

Sermon #109 — John's Gospel

Title: **THE CONVICTION OF**
 RIGHTEOUSNESS

Text: John 16:7-11

Date: Sunday Morning — February 6, 2011

Tape: *John #109*

Subject: *Holy Spirit Conviction*

Reading: *Revelation 20:11-21:27*

Introduction:

When the Spirit of God comes in saving power to a sinner, He convicts the sinner of righteousness. — “*Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more*” (John 16:10). Do you know anything about that? Do you know anything about righteousness? That is my subject this morning: — **THE CONVICTION OF RIGHTEOUSNESS.**

In His mighty, saving operations of grace, God the Holy Spirit convicts sinners of righteousness. — **The basis of this conviction is the fact that Christ has ascended back to His Father in heaven.** What is this conviction of righteousness? It is the conviction that God demands righteousness, that I cannot produce righteousness, and that the Lord Jesus Christ has brought in an everlasting righteousness by his

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obedience to God as the sinners' Substitute. **Blessed be God, our Savior's name is JEHOVAH-TSIDKINU, — THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS!**

Behold the crucified Christ, slain under the penalty of sin, buried, risen again, ascended back into heaven, exalted to the throne of everlasting glory, and be convinced that He has brought in an everlasting, all-sufficient righteousness for all who trust Him (Romans 8:1, 3, 4, 34).

(Romans 8:1-3) “[There is] therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.
2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.
3 For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:”

(Romans 8:34) “Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again,

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who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.”

In the Sermon on the Mount the Lord Jesus tells us what God requires of us. If you will look at the last verse of Matthew 5, you will see that God’s requirement is more than sincerely endeavoring to do that which is good and more than sincerely desiring to be righteous. Let’s look at Matthew 5:48 for just a moment.

(Matthew 5:48) “Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.”

How good does a person have to be to go to heaven? The answer could not be more plainly given. The Son of God says, “**Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.**” This requirement of perfection, perfect holiness, is given by our God repeatedly throughout the Scriptures.

(Leviticus 19:1-2) “And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 2 Speak unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, and say unto them, **Ye**

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shall be holy: for I the LORD your God am holy.”

(Leviticus 20:7) “Sanctify yourselves therefore, and **be ye holy: for I am the LORD your God.**”

(1 Peter 1:15-16) “But as he which hath called you is holy, so **be ye holy in all manner of conversation; (16) Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.**”

(Hebrews 12:14) “Follow peace with all *men*, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:”

(Revelation 21:27) “And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither *whatsoever* worketh abomination, or *maketh* a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb’s book of life.”

This is God’s word to us today. – “*Ye shall be holy: for I the LORD your God am holy.*” Because the Lord our God is holy, He requires that we also be holy.

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THE PHARISEES

Now, look at Matthew 5:20.

“For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.”

The Scribes and the Pharisees were regarded by the ancient Jews as the most devoted, most spiritual, and most holy of all men. They were men of such high esteem and reputation that the Jews had a saying about them. It went like this, “**If but two of all the world were to go to heaven the one would be a scribe and the other a Pharisee.**”

In so far as outward, religious righteousness was concerned no one excelled those two groups of men.

- In **works of piety** they made long public prayers on the corners of streets, so that all could see and hear their devotion.

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- In works of charity they gave alms, blowing the trumpet, so that all would be impressed by their generosity.
- In works of equity they paid their tithes, counting out ten percent on their gross income.
- In works of courtesy and hospitality they often held banquets, even for the Lord Jesus and His disciples (Luke 7).

THREE LESSONS

Yet, the Savior declares that our righteousness must exceed, not match but exceed, the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees. If it does not, we cannot be saved. Our Savior clearly teaches us three things in Matthew 5:20:

1. There will be no admission into heaven without righteousness.
2. A legal, Pharisaical righteousness will never be accepted of God.
3. The only hope any sinner has of being saved is through the righteousness of a divinely appointed and accepted Substitute and Representative. And that Substitute and

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Representative is the Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord our Righteousness (Jeremiah 23:6; 1 Corinthians 1:30-31; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Romans 9:31-10:4). Christ is that holiness we must have, without which no man shall see the Lord (Hebrews 12:14).

Proposition: The only way a guilty sinner can be saved and obtain righteousness before God is through faith in Jesus Christ, Jehovah-tsidkenu – The Lord our Righteousness.

Divisions: Because there is so much ignorance and confusion about righteousness, because most people, like the Jews of old, being ignorant of God's righteousness are going about to establish their own righteousness and refuse to submit themselves to Christ alone for righteousness, I want to show you six things revealed in the Word of God about this matter of righteousness.

1. Righteousness Required
2. Righteousness Lost
3. Righteousness Established
4. Righteousness Imputed

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5. Righteousness Imparted

6. Righteousness Rewarded

GOD'S REQUIREMENT

First, as we have seen already, the Book of God universally declares that **the holy, Lord God requires righteousness**. Righteousness is demanded by Him. God is holy. Being perfectly holy, He demands perfect holiness. He requires perfect righteousness. Anything and anyone that is not perfectly holy will be consumed by the fire of His glorious holiness. He declares, **“I am Almighty God; walk before me and be thou perfect”** (Genesis 17:1). — **“It shall be perfect to be accepted; there shall be no blemish therein”** (Leviticus 22:21). — **“Be ye holy; for I am holy”** (1 Peter 1:16). We read in Hebrews 12:14 that there is a holiness to be pursued, without which no man shall see the Lord.

- **God demands character holiness**. We are required to be holy on the inside, in heart, at the very core of our being. — *“The Lord looketh on the heart”* (1 Samuel 16:7).

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- **He demands conduct holiness.** We must be holy on the outside, in behavior. – *“Be ye holy in all manner of conversation”* (1 Peter 1:15).
- In a word, **God demands complete holiness.** We must be entirely without sin – *“The soul that sinneth, it shall die”* (Ezekiel 18:20).

God demands holiness; but we cannot produce holiness. Not one of us can do one good thing before God. It is written, **“There is none that doeth good, no not one”** (Romans 3:12). Purity cannot come from our corrupt nature. We cannot even seek the Lord on our own, much less correct our past record, change our present wretchedness (Psalm 51:1-5), or control our future thoughts and deeds (Galatians 3:10).

The whole purpose of God’s law is to show us our utter inability to keep it and to convince us of our need of a Substitute (Galatians 3:24). And the first work of God the Holy Spirit in a sinner’s heart is to convince him of sin, of his need of a Substitute.

A man’s definition of righteousness depends entirely upon his understanding of who God is.

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The problem with this religious generation is that they have never seen the holy, righteous, just character of God almighty. They have never seen the absolute holiness of God. And no one will ever see the holy character of God until he sees what happened at Calvary (Isaiah 6:1-7).

(Isaiah 6:1-7) “In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. (2) Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. (3) And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, *is* the LORD of hosts: the whole earth *is* full of his glory. (4) And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke. (5) Then said I, Woe *is* me! for I am undone; because I *am* a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts. (6) Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, *which* he had taken with the tongs from

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off the altar: (7) And he laid *it* upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged.”

How good does a person have to be to get to heaven? He must be as good as God. — “*It must be perfect to be accepted.*” God cannot and will not accept anything short of perfection. — “*Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted upon his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully*” (Psalm 24:3-4), and no one else. **Yet, it is written,** “*They that are in the flesh cannot please God.*” — “*Cursed is everyone that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them*” (Galatians 3:10).

NO RIGHTEOUSNESS

So, *second*, let me remind you that **you and I have no righteousness.** We lost all righteousness in the sin and fall of our father Adam. — “*There is none righteous!*” We have no ability to produce righteousness, or even to make any contribution

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toward it. — “*There is none that doeth good; no, not one!*” **All the sons and daughters of Adam are all sinners. We lost all righteousness before God in the garden.** We are all totally depraved. We have all gone astray from the womb speaking lies. We all drink iniquity like water. **So thorough and complete is the depravity of man that even our works of righteousness are filthy rags before the holy Lord God; and we are all at our best estate altogether vanity!**

(Psalms 14:2-3) “The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, *and* seek God. (3) They are all gone aside, they are *all* together become filthy: *there is* none that doeth good, no, not one.”

(Romans 5:12) “Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:”

(Psalms 51:5) “Behold, I was shapen in iniquity,

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and in sin did my mother conceive me.”

(Jeremiah 17:9) “The heart *is* deceitful above all *things*, and desperately wicked: who can know it?”

(Matthew 15:19) “For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies:”

The fact is, the natural man has absolutely no idea what righteousness is, where it is to be found, or how it can be obtained. But he thinks he does. —

“And he said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God” (Luke 16:15).

This is the first thing to be established. We have no righteousness, and no ability to produce righteousness. Yet, our Lord said, *“Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.”*

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In making that statement our Lord declared that there has never been one son or daughter of Adam on this earth good enough, righteous enough, or holy enough to inherit and inhabit the kingdom of heaven. There is not now and never will be one person in heaven who is there because he was good, righteous, and holy in this world. — “*Man at his best estate is altogether vanity.*” — “*Our righteousnesses are as filthy rags in God’s sight.*”

We must get the idea of “righteousness” out of our minds and get the word “righteousness” out of our vocabulary, insofar as any human works are concerned in God’s sight.

- Our righteousnesses are filthy rags before the holy Lord God (Isaiah 64:6; Isaiah 1:16-20).
- Every imagination of the thoughts of man’s heart is only evil continually (Genesis 6:5).

Read the Book of God and you will discover that every man in the Book who knew God, who knew the righteous character of God and had been made

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righteous in Christ, lamented his own utter wickedness.

- Job
- David
- Isaiah

Still, God requires perfect righteousness. The fact that we cannot produce righteousness does not mean that righteousness cannot be produced. God can do it.

Man cannot please God; but God can please God. Man cannot produce righteousness; but God can produce righteousness.

CHRIST'S RIGHTEOUSNESS

Third, I want so much for you to see and rejoice in this fact. — **The Lord Jesus Christ has established and brought in everlasting righteousness by His obedience and death as our Substitute and Surety.** The Lord Jesus Christ came into this world to fulfil all righteousness, not for Himself, but for us (Matthew 3:15; 5:17). — “*The LORD is well pleased for his righteousness’ sake,*” because he magnified the law and made it honorable (Isaiah 42:21).

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Our Savior did for us exactly what Daniel 9:24 said he would do.

(Daniel 9:24) “Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.”

- He **finished the transgression.**
- He **made an end of sin** for us, putting away our sins by the sacrifice of Himself.
- He **made reconciliation for iniquity** by satisfying the justice of God as our Substitute.
- And he **brought in everlasting righteousness** by His obedience to the will of God in all things as our Representative and Federal Head.

In His life Christ Jesus rendered perfect obedience to the law as our Representative. And in His death He satisfied the claims of the law as our Substitute.

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Therefore, the prophet of God declares of Christ, *“This is the name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS,”* and of us, *“This is the name whereby she shall be called, the Lord our Righteousness.”*

(Jeremiah 23:6) “In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this *is* his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.”

(Jeremiah 33:16) “In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely: and this *is the name* wherewith she shall be called, The LORD our righteousness.”

That is the message that is set before us in 2nd Corinthians 5:21 and Romans 5.

(2 Corinthians 5:21) “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.”

(Romans 5:12) “Wherefore, as by one man sin

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entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:”

(Romans 5:18-21) “Therefore as by the offence of one *judgment came* upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one *the free gift came* upon all men unto justification of life. (19) For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous. (20) Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: (21) That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.”

The Lord Jesus Christ is our only righteousness, and it is our joy to confess that He is. — “*Of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: That, according as it is written, He that*

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glorieth, let him glory in the Lord” (1 Corinthians 1:30-31).

IMPUTED RIGHTEOUSNESS

Fourth, the fourth aspect of righteousness revealed in this Book is the fact that **the righteousness of Christ is imputed to all who trust Him alone for righteousness in free justification.** The only way a sinner can be made righteous is by the holy Lord God imputing righteousness to him. **In justification God imputes the righteousness of Christ to His people in exactly the same way as He made His darling Son sin for us** (Romans 5:18-19; 2 Corinthians 5:21). How are sinners made to become the righteousness of God in Christ? I appeal to the Word of God alone for the answer to that question. The opinions of men are totally irrelevant. What does the Book say? Nothing else matters.— **“FREELY!”**

(Romans 3:20-26) “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. (21)

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But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; (22) 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: (23) For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; (24) Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: (25) 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; (26) To declare, *I say*, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.”

When Christ was made sin for us, that was a one time, once and for all act accomplished in the past, a work in which He was personally involved. But when the Holy Spirit speaks of us being “*made the righteousness of God in him,*” the word He uses for “*made*” is another word altogether. It is a present tense, passive verb, implying total passivity on our part, and means “continually cause to become.” He is

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telling us that **those for whom Christ was made sin God continually causes to become the righteousness of God in Him without them doing a thing**. Let me show you how He has done it and is doing it.

ETERNALLY — Our great, all-wise, eternally gracious God made us righteous before the world was made, in His sovereign, eternal purpose of grace in Christ, the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, (Romans 8:28-30; Ephesians 1:3-6; 2 Timothy 1:9-10; Jude 1). If we were blessed of God with all spiritual blessings before the world began and accepted in the Beloved from everlasting, it was not as unrighteous but as the righteousness of God in Christ.

JUDICIALLY — We were made to become the righteousness of God judicially, in a legal sense, when the Lord Jesus died as our Substitute under the wrath of God, satisfying divine justice for us. When He had put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, He obtained eternal redemption for us, and we were made to become the righteousness of God in Him by

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divine imputation in justification, “*being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ*” (Romans 4:25; 5:12, 17-21).

EXPERIMENTALLY — But this matter of being made the righteousness of God in Christ, while it is something with which we have no involvement, is not just a matter of law, any more than Christ’s being made sin was just a matter of law. It is not something that takes place altogether outside our experience, any more than Christ being made sin was outside his experience.

Sinners are made the righteousness of God in Christ experimentally in the new birth, when we are made “partakers of the divine nature” (2 Peter 1:4). That holy thing in us that is born of God, that John tells us cannot sin (1 John 3:9), is “*Christ in you, the hope of glory*” (Colossians 1:27). We experience this blessed thing (being made the righteousness of God) in the inmost depths of our souls, in the constant assurance of our access to, acceptance with, and forgiveness of our sins by our God (1 John 1:7-2:2).

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- We are in Christ, in whom alone God is well pleased. That means he is well pleased with us (Matthew 17:5).
- Our sacrifices are accepted of God as a sweet-smelling savor in Christ (1 Peter 2:5).
- Our sins are never imputed to us, but perpetually forgiven because we are one with Him who was once made sin for us, in whom we are perpetually made to become the righteousness of God.

ABSOLUTELY — Believing on the Lord Jesus Christ, every sinner who trusts Him is made to become the righteousness of God in him absolutely (2 Corinthians 5:17; Colossians 1:12).

(2 Corinthians 5:17) “Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”

(Colossians 1:12) “Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.”

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Discerning the Lord's body, that is to say, knowing our need of a Substitute and knowing the Substitute Himself, trusting His finished work and trusting Him, sinners like you and me are worthy to enter His church, worthy to call upon His name, worthy to receive the Lord's Table, and worthy to enter into and possess forever His glory!

EVERLASTINGLY — We shall be made to become the righteousness of God everlastingly in the last day in resurrection glory. We shall be raised in righteousness. We shall be declared righteous according to the record book of heaven at the Day of Judgment (Revelation 20:11-15; Jeremiah 50:20).

(Jeremiah 50:20) “In those days, and in that time, saith the LORD, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and *there shall be* none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found: for I will pardon them whom I reserve.”

We shall be declared righteous to wondering worlds to the glory of our God forever (Ephesians 2:7). Then, we shall forever begin to enjoy, in such

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experimental reality, as words cannot describe, the blessedness of being made to become the righteousness of God in Christ (Revelation 21:2-5; 22:1-6).

I am lost in wonder. All this, **all that Christ has** as the God-man my Mediator, we have in Him. **All that He is**, we are in Him. **All that He enjoys**, soon, I shall enjoy forever in Him, because...

(2 Corinthians 5:17-21) “If any man *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things *are* of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; 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

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in him.”

(Romans 8:32) “He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?”

IMPARTED RIGHTEOUSNESS

Fifth, not only is the righteousness of God imputed to us in justification, **the righteousness of God in Christ is imparted to every chosen, redeemed sinner in sanctification, by the regenerating work of God the Holy Spirit.** In regeneration we are sanctified, made holy, by righteousness being imparted to us by the Spirit of God (Galatians 5:23-24; 2 Peter 1:4; Colossians 1:27; 1 John 3:5-9). Believers are people with two natures (Romans 7:14-24), that holy seed which is born of God and cannot sin (1 John 3:9), and the flesh which is nothing but sin (Romans 7:18). These two natures, the flesh and the spirit, are constantly at war with one another so long as we live in this world.

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When God saves a sinner, He does not renovate, repair, and renew the old nature. He creates a new nature in His elect. Our old, Adamic, fallen, sinful nature is not changed. The flesh is subdued by the spirit; but it will never surrender to the spirit. The spirit wars against the flesh; but it will never conquer or improve the flesh. The flesh is sinful. The flesh is cursed. **Thank God, the flesh must die! But it will never be improved.**

This dual nature of the believer is plainly taught in the Word of God. It is utterly impossible to honestly interpret 5th chapter of Galatians, the 7th chapter of Romans, and 1 John 3 without concluding that **both Paul and John teach that there is within every believer, so long as he lives in this world, both an old Adamic nature that can do nothing but sin and a new righteous nature, that which is born of God, that cannot sin, that can only do righteousness.**

The Holy Spirit's work in sanctification is not the improvement of our old nature, but the maturing of the new, steadily causing the believer to grow in the

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grace and knowledge of Christ and bring forth fruit unto God.

Every believer knows the duality of his nature by painful, bitterly painful experience. Ask any child of God what he desires above all things and he will quickly reply, “That I may live without sin in perfect conformity to Christ, perfectly obeying the will of God in all things.”

But that which he most greatly desires is an utter impossibility in this life. Is it not so with you? Though you delight in the law of God after the inward man, there is another law of evil in your members, warring against you. You would do good; but evil is always present with you, so that you cannot do the things that you would. Even your best, noblest, most sincere acts of good, when honestly evaluated, are so marred by sin in motive and in execution that you must confess, “All my righteousnesses are filthy rags!”

It is this warfare between the flesh and the spirit more than anything else that keeps the believer

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from being satisfied with life in this world. Blessed be God, we shall soon be free! When we have dropped this robe of flesh, we shall be perfectly conformed to the image of Him who loved us and gave Himself for us! **Yet, the Lord God reckons us righteous, absolutely and perfectly righteous before Him; and, what is more, He tells us to reckon ourselves to be what hHe reckons us to be in Christ** (Romans 5:9-11; 6:11; 1 Peter 4:1).

(Romans 5:9-11) “Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. (10) For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. (11) And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.”

(Romans 6:11) “Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

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(1 Peter 4:1) “Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin.”

REWARDED RIGHTEOUSNESS

Here is the *sixth* aspect of righteousness revealed in this blessed Book. May God the Holy Spirit enable us to get hold of it and live in the joyous prospect of it until it, at last, comes to pass. — Every sinner who trusts Christ as his Savior, being made the righteousness of God in Him, shall be rewarded for his perfect righteousness with everlasting glory in heaven.

In the last day, every believer shall enter into heaven and obtain the inheritance of everlasting glory; and that will be righteousness rewarded. Immediately after the resurrection we must all be judged by God, according to the record of our works (Revelation 20:12-13). “*It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment*” (Hebrews 9:27). The Judge before whom we must stand is the God-man, whom

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we have crucified (John 5:22; Acts 17:31; 2 Corinthians 5:10). We will be judged out of the books, according to the record of God's strict justice. And this is God's declaration.

(Jeremiah 50:20) “In those days, and in that time, saith the LORD, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and *there shall be none*; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found: for I will pardon them whom I reserve.”

The question is often raised, “Will God judge His elect for their sins and failures committed after they were saved, and expose them in the Day of Judgment?” The only reason that question is ever raised is because many retain a remnant of the Roman doctrine of purgatory, by which they hope to hold over God's saints the whip and terror of the law. There is absolutely no sense in which those who trust Christ shall ever be made to pay for their sins!

- Our sins were imputed to Christ and shall never be imputed to us again (Romans 4:8).

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- Christ paid our debt to God's law and justice; and God will never require us to pay.
- God, who has blotted out our transgressions, will never write them again.
- He who covered our sins will never uncover them!

Those who are found perfectly righteous, righteous according to the records of God himself, shall enter into eternal life and inherit everlasting glory with Christ. Because we have, in Christ, done good, nothing but good, perfect good, without any spot of sin, wrinkle of iniquity, or trace of transgression, we shall enter into life everlasting because we are worthy to enter in (Revelation 22:11).

Who are these perfectly righteous ones? They are all who are saved by God's free and sovereign grace in Christ (1 Corinthians 6:9-11; Romans 8:1, 32-34).

(Romans 8:1) *“There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.”*

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(Romans 8:32-34) “He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? (33) Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God’s elect? *It is* God that justifieth. (34) Who *is* he that condemneth? *It is* Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.”

- Heaven was earned and purchased for all God’s elect by Christ.
- We were predestined to obtain our inheritance from eternity (Ephesians 1:11).
- Christ has taken possession of heaven’s glory as our Forerunner (Hebrews 6:20).
- We are heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ (Romans 8:17).
- Our Savior gave all the glory He earned as our Mediator to all His elect (John 17:5, 20).
- And in Christ every believer is worthy of heaven’s glory (Colossians 1:12).

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Glorification shall be but the consummation of salvation; and salvation is by grace alone! That means no part of heaven's bliss and glory is the reward of our works, but all the reward of God's free grace in Christ! All spiritual blessings are ours from eternity in Christ (Ephesians 1:3), and all shall be ours in and with Him forever!

Illustration: *Rowland Hill's Dream*

Christ is our Righteousness. He is that righteousness that exceeds the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees. And, if we trust Him, He is ours! Because His righteousness is ours, we shall enter into the kingdom of heaven. He is that Holiness without which no man shall see the Lord. If we believe on the Son of God, that Holiness is ours and we shall see the Lord our God face to face in Christ. Then, (O blessed day!) He shall wipe all tears from our eyes!

(Revelation 21:1-5) “And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more

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sea. (2) And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. (3) And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God *is* with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, *and be* their God. (4) And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. (5) And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful.”

(Revelation 22:3-6) “And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him: (4) And they shall see his face; and his name *shall be* in their foreheads. (5) And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever. (6)

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And he said unto me, These sayings *are* faithful and true: and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to show unto his servants the things which must shortly be done.”

Amen.