

# FOUNDATIONS FOR CHRISTIAN GROWTH

## Lesson THREE RIGHTEOUSNESS — THE GIFT OF GOD

- I. INTRODUCTION
  
- II. MAN'S GREAT NEED
  - A. Man Before The Fall
    - 1. Created in God's image
    - 2. God's under-ruler
    - 3. Freedom of choice
  - B. Man After The Fall
    - 1. Spiritual death
    - 2. The inheritance
  - C. Man's Inability to Help Himself
  
- III. GOD'S ANSWER TO MAN'S NEED
  - A. Jesus, God's Solution
    - 1. Did the Old Covenant fail?
    - 2. Atonement under the Old Covenant
  - B. Old Testament Figures Pointing to Jesus
    - 1. The blood
    - 2. The scapegoat
  - C. New Testament Fulfillment of Old Testament Figures
    - 1. The shedding of blood
    - 2. The identification with sin
  - D. The Blood of Jesus Cleansed Sin
    - 1. The blood of Jesus speaks for us
    - 2. The blood of Jesus is our receipt
  - E. Christ's Identification With Man
    - 1. Represented in His death
    - 2. Represented in His resurrection
  - F. How God Could Be Just in Justifying
    - 1. An acceptable sacrifice
    - 2. A Son of Adam obedient to death
    - 3. Divinity
    - 4. Fully God/fully man

# FOUNDATIONS FOR CHRISTIAN GROWTH

## Lesson THREE RIGHTEOUSNESS — THE GIFT OF GOD

### IV. THE FREE GIFT OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

- A. Not By Works
  - 1. The Law
  - 2. Self-righteousness
- B. Righteousness By Faith
  - 1. Our believing
  - 2. God's grace
  - 3. Our receiving
- C. How To Avoid the Galatian Error
  - 1. Continuing in grace
  - 2. Receiving forgiveness

### V. THE EFFECT OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

- A. Peace With God
  - 1. Jesus removed the sin barrier
  - 2. Free access to God's presence
- B. Quietness and Confidence

### VI. ESTABLISHING THE REALITY OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

- A. Don't Look to Your Emotions
- B. See Yourself As God Sees You

### VII. SUMMARY — THE VALUE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

### VIII. ASSIGNMENTS

# FOUNDATIONS FOR CHRISTIAN GROWTH

## Lesson THREE RIGHTEOUSNESS — THE GIFT OF GOD

### I. INTRODUCTION

defines righteousness as "the ability to stand in the presence of the Father God without the sense of guilt or inferiority."<sup>1</sup> A righteous person is one who has right-standing with God. Without righteousness, fellowship with God is impossible. Adam was created with this kind of right-standing. After he disobeyed, he cowered in the presence of God because of the sin that was then in him (Genesis 3:10). He was no longer in right-standing with God, so fellowship was destroyed.

Before fellowship with God could be re-established, this sin had to be replaced with righteousness. That is what the story of God's redemption is all about: God removed from man the sin which separated him from God and replaced it with His very own righteousness. How God accomplished this and that He was just in doing so, is revealed in the "gospel" (good news) message of the New Testament.

For many years the gospel has been preached as a revelation of sin. Preachers have spent great amounts of time telling of the evil which is in mankind. However, in his letter to the Romans, Paul shows us that rather than the gospel being a revelation of sin, it is a revelation of righteousness. He explains how God made His righteousness available to man through faith in Jesus Christ (Romans 1:16,17).

Believers need to deepen their understanding of this revelation. God has imparted unto them His own righteousness, and they are therefore in right-standing with Him. God's desire is that we know this so well that we can ". . . draw near with confidence to the throne of grace" (Hebrews 4:16), the very presence of God, free from the fear that Adam experienced after he sinned.

And he said, "I heard the sound of Thee in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid myself."

*Genesis 3:10*

For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to every one who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "But the righteous man shall live by faith."

*Romans 1:16,17*

Let us therefore draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and may find grace to help in time of need.

*Hebrews 4:16*



# FOUNDATIONS FOR CHRISTIAN GROWTH

## Lesson THREE RIGHTEOUSNESS — THE GIFT OF GOD

### II. MAN'S GREAT NEED

Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and, were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.

*Ephesians 2:3*

Remember that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.

*Ephesians 2:12*

For He delivered us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son.

*Colossians 1:13*

And God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him: male and female He created them.

*Genesis 1:27*

Then the Lord God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.

*Genesis 2:7*

Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." And God blessed them; and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky, and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

*Genesis 1:26,28*

When studying God's redemption of man, it is vital that we understand what it is that we were redeemed from! Paul told the Ephesians that before they were saved, they were by nature the children of wrath (Ephesians 2:3); he said that they were without hope and without God in the world (Ephesians 2:12). Man was under the dominion of darkness and needed to be delivered (Colossians 1:13). As we shall see, only God could accomplish this deliverance.

#### A. MAN BEFORE THE FALL

When God created Adam, He created him without sin and without flaw, in His own image (Genesis 1:27), and breathed into him His own Spirit (Genesis 2:7). Adam was a perfect creation (Genesis 1:31), able to stand in God's presence without guilt or fear and enjoy fellowship with Him.

##### 1. Created in God's image

Adam was made in the image of God, which set him apart from all the other creatures God had created. He was in God's image in that he was created a spiritual being (Genesis 1:27). God is a spirit and can only have fellowship with a creature of like kind. So, He made man "a little lower" than Himself, a spirit being with whom He could fellowship.

##### 2. God's under-ruler

Adam was a creature of authority, for God gave him dominion over all the works of His hands (Genesis 1:26,28). We have little appreciated the extent of his dominion. David said:

Yet Thou hast made him a little lower than God,

And dost crown him with glory and majesty!

Thou dost make him to rule over the works of Thy hands;

Thou hast put all things under his feet.

*Psalm 8:5,6*

Adam was God's under-ruler on the earth, and it was his responsibility to take care of it.



# FOUNDATIONS FOR CHRISTIAN GROWTH

## Lesson THREE RIGHTEOUSNESS — THE GIFT OF GOD

### 3. Freedom of choice

Adam was also given freedom of choice. It was his prerogative to choose to obey God or to disobey Him. The forbidden tree was placed in the garden (Genesis 2:9) to insure that Adam had this freedom. Without it he would have been little more than a robot, obeying God simply because he had no other option.

The New Testament reveals that before the foundations of the world, God had wanted a family (Ephesians 1:4,5), which is why He called us into fellowship with Himself and His Son (I Corinthians 1:9; I John 1:3). So He created a being like Himself (in His image), giving him dominion and freedom of choice. With such a creation, He could have fellowship.

### B. MAN AFTER THE FALL

God told Adam that if he disobeyed and ate of the forbidden tree, he would die the very day he did so (Genesis 2:17). Simple reading of the Bible text will show that God was not referring to mere physical death, for Adam continued to live physically after his disobedience. The immediate effect of this first sin was inward. The outward manifestation of the inward effect did not occur until nine hundred and thirty years later (Genesis 5:5).

#### 1. Spiritual death

The death to which God referred was spiritual death. The entrance of sin into Adam's life brought separation from God, the source of all life; "for the wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23). The effect of this corruption of Adam's nature is immediately apparent; Adam tried to hide himself from the presence of God (Genesis 3:8). The "unrighteousness" which came into Adam as a result of his disobedience made it impossible for him to come freely into God's presence.

#### 2. The inheritance

The effects of Adam's disobedience go far beyond the life of Adam and Eve. We are told in the New Testament that because of Adam, we all died spiritually. For "as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all shall be made alive" (I Corinthians 15:22). Through one man's sin, death (i.e. spiritual death) entered the world and "passed upon all men" (Romans 5:12). All men have inherited spiritual death from Adam, because

And out of the ground the Lord God caused to grow every tree that is pleasing to the sight and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Genesis 2:9

Just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before Him. In love He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will.

Ephesians 1:4,5

God is faithful, through whom you were called into fellowship with His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

I Corinthians 1:9

What we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, that you also may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.

I John 1:3

"But from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you shall surely die."

Genesis 2:17

For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 6:23

And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden.

Genesis 3:8

Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned.

Romans 5:12



# FOUNDATIONS FOR CHRISTIAN GROWTH

## Lesson THREE RIGHTEOUSNESS — THE GIFT OF GOD

When Adam had lived one hundred and thirty years, he became the father of a son in his own likeness, according to his image, and named him Seth.  
*Genesis 5:3*

For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.  
*Romans 3:23*

As it is written, "There is none righteous, not even one."  
*Romans 3:10*

Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death?  
*Romans 7:24*

For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly.  
*Romans 5:6*

they are born with Adam's likeness and image (i.e. his fallen nature) as was Seth (*Genesis 5:3*).

Thus, the curse of sin passed onto the entire human race as a result of Adam's transgression. David was so aware of this curse that he stated in his prayer of repentance: "Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin my mother conceived me" (*Psalm 51:5*).

### C. MAN'S INABILITY TO HELP HIMSELF

Not only did spiritual death pass upon all men, but man was also left powerless to overcome this inward condition. The creature which God had created to rule became a slave to sin, unable to break free and get back into fellowship with God. No amount of good works could ever re-establish the right-standing that Adam had with God before the fall. Man was now by nature an unrighteous creature.

"For all have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God..." (*Romans 3:23*). Paul says that there is none righteous, not one (*Romans 3:10*). Those who wish to establish their own righteousness by good works are destined to fail and might well cry out as did Paul before his conversion: "Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death?" (*Romans 7:24*).

## III. GOD'S ANSWER TO MAN'S NEED

God didn't cease to love man when he fell and was lost in unrighteousness. If that were the case, no way of salvation would ever have been made by God. God's love for man was too great for Him to let man go to destruction without making a way of deliverance available.

"For while we were still helpless, at the right time, Christ died for the ungodly" (*Romans 5:6*). Man was helpless to regain that position of right-standing with God that Adam had originally enjoyed. God Himself would have to do it for man.



# FOUNDATIONS FOR CHRISTIAN GROWTH

## Lesson THREE RIGHTEOUSNESS — THE GIFT OF GOD

### A. JESUS, GOD'S SOLUTION

God's redemption of man revolves around the person of His Son, Jesus. Jesus was God's plan for our redemption from the very beginning. He is the promised redeemer who was to bruise (crush) the serpent's head (Genesis 3:15). On the day that man fell, God had no other redeemer in mind but Jesus. This is why Jesus is called "the Lamb that was slain from the creation of the world" (Revelation 13:8 NIV).

#### 1. Did the Old Covenant fail?

Some are of the mistaken impression that the Old Covenant is a plan of redemption which God tried, but which didn't work. Jesus is understood to be an alternate plan which God enacted after the failure of the first.

But, the Old Covenant was never intended to be the means by which God would free man from the slavery of sin and unrighteousness. The scriptures are clear on this point. "For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins" (Hebrews 10:4). "For the Law (i.e. the Old Covenant) can never by the same sacrifices which they offer continually, make perfect those who draw near" (Hebrews 10:1). God never intended the rituals and regulations of the Old Covenant to be the means of man's redemption.

#### 2. Atonement under the Old Covenant

Atonement in the Old Covenant was on the basis of Jesus' sacrifice, since all the animal sacrifices of that covenant look forward to Jesus' death. It was on this basis that God overlooked the transgressions committed under the first covenant (Romans 3:25; Hebrews 9:15).

### B. OLD TESTAMENT FIGURES POINTING TO JESUS

As we have already seen, the scriptures of the Old Testament point to Jesus. God instituted animal sacrifice for the forgiveness of sins in order to symbolize that Jesus would come and sacrifice Himself for our sins; ". . . without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness" (Hebrews 9:22).

And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, and you shall bruise him on the heel."

All inhabitants of the earth will worship the beast — all whose names have not been written in the book of life belonging to the Lamb that was slain from the creation of the world.

*Revelation 13:8*

For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.

*Hebrews 10:4*

For the Law, since it has only a shadow of the good things to come and not the very form of things, can never by the same sacrifices year by year, which they offer continually, make perfect those who draw near.

*Hebrews 10:1*

Whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith. This was to demonstrate His righteousness, because in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed.

*Romans 3:25*

And for this reason He is the mediator of a new covenant, in order that since a death has taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were committed under the first covenant, those who have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.

*Hebrews 9:15*

And according to the Law, one may almost say, all things are cleansed with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.

*Hebrews 9:22*



# FOUNDATIONS FOR CHRISTIAN GROWTH

## Lesson THREE RIGHTEOUSNESS — THE GIFT OF GOD

Then he shall slaughter the goat of the sin offering which is for the people, and bring its blood inside the veil, and do with its blood as he did with the blood of the bull, and sprinkle it on the mercy seat and in front of the mercy seat

*Leviticus 16:15*

“For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you on the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood by reason of the life that makes atonement.”

*Leviticus 17:11*

“He shall also sprinkle some of the blood of the sin offering on the side of the altar, while the rest of the blood shall be drained out at the base of the altar; it is a sin offering.”

*Leviticus 5:9*

“Then Aaron shall lay both of his hands on the head of the live goat, and confess over it all the iniquities of the sons of Israel, and all their transgressions in regard to all their sins; and he shall lay them on the head of the goat and send it away into the wilderness of the hand of a man who stands in readiness. And the goat shall bear on itself all their iniquities to a solitary land; and he shall release the goat in the wilderness.”

*Leviticus 16:21,22*

The most significant day for the expiation of sin in the Jewish calendar was the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur). This was the day on which the High Priest made sacrifice for the sins of the people.

### Read Leviticus 16:1-28

The sin offering mentioned in this passage is symbolic of the Lord Jesus. Notice that it involved not one, but two goats.

#### 1. The blood

The first goat was to be killed and its blood sprinkled on the mercy seat for the expiation of sin (Leviticus 16:15). Shed blood meant that something had died (Leviticus 17:11). God thus used this blood as a visual reminder to the Jews that their sin had resulted in death (Leviticus 1:5,11; 3:2,8; 4:5-7; 5:9).

#### 2. The scapegoat

The second goat was presented to Aaron alive. Laying his hands upon its head, Aaron confessed over it all the sins of the people. Thus, the second goat became the sin-bearer for the people. “And the goat (i.e. the scapegoat) shall bear on itself all their iniquities to a solitary land” (Leviticus 16:21,22).

### C. NEW TESTAMENT FULFILLMENT OF OLD TESTAMENT FIGURES

The rituals described in Leviticus 16 are of course symbolic of Christ's sacrifice. Just as there were two animals for the sin offering, so redemption through Christ is two-fold.

#### 1. The shedding of blood

Jesus shed His blood for the forgiveness and cleansing of our sins. “In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace” (Ephesians 1:7).

#### 2. The identification with sin

Jesus was identified with our sins, bearing them and their penalty, so that we wouldn't have to. “He (God) made Him (Jesus) who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him” (II Corinthians 5:21).



# FOUNDATIONS FOR CHRISTIAN GROWTH

## Lesson THREE RIGHTEOUSNESS — THE GIFT OF GOD

### D. THE BLOOD OF JESUS CLEANSED SIN

Even before His death, Jesus made it plain that remission of sins would only be accomplished with the shedding of His own blood (Mark 14:24). His blood was the price that was paid to redeem us to God (I Peter 1:18,19).

Jesus' blood did something which the blood of animals could never do. The blood of animal sacrifices had only temporary and external effects (Hebrews 9:9,10; Hebrews 10:1-3). But, the blood of Jesus has "a **permanent and inward effect**" (Hebrews 9:12,14). It is His blood that washed us clean from our sins (Revelation 1:5), making us "holy" and "blameless" before the Father.

#### 1. The blood of Jesus speaks for us

The blood of Jesus speaks and avails for us today. In Hebrews 12:24, we are told that we have come to " . . . **the sprinkled blood** (i.e. Jesus' blood), *which speaks better things than the blood of Abel.*" When Abel was murdered by his brother Cain, God told Cain that Abel's blood was crying out to Him from the ground (Genesis 4:10).

Abel's blood speaks condemnation, but Jesus' blood speaks forgiveness and redemption. Jesus' blood is speaking forgiveness for you at this very moment, telling God that "the price" for your sin has been paid!

#### 2. The blood of Jesus is our receipt

Jesus' shed blood signifies that He poured out His life for us (Leviticus 17:11). The penalty for sin is death, and somebody had to pay that price, either we or somebody else in our behalf. Jesus paid that price for us, and His blood is our receipt that that debt has been paid.

### E. CHRIST'S IDENTIFICATION WITH MAN

Jesus was identified with the sin of mankind, becoming the sin-bearer for humanity. Although He was without sin, God imputed all our sin to Him (i.e. charged it to His account), and Jesus suffered the penalty for it (II Corinthians 5:21). Just as the scapegoat bore the sin of the Israelites, and was driven into the wilderness, so Jesus bore our sin and was separated from the presence of God (Mark 15:34; Acts 2:27; Romans 10:7).

And He said to them, "This is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many."

Mark 14:24

Knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ.

I Peter 1:18,19

Which is a symbol for the present time. Accordingly both gifts and sacrifices are offered which cannot make the worshiper perfect in conscience, since they relate only to food and drink and various washings, regulations for the body imposed until a time of reformation.  
Hebrews 9:9,10

For the Law, since it has only a shadow of the good things to come and not the very form of things, can never by the same sacrifices year by year, which they offer continually make perfect those who draw near. Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, because the worshipers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have had consciousness of sins? But in those sacrifices there is a reminder of sins year by year.

Hebrews 10:1-3

And not through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood, He entered the holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption. How much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

Hebrews 9:12,14

# FOUNDATIONS FOR CHRISTIAN GROWTH

## Lesson THREE RIGHTEOUSNESS — THE GIFT OF GOD

And from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the first-born of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To Him who loves us, and released us from our sins by His blood.

*Revelation 1:5*

And to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood, which speaks better than the blood of Abel.

*Hebrews 12:24*

And He said, "What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood is crying to Me from the ground."

*Genesis 4:10*

"For the life of the flesh is in the blood and I have given it to you on the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood by reason of the life that makes atonement."

*Leviticus 17:11*

He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

*II Corinthians 5:21*

And at the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?" which is translated, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?"

*Mark 15:34*

Thou wilt not abandon my soul to Hades, nor allow Thy Holy One to undergo decay.

*Acts 2:27*

"Who will descend into the abyss?" (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead).

*Romans 10:7*



# FOUNDATIONS FOR CHRISTIAN GROWTH

## Lesson THREE RIGHTEOUSNESS — THE GIFT OF GOD

Jesus didn't just bear the penalty for sin — **He bore the sin itself**. "*But the Lord has caused the iniquity of us all to fall on Him*" (Isaiah 53:6,12). He died under the judgment of God and went to the place of departed spirits, called Hades (Acts 2:27) or the abyss (Romans 10:7), where He was separated from God (Mark 15:34). Thus, Jesus' suffering was much more than just physical.

### 1. Represented in His death

When Jesus died on the cross, everything that had ever alienated us from God died with Him. The sin which had lodged in our spirits and separated us from God was dealt a death blow on the cross. "... *Our old self (man) was crucified with Him, that our body of sin might be done away with*" (Romans 6:6).

The "old man" to which Paul refers was our old, spiritually dead nature. Paul was so acutely aware that he was **represented in Christ's death** that he could say, "*I have been crucified with Christ*" (Galatians 2:20), by which he meant, "the sinful nature (old man) that separated me from God died when Jesus died!"

### 2. Represented in His resurrection

Not only were we represented in Christ's death, but we were also represented in His resurrection. God "*made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in heavenly places, in Christ Jesus*" (Ephesians 2:5,6).

The purpose in Christ's becoming sin for us was that we might be made the righteousness of God. Jesus was imputed with our sin, so that we could be imputed with **His righteousness**.

All of us like sheep have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; but the Lord has caused the iniquity of us all to fall on Him. Therefore, I will allot Him a portion with the great, and He will divide the booty with the strong; because He poured out Himself to death, and was numbered with the transgressors; yet He Himself bore the sin of many, and interceded for the transgressors.

*Isaiah 53:6,12*

Knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, that our body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin.

*Romans 6:6*

"I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and delivered Himself up for me."

*Galatians 2:20*

Even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places, in Christ Jesus.

*Ephesians 2:5,6*

# FOUNDATIONS FOR CHRISTIAN GROWTH

## Lesson THREE RIGHTEOUSNESS — THE GIFT OF GOD

For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

*Romans 3:23*

Whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith. This was to demonstrate His righteousness, because in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed.

*Romans 3:25*

He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world.

*I John 2:2*

In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

*John 4:10*

Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone.

*James 1:13*

For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin.

*Hebrews 4:15*

With precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ.

*I Peter 1:19*

"The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Behold, a gluttonous man and a drunkard, a friend of tax-gatherers and sinners!' Yet wisdom is vindicated by her deeds."

*Matthew 11:19*

Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, He began asking His disciples, saying, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?"

*Matthew 16:13*

### F. HOW GOD COULD BE JUST IN JUSTIFYING

When God redeemed man, He had to do so in such a way as was consistent with His character. For God to have simply "let us off the hook" and overlooked our sin would have compromised His righteous nature, making Him a party to Adam's sin. God is holy and just, and as such, He must inflict righteous punishment on all sin. Thus, the wrath of God was justly directed toward man, because by nature man was a sinful creature (Romans 3:23).

But, the Bible says that God sent Jesus to be the *propitiation* for our sins (Romans 3:25; I John 2:2; 4:10). Propitiation means *appeasement or satisfaction*. By the sacrifice of Jesus, the just wrath of God was appeased. The wrath that should rightly have fallen on us was focused on Christ as He hung on the cross.

#### 1. An acceptable sacrifice

To be an *acceptable sacrifice*, Jesus had to be a man without sin. If He had sinned at any point during His life, His death would have been for His sins and not for ours. Before Jesus could be deemed a spotless sacrifice, He had to be tempted in all points like us, and yet not sin. This is why Jesus had to be a man.

If God had just appeared on the scene (an eternal spirit) and not become a man, He would not have been vulnerable to temptation; for "*God cannot be tempted by evil*" (James 1:13). Only a man can be tempted; so Jesus became a man.

The Bible affirms that Jesus was tempted in every way, yet He never succumbed (Hebrews 4:15); He always obeyed God. In fact, He lived His entire life in accordance with the precepts of the Mosaic Law. Thus, when He was led away to Calvary, He was indeed a "*lamb unblemished and spotless*" (I Peter 1:19).

#### 2. A Son of Adam obedient to death

Jesus always referred to Himself as "*the Son of Man*" (Matthew 11:19; 16:13); He was not an ethereal spirit that floated around the earth for thirty-three years. He was a flesh-and-blood human being. "*What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we*



# FOUNDATIONS FOR CHRISTIAN GROWTH

## Lesson THREE RIGHTEOUSNESS — THE GIFT OF GOD

*beheld and our hands handled, concerning the Word of Life*" (I John 1:1).

Jesus is called the "last Adam" (I Corinthians 15:45; Romans 5:14), because He came to undo what the first Adam had done. The first Adam fell because he disobeyed God. The Last Adam (Jesus) obeyed God in *every point*, becoming obedient to the point of death (Philippians 2:8). Jesus' final obedience to God in the Garden of Gethsemane undid what Adam's disobedience had done in the Garden of Eden.

### 3. Divinity

However, in order for Jesus to qualify to bear the sins of the whole world and for His sacrifice to be sufficient for all men's sins, He had to be *God*. Only God could bear on Himself the sins of the whole world (I John 2:2). Only God's life was worth enough to buy back the entire human race.

And thus, we see Jesus continually affirming His divinity. "*I and the Father are one*" (John 10:30). "*Truly, truly I say to you, before Abraham was born, I am*" (John 8:58). In this latter scripture, Jesus used the same expression to describe Himself which God spoke to Moses: "*I am that I am*" (Exodus 3:14).

### 4. Fully God/fully man

To be a spotless representative of mankind (who lived without sin) and to be worthy enough to pay the price for all of man's sins, our Redeemer had to be *man* and *God* at the same time. This is exactly what Jesus was. He was *fully man* and *fully God* in one being.

How could a person be man *and* God? God accomplished this through the virgin birth. Jesus was born when the Holy Ghost overshadowed a virgin by the name of Mary and caused her to conceive (Luke 1:35). This was a *supernatural* occurrence. Jesus was born of a woman (Galatians 4:4), but He was conceived by the Spirit of Almighty God (Matthew 1:18-20)! Thus, simultaneously He was fully man and fully God.

*"And without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh, justified in the Spirit,*

So also it is written, "The first man, Adam, became a living soul." The last Adam became a life-giving spirit.

*I Corinthians 15:45*

Nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over those who had not sinned in the likeness of the offense of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come.

*Romans 5:14*

Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

*Philippians 2:8*

And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world.

*I John 2:2*

And the angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason the holy offspring shall be called the Son of God."

*Luke 1:35*

When the fulness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law.

*Galatians 4:4*

Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows. When His mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child by the Holy Spirit.

And Joseph her husband, being a righteous man, and not wanting to disgrace her, desired to put her away secretly. But when he had considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife; for that which has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit."

*Matthew 1:18-20*

# FOUNDATIONS FOR CHRISTIAN GROWTH

## Lesson THREE RIGHTEOUSNESS — THE GIFT OF GOD

*seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory” (I Timothy 3:16 KJV).*

For the demonstration, I say, of His righteousness at the present time, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

*Romans 3:26*

In order that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

*Ephesians 2:7*

He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit.

*Titus 3:5*

Why? Because they did not pursue by faith, but as though it were by works. They stumbled over the stumbling stone.

*Romans 9:32*

The wages of our sin was death, but God deemed the death of His spotless Son Jesus as sufficient to pay the sin-debt that we all owed. As we have seen, **Jesus was a worthy substitute for us**, and so God could be “. . . *just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus*” (Romans 3:26). Our sins weren’t overlooked by God. He paid for them Himself at the price of His very own Son.

### IV. THE FREE GIFT OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

As we have said, God’s motivation for making His own righteousness available was His great Love. God was not obligated in any way to redeem man from the mess that he was in. Man was responsible for the Fall, not God. God would have been perfectly justified in letting mankind bear all the punishment for his iniquity.

That God didn’t let man go to destruction, but made a way of salvation for him at the price of His own Son, is a testimony His *Grace and Everlasting Mercy* (Ephesians 2:7). God has not dealt with us according to our sins, but instead He dealt with His Son according to *our* sins, thereby making available to us the *free gift of righteousness*. God saw that man was helpless to re-establish right-standing with Him, so He re-established it for us.

#### A. NOT BY WORKS

Paul told Titus that we are saved by the mercy of God, and not by our *works* of righteousness (Titus 3:5). For many, this is a hard fact to accept. **There is nothing any man can ever do that will make him worthy by his own merit to be in right-standing with God.** This is the very truth which the Jews could not comprehend. The Bible says the Jews did not achieve right-standing “. . . *because they did not pursue it by faith, but as though it were by works. They stumbled over the stumbling stone (i.e. Jesus)*” (Romans 9:32). Righteousness can only be achieved through faith in Jesus Christ; good works will never make anyone righteous.



# FOUNDATIONS FOR CHRISTIAN GROWTH

## Lesson THREE RIGHTEOUSNESS — THE GIFT OF GOD

### 1. The Law

The Law (by which we mean the commandments of Moses) was never meant to be the way for man to receive righteousness, because "...by the works of the Law, no flesh will be justified in His sight; for through the Law comes the knowledge of sin" (Romans 3:20).

The Law was given to show man that he is lost in sin (See Romans 7:14-24 in which Paul describes his state before he was saved), and that he is utterly helpless to achieve right-standing with God on his own merit. Paul called the Law a tutor that brings us to Christ (Galatians 3:24), so that we can be made right by putting our faith in Jesus' sacrifice.

### 2. Self-righteousness

God's righteousness is a free gift that *cannot be earned*. If you had to work for it, it wouldn't be a free gift (Romans 4:4,5). Any righteousness which is based upon works is not God's righteousness but is rather *self-righteousness*, a righteousness based on the flesh rather than on Jesus' sacrifice.

## B. RIGHTEOUSNESS BY FAITH

"For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from the works of the Law" (Romans 3:28). Paul is emphatic in his assertion that *only faith* in Jesus brings about righteousness. If works were capable of making a man righteous, then Christ's suffering and death were a waste of time (Galatians 2:21).

The only way to get a free gift is simply to *receive it*, and God's method of receiving from Him is *Faith* (Hebrews 11:6). The only way any man will ever receive the righteousness which God has made available is to **receive it by faith!**

### 1. Our believing

"And Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness" (Romans 4:3). Abraham wasn't justified because he was a good man or because he deserved to be justified. He was justified because he believed God.

We can stand before God without condemnation, not because we worked ourselves to a position of worthiness

For we know that the Law is spiritual; but I am of flesh, sold into bondage to sin. For that which I am doing, I do not understand; for I am not practicing what I would like to do, but I am doing the very thing I hate. But if I do the very thing I do not wish to do, I agree with the Law, confessing that it is good. So now, no longer am I the one doing it, but sin which indwells me. For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh; for the wishing is present in me, but the doing of the good is not. For the good that I wish, I do not do; but I practice the very evil that I do not wish. But if I am doing the very thing I do not wish, I am no longer the one doing it, but sin which dwells in me. I find then the principle that evil is present in me, the one who wishes to do good. For I joyfully concur with the law of God in the inner man, but I see a different law in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind, and making me a prisoner of the law of sin which is in my members. Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death? *Jesus Did!*

Romans 7:14-24

Therefore the Law has become our tutor to lead us to Christ, that we may be justified by faith.

Galatians 3:24

Now to the one who works, his wage is not reckoned as a favor but as what is due. But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is reckoned as righteousness.

Romans 4:4,5

I do not nullify the grace of God; for if righteousness comes through the Law, then Christ died needlessly. Galatians 2:21

# FOUNDATIONS FOR CHRISTIAN GROWTH

## Lesson THREE RIGHTEOUSNESS — THE GIFT OF GOD

For this reason it is by faith, that it might be in accordance with grace, in order that the promise may be certain to all the descendants, not only to those who are of the Law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all.

*Romans 4:16*

For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God.

*Ephesians 2:8*

That, just as it is written, "Let him who boasts, boast in the Lord."

*I Corinthians 1:31*

before Him, but because we have *faith* in the fact that Jesus' sacrifice was sufficient to eliminate sin. When God sees a man or woman not striving to establish his or her *own* righteousness, but simply accepting God's free gift and *believing* in Jesus' all-sufficient sacrifice, God credits them with His very own, holy and pure *Righteousness*.

### 2. God's grace

"Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by *grace*" (Romans 4:16). The fact that God's righteousness can only be received by faith insures that that righteousness is imputed completely on the basis of God's *unmerited favor* and has nothing to do with our deeds. We are made righteous through faith only because faith is the hand which reaches up and receives the provision of God's Grace (unmerited favor). "*For by grace you have been saved, through faith*" (Ephesians 2:8).

**Faith is not a work** to which a Christian can point and then say to God, "See there! I *deserve* to be justified." A child who receives a gift from his parents doesn't then go out and start bragging about how wonderful *he is* for the way in which he received the gift. He tells others how wonderful and loving his parents are! In the same way, faith brings glory not to the one who believes, but to the One who bestows the gracious gift which faith receives. "*Let him who boasts, boast in the Lord*" (I Corinthians 1:31).

### 3. Our receiving

Faith which receives Christ is as simple an act as when your child receives an apple from you, because you hold it out and promise to give him the apple if he comes for it. The belief and the receiving relate only to an apple; but they make up precisely the same act as the faith which deals with eternal salvation. What the child's hand is to the apple, that your faith is to the perfect salvation of Christ. The child's hand does not **make the apple, nor improve the apple, nor deserve the apple; it only takes it.** And faith is chosen by God to be the receiver of salvation because it does not pretend to create salvation, nor to **help in it**, but it is content humbly to **receive it.**<sup>2</sup>

Charles Spurgeon — *All of Grace*



# FOUNDATIONS FOR CHRISTIAN GROWTH

## Lesson THREE RIGHTEOUSNESS — THE GIFT OF GOD

### C. HOW TO AVOID THE GALATIAN ERROR

In his letter to the Romans, Paul says that the righteousness of God is *"from faith to faith"* (Romans 1:17). This means that not only is our right-standing with God *established* through faith, but it is also continually *maintained* through faith! **Many Christians have the mistaken idea that once you get saved, you then have to maintain your stand with God by doing good works.**

This error was prevalent in the Galatian church, and it was the sole reason that Paul wrote a letter to them. That he felt very strongly about this issue can be seen in the way in which he addressed them: *"You foolish (i.e. stupid) Galatians! Who has bewitched you . . .?"* (Galatians 3:1). Careful reading of the book of Galatians will reveal that Paul speaks more sternly to this church than he does even to the Corinthian church (which was noted for its carnality and immorality). Paul knew that this error struck at the very heart of Christianity, so he dealt with it sternly.

*"Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?"* (Galatians 3:3). The Galatians were deceived into thinking that in order to maintain their stand with God, they would have to keep the precepts and commandments of the Mosaic Law (i.e. do good works). Paul calls this kind of teaching "another gospel," which is totally contrary to the one that he preached. He goes on to say that anyone who preaches such a message should be *accursed!* (Galatians 1:8).

#### 1. Continuing in grace

Our continuing relationship with God is based upon the same grace that brought us into salvation. We were saved by grace and now we stand in that same *unmerited favor!* Through Jesus *" . . . we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand"* (Romans 5:2).

You are no more righteous and acceptable in God's sight today than you were on the day in which you were saved. You didn't deserve the favor of God then, and you don't *deserve* it now! God's favor can *never be earned by man*. Your right-standing with God is based on the fact that you *believe in the sufficiency of Jesus' sacrifice.*

For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "But the righteous man shall live by faith."

*Romans 1:17*

You foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified?

*Galatians 3:1*

Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?

*Galatians 3:3*

But even though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to that which we have preached to you, let him be accursed.

*Galatians 1:8*

Through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we exult in hope of the glory of God.

*Romans 5:2*

# FOUNDATIONS FOR CHRISTIAN GROWTH

## Lesson THREE RIGHTEOUSNESS — THE GIFT OF GOD

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

*I John 1:9*

That no man should boast before God.

*I Corinthians 1:29*

And the work of righteousness will be peace, and the service of righteousness, quietness and confidence forever.

*Isaiah 32:17*

Therefore having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

*Romans 5:1*

Just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before Him. In love He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will.

*Ephesians 1:4,5*

### 2. Receiving forgiveness

If, after we are saved, we succumb to the flesh and stumble in some kind of sin, our forgiveness is based upon the same principles as was our salvation: confession and faith. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (I John 1:9).

God forgives us when we stumble on the same basis as He redeemed us — *Grace!* The idea of *penance* (doing good deeds to pay for sins) came into being because men thought that they could earn God's forgiveness. Penance is nothing more than the flesh saying, "I don't need the grace of God; I can *earn* His forgiveness!" But, the Bible says, "*No flesh should glory in His presence*" (I Corinthians 1:29 KJV).

## V. THE EFFECT OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

"The work of righteousness will be *peace*, and the service of righteousness, *quietness* and *confidence* forever" (Isaiah 32:17). When God gave His righteousness to us, He restored us to the right-standing which Adam had enjoyed before the Fall. That right-standing has a profound effect upon a person.

- Righteousness returns to him the dominion which God had given Adam at the outset.
- Righteousness restores to him the freedom from fear which Adam lost after he fell (Genesis 3:10).
- Righteousness enables him to come into God's presence without any feeling of guilt, inferiority or condemnation.

### A. PEACE WITH GOD

"Therefore having been justified by faith, we have *peace with God* through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Romans 5:1). With the sin that had separated us from God taken out of the way, a relationship without fear can be established between us and God. This is the fellowship which God had desired when He created Adam and to which He predestined us in Love before the foundation of the world (Ephesians 1:4,5).



# FOUNDATIONS FOR CHRISTIAN GROWTH

## Lesson THREE RIGHTEOUSNESS — THE GIFT OF GOD

### 1. Jesus removed the sin barrier

There is no longer any barrier between God and us. In fact, we are encouraged to come boldly into the holy place, that is, into the very presence of God (Hebrews 4:16; 10:19 KJV). Under the Old Covenant, the presence of God was a fearsome thing, and the High Priest entered the holy place once a year, and then only after elaborate preparations (Leviticus 16:33,34).

But, we are under a better covenant than they were, because Jesus has opened the way into the presence of God for us. We can come freely without any fear (Hebrews 10:19,20).

### 2. Free access to God's presence

The exhortation of the scriptures to us is to come freely into God's presence. "Let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith" (Hebrews 10:22). God is not pleased when those whom He has redeemed, justified, and sanctified by the blood of His Son stay away from Him because of fear. He is calling us to "draw near," because He sees us as holy and blameless (Ephesians 1:4).

We are righteous before God, and so He is at peace with us. The sin and condemnation that caused Adam to fear have been removed (Romans 8:1), so there is no reason for us to be afraid of God. God has imparted to us His own righteousness, the same right-standing that Jesus had when He walked the earth. "He (God) made Him (Jesus) who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him" (II Corinthians 5:21).

## B. QUIETNESS AND CONFIDENCE

There is an assurance and a boldness that comes when a person knows that he is in right-standing with the God who created the universe. The scripture says that "the righteous are bold as a lion" (Proverbs 28:1).

The people of Jesus' day often marvelled at the authority and boldness in which Jesus spoke and acted (Mark 1:22,27). When He prayed before the tomb of Lazarus, He said: "Father, I thank Thee that Thou heardest Me. And I knew that Thou hearest Me always" (John 11:41,42). Jesus was always confident that He had God's ear. That confidence

Let us therefore draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and may find grace to help in time of need.

Hebrews 4:16

Since therefore, brethren, we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus.

Hebrews 10:19

"Make atonement for the holy sanctuary; and he shall make atonement for the tent of meeting and for the altar. He shall also make atonement for the priests and for all the people of the assembly. Now you shall have this as a permanent statute, to make atonement for the sons of Israel for all their sins once every year." And just as the Lord had commanded Moses, so he did.

Leviticus 16:33,34

Since therefore, brethren, we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, His flesh.

Hebrews 10:19,20

Let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

Hebrews 10:22

There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

Romans 8:1

They were amazed at His teaching; for He was teaching them as one having authority, and not as the scribes. And they were all amazed, so that they debated among themselves, saying, "What is this? A new teaching with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey Him."

Mark 1:22,27

# FOUNDATIONS FOR CHRISTIAN GROWTH

## Lesson THREE RIGHTEOUSNESS — THE GIFT OF GOD

What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us?

*Romans 8:31*

But Peter said, "I do not possess silver and gold, but what I do have I give to you; In the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene — walk!"

*Acts 3:6*

But Peter sent them all out and knelt down and prayed, and turning to the body, he said, "Tabitha, arise." And she opened her eyes, and when she saw Peter, she sat up.

*Acts 9:40*

For everyone who partakes only of milk is not accustomed to the word of righteousness, for he is a babe.

*Hebrews 5:13*

stemmed from His awareness that He was in right-standing with a God Who loved Him and Who could do anything that He asked.

When you are in right-standing with God and can stand blameless before Him, that means God is *for you*, **He is on your side!** Your quiet assurance comes from this realization: "*If God be for us, who can be against us?*" (Romans 8:31 KJV). This is the boldness that enabled Peter to tell the cripple at the Beautiful Gate to rise and walk (Acts 3:6). This is the confidence that is able to tell a dead woman to arise (Acts 9:40).

### VI. ESTABLISHING THE REALITY OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

Many Christians go through life ignorant of the fact that they have been made the righteousness of God in Christ. They don't know that they have right-standing with God, so they have little confidence to come before Him. The author of Hebrews called this kind of Christian a "babe." "*For everyone who partakes only of milk is not accustomed to the word of righteousness, for he is a babe*" (Hebrews 5:13).

That these believers don't know that God has made them righteous doesn't in any way negate the truth of that fact. They are righteous whether they know it or not. The sad result, however, is that these people can't avail themselves of all the blessings which right-standing brings. There is no barrier of sin between them and God, but they are convinced that one exists. Many times this kind of thinking is the result of the gospel being preached as a revelation of sin, rather than a revelation of God's righteousness.

Believers need to establish firmly in their hearts and minds that **God has declared them righteous** on the basis of Jesus' sacrifice. God sees us as holy and blameless, washed pure from our sins by the blood of His Son. As we affirm in our minds that we are righteous before Him, we will become mature adults, not only "*accustomed,*" but **well-versed in "the word of righteousness."**

# FOUNDATIONS FOR CHRISTIAN GROWTH

## Lesson THREE RIGHTEOUSNESS — THE GIFT OF GOD

### A. DON'T LOOK TO YOUR EMOTIONS

Emotional feelings can't always be trusted to tell you the truth, so it is foolish to base your assurance of righteousness on emotions. Emotions can change from one day to the next, but your righteousness is based upon the sacrifice of Jesus, and the effects of that sacrifice are eternal and unchanging. No matter what you may *feel like*, *God sees you as holy and blameless, because of Jesus.*

**Righteousness is by faith** (Romans 1:16,17), and faith is not an emotion. Our right-standing before God is based upon our faith in the work of the cross. When we choose to believe feelings of unworthiness, we are in effect saying that Christ's sacrifice was not sufficient. Put your faith in what the Word says Jesus accomplished for us on Calvary, and not in what your emotions say about your worthiness.

### B. SEE YOURSELF AS GOD SEES YOU

The Word of God is the only true reflection of who you are before God. The Word gives us "God's eye view" on reality and tells exactly what God thinks of those whom Christ has redeemed with His blood. As we dwell on what the Word says about us and our place in Christ, our thoughts about ourselves begin to conform to God's thoughts about us.

- The Word says *you are the righteousness of God* (II Corinthians 5:21), because **that is how God sees you!**
- The Word says *you are holy and blameless before Him* (Ephesians 1:4), because **that is what God thinks of you!**
- The Word says *you are part of a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession* (I Peter 2:9), because **that is how God feels about you!**

*Agree with God and His Word, rather than your emotions.  
You are a righteous person!*

**For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "But the righteous man shall live by faith."**

*Romans 1:16,17*

**He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.**

*II Corinthians 5:21*

**Just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before Him.**

*Ephesians 1:4*

**But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.**

*I Peter 2:9*



# FOUNDATIONS FOR CHRISTIAN GROWTH

## Lesson THREE RIGHTEOUSNESS — THE GIFT OF GOD

### VII. SUMMARY — THE VALUE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

And when you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions.

*Colossians 2:13*

Since therefore, brethren, we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus.

Let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

*Hebrews 10:19,22*

The value of anything can only be judged by the *price* that was paid to obtain it. When we see the great price that was paid to forgive us and to impart to us God's righteousness, we can then fully appreciate the value of that righteousness. Our right-standing with God is not lacking in any point, for He has ". . . forgiven us **all** our transgressions" (Colossians 2:13). There is nothing that can bar us from the presence of God.

*"Since therefore, brethren, we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus . . . let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water" (Hebrews 10:19,22).*