

# Our Firm Foundation

## Righteousness Witnessed by the Law

Before conversion, the law of God, which is the standard of righteousness, brought only condemnation to the sinner. But after he has received the righteousness of Christ he stands again before the law and now it finds no fault in him. What was formerly an instrument of condemnation to him has now become an instrument of commendation, for “now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets.” Romans 3:21.

-The law, which once condemned him, now testifies to his innocence. The blood of Jesus Christ has cleansed him from all sin. (See 1 John 1:7)

What has happened to his past sins? God has cast them “into the depths of the sea.--- He has removed them as far from the sinner “as the east is from the west.” He casts them behind His back and remembers them against the sinner no more forever.

His sins are entirely separated from him, and even God, against whose law he had sinned, forgets them. In the righteousness of Christ he stands. Through Him he has been justified. His guilt is gone. “Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man [Jesus] is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by him all that believe are justified from all things.” Acts 13:38, 39.

John the revelator saw in vision the vast host of the redeemed as they shall finally stand before the throne of God in His kingdom, and has left us the following graphic description of this glorious scene:

“After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kingdoms, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands. And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? And whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou know. And he said unto me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.” Revelation 7:9-14.

And all this is absolutely free to the sinner. God not only offers it all as a gift but actually pleads with the sinner to accept it as such. Hear His earnest entreaty: “My son, give me your heart.” Proverbs 23:26. “Come unto me, all you that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” Matthew 11:28. “Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.” Revelation 22:17.

## By Faith

But all this can be received only through the exercise of faith. “For by grace are you saved through faith.” Ephesians 2:8. It is only those who believe on Him who are saved. “Without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that comes to God must believe that he is, and that he rewards them that diligently seek him.” Hebrews 11:6.

“Abraham believed God, and this was credited to him as righteousness. (Genesis 15:6.) But in the case of a man who works, pay is not reckoned as a favor but as something due; whereas in the case of a man who in place of working believes in Him who acquits the ungodly, his faith is credited to him as righteousness.” Romans 4:3-5. Weymouth.

Again the apostle speaks of “a righteousness of God conditional on faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. No distinction is made; for all alike have sinned, and consciously fall short of the glory of God, but are acquitted freely by His grace through the ransom given in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation available to faith in virtue of His blood. It was to demonstrate God’s justice, in view of the condoning by His forbearance of sins previously committed-that is to demonstrate His justice at the present time, that He may be shown to be just Himself, and the justifier of the man who believes in Jesus.” Romans 3:21-26, Weymouth.

For says the apostle, “We deem that a man is accounted righteous by faith, apart from fulfillment of the Law.” Verse 28, Weymouth. “This is the lesson which Jesus taught while He was on earth, that the gift which God promises us, we must believe we do receive, and it is ours. Jesus healed the people of their diseases when they had faith in His power.

“From the simple Bible account of how Jesus healed the sick, we may learn something about how to believe in Him for the forgiveness of sins. Let us turn to the story of the paralytic at Bethesda. The poor sufferer was helpless; he had not used his limbs for thirty-eight years. Yet Jesus bade him, ‘Rise, take up thy bed, and walk.’ The sick man might have said, ‘Lord, if Thou wilt make me whole, I will obey Thy word.’ But no, he believed Christ’s word, believed that he was made whole, and he made the effort at once; he willed to walk, and he did walk. He acted on the word of Christ, and God gave the power. He was made

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whole.

“In like manner you are a sinner. You can not atone for your past sins, you can not change your heart, and make yourself holy. But God promises to do all this for you through Christ. You believe that promise. You confess your sins, and give yourself to God. You will to serve Him. Just as surely as you do this, God will fulfil His word to you. If you believe the promise, believe that you are forgiven and cleansed, God supplies the fact; you are made whole, just as Christ gave the paralytic power to walk when the man believed that he was healed. It is so if you believe it.

“Do not wait to feel that you are made whole, but say, ‘I believe it; it is so, not because I feel it, but because God has promised.’ [8]

“The wondering crowd that pressed close about Christ realized no accession of vital power. But when the suffering woman put forth her hand to touch Him, believing that she would be made whole, she felt the healing virtue. So in spiritual things. To talk of religion in a casual way, to pray without soul-hunger and living faith, avails nothing. A nominal faith in Christ, which accepts Him merely as the Savior of the world, can never bring healing to the soul. The faith that is unto salvation is not a mere intellectual assent to the truth. He who waits for entire knowledge before he will exercise faith, cannot receive blessing from God. It is not enough to believe about Christ; we must believe in Him. The only faith that will benefit us is that which embraces Him as a personal Savior; which appropriates His merits to ourselves. Many hold faith as an opinion. Saving faith is a transaction, by which those who receive Christ join themselves in covenant relation with God. Genuine faith is life. A living faith means an increase of vigor, a confiding trust, by which the soul becomes a conquering power.

“After healing the woman, Jesus desired her to acknowledge the blessing she had received. The gifts which the gospel offers, are not to be secured by stealth or enjoyed in secret. So the Lord calls upon us for confession of His goodness. ‘You are my witnesses, said the Lord, that I am God.’ [9]

This, then, is righteousness by faith. It is imputed righteousness. It was not ours by right, but it becomes ours by God’s grace when we accept it by faith. Only the Christian religion provides such a plan of salvation as that! All other religions leave man to lift himself from the mire of sin by his own efforts. Christ Jesus came down from heaven and lifted us up to God. Therefore, “Thou shall call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins.” Matthew 1:21. What a Savior!

Today the Lord says to us: “With everlasting kindness will I have mercy upon thee. I will take your sins and give you My peace. Banish no longer your self-respect; for I have bought you with the price of My own blood. You are Mine. Your weakened will I will strengthen. Your remorse for sin I will remove.” [10]

O brethren, hear the message of God. Even “your remorse for sin I will remove.” What wonderful boundless love! Then we are free, made free by God’s Son and therefore free indeed. (See John 8:36) Standing then acquitted as a result of faith, let us enjoy peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” Amen.

The story is told of a man who, while traveling in the great Sahara Desert, found that his supply of water was exhausted. He was overcome by thirst, and was on the verge of utter despair.

As he attempted to struggle on a little further in tile apparently vain hope of relief, he suddenly noticed by the side of the path a sign which said:

“Ten paces to the east, O traveler, you will find the treasure of paradise.”

Quickly he took the ten steps, dug into the loose sand, and found a spring of clear water. His life was spared. Just so the treasure of eternal life and heaven is near us -perhaps less than ten paces away. God is not very far from any one of us.

In the light of eternity’s joys there is so little to give up. Shall we not just now take the few necessary steps to enable us to drink of the water of life freely? Christ beckons us to come. He entreats us to believe. How can we stay away?

### Imparted Righteousness

“If, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.” Romans 5:10. The same God who imputes the righteousness of Christ to the repentant sinner now actually imparts it to the Christian. Christ now desires to identify Himself so closely with the believer that His very own life will be lived in and through the Christian.

Thus we must become saved, and thus we must keep saved, by Christ’s life. Let us read Paul’s