And the things of earth will grow
strangely dim,
In the light of His glory and grace.
O soul, are you weary and troubled?
There’s a light for a look at the Savior,
And life more abundant and free.”*



10 “All power is given into His hands.” Some of Christ’s parting words to His disciples were “All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth” (Matthew 28:18). What does He do with this power? He promised to give His power to His disciples: “And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high” (Luke 24:49).

11 “This is the message that God commanded to be given to the world.” This is Present Truth, the message to be given at this time. The message of the “righteousness of Christ” is to be accompanied with power. This is the loud cry of the third angel’s mes-

sage (see Revelation 18:1–4). God is eager to pour out His power upon His people, but are we ready to receive it? In what condition must we be in order to receive power from on high? Listen to what the apostle Paul said to the Ephesians: “That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish” (Ephesians 5:26, 27).

“Not one of us will ever receive the seal of God while our characters have one spot or stain upon them. It is left with us to remedy the defects in our characters, to cleanse the soul temple of every defilement. Then the latter rain will fall upon us as the early rain fell upon the disciples on the Day of Pentecost.”⁹

12 “It is the third angel’s message, which is to be proclaimed with a loud voice, and attended with the outpouring of His Spirit in a large measure.” In summary, the 1888 message is the third angel’s message. If we want to simplify it further, or say it in one word, that word would be “Christ.”

Are you ready to give the third angel’s message? Are you ready to present Christ to the world? We cannot give that which we do not have. Therefore, dear brother or sister, first receive Christ in your heart. Surrender your life to Him fully. Then you will be able to say with the apostle Paul “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me” (Galatians 2:20). May the Lord pour out His blessing upon you as you strive to be like Him. *✠*

References

- ¹ *Testimonies to Ministers*, pp. 91, 92.
- ² *The Ministry of Healing*, p. 460.
- ³ *Christian Education*, pp. 112, 113.
- ⁴ *The Review and Herald*, July 16, 1889.
- ⁵ *The Signs of the Times*, March 24, 1898.
- ⁶ *Ibid.*, June 27, 1892
- ⁷ *The Story of Jesus*, p. 79.
- ⁸ *The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 2, p. 269.
- ⁹ *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 214.



HELP IN *High Places*

*"As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord,
so walk ye in him" (Colossians 2:6).*

There were once a little boy and a little girl growing up in the city of Washington, DC. In their neighborhood was a huge estate that had once belonged to a rich family. Its wide frontage faced a busy avenue. Times had changed, the rich family was gone, and now the property was owned by an apartment complex. One thing, however, that was still the same was the original wall built out of cut stone. It was thick and wide with a smooth, solid concrete top. This wall encircled the hundreds of acres where the big estate had once been. The wall was taller than the children's heads.

By B. Monteiro



One day, as the children walked down the long street with their mother, the idea came that it would be much more fun to walk along the top of the wall than just to walk on the regular sidewalk. So, Mother lifted up the boy onto the top of the wall and held his hand as he walked high on top. She remained close beside him, walking on the grass next to the wall. Then the girl would get her turn to try it, too. Finally, when the children

got older, they were steady and sure enough to walk on the wall all by themselves.

This reminds us of the message of Christ our Righteousness. As a child, sometimes it's hard to be good. We're just not "high" enough. We are not strong enough to live a higher life by ourselves. We need the help of our heavenly Father to give us a boost to lift us up. That is what Jesus did for us by coming to earth to pay the penalty for our sins. Then, even after we accept His sacrifice for us, we still need His help to keep us going straight without falling. The helping hand of Jesus does that for us, too—He keeps us steady. He makes us able to walk through life in a higher level of obedience than we could do on our own. Then, as we grow in Christ, we become spiritually strong enough to live a pure life like His through His power—even through the time of trouble.

"Who is God, save the Lord? and who is a rock, save our God? God is my strength and power: and he maketh my way perfect. He maketh my feet like hinds' feet: and setteth me upon my high places" (2 Samuel 22:32–34).

Then we are encouraged to "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen" (2 Peter 3:18). *✠*

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