

This is Justification

Faith cannot save us. Works cannot save us. Nothing we do or can do can save us. We must be justified in the sight of God solely by the merits of Jesus Christ. Yet without obedience we will not be saved.

Without humble, submissive obedience, by the empowering grace of Christ, to the law of God and the teachings of His Word, we cannot retain justification. —And without that, we will be lost.

To say it another way, our salvation can only be begun and completed by the forgiving, enabling grace of Christ and our full cooperation.

The quotation in the box on the bottom of the next page describes the situation well: Justification is a work done totally by God. Our part is to cooperate in the fullest with what He is trying to do in our lives.

Obviously, our part is extremely important! Millions will be lost because they refuse to let God justify them. Large numbers will not be saved because they imagine that, after coming one time to God in forgiveness, they can thereafter relax and enjoy the world. They do not remain in a state of justification. He is our God and we are to obey Him.

The statements in this compilation are clearly presented, and the subject is viewed from every possible angle; so you need have no confusion as to what is involved in, what is called, “justification.” It is not a complicated process. Even little children can be justified, without ever having learned that big word.

Because Christ died in our place, we can be forgiven of our past sins—and accounted righteous in the sight of God. That is justification.

Notice that the experience covered “past sins.” In order to remain accepted by God and covered by the righteousness of Christ, we must maintain a state of justification. As we yield our lives anew to God and progress toward higher ground, our past failings are continually covered anew by His blood.

How do we maintain justification? As you first found Him, so live in Him.

At the moment of justification, you yielded your life to Him fully. The next moment, you must maintain that experience by continuing to live solely for

Him.

That “next moment” is the beginning of another big word: sanctification. Justification brought you forgiveness of sins and acceptance by God as His child. Sanctification is obedience to Him thereafter.

By submission to Him and to His will, you received justification; by continued submission and obedience to His law and Written Word, you enter upon the sanctification process.

If all this seems somewhat complicated, just remember that justification is forgiveness by God, and sanctification is obedience to God. A forensic aspect is also involved; but, if you use the words “forgiveness” and “obedience,” you can explain the terms to a child.

Justification must be continually renewed. A major error is the thinking that one moment of surrender provides a person’s passport to heaven.

Paul said, “I die daily.” Each day he underwent a complete reconversion of heart and life. That which Paul experienced every day, many do only once or never throughout their lifetime.

Surrender, submission, yielding, and obedience are key words in the justification process, as well as in sanctification.

Someone will reply that there is no obedience in the justification experience. But there surely is an aspect of obedience here. You had to be obedient to the call of the Spirit to surrender your life to God, confess your sins, and accept His forgiveness.

It is the Holy Spirit that convicts of sin, enables you to have heart sorrow for sin. He “giveth repentance unto Israel.” Yet throughout the process, you must respond; you must obey the pleading of the Spirit and yield yourself to God. Many refuse to do so, to their eternal loss.

Although justification requires a decision on your part to cooperate, the act of justification, itself, is entirely done by God. The Spirit of Prophecy repeatedly affirms this fact. None of man’s regular “works” is involved.

Do any “works” follow justification? Is obedience to God’s law and the Inspired Writings required after you are justified? As you may know, this seemingly ageless controversy is being fought once again in our ranks.

To answer it, let us consider a few facts:

What is justification? It is forgiving man's past sins and bringing him into submission to, and fellowship with, God. At that moment, he stands justified and is accounted righteous in God's eyes.

But he must—*he must*—do his part to maintain that state thereafter! The very next moment he must begin being obedient to everything he knows to be right. The movings of conscience and all that he knows in Scripture must be obeyed. He must study and learn more from God's Word—and obey that as well. Yet that obedience can only be done through the enabling grace of Jesus Christ his Lord and Saviour. By ourselves, we are utterly unable to do any good thing.

In the time of Christ, the Jewish religion had become a continual round of forms and ceremonies. Christ found it necessary to set aside many of the Levitical rules, which by that time had been smothered in man-made error.

The Apostle Paul met that error as firmly as he could. Frequently, he wrote disparagingly of the various traditional codes of the Jewish "law" while declaring that, through the grace of Christ, men were justified and enabled to obey God's law—without obeying those invented Jewish rules. Reading in

Paul's writings, we find he was vigorously opposed to the total legalism of the Jews.

The early Christian believers obeyed the promptings of the Holy Spirit and the clear words of Scripture; they had no difficulty understanding genuine Christian experience. Real Christianity is not complicated—if a person is willing to love God supremely, obey His revealed will, and abandon his sins.

But, as pagan customs entered the church, a variety of heathen customs were adopted; and man-made forms, rituals, and teachings perverted the plain words of the Bible.

John Huss, Martin Luther, and other Reformers worked to restore the teachings of Scripture; but some of them were more successful in discovering justification than sanctification.

By the time of John Wesley, a large part of Christendom had returned to deadness. As explained in *Great Controversy*, he had rediscovered justification by faith, as Martin Luther had earlier done. But Wesley also had a far better understanding of sanctification.

Confusion regarding justification was part of the 1888 crisis in our denomination. Some of our 19th-

OUR OWN WORKS APART FROM CHRIST

"Let the subject be made distinct and plain that it is not possible to effect anything in our standing before God or in the gift of God to us through creature merit. Should faith and works purchase the gift of salvation for anyone, then the Creator is under obligation to the creature.

"Here is an opportunity for falsehood to be accepted as truth. **If any man can merit salvation by anything he may do, then he is in the same position as the Catholic to do penance for his sins.** Salvation, then, is partly of debt, that may be earned as wages.

"If man cannot, by any of his good works, merit salvation, then it must be wholly of grace, received by man as a sinner because he receives and believes in Jesus. It is wholly a free gift. Justification by faith is placed beyond controversy. And all this controversy is ended, as soon as the matter is settled that **the merits of fallen man in his good works can never procure eternal life for him.**

"The light given me of God places this important subject above any question in my mind. **Justification is wholly of grace and not procured by any works that fallen man can do.** The matter has been presented before me in clear lines that if the rich man has money and possessions, and he makes

an offering of the same to the Lord, false ideas come in to spoil the offering by the thought he has merited the favor of God, that the Lord is under obligation to him to regard him with special favor because of this gift.

"There has been too little educating in clear lines upon this point. **The Lord has lent man His own goods in trust—means which He requires be handed back to Him** when His providence signifies and the upbuilding of His cause demands it. The Lord gave the intellect. He gave the health and the ability to gather earthly gain. He created the things of earth. He manifests His divine power to develop all its riches. They are His fruits from His own husbandry. He gave the sun, the clouds, the showers of rain, to cause vegetation to flourish.

"As God's employed servants you gathered in His harvest to use what your wants required in an economical way and hold the balance for the call of God. You can say with David, 'For all things come of Thee, and of Thine own have we given Thee' (1 Chronicles 29:14). So **the satisfaction of creature merit cannot be in returning to the Lord His own, for it was always His own property** to be used as He in His providence should direct."—*Faith and Works, 19-21.*

1 century pioneers had eventually arrived at the point
3 where they believed that preaching the law and the
1 doctrines was the totality of their message, and the
1 basis of our beliefs and Christian experience.

So much so, that they imagined that obedience to the Ten Commandments was being threatened by the 1888 concept, that we should also preach repentance from sin and acceptance of Christ as our crucified and risen Saviour.

In spite of Ellen White's pleadings, the situation tended to stagnate somewhat in later decades. By the 1930s and 1940s, the glorious truth of Christ the Enabler of our obedience—had once again become lost.

The beginning of a radical change emerged in the late 1950s. It came about partly because of the Evangelical Conferences at our world headquarters and because our college Bible teachers began obtaining doctoral degrees from outside universities. (See my 198 pp. *Evangelical Conferences and their Aftermath*, also our *Doctrinal History Tractbook*) The changeover gradually took place; and, by the late 1970s, the theology of many of our college and university Bible teachers was decidedly oriented toward the views they had been taught in worldly schools. (My book, *Broken Blueprint*, carefully de-

scribes the entire problem and its origin.)

The astounding change which occurred was well in place by the mid-1980s.

In 1888, Ellen White tried to lead the denomination to genuine justification by faith; this is simply a state of true conversion, both entered into and maintained thereafter.

But the transformation which took place a hundred years later was dramatically different! It consisted of a systematic attempt to eliminate obedience to the law of God entirely, and impose something akin to a once-saved-always-saved mentality:

“We have been saved; so let's enjoy life. Music, celebration, enjoy a glass of wine with our dinner at the restaurant after church service on Sabbath. Relax and enjoy the football games, much of what is on television, Christian rock, and most anything else that pleases us.”

As a result, an entire generation of pastors has received their training in our colleges, universities, and seminaries. For practical purposes, many of our pastors and teachers are no longer believers in our historic message, even though they are salaried workers. Errors are being widely taught, and eagerly accepted by many members. Frequently, perhaps without realizing what the results will be,

THE ERROR IN THE 1888 CRISIS

“While one class pervert the doctrine of justification by faith and neglect to comply with the conditions laid down in the Word of God—‘If ye love Me, keep My commandments’—there is fully as great an error on the part of those who claim to believe and obey the commandments of God but who place themselves in opposition to the precious rays of light—new to them—reflected from the cross of Calvary. The first class do not see the wondrous things in the law of God for all who are doers of His Word. The others cavil over trivialities and neglect the weightier matters, mercy and the love of God.

“Many have lost very much in that they have not opened the eyes of their understanding to discern the wondrous things in the law of God. **On the one hand, religionists generally have divorced the law and the gospel, while we have, on the other hand, almost done the same from another standpoint.** We have not held up before the people the righteousness of Christ and the full significance of His great plan of redemption. We have left out Christ and His matchless love, brought in theories and reasonings, and preached argumentative discourses.”—*Faith and Works*, 15-16 (MS 36, 1890).

“The danger has been presented to me again and again of entertaining, as a people, false ideas of justification by faith. I have been shown for years that Satan would work in a special manner to confuse the mind on this point. **The law of God has been largely dwelt upon and has been presented to congregations, almost as destitute of the knowledge of Jesus Christ and His relation to the law as was the offering of Cain.**”—*Faith and Works*, 18.

“There is danger in regarding justification by faith as placing merit on faith. When you take the righteousness of Christ as a free gift you are justified freely through the redemption of Christ. What is faith? ‘The substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen’ (Hebrews 11:1). It is an assent of the understanding to God's words which binds the heart in willing consecration and service to God, Who gave the understanding, Who moved on the heart, Who first drew the mind to view Christ on the cross of Calvary. **Faith is rendering to God the intellectual powers, abandonment of the mind and will to God, and making Christ the only door to enter into the kingdom of heaven.**”—*Faith and Works*, 25.

higher levels of church administration back those new theology preachers when church members protest.

Entire churches are being gutted. Bible justification and genuine sanctification are being set aside. This is a terrible tragedy. The people, who were supposed to give to all the world the final message of true justification and genuine obedience by faith in Christ to the law of God,—are abandoning those truths!

In this present study, we will overview the correct position on justification by faith. Here you will find the truth about this subject. These are words of life to the thirsty soul!

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“Make sure that you are accepted by Christ because you rely on the merits of a crucified and risen Saviour. **His righteousness must be your righteousness. He wrought it out for you, and when you receive it you stand justified in the presence of God.**”—*Medical Ministry, 115 (Letter 121, 1901).*

“Every soul may say: **By His perfect obedience He has satisfied the claims of the law, and my only hope is found in looking to Him as my substitute and surety,** who obeyed the law perfectly for me. By faith in His merits I am free from the condemnation of the law. He clothes me with His righteousness, which answers all the demands of the law. I am complete in Him who brings in everlasting righteousness. **He presents me to God in the spotless garment of which no thread was woven by any human agent.** All is of Christ, and all the glory, honor, and majesty are to be given to the

Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world’ . . .

“The apostle says, ‘With the heart man believeth unto righteousness’ (Rom. 10:10). **No one can believe with the heart unto righteousness, and obtain justification by faith, while continuing the practice of those things which the Word of God forbids, or while neglecting any known duty.**

“Genuine faith will be manifested in good works; for good works are the fruits of faith. **As God works in the heart, and man surrenders his will to God, and cooperates with God, he works out in the life what God works in by the Holy Spirit, and there is harmony between the purpose of the heart and the practice of the life.** Every sin must be renounced as the hateful thing that crucified the Lord of life and glory, and the believer must have a progressive experience by continually doing the works of Christ. **It is by continual surrender of the will, by continual obedience, that the blessing of justification is retained.**”—*1 Selected Messages, 396-397.*

“**Those who are justified by faith must have a heart to keep the way of the Lord.** It is an evidence that a man is not justified by faith when his works do not correspond to his profession. James says, ‘Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was his faith made perfect?’ (James 2:22).

“**The faith that does not produce good works does not justify the soul.** ‘Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only’ (James 2:24). ‘Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness’ (Rom. 4:3).”—*1 Selected Messages, 397.*

THE MYSTERY WITHIN THE SANCTUARY

“In the temple in heaven, the dwelling place of God, His throne is established in righteousness and judgment. **In the most holy place is His law, the great rule of right by which all mankind are tested.** The ark that enshrines the tables of the law is covered with the mercy seat, before which Christ pleads His blood in the sinner’s behalf. **Thus is represented the union of justice and mercy in the plan of human redemption.** This union infinite wisdom alone could devise and infinite power accomplish; **it is a union that fills all heaven with wonder and adoration.** The cherubim of the earthly

sanctuary, looking reverently down upon the mercy seat, represent the interest with which the heavenly host contemplate the work of redemption. **This is the mystery of mercy into which angels desire to look—that God can be just while He justifies the repenting sinner** and renews His intercourse with the fallen race; that Christ could stoop to raise unnumbered multitudes from the abyss of ruin and clothe them with the spotless garments of His own righteousness to unite with angels who have never fallen and to dwell forever in the presence of God.”—*Great Controversy, 415.*

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**PART TWO
OF THREE**

Continued from the preceding tract in this series

“As we look into the divine mirror, the law of God, we see the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and our own lost condition as transgressors. But **by repentance and faith we are justified before God, and through divine grace enabled to render obedience to His commandments.**”—*Reflecting Christ*, 96.

“**Grace is unmerited favor, and the believer is justified without any merit of his own, without any claim to offer to God.** He is justified through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, who stands in the courts of heaven as the sinner’s substitute and surety. **But while he is justified because of the merit of Christ, he is not free to work unrighteousness.** Faith works by love and purifies the soul. Faith buds and blossoms and bears a harvest of precious fruit. **Where faith is, good works appear.** The sick are visited, the poor are cared for, the fatherless and the widows are not neglected, the naked are clothed, the destitute are fed. Christ went about doing good, and when men are united with Him, they love the children of God, and meekness and truth guide their footsteps. The expression of the countenance reveals their experience, and men take knowledge of them that they have been with Jesus and learned of Him. Christ and the believer become one, and His beauty of character is revealed in those who are vitally connected with the Source of power and love. **Christ is the great depository of justifying righteousness and sanctifying grace.**”—*1 Selected Messages*, 398.

“**Today a large part of those who compose our congregations are dead in trespasses and sins.** They come and go like the door upon its hinges. For years they have complacently listened to the most solemn, soul-stirring truths, but they have not put them in practice. Therefore they are less and less sensible of the preciousness of truth. The stirring testimonies of reproof and warning do not arouse them to repentance. **The sweetest melodies that come from God through human lips—justification by faith, and the righteousness of Christ—do not call forth from them a response**

of love and gratitude. Though the heavenly Merchantman displays before them the richest jewels of faith and love, though He invites them to buy of Him ‘gold tried in the fire,’ and ‘white raiment’ that they may be clothed, and ‘eyesalve’ that they may see, they steel their hearts against Him, and fail to exchange their lukewarmness for love and zeal. While making a profession, they deny the power of godliness. If they continue in this state, God will reject them. They are unfitting themselves to be members of His family.”—*6 Testimonies*, 426-427.

“Instead of releasing man from obedience, it is faith, and faith only, that makes us partakers of the grace of Christ, which enables us to render obedience.

“**We do not earn salvation by our obedience; for salvation is the free gift of God, to be received by faith. But obedience is the fruit of faith.** ‘Ye know that He was manifested to take away our sins; and in Him is no sin. Whosoever abideth in Him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen Him, neither known Him.’ 1 John 3:5, 6. Here is the true test. **If we abide in Christ, if the love of God dwells in us, our feelings, our thoughts, our purposes, our actions, will be in harmony with the will of God as expressed in the precepts of His holy law.** ‘Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as He is righteous.’ 1 John 3:7. **Righteousness is defined by the standard of God’s holy law,** as expressed in the ten precepts given on Sinai.

“**That so-called faith in Christ which professes to release men from the obligation of obedience to God, is not faith, but presumption.** ‘By grace are ye saved through faith.’ But ‘faith, if it hath not works, is dead.’ Ephesians 2:8; James 2:17. Jesus said of Himself before He came to earth, ‘I delight to do Thy will, O My God: yea, Thy law is within My heart.’ Psalm 40:8. And just before He ascended again to heaven He declared, ‘I have kept My Father’s commandments, and abide in His love.’ John 15:10. The Scripture says, **‘Hereby we do know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments . . . He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself also so to walk even as He walked.’** 1 John 2:3-6. ‘Because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an ex-

ample, that ye should follow His steps.' 1 Peter 2:21.

"The condition of eternal life is now just what it always has been,—just what it was in Paradise before the fall of our first parents,—perfect obedience to the law of God, perfect righteousness. If eternal life were granted on any condition short of this, then the happiness of the whole universe would be imperiled. The way would be open for sin, with all its train of woe and misery, to be immortalized."—*Steps to Christ*, 60-62.

"We have no righteousness of our own with which to meet the claims of the law of God. But Christ has made a way of escape for us. He lived on earth amid trials and temptations such as we have to meet. He lived a sinless life. He died for us, and now He offers to take our sins and give us His righteousness. **If you give yourself to Him, and accept Him as your Saviour, then, sinful as your life may have been, for His sake you are accounted righteous.** Christ's character stands in place of your character, and you are accepted before God just as if you had not sinned.

"More than this, Christ changes the heart. He abides in your heart by faith. **You are to maintain this connection with Christ by faith and the continual surrender of your will to Him;** and so long

as you do this, He will work in you to will and to do according to His good pleasure. So you may say, '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. So Jesus said to His disciples, 'It is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.' Matthew 10:20. Then **with Christ working in you, you will manifest the same spirit and do the same good works**—works of righteousness, obedience."—*Steps to Christ*, 62-63.

"No one who truly loves and fears God will continue to transgress the law in any particular. When man transgresses he is under the condemnation of the law, and it becomes to him a yoke of bondage. **Whatever his profession may be he is not justified, which means pardoned.**"—*My Life Today*, 250.

"Justification by faith in Christ will be made manifest in transformation of character. This is the sign to the world of the truth of the doctrines we profess. **The daily evidence that we are a living church is seen in the fact that we are practicing the Word.** A living testimony goes forth to the world in consistent Christian action.

DANGERS TO BE GUARDED AGAINST

"The apostle James saw that dangers would arise in presenting the subject of justification by faith, and he labored to show that genuine faith cannot exist without corresponding works. The experience of Abraham is presented. 'Seest thou,' he says, 'how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect?' James 2:22. Thus **genuine faith does a genuine work in the believer. Faith and obedience bring a solid, valuable experience.**

"Faith and works are two oars which we must use equally if we [would] press our way up the stream against the current of unbelief."—*Faith I Live By*, 115.

"There are dangers to be guarded against on the right hand and on the left. There will be inexperienced ones, newly come to the faith, who need to be strengthened, and to have a correct example before them. **Some will not make a right use of the doctrine of justification by faith. They will present it in a one-sided manner.**

"Others will seize the ideas that have not been correctly presented, and will go clear over the mark, ignoring works altogether.

"Now genuine faith always works by love. When you look to Calvary it is not to quiet your soul in the nonperformance of duty, not to compose yourself to sleep, but to create faith in Jesus, faith that will work, purifying the soul from the slime of selfishness. When we lay hold of Christ by faith, our work has just begun. Every man has corrupt and sinful habits that must be overcome by vigorous warfare. Every soul is required to fight the fight of faith."—*2 Selected Messages*, 20.

"The Holiness people have gone to great extremes on this point. **With great zeal they have taught, 'Only believe in Christ, and be saved; but away with the law of God.'** This is not the teaching of the Word of God. There is no foundation for such a faith. This is not the precious gem of truth that God has given to His people for this time. This doctrine misleads honest souls. The light from the Word of God reveals the fact that **the law must be proclaimed. Christ must be lifted up,** because He is a Saviour who forgiveth transgression, iniquity, and sin, but will by no means clear the guilty and unrepentant soul."—*1 Selected Messages*, 360-361 (*Review*, August 13, 1889).

1 “It declares to a world apostatized that there is
3 a people who believe that our safety is in clinging to
1 the Bible. **This testimony is in unmistakable distinction from that of the great apostate church, which adopts human wisdom and authority in place of the wisdom and authority of God.**”—6
2 *Bible Commentary, 1071 (Letter 83, 1896).*

“We are justified by faith. The soul who understands the meaning of these words will never be self-sufficient. We are not sufficient of ourselves to think anything of ourselves. The Holy Spirit is our efficiency in the work of character building, in forming characters after the divine similitude. When we think ourselves capable of molding our own experience, we make a great mistake. **We can never of ourselves obtain the victory over temptation.** But those who have genuine faith in Christ will be worked by the Holy Spirit. **The soul in whose heart faith abides will grow into a beautiful temple for the Lord.** He is directed by the grace of Christ. Just

in proportion as he depends on the Holy Spirit’s teaching he will grow.”—6 *Bible Commentary, 1109 (MS 8, 1900).*

“Righteousness within is testified to by righteousness without. He who is righteous within is not hard-hearted and unsympathetic, but day by day he grows into the image of Christ, going on from strength to strength. He who is being sanctified by the truth will be self-controlled, and will follow in the footsteps of Christ until grace is lost in glory. **The righteousness by which we are justified is imputed; the righteousness by which we are sanctified is imparted. The first is our title to heaven, the second is our fitness for heaven.**”—*Messages to Young People, 35 (Review, June 4, 1895).*

“But while God can be just, and yet justify the sinner through the merits of Christ, **no man can cover his soul with the garments of Christ’s righteousness while practicing known sins, or neglecting known duties. God requires the entire sur-**

THE SIXTEENTH-CENTURY REFORMERS DISCOVERED IT

“It was about this time that Luther, reading the works of Huss, found that the great truth of justification by faith, which he himself was seeking to uphold and teach, had been held by the Bohemian Reformer. ‘We have all,’ said Luther, ‘Paul, Augustine, and myself, been Hussites without knowing it!’ ‘God will surely visit it upon the world,’ he continued, ‘that the truth was preached to it a century ago, and burned!’”—*Great Controversy, 140.*

“In 1512, before either Luther or Zwingli had begun the work of reform, Lefevre [in France] wrote: **‘It is God who gives us, by faith, that righteousness which by grace alone justifies to eternal life’** (Wylie, b. 13, ch. 1). Dwelling upon the mysteries of redemption, he exclaimed: **‘Oh, the unspeakable greatness of that exchange,—the Sinless One is condemned, and he who is guilty goes free;** the Blessing bears the curse, and the cursed is brought into blessing; the Life dies, and the dead live; the Glory is whelmed in darkness, **and he who knew nothing but confusion of face is clothed with glory’** (D’Aubigne, London ed., b. 12, ch. 2).”—*Great Controversy, 212-213.*

“At a meeting of the Moravian society in London a statement was read from Luther, describing the change which the Spirit of God works in the heart of the believer. **As Wesley listened, faith was kindled in his soul.** ‘I felt my heart strangely warmed,’ he says. **‘I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone, for salvation: and an assurance was given**

me, that He had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death’ (Whitehead, *Life of the Rev. John Wesley*, page 52).

“Through long years of wearisome and comfortless striving—years of rigorous self-denial, of reproach and humiliation—Wesley had steadfastly adhered to his one purpose of seeking God. Now he had found Him; and **he found that the grace which he had toiled to win by prayers and fasts, by almsdeeds and self-abnegation, was a gift,** ‘without money and without price.’

“Once established in the faith of Christ, his whole soul burned with the desire to spread everywhere a knowledge of the glorious gospel of God’s free grace. ‘I look upon all the world as my parish,’ he said; ‘in whatever part of it I am, I judge it meet, right, and my bounden duty, to declare unto all that are willing to hear, the glad tidings of salvation’ (*ibid.*, 74).

“He continued his strict and self-denying life, not now as the ground, but the result of faith; not the root, but the fruit of holiness. The grace of God in Christ is the foundation of the Christian’s hope, and that grace will be manifested in obedience. **Wesley’s life was devoted to the preaching of the great truths which he had received—justification through faith in the atoning blood of Christ, and the renewing power of the Holy Spirit upon the heart, bringing forth fruit in a life conformed to the example of Christ.**”—*Great Controversy, 256.*

render 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 . . .

“In order for man to be justified by faith, faith must reach a point where it will control the affections and impulses of the heart; and it is by obedience that faith itself is made perfect . . .

“When the sinner believes that Christ is his personal Saviour, then, according to His unfulfilling promises, God pardons his sin, and justifies him freely. **The repentant soul realizes that his justification comes because Christ, as his substitute and surety, has died for him,** is his atonement and righteousness.

“Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness’ (Rom. 4:3-5).

“Righteousness is obedience to the law. The law demands righteousness, and this the sinner owes to the law; but he is incapable of rendering it. The only way in which he can attain to righteousness is through faith. **By faith he can bring to God the merits of Christ, and the Lord places the obedience of His Son to the sinner’s account.** Christ’s righteousness is accepted in place of man’s failure, and **God receives, pardons, justifies, the repentant, believing soul, treats him as though he were righteous, and loves him as He loves His Son.** This is how faith is accounted righteousness; and the pardoned soul goes on from grace to grace, from light to a greater light.”—*1 Selected Messages*, 366-367.

“Justification means the saving of a soul from perdition, that he may obtain sanctification, and through sanctification, the life of heaven. Justification means that the conscience, purged from dead works, is placed where it can receive the blessings of sanctification.”—*7 Bible Commentary*, 908 (*MS 113, 1902*) [The surrounding quotations reveal that sanctification consists of obedience through the enabling grace of Christ to the law of God].

“Christ looks at the spirit, and when He sees us carrying our burden with faith, His perfect holiness atones for our shortcomings. When we do our best, He becomes our righteousness. It takes every ray of light that God sends to us to make us the light of the world.”—*1 Selected Messages*, 368 (*Letter 33, 1889*).

“Many have come presenting other objects for the faith of the world; **ceremonies and systems have been devised by which men hope to receive justification and peace with God,** and thus find entrance to His fold. But the only door is Christ, and all who have interposed something to take the place of Christ, **all who have tried to enter the fold in some other way, are thieves and robbers.**”—*Desire of Ages*, 477-478.

“When the Spirit of God controls mind and heart, the converted soul breaks forth into a new song; for he realizes that in his experience the promise of God has been fulfilled, that his transgression has been forgiven, his sin covered. He has exercised repentance toward God for the violation of the divine law, and faith toward Christ, who died for man’s justification. ‘Being justified by faith,’ he has ‘peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.’ Romans 5:1.

SPEAK EASY WORDS

“A little girl once asked me, ‘Are you going to speak this afternoon?’ ‘No, not this afternoon,’ I replied. ‘I am very sorry,’ she said. ‘I thought you were going to speak, and I asked several of my companions to come. Will you please ask the minister to speak easy words that we can understand? Will you please tell him that we do not understand large words, like “justification” and “sanctification”? We do not know what these words mean.’

“The little girl’s complaint contains a lesson worthy of consideration by teachers and ministers.

Are there not many who would do well to heed the request, ‘Speak easy words, that we may know what you mean’?

“Make your explanations clear; for I know that there are many who do not understand many of the things said to them. Let the Holy Spirit mold and fashion your speech, cleansing it from all dross. Speak as little children, remembering that there are many well advanced in years who are but little children in understanding.”—*Counsels to Parents and Teachers*, 254.

This is Justification

**PART THREE
OF THREE**

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Continued from the preceding tract in this series

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“But because this experience is his, the Christian is not therefore to fold his hands, content with that which has been accomplished for him.

He who has determined to enter the spiritual kingdom will find that all the powers and passions of unregenerate nature, backed by the forces of the kingdom of darkness, are arrayed against him. **Each day he must renew his consecration, each day do battle with evil.** Old habits, hereditary tendencies to wrong, will strive for the mastery, and against these he is to be ever on guard, striving in Christ’s strength for victory.”—*Acts of the Apostles*, 476-477.

“There is no safety nor repose nor justification in transgression of the law. Man cannot hope to stand innocent before God, and at peace with Him through the merits of Christ, while he continues in sin.”—*1 Selected Messages*, 213.

“When we trust God fully, when we rely upon the merits of Jesus as a sin-pardoning Saviour, we shall receive all the help that we can desire.

Let none look to self, as though they had power to save themselves. Jesus died for us because we were helpless to do this. **In Him is our hope, our justification, our righteousness.** When we see our sinfulness we should not despond and fear that we have no Saviour, or that He has no thoughts of mercy toward us. At this very time He is inviting us to come to Him in our helplessness and be saved.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, 431.

[Describing the experience of Paul just after he was struck with blindness:] “As Saul yielded himself fully to the convicting power of the Holy Spirit, he saw the mistakes of his life and recognized the far-reaching claims of the law of God. **He who had been a proud Pharisee, confident that he was justified by his good works, now bowed before God with the humility and simplicity of a little child,** confessing his own unworthiness and pleading the merits of a crucified and risen Saviour. Saul longed to come into full harmony and communion with the Father and the Son; and in the intensity of his desire for pardon and acceptance he offered up fer-

vent supplications to the throne of grace.”—*Acts of the Apostles*, 119-120.

“Said the Judge: **‘All will be justified by their faith and judged by their works.’**”—*4 Testimonies*, 386.

“Centuries before, **the cry of the soul for justification with God had found voice and answer in the words of the prophet Micah:** ‘Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? shall I come before Him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? . . . He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?’ Micah 6:6-8 . . .

“Jesus proceeded to show His hearers **what it means to keep the commandments of God—that it is a reproduction in themselves of the character of Christ.**”—*Mount of Blessing*, 54-55.

“The wedding garment, provided at infinite cost, is freely offered to every soul. By the messengers of God are presented to us the righteousness of Christ, justification by faith, **the exceeding great and precious promises of God’s Word, free access to the Father by Christ, the comfort of the Spirit, the well-grounded assurance of eternal life** in the kingdom of God.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, 317.

“The present message—justification by faith—is a message from God; it bears the divine credentials, for its fruit is unto holiness. Some who greatly need the precious truth that was presented before them, we fear did not receive its benefit. They did not open the door of their hearts to welcome Jesus as a heavenly guest, and they have suffered great loss. **There is indeed a narrow way in which we must walk; the cross is presented at every step. We must learn to live by faith;** then the darkest hours will be brightened by the blessed beams of the Sun of Righteousness.”—*1 Selected Messages*, 359.

“With great clearness and power the apostle [Paul] presented the doctrine of justification by faith in Christ. He hoped that other churches also might be helped by the instruction sent to the Christians at Rome; but how dimly could he foresee the far-reaching influence of his words! **Through all the ages the great truth of justification by faith has stood as a mighty beacon to guide repentant sinners into the way of life.** It was this light that scattered the darkness which enveloped Luther’s mind and revealed to him the power of the blood of Christ to cleanse from sin. The same light has guided thousands of sin-burdened souls to the true Source of pardon and peace.”—*Acts of the Apostles, 373-374.*

“**Precious gems of truth, long lost sight of, are now to be restored to the children of God. The themes of justification by faith, the righteousness of Christ, should be presented** in our schools, that the youth and children may understand these important subjects, and teachers and scholars may know the way of salvation. **Sacred and eternal principles connected with the plan of salvation have long been lost from sight, but they must be restored to their proper place** in the plan of salvation, and made to appear in their heavenly light, and penetrate the moral darkness in which the world is enshrouded.”—*Counsels on Sabbath School Work, 12-13.*

“**Without the grace of Christ it is impossible to take one step in obedience to the law of God. Then how necessary that the sinner hear of the love and power of his Redeemer and Friend!** While the ambassador for Christ should plainly declare the claims of the law, he should make it understood that **none can be justified without the atoning sacrifice of Christ.** Without Christ there can be only condemnation and a fearful looking for a fiery indignation, and final separation from the presence of God. But **he whose eyes have been opened to see the love of Christ, will behold the character of God as full of love and compassion . . . All despair is swept from the soul when Christ is seen in His true character . . .** Several have written to me, inquiring if the message of **justification by faith** is the third angel’s message, and I have answered, **‘It is the third angel’s message, in verity.’**”—*1 Selected Messages, 372 (Review, April 1, 1890).*

“**The Word of God must not be kept apart from our life. It must be entertained in the mind, welcomed in the heart, and be cherished, loved, and obeyed . . .** There is great need that Christ should be preached as the only hope and salvation. When the doctrine of justification by faith was presented at

the Rome meeting, it came to many as water comes to the thirsty traveler. **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.**”—*1 Selected Messages, 360 (Review, Sept. 3, 1889).*

“**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.** Every believing soul is to conform his will entirely to God’s will, and keep in a state of repentance and contrition, exercising faith in the atoning merits of the Redeemer and advancing from strength to strength, from glory to glory.

“**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 relieve 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.

“The sinner may err, but he is not cast off without mercy. His only hope, however, is repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. It is the Father’s prerogative to forgive our transgressions and sins, because Christ has taken upon Himself our guilt and relieved us, imputing to us His own righteousness. His sacrifice satisfies fully the demands of justice.

“**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.”—*6 Bible Commentary, 1070-1071 (MS 21, 1891).*

“**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.** When men see their own nothingness, they are prepared to be clothed with

the righteousness of Christ.”—*Faith I Live By*, 111.

[Referring to the Israelites in the time of Moses:]
“The pardon of sin, justification by faith in Jesus Christ, access to God only through a mediator because of their lost condition, their guilt and sin—of these truths the people had little conception. In a great measure they had lost a knowledge of God and of the only way to approach Him. They had lost nearly all sense of what constitutes sin and of what constitutes righteousness. The pardon of sin through Christ, the promised Messiah, whom their offerings typified, was but dimly understood.”—*Lift Him Up*, 147.

“No one can believe with the heart unto righteousness, and obtain justification by faith, while continuing the practice of those things which the Word of God forbids, or while neglecting any known duty.”—*1 Selected Messages*, 396.

“Justification by faith is to many a mystery. A sinner is justified by God when he repents of his sins. He sees Jesus upon the cross of Calvary. Why all this suffering? **The law of Jehovah has been**

broken. The law of God’s government in heaven and earth has been transgressed, and the penalty of sin is pronounced to be death. But ‘God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.’ **Oh, what love, what matchless love! Christ, the Son of God, dying for guilty man!**”—*3 Selected Messages*, 193-194.

“Sanctification cannot be genuine which does not work this utter renunciation of the sinful pursuits and gratifications of the world. To those who comply with the conditions . . . God’s promise is ‘I will receive you and be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Almighty.’—*Great Controversy*, 475.

“The Laodicean message has been sounding. Take this message in all its phases and sound it forth to the people wherever Providence opens the way. Justification by faith and the righteousness of Christ are the themes to be presented to a perishing world.”—*7 Bible Commentary*, 964 (*Letter 24*, 1892).

JUSTIFICATION IN THE BIBLE

Here are a few of the many passages relating to this subject, as given in the Bible.

“And he believed in the Lord; and He counted it to him for righteousness.”—*Genesis 15:6*.

“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.”—*Psalms 32:1-2*.

“I will go in the strength of the Lord God: I will make mention of Thy righteousness, even of Thine only.”—*Psalms 71:16*.

“Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of Thy countenance. In Thy name shall they rejoice all the day: and in Thy righteousness shall they be exalted. For Thou art the glory of their strength.”—*Psalms 89:15-17*.

“Surely, shall one say, in the Lord have I righteousness and strength: even to him shall men come; and all that are incensed against him shall be ashamed.”—*Isaiah 45:24*.

“Hearken unto Me, ye stouthearted, that are far from righteousness: I bring near My righteousness; it shall not be far off, and My salvation shall not tarry: and I will place salvation in Zion for Israel My glory.”—*Isaiah 46:12-13*.

“For the Lord God will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded: therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed. He is near that justifieth me; who will contend with me? let us stand together: who is mine adversary? let him

come near to me. Behold, the Lord God will help me; who is he that shall condemn me?”—*Isaiah 50:7-9*.

“He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied: by His knowledge shall My righteous servant justify many; for He shall bear their iniquities.”—*Isaiah 53:11*.

“No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of Me, saith the Lord.”—*Isaiah 54:17*.

“Thus saith the Lord, Keep ye judgment, and do justice: for My salvation is near to come, and My righteousness to be revealed.”—*Isaiah 56:1*.

“I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, He hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels.”—*Isaiah 61:10*.

“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 23:6*.

“And he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him. And the Lord said unto Satan, The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan; even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire? Now Joshua

was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel. And He answered and spake unto those that stood before Him, saying, Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him He said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment. And I said, Let them set a fair mitre upon his head. So they set a fair mitre upon his head, and clothed him with garments. And the angel of the Lord stood by. And the angel of the Lord protested unto Joshua, saying, Thus saith the Lord of hosts; If thou wilt walk in My ways, and if thou wilt keep My charge, then thou shalt also judge My house, and shalt also keep My courts, and I will give thee places to walk among these that stand by.”—*Zechariah 3:1-7*.

“Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: And by Him all that believe are justified from all things.”—*Acts 13:38-39*.

“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.”—*Romans 1:16-17*.

“Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith.”—*Habbakuk 2:4*.

“For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified.”—*Romans 2:13*.

“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.”—*Romans 3:21-26*.

“Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.”—*Romans 4:7-8*.

“He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; and being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform. And therefore it

was imputed to him for righteousness. Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on Him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.”—*Romans 4:20-25*.

“Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God . . . And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him.”—*Romans 5:1-2, 5-9*.

“But 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 glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.”—*1 Corinthians 1:30-31*.

“And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.”—*1 Corinthians 6:11*.

“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*.

“Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness.”—*Ephesians 6:13-14*.

“That being justified by His grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men.”—*Titus 3:7-8*.